

Notes for the Ones Called-Out to Meet

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The Hope of the Resurrection for the "New You"

by Dan Trygg

"Behold how great a love the Father has given to us in order that we might be called 'offspring of God' -- and we *are!* On account of this the world does not perceive us *as we really are* because it did not perceive Him. ²Beloved ones, now, *at this present time*, we *are* offspring of God, and it was not yet revealed/made-visible what we will be. We know that if ever He might appear, we will be *like Him*, ...*of the same nature as Him...*, because we will see Him according as He is. ³And everyone holding this hope in Him purifies him/herself, according as That One is pure. ⁴Every-the-one doing sin also does lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness. ⁵And y'all know that That One appeared *in order that He might take away the sins*, and sin is not in Him. ⁶Every-the-one abiding in Him *does not sin*; every-the-one sinning *has not discerned Him nor experientially-recognized Him*. ⁷Little-children, let no one lead you astray; the one doing the righteousness is righteous, according as That One is righteous; ⁸the one doing the sin is out from the Slanderer, because from *the beginning* the Slanderer sins. Toward-this-purpose the Son of God appeared, in order that He might loose/break/destroy the works of the Slanderer. ⁹Every-one having-been-begotten out from God does not do sin, because His seed/sperm abides in him/her; and he/she is not able to sin, because out from God he/she has been begotten. ¹⁰By this is-plainly-seen the offspring of God and the offspring of the Slanderer; every-the-one not doing righteousness is not out from God, and the-one-not-loving his/her brother." I John 3:1-10

What Jesus did for us is incredible! It is *so far-reaching and multi-faceted that we cannot begin to grasp* the extent of what that first Resurrection Sunday means.

[He died *for* us.] Certainly, the most clearly understood, and widely taught, aspect of what He accomplished is that He **paid for our sins** (Mk. 10:45; Heb. 9:11-14,22-28; Eph. 1:7; cf. I Pet. 3:18).

[He died *as* us.] Because He **took our place** on that cross, and took our griefs, our sorrows, and our punishment (Isa. 53; I Cor. 15:3,4; II Cor. 5:21; I Pet. 2:24), it is now possible for those who believe in Him to receive forgiveness of sins through Him (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 22:16; 26:15-18).

The resurrection also demonstrates Jesus' complete victory over death, ...not only His personal escape from its clutches, but His triumph over its power on our behalf (Acts 2:24; I Cor. 15:12-58). Not only did He forever remove, once-for-all, *any* charge, accusation, or indictment against us before God (Heb. 7-9; Rom. 8:1,31-39), but He **also wrested the power of condemnation and the fear of death away from the devil himself**, so that he would no longer be able to manipulate us with these tools (Col. 2:13-15; Heb. 2:14,15; Rev. 12:10,11).

Most of this has to do with *the removal of the penalty of sin*. It says little about *dealing with the power of sin* within our lives. The apostle Paul develops *this* concept in his letters, pointing to our union with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection (Rom. 5:12-6:14).

[He died and rose *together-with* us.] The language of the NT is *very* clear. We were gathered up into Jesus and crucified-together-with Him (co-crucified), buried-together-with Him (co-buried), and raised-together-with Him (co-raised) (Gal. 2:19,20; Col. 2:12). When we were spiritually dead toward God, He made-us-alive-together-with Him (co-quickened), raised us up together-with Him (again, co-raised) and He seated-us-together-with-Him in the heavenly places (co-appointed to a position of authority) (Col. 2:13; Eph. 2:5,6). This is not presented as something which *will be done* in the future, but something which *has been done* in the past. We don't have to do something to get God to do these things for us; He *already has!!* We just need to *learn how to walk in the reality of what God has already done for us*. By putting us to death with Jesus, we are able to be set free from our slavery to sin, the bondage to the Law, and the power of the flesh within us (Rom. 6-8). Our resurrection with Him introduces an entirely new dynamic in our experience, ...i.e., a life lived by the power of the Spirit *within* us.

The good news is even better than *that*, however. Jesus' death and resurrection did *not* just bring forgiveness and cleansing, allowing us to "get whitewashed" every time we "get dirty" again. *That would not get to the core issue of my brokenness, ...my fault, ...my responsibility*. Jesus offers more than a "soul cleaning service". It even goes *beyond* giving me power to overcome sin by His indwelling presence. That, too, does not get at the problem of *my defectiveness*, my willfulness. There is an inner sense that such a salvation does not adequately deal with the issue of justice. It seems to bypass *my* personal responsibility for *my* sinful actions. It lets *me* off the hook too easily. It appears to allow me to escape punishment with the utterance of a few words of surrender, and then allows this hideous monster, who is capable of such evil, to have all the freedoms and joys of heaven. We feel this revulsion inside when we think of a murderer or rapist getting into heaven just by accepting Jesus. *What about the evils they committed?* Well, we say, "Jesus' blood covered that." That is nice *for them*, but it seems unjust. Am I supposed to rub shoulders with them for all eternity, and accept them as any other person, because Jesus "has them

covered”? *What about their victims?* Supposing some of them are there, how would they ever be able to love and accept the ones who had been their tormentors? **Something about that seems wrong, unfair, even intolerable.**

