



Making a Fresh Start January 1

*Put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. Be renewed in the spirit of your mind. Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness' (Eph. 4:22-24).
Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ' (Rom. 13:14).*

We can all start afresh! However far we have ascended, there is something higher; and however far we have fallen, it is always possible to make a fresh start. We need to take our place in the School of Christ and be taught by him (Eph. 4:20, 21).

'The old man' which we must 'put off' is clearly our former manner of life. If we have not put it entirely away, let us do so now by an immediate act of faith in the living Spirit. It does not take long for a beggar to put off his rags and take away instead a new suit of clothes, and it need not take a moment longer to put away habits and thoughts, ways of speech and life which are unworthy of the children of God. Do it now, and look up to the Holy Spirit to keep renewing you in the spirit of your mind.

But more than this, let us 'put on the new man', which is the life of Jesus Christ, that ideal which is in the likeness of God, and which the Lord created for us by his blessed life and death and resurrection. But to enable us to live this life we need the daily help of the Holy Spirit. He entered our hearts at the moment of regeneration, and has been with us ever since. We may not have realised his entry, but we believe it because of the assurance of 1 Corinthians 6:19; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 3:16. For my part, I like to begin every day, before lifting my head from the pillow, by saying, 'Thou art within, O Spirit of Christ, though I feel thee not.'

If the Holy Spirit be ungrieved, he will witness to our sonship; he will enthrone Christ as king of our life; will keep the self-life in the place of death; will give us a hunger for the things of God; he will give power in witness-bearing. In order to have a strong and blessed Christian experience, the one thing is to see that we do not grieve the Spirit. I do not think that we can grieve him away, but we may greatly limit and restrain his gracious work by insincerity of speech, the nursing of an unforgiving spirit, any kind of over-reaching or fraudulent dealing, impurity of speech, or failure in love. We may be bound, so as not to be able to move our arms, by a number of cotton threads, quite as tightly as by a strong rope-thong. Let us take care not to grieve him by such inconsistencies.

Prayer:

Fulfil in me, O God, those desires of goodness which thou hast created in my heart, and perfect the work of faith, that Jesus Christ may be glorified in me. Amen

