

USING THE OLD AND NEW MAN IN SANCTIFICATION

BY

NATHAN GERALD SCHULTE

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PROF. JOHN HARTWIG, ADVISOR

WISCONSIN LUTHERAN SEMINARY

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Abstract

Why do Christians sometimes sin? What part of you is a sinner? Does Psalm 119 speak to your Old or New Man? Who is your New Man? How do we interact with our Old Man? Does everyone have an Old and New Man? Why do we do what we do not want to do? What tools does God give us to understand our lives of sanctification? All of these questions can be answered with a correct understanding of the biblical imagery of the Old and New Man. God gives us this useful imagery of the Old and New Man so that we can understand ourselves and others better and so that we can help them in their spiritual lives. The imagery of the Old and New Man, when properly applied, can assist in living lives of sanctification which properly focus on God and his grace. This thesis studies the key passages for understanding the Old and New Man and then evaluates proper and improper applications of the teaching.

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*Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths;
Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior,
and my hope is in you all day long.—Psalm 25:4-5*

Two unmovable pillars describe ministry—a love of God’s Word and a love for people. No matter where you serve, whom you serve, when you serve, or how you serve, these two truths remain the most important ones a believer can acquire and cling to. Eager servants of the Lord will dive into the never-ending pursuit to understand both the Word and people more and more. God blesses both endeavors and, through his Word, teaches more about people than can ever be learned apart from him.

Learning about people and how to best give them God’s Word is complex. When do you give the gospel? When do you give the law? Why do believers, such as I, act the way we do? Why do we think, feel, do, and desire the things we do? The questions abound. Learning about people through God’s Word is the best way not only to know how God works in the world and to understand how to work with people, but also to know ourselves and to care for ourselves better. And God has given us an excellent tool—the imagery of the Old and New Man—for this task.

Not only does this imagery of the Old and New Man add clarity to our self-understanding, it also assists believers in godly living by giving them useable information for dealing with themselves and with other people. It shows, in concrete and memorable terms, how the law and the gospel work in a person and why believers struggle in the ways that they do. The imagery focuses on believers’ lives as children of God—their lives of sanctification. In fact, an understanding of the Old and New Man is critical for understanding and living lives of sanctification because, if that imagery is forgotten or misunderstood, people make mistakes when promoting and teaching sanctification.

This thesis will lead the readers through an examination and application of the biblical teaching of the Old and New Man as it relates to sanctification. I hope that it helps people understand themselves more as they see the powerful things God has done in them and the powers striving against them. And I also pray that this thesis will help people preach and teach more confidently and precisely to Christians so that they better understand their struggles and that warring inside of them. Both sides of the imagery of the Old and New Man will cause them

to rush to their Savior. A true understanding of both the Old Man and the New Man will lead believers to give more thanks to Jesus and for his salvation.

Most Christians have at least a cursory understanding of the Old and New Man through their own Bible study and learning. I did as well. In the box below, I wrote my starting definition of the Old and New Man before I did an in-depth study of the relevant passages. This sentence will serve as the beginning point that will be evaluated and expanded after examining the following sections of Scripture. The thesis progresses into the applicable Bible passages in Romans 6-8, Galatians 5, Ephesians 4, and Colossians 3 to discover the biblical understanding of the Old and New Man. After summary conclusions have been distilled from those sections, the paper will then analyze various applications of the Old and New Man imagery. These evaluations include secular parallels, how biblical misunderstandings affect the imagery, improper uses of the Old and New Man, and well-applied instances of the imagery. Using this structure, the paper has strong roots in Scripture as well as a thorough examination of various applications of the imagery of the Old and New Man.

The doctrine of the Old and New Man is imagery of the struggle between the evil desires and the godly desires of a believer.
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Part 1: Discovering the Definition of the Old and New Man

We find the Old and New Man anywhere in the Bible where we find a believer living after the fall into sin. The text may not mention the imagery and the struggle. We may not be able to detect the inner workings of the believer because we only see the story from the outside. Nevertheless, each believer lived with the Old and New Man inside of him every day, from the time of his conversion to the time of his death. Whether the believer was Abram traveling through the wilderness regions following God's promise or Lydia newly understanding the message of the Apostles, we can be sure they dealt with the reality of a struggle known only to believers living on this side of heaven. This struggle is the one between the Old and New Man. Although the Old and New Man are a part of every believer's life, this thesis will only explore

some of the key passages to define the principles which will direct the rest of the paper’s discussion. We begin in Romans with the best known section that discusses this imagery.

Gatherings from Romans 6

After the Apostle Paul spends the first five chapters of Romans extensively explaining sin and righteousness—key elements in understanding justification¹—he naturally turns to sanctification in chapter 6. This discussion of sanctification is also where Paul introduces the Old and New Man. He begins with a question which he anticipates his readers would ask: “Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?” (Ro 6:1). Immediately Paul replies in dramatic language, “We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?” (Ro 6:2). Then, as the next section shockingly reveals, the first time we meet the formidable Old Man we find out he is dead.

**τοῦτο γινώσκοντες ὅτι ὁ παλαιὸς ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος συνεσταυρώθη,²
“For we know that our old self was crucified with [Jesus]” (Ro 6:6).³**

How was the Old Man Crucified?

Paul encourages believers in this section by sharing with them their intimate relationship with Jesus. In verse 4, Paul refers believers to their connection to Christ’s death and burial through baptism. From verses 4 to 6, Paul intensifies his word choice from “dead” and “buried” to “crucified with.” His word choice is unique. In fact, Paul is the only biblical writer to use the verb *συσταυρόω* to describe an event other than literally crucifying multiple people at the same time.⁴ He uses the word twice—in this verse and also in Galatians 2:20. However, Paul does not use the word with the same emphasis in both passages. In Galatians 2:20 he says, “I was crucified with Christ,” to describe his inextricable connection to Christ. The verb *συσταυρόω* in Galatians describes a good connection because Paul was crucified *with* Christ. In Romans 6:6, Paul’s use of the word is still provides a positive picture, but only because the Old Man was crucified and

¹ God’s declaration that Christ paid for all sins of all people of all time.

² K. Aland, M. Black, C. M. Martini, B. M. Metzger, M. A. Robinson, and A. Wikgren, (1993; 2006), *The Greek New Testament, Fourth Revised Edition (with Morphology)* (Ro 6:6), Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft. All Greek New Testament citations are from this source.

³ NIV11 is used throughout. If a different translation is preferred, the paper will indicate so.

⁴ Douglas J Moo, *Romans 1-8*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 389.

done away with on the cross. The *συσταυρόω* is positive in this passage because it gets rid of something. Paul does not use the word specifically to describe his connection to Christ as he does in Galatians but mainly to show how the Old Man died.

These two uses show that more than one important event was happening on the cross when Christ was crucified. In one way the crucifixion means that believers are connected to Christ's death. His death is their death and his resurrection is their resurrection.⁵ Believers travel vicariously with Christ through his passion and resurrection as he does everything for them. However, in addition to joining Christ on the cross, believers also left something on the cross—their Old Man. He died with Christ on the cross and stayed there. As Galatians 5:24 says, "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."

Our faith connects believers with the historical event of the crucifixion so that Christ's death affects the Old Man. If a criminal is crucified, he is done away with. Society does not worry about him anymore. He is dead. The same is true with the Old Man. He is done away with. Douglas Moo describes it well when he used the word "dethroned."⁶ The idea of losing power and control continues into chapter 6 and the first part of chapter 7. This theme is succinctly summarized in 6:14, "For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace."

In What Sense is the Old Man παλαιός (old)?

From the beginning of Paul's usage of this imagery, he describes the Old Man as being old (*παλαιός*). Although Paul uses *παλαιός* only once in this letter, in other contexts (e.g., 1 Corinthians 5:7-8), he regularly uses it to refer to the complete incompatibility of the coexistence of the old and obsolete (wickedness) and the new (good things).⁷ As Morris comments, "It [the old] is not something to be desired."⁸ Aversion to the old is clear and to be expected. *παλαιός* and its opposite, *καινότης*, are useful words for describing drastic opposites. In this Old and New Man imagery, they appropriately highlight the contrasts in sanctification between the old life and

⁵ Moo, *Romans 1-8*, 389. "God considers that we died the same death that Christ died."