So much of the presentation of the Christian message has focused around the legal aspect of *removing the penalty* for our sin that many of us have not fully grasped the whole message of what Jesus has done. **Jesus has done much more than win the forgiveness of sinners. We are much more than “sinners saved by grace”. We are “saints” in a much deeper way than most of us can imagine.** In I John 3, the apostle John attempts to open up to us a glimpse of the much more expansive reality of what God does for us in Jesus. The apostle Paul also attempts to get at this same underlying reality in his epistles, as well. **The radical message of what the death and resurrection of Jesus has made possible is that He has made a new “me”,** i.e., I am a new creature in Christ, a new person (II Cor. 5:17). **I am not who I was before.** In fact, in agreement with our own inner sense of justice, God has put that old, sinful self to death with Jesus. He has judged me as a sinner to be worthy of death, and executed that judgment on me in Christ, so that the just demands of the Law would have been forever satisfied by my death in Christ. What will be in eternity with God is *not* the same old sinful person, cleaned up and polished with grace. No. **What will be with God in eternity is a brand new person, a new creation, something that is different in essence and history from my sinful past, ...even separate and different from the leadings and thoughts of my sinful present experiences, ...indeed, something that, as John says in this passage, is truly incapable of sin, ...past, present, or future.**

Two different Greek words are used in the NT to describe us as people who have been made new. The first is the word *neos*, which means “young, fresh, tender, of recent origin”. It is used to describe new, fresh wine (Mt. 9:17; Lk. 5:37-39); a new, fresh lump of dough (I Cor. 5:7), and of us in Col. 3:10. Notice there that we are to be “putting off the former person, with his/her evil practices, and putting on the new/fresh/of-recent-origin [person] the one being renewed (i.e., being caused to become new and different) into true knowledge according to the image of the One creating him/her.” **Since we are a new person in a *neos* way, that would seem to mean that we are someone recently born or created (Jn. 3:1-8; II Cor. 5:17). One implication of this is that this new “me” is not the “me” of my past. My past sins were not committed by this new “me”. My past history is separated from the new “me”. The other truth that must sink into my brain is that I myself am not the same as I was. There is something about me now that is different than I was before. It is new, fresh, and of recent origin. That means that there is a new “me” that I have yet to truly understand. I know the old “me”, but there is a new “me” that I do not know very well.**

The second Greek word for “new” is the word *kainos*. This word refers to what is “new, of a new quality, unused, unknown, unheard of, or different”. It is used to refer to new quality wineskins (Mt. 9:17); the new, unused tomb (Mt. 27:60; Jn. 19:41); new, different teaching (Mk. 1:27; Acts 17:22); the new, different covenant (II Cor. 3:6; Heb. 8:8,13; 9:15); the new, unheard of humanity established in Christ (Eph. 2:15); the new, different, of unknown quality heavens and earth (II Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1,5); the new, different, of unknown quality creatures we are in Christ (II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15); the new quality persons we are in Christ (Eph. 4:24); and, the new, unknown name which Jesus will give us (Rev. 21:7). **Again, one of the implications is that this new, unknown “me” is different than the “me” that committed the sins of my past. To emphasize this break with my past, when I stand before Jesus in my resurrection body, ...when finally even my old “flesh” is gone..., He will give me an entirely different name. I will not be tied to my past sins, or old reputation, ...even by name. I will be totally free from any connection to any sinful past at all. Why? Because that which is the new creature, born from God, created in His image, did not do any of those sinful acts. It would actually be unjust to link the new “me” to any wrong behavior produced by the old “me”.**

What do we know about the new “me”? According to Eph. 4:24, **it has already been created according to God, in righteousness and holiness of the truth.** It does not need to grow into a maturity in order to become righteous and holy. **It is holy and righteous now, by virtue of its very nature.** According to I John 3:9, it “...does not do sin, because His seed/sperm abides in it; and it is not able to sin, because out from God it has been begotten.” **What this means is that when I choose to sin, I am acting inconsistent with my new, true character.** I am being defrauded, cheated, from my true character and heart, by giving my members to serve sin according to the thinking of my former way of living. Jesus had said, “...every good tree bears good fruit; but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit”, and, again, “Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad...” (Mt. 7:17,18; 12:33). **The point is that in order to change the fruit of someone’s life, you have to change their inner character and nature. That is the victorious message of hope regarding Jesus’ resurrection.** “Therefore we have been buried with Him... into death, *in order that* as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, *in order that we might no longer be slaves to sin...*” (Rom. 6:4-6). Truly, “old things passed away, behold, new things have come” (II Cor. 5:17).