

# Notes for the Ones Called-Out to Meet

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## Inside-Out: Earthy versus Heavenly

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“But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. <sup>21</sup> For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. <sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive... <sup>45</sup> So also it is written, ‘The first man, Adam, became a living soul.’ The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. <sup>46</sup> However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. <sup>47</sup> The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. <sup>48</sup> As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. <sup>49</sup> Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly.”

1 Corinthians 15:20-22,45-49

“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup> For the law of the Spirit of the life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.”

Romans 8:1-2

Old covenant/new covenant, bad tree/good tree, old creation/new creation, old person/new person, outer person/inner person, and flesh/spirit are all word pictures used to describe the radical change that has been introduced into our lives, when we were born from above by faith in Jesus Christ. **God introduced something new, radically different, into our being.** We received a new heart inclined to obey God. We received a new spiritual-genetic makeup, whereby we will produce good, righteous fruit as a natural outcome of our inner nature. We were created anew, with a nature that is dramatically different and superior than we were before. We are a new person, created in righteousness and devotion to God, even though our old self still somehow continues with us. Our old person seems to be somehow located in the “outer” part of our being, while the new reality that God has introduced is somehow our “inner” self. Sin still seems to be operational within our flesh, and a fleshly-oriented way of living leads to death and alienation from God, while a Spirit-oriented way of perceiving and operating leads to life and peace from the Holy Spirit. **Today, we want to introduce a new contrasting word picture couplet that is descriptive of the new reality that is ours in Jesus Christ, ...an earthy nature versus a heavenly nature.**

**According to Romans 5:12-21, sin entered the world through one man, Adam, and spread to all humanity through his offspring. All have been born as sinners by nature, which becomes evident by the selfish, sinful choices people make.** Sin is an aspect of our natural condition as a child of Adam. **Death is the end result of sin, ...both the immediate death of alienation and separation from God, as well as the death of the physical body.** Left unchecked, it will result in the final separation from God, the second death, which is the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14). **The wages, or “the paycheck”, of sin is death** (Rom. 6:23).

**Jesus was miraculously born of a virgin, so that He could be fully human, but escape the necessary transmission of sin to His inner nature that would happen with two human parents.** He was innocent, as was the first Adam before he embraced sin. **Jesus was to be a second Adam, a representative head of a new race of humanity.** As the first Adam represented the human race, and his actions affected all those who came from him, ...in a similar way Christ came to be the corporate head and representative of a new human race, and His actions would affect all those who come from Him. While the original Adam was only one, and made a choice that represented and affected the many who would come after Him, ...**Jesus came even after many had been born, had sinned and had even died, yet He was able to encapsulate and represent all humanity, ...all who came before Him, and all who would come after Him.** Truly **what Jesus accomplished for humanity was much more powerful than what Adam caused.** He who knew no sin (because He Himself had never sinned), took all humanity and their sins into Himself, so that **He became sin for us all** (2 Cor. 5:21). **As the wrath of God was poured out upon Him as sin, and in our place, and even as us, He exhausted and satisfied the just demand for recompense and retribution. Jesus became the propitiation, ...the sacrifice that satisfied the wrath of God..., for the sins of all humanity, the sins of the whole world** (1 Jn. 2:2).

Isaiah put it this way, “Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup> But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. <sup>6</sup> All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but Yahweh has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him. <sup>7</sup> He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth. Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth. <sup>8</sup> By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due (53:4-8)? The apostle Paul wrote, “...having concluded this, that One died for all, therefore all died...” (2 Cor. 5:14). The apostle Peter wrote, “...and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you

were healed” (1 Pet. 2:24). **Jesus came to identify with us completely and bring us to death in and with Him.** Death was the judgment for sin. Death was associated with the Adam nature. **Death is the only way to be free from the power of sin, the law, the flesh, and even our former identity in Adam.**

**Jesus came to be another Adam, the last Adam. We were all born into the former Adam, through our natural birth, but we have to choose to be born into Christ.** In the comparison between the transgression of the former Adam, and the grace of God and the free gift of righteousness that came with Christ’s act of obedience, Paul wrote, “. . .if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, *much more* those who *receive* the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:17). **All that Christ did and accomplished for humankind as the last Adam is available to all, and offered as a gift, ...but it must be received (taken, accepted, embraced) to become effectual.** It is received by faith.