⁶ Moo, *Romans 1-8*, 392.

⁷ W. Arndt, F. W. Danker, and W. Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature 3rd ed.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 751.

⁸ Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1988), 251. Also to note: Only a person looking through the lens of the New Man could call the Old Man old.

the new one.⁹ By using *παλαιός* and *καινότης*, we immediately see that the new life and the old life of a believer are hostile to each other—more so than water and oil.

What is the Old Man?

The Old Man appears abruptly in Paul’s dialogue without any explanation. The phrase is picture language, but how should we understand it? How useful is it? Does Paul need to explain himself? The Old Man phrase is imagery that falls under the category of the metaphor. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson define metaphorical language as “understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another.”¹⁰ For example, one common metaphor is ARGUMENT IS WAR. People use that thought picture in their daily expressions without even thinking about it:

Your claims are *indefensible*.
He *attacked every weak point* in my argument.
His criticisms were *right on target*.
I *demolished* his argument.
I’ve never *won* an argument with him.
You disagree? Okay, *shoot*.
If you use that *strategy*, *he’ll wipe you out*.
He *shot down* all of my arguments.¹¹

Metaphors pervade our understanding. We could not think without them. Some metaphors are deeply embedded into our collective psyche (e.g., LIFE IS A JOURNEY). Others we invent and use as we need them (e.g., BASKETBALL GAME IS A DAVID AND GOLIATH FIGHT).

The pattern of Paul’s metaphor is _____ IS OLD MAN. The second half of verse 6 immediately mentions sin—“so that the body of sin might be done away with.” Could the metaphor be SIN IS OLD MAN? That definition is not wrong, but the word *παλαιός* pushes the distinction even further. The “old” refers to something before and original to our first state. In fact, I contend that the Old Man is a metaphor of the inherited portion of original sin, also

⁹ Gerhard Kittel and Geoffrey William Bromiley, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: WM. B. Eerdmans, 1967), 719. “In Paul the antithesis of old and new is just as much emphasized as in the proclamation of Jesus. Indeed, Paul makes it even sharper by seeing in it the antithesis between good and evil.”

¹⁰ George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live by*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 5.

¹¹ George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live by*, 4.

referred to as the sinful nature.¹² In the words of the metaphor formula: ORIGINAL SIN IS OLD MAN.

The Bible says no good things about the sinful nature. Many passages (e.g., Ga 5:19-21, 1 Co 6:9-11) give long litanies of the evil results of original sin. Matthew 15:19 identifies the source as being deep within humans: “For *out of the heart* come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander” (emphasis added). All humans are born with sin as David confesses in Psalm 51.¹³ Every unconverted human is completely sinful.¹⁴ Since that state of sinfulness is the prior, undesired state, Paul’s use of *παλαιός* fits the description well.

The metaphor is that of a person (*ἄνθρωπος*) which is especially apt for a description of the original sin. A metaphor is the conceptual mapping of one thing on another. Therefore, in the metaphor of the Old Man, the image of a person maps onto original sin. The corresponding features are nuanced and useful. A person has a will, intellect, and emotions. These are incorporated into our understanding of original sin. Original sin corrupts the entire human nature. Not a single part is free from its grasp. As the Confessions put it, “[original sin is] a deep-seated, evil, horrible, bottomless, unfathomable, and indescribable corruption of the entire human nature and of all its powers, particularly of the highest, most important powers of the soul, in mind, heart, and will.”¹⁵ Imagining original sin as a person allows us to illustrate all the ugly facets of original sin within the imagery of a human that has all those capabilities. Just as a person has a will, intellect, and emotions, original sin evokes a person who exhibits a will, intellect, and emotions.

In addition, the imagery of people also lends itself well to the fighting and struggle of the Old and New Man. Animals can, and often, fight each other, but we understand human fights,

¹² I say, “inherited portion of original sin” to distinguish it from the guilty pronouncement on all humanity because of Adam’s fall (Hoenecke III, 397). There are two aspects of original sin—the inherited portion and God’s guilty pronouncement over all humanity. The Old Man is specifically the inherited portion. Adolf Hoenecke, *Evangelical Lutheran Dogmatics*, vol. 3, (Milwaukee, WI: Northwestern Publishing House, 1909-1917. Translated by James Langebartels, 2003), 397.

¹³ Psalm 51:5, “Look, I was guilty of sin from birth, a sinner the moment my mother conceived me.”

¹⁴ The Formula of Concord summarizes it nicely, “original sin means the deep-seated corruption of our nature.” Robert Kolb, Timothy J. Wengert, and Charles P. Arand, (*The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 540.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 534.

wrestling, and struggling to be deeper and more intentional. The Old Man and the New Man are vicious enemies and they fight each other with all their resources.

Gatherings from Romans 7

Already in chapter 6, Paul explores the realities of pronouncing the death of the Old Man. His applications draw from a paradox—the Old Man is dead and yet still alive.¹⁶ The two realities stand side by side in the chapter. In verse 6 the Old Man was crucified, and in verse 11 and following, Paul exhorts believers to count themselves dead to sin and not to let sin follow its sinful desires (ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις αὐτοῦ). Paul does not pause to explain the discrepancy. Both truths are correct. The Old Man is dead but the Old Man still prowls. The power of this paradox shows that the imagery of the Old and New Man is robust enough to handle the tensions of the life of sanctification as seen in Paul’s famous section of his struggle in chapter 7.

**ἐγὼ δὲ σάρκινός εἰμι πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν.
“but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin” (Ro 7:14b).**

Romans 7 is widely infamous for its difficulty in interpretation. Who is the person speaking? Many suggestions are brought forth: unregenerate man, Adam, Israel, human experience, Paul before his conversion, and the list goes on.¹⁷ Not very many people want to read Paul the Christian as the speaker because of the section’s strong language. How can a Christian say he is unspiritual and sold to sin? Those who do not see Paul as the speaker struggle to see the true terrors of sin in a believer. They seemingly cannot bring themselves to say *how* sinful believers really are. Thomas Schreiner illustrates this approach in a blog post on The Gospel Coalition website:

Yes, we continue to struggle with sin. Yes, we fall short every day. But Romans 7:13–25 is talking about total defeat. As Paul says in verse 14, “I am of the flesh, sold under sin.” In other words, he is describing complete and total captivity to sin. [. . .] Paul isn’t just talking about struggling with sin with frequent failures; he describes complete and abject defeat, being utterly enslaved to sin. The “I” is a prisoner of sin. Again and again

¹⁶ “If we say that Paul is referring to an inner struggle in his Christian life, then we must admit that he in the same chapter has made contrary statements.” Yep! It’s all part of the paradox. Donald M. Davies, “Free from the law,” *Interpretation* 7, no. 2 (April 1953): 156-162, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials, EBSCOhost* (accessed September 21, 2016), 160.

¹⁷ Michael Paul Middendorf, *Romans 1-8*, (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2013), 550.

in this passage, Paul says he wanted to obey but couldn't; the obedience didn't come and couldn't come—since he was unregenerate.¹⁸

Unfortunately those who follow this line of thinking do not recognize the joy of the law/gospel paradox which shows sin as it is so that devastated sinners can see the Savior as he really is. Paul follows the pathway of complete despair and complete joy all the way to verse 25 where he shouts with relief, “Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!”

To be sure, Paul uses difficult language in this section. *πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν* (sold to sin) is hardly a weak phrase, but it does not need to be used only for the unbeliever. There is no reason to read this section of Romans assuming that the converted Paul is not the person speaking. In fact, understanding Paul as a Christian speaking these words is the simplest reading. As Middendorf comments, “Most commentators admit that *prima facie* [face value] the words of Romans 7 read like autobiography.”¹⁹ Paul emphasizes that point by using *ἐγὼ* six times in verses 13-25 and this number does not even include his constant use of first person singular verbs.²⁰ Clearly Paul is describing his present struggle. The following is a progression of key parts of the verses in his comments on his life:

**ἐγὼ δὲ σάρκινός
I am unspiritual. (v14)**

Paul identifies himself as “fleshly.”²¹ He uses a derivative of *σάρξ* as the referent to his sinful nature—the Old Man. This word choice gives the passage a different connotation. The *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* comments on the word's use in the Old Testament (which heavily influenced the early Christian writers) by saying that “bound up with this term is his [man's] creatureliness, his sinfulness, and his defective understanding of God's saving acts and plan of election. But nowhere is it even probable that the flesh is in conflict with the spirit.”²²

¹⁸ Thomas Schreiner, “Romans 7 Does Not Describe Your Christian Experience,” (The Gospel Coalition, Accessed November 14, 2016. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/romans-7-does-not-describe-your-christian-experience>).

¹⁹ Middendorf, *Romans 1-8*, 548.

²⁰ Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1988), 285.

²¹ Frederick W. Danker, Walter Bauer, and William F. Arndt. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000). Under *σάρξ*

²² W. Arndt, F. W. Danker, and W. Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature 3rd ed*, 114. By the way, the author of the section, Schweizer thinks that the Romans 7 passages refer to Paul's pre-Christian life.

This observation highlights the beauty of metaphors. Different metaphors can refer to the same item but bring out different perspectives and understandings of the concept. “Fleshly” brings out one idea (the worldly, inherited sinful nature), while a metaphor like “Old and New Man” is more conducive to connotations of the struggle within us.

**ὁ γὰρ κατεργάζομαι οὐ γινώσκω· οὐ γὰρ ὁ θέλω τοῦτο πράσσω, ἀλλ’ ὁ μισῶ τοῦτο ποιῶ.
I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. (v15)**

Confusion results when a struggle prevails on the inside of a person. Paul is remarkably transparent and honest in this diary-like section of Romans—a letter to a place he has never visited before. He bares his heart and gives an accurate picture of what it is like to be a believer on this earth. Paul’s frustration with himself reverberates throughout the section. The believer’s life is a messy and hard struggle. And Paul identifies the enemy—himself.

Throughout the section Paul points out two “I”s—the one which desires bad and the other which desires good. They struggle with each other and cause the confusion of the believer. As Middendorf notes though, “the ‘I’ is never depicted as two ‘I’s; nor do we have a schizoid, dual, or split personality.”²³ The two “I”s are one and the same person desiring, feeling, and doing the complete opposite—the Old and the New Man in action.²⁴ The metaphor paints a picture of two people to help understand the warring state within one person.

**νονὶ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγὼ κατεργάζομαι αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ ἡ οἰκοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἁμαρτία.
As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. (v17)**

Although Paul identifies two “I”s and takes responsibility for his actions, he describes the definite supremacy of the New Man. The struggle between the two continues, but there is no doubt that Paul finds his identity and operates from the perspective of one favoring the New Man. This favored identity is evident in a number of areas, including verse 22 when Paul speaks of the ἔσω ἄνθρωπον (the inner man).²⁵ The inner man refers to something more foundational in

²³ Middendorf, *Romans 1-8*, 561.

²⁴ Thus far in the paper I have only dealt with the Old Man. The New Man is coming soon! Don’t worry!

²⁵ Paul uses this phrase two other times (2 Corinthians 4:16 and Ephesians 3:16) and it is my opinion that only one of those two times refers to the New Man as Romans does in this verse. In context, the 2 Corinthians passage is understood best as physical health (the outer man) and spiritual health (the inner man) and the Ephesians passage is best understood as referring to the New Man.

Paul, and by extension, all of us believers—something that has more permanence and is his true identity before God.²⁶

The supremacy is so distinct that Paul denies that he is doing the sin at all. He is so consumed by the New Man that the sinful nature inside of him (the Old Man) is like a foreign invader. It is not supposed to be there and eventually will not exist once he reaches heaven. Instead, Paul orients himself by his true being—his New Man (cf. Ro 8:9).²⁷

**οἶδα γὰρ ὅτι οὐκ οἰκεῖ ἐν ἐμοί, τοῦτ' ἔστιν ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου, ἀγαθόν·
I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. (v18)**

Paul is describing his Old Man. Paul again distances himself from his own sinful nature—he is speaking from a position set apart from the struggle and there is no doubt on which side he stands. He is committed to his New Man. Cranfield comments that the word “flesh” denotes “the whole fallen human nature as such.”²⁸ It is everything that is original sin—thoughts, actions, emotions, will, and desire.

**βλέπω δὲ ἕτερον νόμον ἐν τοῖς μέλεσίν μου ἀντιστρατευόμενον τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ νοός μου καὶ
αἰχμαλωτίζοντά με ἐν τῷ νόμῳ τῆς ἁμαρτίας τῷ ὄντι ἐν τοῖς μέλεσίν μου.
but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of
my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. (v23)**

Paul, without dispute, places the whole conversation about the inner struggle into war vocabulary, and he pits the “law of the mind” against the “law of sin.” Some debate surrounds what the word νόμος refers to. One view²⁹ supports the idea that “the law of the mind” and “the law of sin” (as well as the “another law”) refer to the same law—either the narrower view of Mosaic law or the wider one of God’s universal law. The only difference between the phrases is a difference in perspectives. The New Man (referenced here from the perspective of the mind) sees the law in one way—as very good. The Old Man (referenced by the metonymy of sin) sees

²⁶ An analogy: If a gal is dating a guy for a really long time and suddenly he (completely out of his normal actions) pushes her away, she may say, “Now I know who you really are. You’ve shown your true colors.” Well, for the believer, the “true colors” are the New Man.

²⁷ The interaction of the Old and New Man is confusing! I am a sinner. I am a saint. But I so identify with my sainthood that when I sin, it really isn’t me, but I do take responsibility because it is me. In more mathematical terms: I am A. I am B. But when B does things it is not really me, although I am responsible because I am B.

²⁸ Middendorf, *Romans 1-8*, 564, as he quotes Cranfield.

²⁹ Supported by scholars such as Dunn and Middendorf. Dunn goes with a narrower definition of law than Middendorf does.

the law in another way—namely very bad. Another view³⁰ takes νόμος as not referring to a specific law but as a principle, demand, or authority. In this opinion, the law is the opposing demands emanating from the Old and New Man. Although I prefer the second suggestion of understanding νόμος as a principle or demand in this verse, both routes lead to a similar conclusion: two opposing opinions live inside a believer and they have opposite feelings toward God and what he says.³¹

This verse also presents a key point in understanding metaphors: Metaphors use picture language. Since picture language needs to be explained or taught (that is, if the background knowledge is not known), it lends itself to artistry. Artistry in metaphors requires freedom, but only to a point. A story to illustrate: You are sitting in a library listening to a father read to his son. He is reading a story about two sisters who cannot get along and the sentence describes one scene like this, “Elisa and Jessica’s day was like World War I.”³² The child asks his dad, “What does that mean when it says their fighting was like World War I?” Would you not be shocked and fall out of your chair if the father proceeded to tell the child that it was like World War I because at one time in a battle on Christmas Eve, the two armies dropped their weapons and celebrated together? This choice is clearly out of line with the imagery. However, any other description of World War I (tanks, machine guns, dogfights, ships, gas masks, etc.) would adequately convey the meaning of the metaphor. Those uses of the freedom of artistry are legitimate and encouraged in metaphors.³³

³⁰ Supported by scholars such as Moo and Matera.

³¹ The Formula of Concord also notes these opposites: “Here once again the distinction that Paul makes in Romans 7 [22, 23] should be noted: I am willing and “I delight in the law of God in my inmost self,” but in my flesh I find “another law,” which is not only unwilling and reluctant but also does battle against the law of my mind. In regard to the reluctant, recalcitrant flesh, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 9[27], “I punish my body and enslave it,” and in Galatians 5[24] and Romans 8[13], “Those who belong to Christ have crucified,” indeed killed, their “flesh with its passions and desires” and activities.” Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, (FC SD IV paragraph 19) 577.

³² When talking about conceptual metaphors, there is little difference between the traditional, English grammar idea of metaphors and similes. (i.e., Similes use “like” or “as.” Metaphors do not.) Metaphor in this paper refers to the wider definition of metaphors (the mapping of concepts which was explained earlier) which includes both similes and metaphors.

³³ Lakoff and Turner mention this idea in their book, *More than Cool Reason*. “Metaphor is a tool so ordinary that we use it unconsciously and automatically, with so little effort that we hardly notice it. [...] Great poets can speak to us because they use the modes of thought we all possess. Using the capacities we all share, poets can illuminate our experience, explore the consequences of our beliefs, challenge the ways we think, and criticize our ideologies.” George Lakoff and Mark Turner, *More than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989) xi. This flexibility in the imagery allows Martin Luther to describe the fight between the Old and New Man as drowning the Old Man in the waters of baptism.