**Notice what comes with Jesus? Life!** We will “reign in life” through Jesus! **So, while the former Adam brought about sin and death, the last Adam, Christ, brings us to and through death into life, ...resurrection life!**

**The first Adam was formed of earth. God breathed life into him, and he became a living soul or self. The last Adam, Jesus, did not just come alive, ...He became a life-giving spirit!**

**The first Adam was from the earth, “earthy”. The word “earthy” literally means, “made of dust”. The second man, the last Adam, Christ is from heaven, “heavenly”. We don’t know what all that entails. But what is clear is that there is a natural body, and there is a “spiritual body” (1 Cor. 15:44). And Paul tells us that just as we have borne the image of the earthy man, Adam, the man made of dust, ...so we will also bear the image of the heavenly man, the last Adam, the risen Christ.**

**The word “image” here means “likeness, representation, manifestation, embodiment, form, appearance or expression”. This is much more than a mere fingerprint. This is the visible, outward manifestation of an inward, invisible reality or substance. In other words, just as we have been the outward expression of the old Adamic nature, ...the man of sin, death and dust, ...we now have the capacity to be the outward expression and visible manifestation of the new Adamic nature, ...the man of obedience, life and spirit. We can be the visible expression of the heavenly life of Jesus which is now in us by the power of His Spirit which dwells in us!**

While the old Adam nature is compromised and degraded by sin, which leads to separation from God, selfish behavior and death (*life-less-ness*), **the last Adam brought us with Him to death and through death to resurrection life, the life from heaven. He has placed within us this heavenly life, which is the power of His resurrection at work within us right now.** This is none other than the life of the age to come, referred to elsewhere as “age-type life” or eternal life. **This heavenly life enables us to walk like the heavenly Man.** Notice the gloss in the translation of Romans 8:2. It says that “the law of the Spirit of the life in Christ Jesus has set us free from the law of sin and death.” It is *not* “the Spirit of life”, here. **It is “the Spirit of the life in Christ Jesus” that sets us free.** The Holy Spirit takes the things of Jesus and makes them known to us (Jn. 16:14; cf. 1 Cor. 2:12). **He is taking the resurrection life of Jesus and is making us alive with it, empowering and enabling us to walk in freedom from sin and death, and manifesting in and through us the very life of heaven itself!**

**Notice again, the inside-out reality of what is described here. As ones who were of Adam, we could only express what we were on the inside.** We were sinners by nature, so we inevitably became sinners by choice. **We were “earthy”, ...animated dust. We did not have the ability to live a heavenly life.** We could not be or do anything beyond the reality of what we were.

**But God has done something wonderful, ...something amazing, ...something far and beyond our imagination’s ability to grasp. He sent the eternal Word into the world to take on human flesh, ...to become a second Adam..., to be a representative head to incorporate all humanity into Himself. He took us all to the cross. He paid for all our sins, and He even put us to death with Him, so that there could be a final and permanent break with our past. He offered this redemption price to us as a free gift, ...a righteousness He has purchased, an opportunity to leave the past behind and experience an entirely new reality in identification with Him. To those of us who perceive this offer, and who choose it by faith, He will make us new, and will place within us the resurrecting, recreating life of heaven itself into us through the Holy Spirit. And now, ...because we have the heavenly life of Jesus in us, ...we can experience and make visible the life of heaven, as we are led by and respond to the leading of the Spirit.**

**It all begins with a natural birth. There are no humans who bypassed the earthy life.** When God made humankind, He did not start over, when they failed. He did not wipe us out and begin again. No. He was not discouraged by our failure. He even knew beforehand what He would do. Jesus is the Lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world. **We are born here, but we are destined for heaven, ...at least those of us who choose Jesus. God wanted all creation to see His grace, His longsuffering, and His love. As we are transformed from the inside-out by the life of heaven that is in us, people and angels will see the image of His heart expressed through ours.**