Gatherings from Romans 8

**ὅσοι γὰρ πνεύματι θεοῦ ἄγονται, οὗτοι υἱοὶ θεοῦ εἰσιν.
For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. (v14)**

Paul continues his vivid use of the Old and New Man by teaching that even though a believer is both the Old and New Man, he has no excuse to sin. In fact, the warning is particularly strong in verse 13: “For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.” To continue the wartime metaphor: the war rages and the battle lines are clearly marked and must be respected.

Especially important to note at this point is that the New Man should not be mistaken with the doctrine of the mystic union. The mystic union is when God himself dwells in the heart of a believer.³⁴ A number of passages describe this indwelling, such as 1 Corinthians 3:16: “Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?” And John chapter 14:23: “Jesus replied, ‘If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.’”³⁵ Some people may be tempted to think the New Man is actually God himself living in the person. Other passages, such as Galatians 2:20, also seem to support this idea—“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”³⁶ While the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit certainly do live in the believer, conflating the indwelling of God with the New Man does not allow for a believer’s autonomy in life. They are two different concepts.

The line between the mystic union and the imagery of the Old and New Man must remain distinct. We do not want to think of a believer as part God and part human or that God takes over an unbeliever’s body. God actually renews and regenerates a believer as well as dwells in him. It is a very close relationship even in the area of sanctification. As Hoenecke mentions, “Man cooperates in sanctification, that is, by virtue of the powers of grace given to him.”³⁷ Paul

³⁴ Lyle Lange, *God So Loved the World*, (Milwaukee, WI: Northwestern Publishing House, 2008), 241.

³⁵ I do not pretend to have solved every big S/little s spirit issue that often appears near/in the verses concerning the Old and New Man. They are best approached on a case by case basis—and even then, uffda!

³⁶ Although, considering the justification context of this section of Galatians, this picture of Christ living in us may be a strong image to convey justification.

³⁷ Hoenecke, *Evangelical Lutheran Dogmatics*, Vol 3, 400.

supports that conclusion in Philippians 2:13: “It is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.” Even in sanctification God’s grace remains the life of a believer but there are still two distinct entities—God and the believer.

Gatherings from Galatians 5

Even in his earliest writings, Paul used the imagery of the Old and New Man to speak about the believer’s life of sanctification. This section examines one of those early writings in Galatians.

**Λέγω δέ, πνεύματι περιπατεῖτε καὶ ἐπιθυμίαν σαρκὸς οὐ μὴ τελέσητε.
So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. (v16)**

A. Andrew Das in his *Concordia Commentary* on Galatians argues that the references to the spirit and the flesh do not refer to the Old and New Man.³⁸ He writes,

When Paul writes of the ‘flesh’ and the ‘spirit’ in 5:16-26, he is not referring to the different parts of a human being. For Paul, the ‘flesh’ does not refer to a sinful human nature as such but rather to an existence apart from Christ and his Spirit within ‘the present evil age (1:4). Thus the flesh is a sphere of influence, an active quasi-personified force that challenges God and his people. Likewise, Paul cannot be referring to an individual’s own spirit. The human spirit does not have the power to overcome the flesh. In 5:16 Paul refers in the second person plural (“you”) to the Galatians as a *community* walking by the single Spirit. The ‘Spirit’ is a powerfully otherworldly Agent who counteracts the flesh with its evil thoughts and actions.³⁹

In addition to the arguments in this paragraph he contends that since σάρξ is not talking about the sinful nature in 4:29, the word does not refer to the sinful nature in chapter 5. He also says, in reference to the Spirit/spirit issue, “When Paul writes of being born ‘according to/as a result of the Spirit’ as opposed to being born “according to/as a result of the flesh in 4:21-31 (see esp. 4:29), he has not suddenly changed the referent for the ‘Spirit’ (πνεῦμα).”⁴⁰ In other words, the πνεῦμα is the Holy Spirit.⁴¹

³⁸ I spend a little extra time analyzing Das’ arguments because he presented the most organized objection to my thoughts on the Old and New Man.

³⁹ Andrew A. Das, *Galatians*, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2014), 558.

⁴⁰ Andrew A. Das, *Galatians*, 561.

⁴¹ Das’ own footnote succinctly says concerning its use in 4:29, “Being born ‘according to the human spirit’ is nonsensical.

Das' reasons for not wanting to see πνεῦμα and σάρξ as referring to the Old and New Man are weak for the following reasons:

- 1.) Paul's use of the second person plural does not mean Paul is directing his comments to a community issue. In fact, Paul speaks many times in Galatians using the second person plural and yet refers to very personal, individual, or spiritual topics. In chapter 3:1 he says, "Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified." The plural imperative appears in verse 7: "Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham." Also: "You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ" (3:26-27). And 4:28: "Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise." And especially 5:2: "Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all." Plural does not mean not personal!
- 2.) Das states, "For Paul, the 'flesh' does not refer to a sinful human nature as such but rather to an existence apart from Christ and his Spirit within 'the present evil age' (1:4). Thus the flesh is a sphere of influence, an active quasi-personified force that challenges God and his people."⁴² He correctly identifies the flesh as a powerful influence in a human's life, but confuses the outward forces (i.e., the world) with the inward force (i.e., Old Man). Not only does the word, σάρξ, naturally connote something very personal and internal, Paul never equates the word in Galatians with an outward force. In fact, Das himself identifies the phrasing Paul uses to talk about the world when he mentions "the present evil age." Paul's concern is not only to protect the Galatians from outward attacks (e.g., 1:4, 1:9, and 6:12), but also to defend them from the perennial attacks of their inner Old Man (e.g., 6:8, σάρκα ἑαυτοῦ).

To Das' credit, the relationship between the Old Man, the world, and the devil are very close. Ephesians 2 describes these three enemies in the span of a few verses: "the ruler of the kingdom of the air," "the ways of the world," and "the cravings of the sinful nature." All these forces are hostile to God and try to dismantle God's purposes for believers. They even interact with each other. The devil is called the god of this age (2 Co 4:4), which makes him the ruler over the world. He even communicates with the sinful flesh as James 3:15 infers when it says, "Such 'wisdom' does not come down from

⁴² Das, *Galatians*, 558.

heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil (δαμονιώδης).” Christians do not know everything about the enemy, but they do understand that these forces are a well-orchestrated war machine against God’s people (Rev 12).

- 3.) Determining when πνεῦμα refers to the Holy Spirit or to the human spirit or to some other referent is difficult. In Galatians, Paul clearly uses πνεῦμα both to speak of the Holy Spirit (Ga 4:6) and to speak of the human one (Ga 6:18). Unfortunately, chapter 5’s use of πνεῦμα is not as clear because the πνεῦμα in those verses do not have any signal words attached to them (e.g., “πνεῦμα of the Son” or “your πνεῦμα”). What may tip the scale in the direction of seeing πνεῦμα in these verses as referring to the New Man as opposed to the Holy Spirit is that πνεῦμα parallels the word “flesh” much better than the Holy Spirit does.⁴³ In other words, the New Man most naturally is seen as the counterpart of the Old Man.⁴⁴

Das reasons that in the first half of the book (especially chapters 3 and 4) Paul uses πνεῦμα for the Holy Spirit almost exclusively (3:5 may be debatable) and, therefore, should not be interpreted differently in the next sections. However, chapter 5 actually marks a strong transition from Paul’s doctrinal explanations to practical applications.⁴⁵ A change in word usage may even be expected in such a case. Nevertheless, I am unable to say for certain if πνεῦμα in chapter 5 refers to the Holy Spirit or the New Man and, perhaps, the ambiguity is intended. The Holy Spirit and the New Man often work hand in hand.⁴⁶

⁴³ R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, to the Ephesians and to the Philippians*, (Columbus, OH: Wartburg Press, 1946), 281.

⁴⁴ That being said, Professor Geiger’s line of thought in his Exegetical Brief, “Philippians 2:12-13 Work Out Your Own Salvation With Fear and Trembling” is also quite convincing. It is an extremely powerful and encouraging image to see the Holy Spirit (the powerful God himself) as the one opposed to the Old Man. “Philippians 2:12-13 Work Out Your Own Salvation With Fear and Trembling” by Stephen H. Geiger. <http://essays.wls.wels.net/bitstream/handle/123456789/1797/GeigerPhilippians2.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y> Accessed November 14, 2016.

⁴⁵ Robert G. Hoerber, *Concordia Self-study Bible*, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1986), 1792.

⁴⁶ Sometimes I think the issue of πνεῦμα is like watching a high school girls basketball game with two (seemingly identical) tall, blond, pony-tailed girls on the same team. It is so hard! Who in the world made that last basket? I don’t know for sure. Especially if it is fast paced game. (Families who have twins in them will attest to the same thing—sometimes no one can figure out whose baby picture that is.) The same goes with πνεῦμα. Who did that? The Holy Spirit or the spirit (New Man)? I don’t know for sure. The situation is even more complicated than the basketball analogy lets on. I remember a number of times in dogmatics class when Professor Brug explained these exegetical questions this way: Is this passage talking about the Spirit who empowers the spirit or is this

- 4.) Galatians 5:16-18 is a remarkably similar summary of Romans 7:14-20 which leads to the conclusion that they are speaking about the same inner battle and not outward forces.

Romans 7:14-20	Galatians 5:16-18
<p>^{14b} but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. ^{18a} For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature.</p>	<p>^{16b} and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.</p>
<p>¹⁵ I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. ¹⁷ As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.</p>	<p>¹⁷ For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other,</p>
<p>¹⁶ And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ^{18b} For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing.</p>	<p>^{17b} so that you are not to do whatever you want.</p>

- 5.) Finally, Galatians 5:19-21’s list of sins are attributed to the Old Man. Lists of sins are common in the Bible. Jesus made one in Matthew 15:19 and attributes the sins to coming from inside the person—“Out of the heart come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.” Sins come from inside a person and, together with the overall evidence, indicate that Galatians also speaks of the Old and New Man.

passage talking about the spirit which is empowered by the Spirit? The beauty of some exegetical questions is that you often end up in the same place.

Gatherings from Ephesians and Colossians⁴⁷

Not only does Paul speak of a supremacy of the New Man as was mentioned before, but he also pulls the reader up and above both the Old Man and the New Man into a new perspective.⁴⁸ By distancing the readers from both their Old and New Man, Paul is able to speak objectively about both the Old and the New Man and their actions and interactions. This observation from a distance is found in verses like Galatians 6:8 which says, “Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life,” and especially in Ephesians and Colossians.

The conceptual metaphors grow even more complex in Ephesians 4:22-25 and Colossians 3:5-10. “You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness” (Ep 4:22-24). And, “Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator” (Co 3:9-10).

Paul does not use the metaphors of the Old and New Man just by themselves. He also further dresses the imagery up by mapping another metaphor on top of the metaphors of the Old and New Man—the picture language of putting on and taking off clothing.⁴⁹ In other words, Paul is overlapping his metaphors to gain more nuance to his commands. In this metaphor the Old and New Man are seen as clothing to be taken off and on. These vivid terms encourage believers to live by the New Man which God has created in them. The clothing metaphor does not undermine Paul’s other uses of the Old and New Man. He is simply saying the same as he did in Galatians

⁴⁷ I will study Colossians and Ephesians together because their language is so close.

⁴⁸ There are three persons described—the person, the Old Man, and the New Man! As you can see metaphors are great ways to work with complex situations.

⁴⁹ Winger, in his Concordia commentary, mentions quite a few instances which Paul may be drawing from to create his clothing metaphor. These include Adam’s and Eve’s animal clothing, shame and dishonor connotations, priestly customs, and early baptism rituals where people were baptized naked. Though helpful in understanding the cultural connections, I do not think one needs to find too many strong connections because the taking off and putting on of clothing is a common enough action that a clear reference point is unnecessary. However, the tightest parallel, in my mind, to the putting on and off of the Old and New Man is Galatians 3:26-27, “So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.” This parallel makes sense because the New Man is patterned after Christ. (<http://www.christcenteredmall.com/teachings/old-man-and-new-man.htm>.) I wholeheartedly agree with Winger in his conclusion that Paul uses radical language (taking off a complete person!) that was unprecedented in Old Testament and ancient literature. (page 545, 546)

5:25, “Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.” The meaning is the same but the imagery is different.

The wonders of metaphors allow for them to jump from one imagery to another one. Here the imagery is clothing. But, how can you put on and take off a person? The phrase seems awkward, but Paul explains himself immediately both in Colossians and in Ephesians. I believe the core of the taking off the Old Man and putting on the New Man is the conscious, deliberate, and repetitive decisions to live as the person we identify with. In other words, Paul is teaching the Christian life of sanctification which constantly needs to learn how to live more in accord with the New Man than the Old Man. Paul does not remain abstract in his exhortations. In Ephesians 4:25 and following he identifies exactly what putting off the Old Man looks like: “Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body.” He does the same in Colossians: “Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.” Paul does not leave his reader clueless to what his imagery means. He empowers his commands with metaphors and backs his metaphors with concrete language.

Can the New Man be Improved?

The imagery of clothing does bring the question about whether the New Man can be improved. The New Man must be the complete opposite of the Old Man. The Old Man is as bad as the New Man is good. So far in this study, this premise has stood firm. The New Man delights in God’s law (Ro 7:22). There is no sin in the New Man (Ro 7:18). The New Man produces good things (Ga 5:22-23). The New Man is meant to be put on and kept on (Ep 4:24). The New Man is created to be like God (Ep 4:24). The New Man seems to be complete and mature. How, then, could Paul write these words in Colossians 3:10, “[You] have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge (τὸν νέον τὸν ἀνακαινούμενον εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν) in the image of its Creator”?

The answer actually coincides nicely with the rest of what Paul has been teaching about the Old and the New Man. The Old and the New Man are in a constant struggle. The New Man has to live with the Old Man every single day and, as Paul pointed out in the previous five verses, their cohabitation results in strong opposing desires and clashes. The renewal that Paul talked about is not an improvement in the sense that the New Man lacked anything or was not completely pleasing to God when he created it. The renewal is a renewal of the knowledge of the image of God which is complete righteousness and holiness.⁵⁰ In other words, it is for the New Man who is being rejuvenated.⁵¹ One could best understand this renewal of the New Man as a refocusing on the knowledge that is in accord with God's holiness. In this way perhaps Paul is referring to how the New Man is constantly fed by the gospel.

Could the New Man be a metaphor for the image of God?

It would be easy to mistakenly conclude that the New Man is a metaphor for the image of God because the key passages that define the image of God are also the same sections that speak about the Old and New Man. The two teachings are intricately related and we need to study both sections (Colossians 3:9-10 and Ephesians 4:24) so that we can correctly identify each part and recognize its role.⁵²

From these two passages one finds three important qualities in the concept of the image of God—holiness, righteousness, and knowledge of God. The image of God goes deep into how God created humans as being perfect. As J.P. Meyer summarized, “Sinlessness is the core of the concept of image.”⁵³ At creation not only were humans' physical composition exactly the way God wanted, but their internal qualities were also set in line with God's will. The Old Man did not exist yet because both Adam and Eve were created in the image of God (Ge 1:27), and their every impulse pleased God. Through the fall, humanity lost this image of God as Genesis 5:3

⁵⁰ Gerhard Kittel and Geoffrey William Bromiley, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: WM. B. Eerdmans, 1967), 452. In reference to this word, “[Paul] is not thinking of a process of moral alteration or a progressive course of sanctification or glorification in his use of ἀνακαινοῦσθαι.”

⁵¹ In addition, since the participle modifies the New Man, the renewal would not naturally fit the believer's constant need in sanctification to live more in accord with the New Man.

⁵² Colossians 3:9-10, “Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.” And Ephesians 4:24, “[You were taught] and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.”

⁵³ Lyle Lange, *Our Great Heritage 2 vol.* (Milwaukee, WI: Northwestern Publishing House, 1991), 187.

confirms when Adam fathered a son in *his own* image. The Old Man entered the human experience at the same time that the image of God was lost.

However, despite the apparent connection between the New Man and the image of God, they are not the same thing. The New Man is not another way to describe the image of God. The image of God is best explained as a measurement or a standard of the ideal spiritual qualities in a person. If a person is perfect, he receives the label of the image of God. If he is not perfect, he does not have the image of God. The image of God is not part of a human being. It is a label or an indicator which can be ascribed to a person who has the qualities of perfection. In comparison, the Old and New Man describe not only the qualities but also the aspects of the person which produce those qualities. The life of sanctification revolves around these producing elements of a person.⁵⁴

Terms Identifying the New Man

The base reality for the imagery of the New Man is not as easily identified as the Old Man which, earlier in the paper, was said to be a metaphor for the inherited portion of original sin. The Bible describes the New Man many times but does not seem to give a self-evident answer as to what the metaphor refers to. The New Man can be described in what he does. He produces good things. His will lines up with God's will. His emotions are good. His thoughts are also correct and in accord with God's thoughts. In other words, the New Man is the ideal which is reality.⁵⁵ The New Man is associated with, and is a part of, a believer's being made alive, reborn, and a new creation as Romans 6, Ephesians 2, John 3, and Galatians 6 indicate. The New Man is the aspect of the believer that desires as God wants him to desire, thinks the thoughts God wants him to think, has the emotions God wants him to have, and acts in the way God wants him to behave. The New Man by itself is perfect in every way.

⁵⁴ I take the New Man one step further than Hoenecke does. Hoenecke identifies the Old Man as the corrupted nature of man. I agree. He then, with a quote from Quenstedt, identifies the New Man as only the qualities of knowledge, holiness, and righteousness. I agree, but I believe the New Man is also the producer of those qualities. Quenstedt quote from Hoenecke III, 396-397: "The terms old and new man are used not physically as far as they are substance, but mystically as far as they are qualities. The old man, taken concretely, is the corrupted nature of man, the new man is the same, but renewed in submission to God. But taken abstractly, the old man is the innate corruption of nature and the inclination of all abilities toward evil, or original sin itself; the new man is the spirit or knowledge of God, righteousness and true holiness." Adolf Hoenecke, *Evangelisch-Lutherische Dogmatik* 4 volumes (Milwaukee, WI: Northwestern Publishing House, 1909-1917. Translated by James Langebartels. English edition, *Evangelical Lutheran Dogmatics*, Vol 3, Milwaukee, WI: Northwestern Publishing House, 2003), 396-397.

⁵⁵ Unfortunately, of course, the Old Man also still clings to us while we live here on earth.

Most of the words the Bible uses to refer to the New Man usually mention the actions of the New Man or introduce new metaphors (e.g., new creation). The closest word to describe the base reality of the New Man is the word $\pi\nu\epsilon\delta\mu\alpha$ as seen in the Galatians passages, especially 5:17. Even then, The New Man's positive identification is not as strong as the sinful nature is for the Old Man because $\pi\nu\epsilon\delta\mu\alpha$ overlaps with other major uses such as the human spirit (which it is not) and the Holy Spirit (which it is also not). Nevertheless, when the word "spirit" does refer to the New Man (along with the times when the Old Man is referred to as "the flesh"), I do think the words themselves hint at the origins of their referents. That is, the spirit (New Man) comes from the Holy Spirit and the flesh (Old Man) comes from a person's earthly ancestors. These opinions, though, are hard to prove.

These were only some of the passages which describe the Old and New Man. The section that follows is a summary and analysis of what these key passages teach about the Old and New Man.

A Summary of Conclusions Drawn from the Passages Studied Above

1. The Old and New Man are imagery God gives to help believers understand and live lives of sanctification and give glory to him.
2. The Old Man is a metaphor for our inherited original sin. It is completely and totally sinful. It opposes God in thoughts, emotions, and desire.
3. The New Man is a metaphor for the renewed and regenerated aspect of a believer. It loves God in thoughts, actions, emotions, and desire.
4. The New Man is complete and mature in itself. However, it can be refreshed and strengthened and the believer always can improve in living in accord with the New Man as opposed to the Old Man.
5. While a believer can simultaneously say, "I am a sinner. I am a perfect, new creation," there is a supremacy of the New Man. A believer's identity lies not in the Old Man, but in the New Man. The New Man is the rightful heir to the throne of the heart.
6. Because of the Old Man a believer often cannot explain all of his actions. They defy logic. They defy will. They defy emotions. His life and his understanding of himself is full of confusion. This confusion pushes the Christian to run to Christ just as Paul did.
7. While the New Man is perfect in itself, a believer's life of sanctification involves learning how to live in accord with the New Man more and more.

8. Only a believer has an Old and New Man.
9. The imagery of the Old and New Man fall into the realm of sanctification.
10. “Since the old man of a Christian retains his old evil nature, just as it exists in unbelievers, Christians must not be surprised, on the one hand, when inclinations to rankest unbelief stir in their heart or temptations to commit the coarsest sins.”⁵⁶
11. We cannot reform the Old Man, we must kill it.⁵⁷
12. The struggle is painful and difficult.
13. A biblical understanding of the Old and New Man leads us closer to Christ. A recognition of the beauty of the New Man prompts us to give thanks to him and his saving work. A recognition of the ugly depths of the Old Man pushes us to find refuge in Jesus’ arms.

Compare these ideas with the original definition below.

The doctrine of the Old and New Man is imagery of the struggle between the evil desires and the godly desires of a believer.

Analysis of the original definition

The largest change in my understanding of the definition is in what the imagery of the Old and New Man describes. The Old and New Man describe more than the evil and godly desires of a believer. The New Man is actually the renewed and perfect aspect of the believer that emits its own good thoughts, emotions, desires, and deeds. The Old Man is actually the inherited sinful nature which also has its own thoughts, will, emotions, and deeds. A mature understanding of both leads us to give thanks to God.

My understanding of the “imagery” and “struggle” of the Old and New Man has also matured. The imagery taps into the complex world of metaphors. Metaphors do not deny the reality of the thing itself, but they do describe the object in a way that can be more easily understood. The struggle between the two uses heavy military language which accentuates the battle that all believers experience.

⁵⁶ Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics vol 3*, 15.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 16.

My third change, although much smaller than the previous two, is the word “doctrine.” I now tend to avoid the phrase, “the doctrine of the Old and New Man,” because the imagery describes different doctrines (e.g., original sin, sanctification), but the imagery itself is not a doctrine. In other words, in the same way that I do not call Jesus’ teaching that he is the vine and believers are the branches a doctrine because it describes another doctrine, namely, Jesus’ relationship to believer, I hesitate to call the Old and New Man a doctrine.

Part 2: Analyzing the Applications of the Old and New Man.

Now that the imagery, definition, and principles of the Old and New Man have been explored, this second half of the paper will focus on the applications of those discoveries. The flow of this section will progress from how secular society acknowledges and imitates an understanding of the Old and New Man, to how biblical misunderstandings skew an understanding of the Old and New Man, and finally, to how the imagery of the Old and New Man is correctly applied in sanctification.

The Secular Understanding of the Old and New Man.

Throughout the discussion about the Old and New Man, the struggle between them has been assumed and enhanced by military imagery. The inner struggle is a key component of the concept. The Old and New Man imagery would fall apart if the conflict between the two were erased. The idea of an inner struggle resonates with believers as they look at their life trying to comprehend their feelings, thoughts, desires, and actions. However, the inner struggle does not only register with believers. Unbelievers also experience great inner turmoil as they recognize opposing desires and actions within themselves.

The evidence suggests an almost universal human understanding of an inner struggle. One prevalent theme through some of the world’s religions is dualism. Religions such as those from Zoroaster, Manes, and other Gnostics had an idea of their good and evil principle within a person.⁵⁸ Craig Keener, in his book *The Mind of the Spirit*, concurs that the idea was ancient when he says, “Platonists in particular saw the conflicted person as divided, with parts inside warring. Even the good soul experiences a struggle against evil, trying to attain good, because it

⁵⁸ C. F. W. Walther, Christian C. Tiews, Charles P. Schaum, John P. Hellwege, and Thomas Manteufel, *Law and Gospel: How to Read and Apply the Bible*, (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2010), 361.

cannot avoid all association with the world.”⁵⁹ The inner struggle motif permeates the modern era as well. Sigmund Freud proposed his idea of the id, ego, and superego which battled inside a person. William Faulkner, in his speech after receiving the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1949, highlighted the importance of struggle in good literature when he commented,

Our tragedy today is a general and universal physical fear so long sustained by now that we can even bear it. There are no longer problems of the spirit. There is only the question: When will I be blown up? Because of this, the young man or woman writing today has forgotten the problems of *the human heart in conflict with itself* which alone can make good writing because only that is worth writing about, worth the agony and the sweat.⁶⁰

The idea is not only entertained among western scholars, it also pervades popular thinking that crosses cultural lines. The Native Americans had the parable of a white wolf and a black wolf. The question would be asked, “If these wolves are equal in strength, stature, and experience, which one will win the fight?” The answer promoted personal responsibility—“The one you feed.” Robert Louis Stevenson’s celebrated work of fiction, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, has also entered the vocabulary of people who refer to the inner struggle. People also often speak about the good and bad angels on their shoulders and the little voice of the conscience. Everyone experiences the inner struggle.

Could this inner struggle indicate a common theme or connection between believers and unbelievers? There is no doubt that people—both unbelievers and believers—experience inner conflict, but one must remember and recognize key differences in the struggle. No struggle in an unbeliever can be credited to the opposition of the Old and New Man. Those struggles in unbelievers come from different tension points. For example, a person struggling with their conscience is fighting a battle with something good—the natural knowledge of the law. However, the battle line is not drawn between the Old and New Man. The line is between their desires and the conscience. One could compare these struggles in an unbeliever to a civil war where the navy fights against the air force or the army fights against the navy. Reason often opposes desire. Long-term desires often oppose short-term gratification. Fear often opposes

⁵⁹ Craig S. Keener, *The Mind of the Spirit: Paul's Approach to Transformed Thinking*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016), 91.

⁶⁰ William Faulkner, "William Faulkner - Banquet Speech," Nobelprize.org, Accessed November 12, 2016. http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1949/faulkner-speech.html. (Emphasis added.)

reason. The list may continue. All these conflicts happen inside the Old Man. He is not a unified entity.

The battle between the Old and New Man is more like two nations (with complete navies, armies, and air forces) battling each other. The New Man desires good, thinks good, and does good. The Old Man does none of these. When these aspects of the believer begin to fight each other, then they are identified as the struggle of the Old and New Man. The inner struggles in an unbeliever and a believer may appear similar, but their hearts are different.

How biblical misunderstandings skew an understanding of the Old and New Man.

Many misunderstandings about the Old and New Man start in misunderstandings of the Bible. They come from differences in the interpretation of the passages about the Old and New Man. Some of these differences such the Spirit/spirit issue of πνεῦμα and the issue of σάρξ have been mentioned in the first part of the paper. The following are two more overarching interpretation issues which entangle Old and New Man studies but do not necessarily manifest themselves in skewed applications.

The first is not seeing Romans 7 as describing the Old and New Man. Even authors such as Bultmann and Keener who specifically address the Old and New Man with their books (*The Old and New Man*, *The Mind of the Spirit*, respectively) reject the idea that Romans 7 is an important section for understanding the inner struggle of a believer. Bultmann states rather early in his book, “It is the situation of the man under the law in general that is described here [Romans 7], and described as seen by the eyes of the one freed from the law by Christ.”⁶¹ Keener also denies it when he says, “In Romans 7:7-25 Paul depicts, in graphically anguished terms, existence without divine righteousness despite knowledge of the law.”⁶² As was noted before, underlying many of these conclusions, there seems to be a fear of finding and facing the depth and the ugliness of sin in the life of a believer. Keener hints at such an aversion when he

⁶¹ Rudolf Bultmann, *The Old and New Man in the Letters of Paul* (Translated by Keith R. Crim. Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1967), 7. Although Rudolf Bultmann comes to wrong conclusions about the ever important Romans chapter 7, he does describe the tension between the Old and New Man vividly and concisely, “There are statements which say that the one justified is free from sin, has died to sin, does not live any longer in the flesh but in the Spirit. Alongside them are others which exhort even the one who has been justified to fight against sin [. . .] The distinctive nature of the problem is made clear by the fact that the contrasting statements—the indicative and the imperative—are not found in widely separated parts of the epistles but are very closely connected.”

⁶² Keener, *The Mind of the Spirit*, 55.

summarizes the view that Romans 7 is part of Paul’s Christian experience: “Should we actually suppose that Paul is suggesting that he succumbs to sin more now that he has been converted [...]?”⁶³ Other writers agree, such as Thomas Schreiner:

If I’m right in the way I interpret this passage, the difference between me and those who see this as Christian experience isn’t great. After all, we both agree that believers fall short in numerous ways and that we struggle daily with sin.

The reason we differ is that I see Romans 7:13–25 as describing total defeat, and that isn’t our story as Christians since the Holy Spirit also empowers us to live in a new way.⁶⁴

Hesitating to ascribe sin and the capability of sinning to believers is very dangerous. A robust understanding of the Old Man allows for us to see the depths and horridness of the evil in a believer’s heart. If that evil is not seen, how can any believer rush to the Savior with the relief that Paul had when he looked at his heart, was devastated, and rushed to Jesus with the exclamation, “Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Ro 7:25) Furthermore, what will give believers a healthy fear of themselves if they do not see the decrepitness of their Old Man? True terror of oneself and true joy at salvation is difficult to find without a clear, unflinching look into the eyes of the Old Man.⁶⁵

The second misunderstanding, although far less common than the Romans 7 one, is a confusing of the new man mentioned in Ephesians 2 with the New Man of a believer. Roy Harrisville in his article, “Is the coexistence of the old and new man biblical,” recounts the story of a young Lutheran theological student, Traugott Schmidt, who was killed in WWI and whose article about the New Man was published posthumously. In Schmidt’s article he connected the new man found in Ephesians 2:15 with the New Man in 4:24. In this way he claimed that the New Man was more about the body of Christ, that is, the Church itself than the individual

⁶³ Keener, *The Mind of the Spirit*, 61.

⁶⁴ Thomas Schreiner, “Romans 7 Does Not Describe Your Christian Experience,” Accessed November 12, 2016. The space between the sentences is found in the original blog post.

⁶⁵ The Lutheran Confessions often look unblinkingly into the Old Man: “On the other hand, we believe, teach, and confess that original sin is not a slight corruption of human nature, but rather a corruption so deep that there is nothing sound or uncorrupted left in the human body or soul, in its internal or external powers. Instead, as the church sings, ‘Through Adam’s fall human nature and our essence are completely corrupted.’ The damage is so indescribable that it cannot be recognized by our reason but only from God’s Word.” Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, (Epitome, I) 488, 489. It is interesting to note that the only way to see the true depth of our sinfulness is by faith.

person.⁶⁶ This thought pattern also shows itself in a subtler way in Deterding's commentary on Colossians when he states, "The unity of believers (Col 3:11) is one aspect of their putting on the new man (Eph 2:15)."⁶⁷

Although the New Man certainly desires and pushes for the unity of all believers, Paul's use of the phrase "new man" in Ephesians 2:15 is not the same as his use of it in chapter 4. In chapter 2, Paul is addressing the unity of the church, and he uses the imagery of two people (the Gentiles and Jews) becoming one. The phrases are the same but the use is different. Although they appear in the same book, the contexts change their meaning.

The Imagery of the Old and New Man Applied Incorrectly and Correctly in Sanctification.

The richness and the complexity of the Old and New Man metaphors are useful for understanding the life of sanctification. Unfortunately, when they are forgotten or misused, they cause confusion and errors. In this first section, a number of instances of poorly used applications will be highlighted to enhance our understanding of the proper use of the Old and New Man.

Some Poor Applications

Should we Change Luther's Small Catechism?

Roy Harrisville concludes his study of the Old and New Man with a radical suggestion:

I should like to suggest that we begin by searching for a happier expression to replace the terms which Luther uses in his Small Catechism to make clear the meaning of baptism, terms which tend to give support to the current doctrine of the coexistence of the two natures. Originally the passage reads:

What does such baptizing with water signify?

It signifies that the old Adam in us, together with all sins and evil lusts, should be drowned by daily sorrow and repentance, and be put to death; and that the new man should daily come forth and arise, to live before God in righteousness and holiness forever.

Perhaps we might make the passage read thus:

⁶⁶ Roy A. Harrisville, "Is the coexistence of the old and new man biblical," (*Lutheran Quarterly* 8, no. 1 (February 1956), *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost (accessed September 21, 2016), 21.

⁶⁷ Paul E. Deterding, *Colossians*, (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2003), 152.

That our *outer man*, together with all sins and evil lusts, should be drowned by daily sorrow and repentance, and be put to death; and that the *inner man* should daily come forth and arise, to live before God in righteousness and holiness forever.”⁶⁸

What would prompt such a subtle change? The small change of phrasing comes from a large misunderstanding of the Old and New Man. Earlier in his article Harrisville states, “The exhortations to the new man to put away all uncleanness and evil are a command to assert his true self, a command to refuse to acknowledge the claims which the old eon makes upon him. Hence the question for the new man is, Should my spirit be subordinate to my environment by which I am conditioned? Paul answers, ‘No!’”⁶⁹ Harrisville rejects the idea that a believer can be both New Man and Old Man at the same time. Even more, he does not decisively attribute sin from coming from the inside of a believer. His constant emphasis on the sin and the influence *outside* of the believer, as seen in his words “a command to refuse to acknowledge the claims of the old eon,” fails to account for the sinner on the inside of each believer. By not understanding the full depth of sin, Harrisville falls into the common problem of blindness toward a believer’s original sin.

His suggestions to change the Small Catechism reflect this persuasion. For Harrisville, the outer man is the actual conduct of a person as it is formed by the outside world. The inner man is the transformation that has happened to the believer. The outer man must constantly be put away as the believer learns more and more not to be influenced by his old habits, old environment, the old covenant, and the world. While the outside influence of the world must not be deemphasized, the inner problems also cannot be forgotten.

Will we Always have the Old Man?

Melvin Dieter, writing from the Wesleyan perspective in the book, *Five Views on Sanctification*, comments that although Christians will never be free from the possibility of sinning,

There was a remedy for the sickness of systemic sinfulness, namely *entire sanctification*—a personal, definitive work of God’s sanctifying grace by which the war within oneself might cease and the heart be fully released from rebellion into wholehearted love for God and others. This relationship of perfect love could be accomplished, not by excellence of any moral achievements, but by the same faith in the

⁶⁸ Harrisville, “Is the coexistence of the old and new man biblical,” 32.

⁶⁹ Harrisville, “Is the coexistence of the old and new man biblical,” 27-28.

merits of Christ's sacrifice for sin that initially had brought justification and the new life in Christ. It was a total death to sin and an entire renewal in the image of God.⁷⁰

In other words, the Old Man can be done away with and “the ‘bent to sinning’ can be cleansed from the repentant, believing heart, and a ‘bent to loving obedience’ can become the mainspring of one’s life.”⁷¹

However, the Bible strongly indicates otherwise. Paul wrote Romans about a decade before the end of his life after years of being a Christian and traveling as a missionary. In this letter he laments his struggle with his Old Man with phrases which still cause people to wonder if what he wrote could really describe the Christian experience. He also calls himself the worst of sinners in 1 Timothy. In no way does Paul even hint that he was close to “cleansing away his bent to sinning.” In addition, 1 John 1:8 warns against any ideas of believers considering that they have reached perfection on earth when it says, “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.” The Old Man clings to believers but will be destroyed completely when they reach the new creation of heaven.

Is Old and New Man Lite an Appropriate Use?

The concept of the Old and New Man has permeated popular Christian thought, but not always in the most accurate ways. Micah Tyler’s song “Never been a Moment” has these opening lines: “I’ve been a sinner, I’ve been a saint // A little bit of both every single day // I’ve been lost // But somehow I’ve been found.”⁷² The lines present the Old and New Man as a reality for a Christian, but they are also misleading. It is accurate to say that a Christian’s internal sinner/saint aspects affect every single day. However, the song minimizes this effect by saying, “a little bit of both every single day.” This attitude does not compare well with what Paul says when he considers his Old and New Man—“What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?” The word “little” can be a big danger.

Another common phrase heard around Christian circles is when people are describing sin and say, “Everyone has a little Pharisee inside of them.” As in the lyrics of the previous song,

⁷⁰ Melvin Easterday Dieter, Anthony A. Hoekema, Stanley M. Horton, J. Robertson McQuilkin, and John F. Walvoord, *Five Views on Sanctification*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Academie Books, 1987), 17.

⁷¹ Dieter, et al., *Five Views on Sanctification*, 21.

⁷² Micah Tyler, "Never Been a Moment Lyrics," Metro Lyrics, accessed November 12, 2016, <http://www.metrolyrics.com/never-been-a-moment-lyrics-micah-tyler.html>.

this sentence also diminishes the Old Man by calling him a *little* Pharisee. The sentence correctly teaches that sin comes from inside of a person, but the diminutive is misleading. Not only does the phrase make the Old Man look like only a nuisance, but it also gives the impression that the Old Man is weak and, perhaps, easily flicked away or stomped on. It would be better to say, “You have a Pharisee in you” instead of “You have a little Pharisee in you.” Just by taking out the “little” of the “little Pharisee” gives an appropriate ominous tone to the phrase. As was mentioned before, everyone should have a healthy fear of his Old Man and struggle against it daily.

A by-product of not clearly teaching and understanding the Old and New Man is a confusion and bewilderment when Christians do sin. The question, “Why do Christians sometimes sin?” which often appears on Christian forums, reveals such a misunderstanding. The question shows a person who is struggling with sin in many of the same ways Paul did. The disappointment over sin is appropriate, but only the biblical imagery of the Old and New Man will help the believers mature in their understanding of the struggle with sin in their lives.

Is it okay to say, “This is written for the New Man?”

I have heard many times, especially when studying the Psalms, “This is written for the New Man,” or “This is the New Man speaking.” These phrases were always used to understand a section of Scripture which is difficult to understand because the words are so perfect and seem as if the person speaking them were not a sinner. For example,

How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Praise be to you, LORD; teach me your decrees. With my lips I recount all the laws that come from your mouth. I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches. I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word (Ps 119:9-16).

Where is the struggle? How can anyone truly say these kind of words without acknowledging the Old Man? Is this an accurate picture of a believer? These questions are why people try to assign these words only for the New Man. But I am both Old Man and New Man. Perhaps there is a more nuanced way of speaking about these types of verses. The problem with saying, “This is written for the New Man,” is that it places a filter over the words before they impact the reader. However, both the Old Man and the New Man hear the words and react differently. Perhaps a better way to approach this issue is not to preface the reading but to examine the response. A

person who understands the Old and New Man will recognize that two completely opposite responses will come from inside of them.⁷³ The Old Man will hate these words. The New Man will say, “I love this so much. This is exactly how I feel. I want more of this. Please tell me more!” This approach will address all of the feelings of a believer when passages like this one from the Psalms are read.

Some Good Applications

Of course not everyone who has written about the Old and New Man has been mistaken about the imagery and its use. I have read many who speak very accurately and eloquently about the Old and New Man. Here are some examples which highlight key points in the application and understanding of the Old and New Man.

Simul Justus et Peccator

Martin Luther’s famous phrase of *Simul Justus et Peccator* captures the dynamic between the Old and New Man. Paul Althaus, in his book *The Theology of Martin Luther*, summarizes Luther’s teaching as:

This double character remains through all of life. Both are always true of me at one and the same time. This is the great paradox of Christian existence. Neither reason nor legalistic thinking can understand the contradiction involved in the fact that one and the same man is at one and the same time both a righteous man and a sinner: and he is both completely; it is not as though he were partially righteous and partially a sinner but rather he is completely a sinner and completely righteous.⁷⁴

Although the imagery of the Old and New Man is a paradox, it rightly understands the complexities of the world around and within the believer. One of the best examples of this usefulness of an understanding of the Old and New Man is seen in the next section.

⁷³ “There is also the matter that in our use of the terms ‘new man’ and ‘old man’ the caution must be expressed that we not over-distinguish and almost personify the new and the old, when in the present state it is always the believer as subject—and not new man or old man—to whom God’s Word of law and gospel addresses itself.” Stephen P. Valleskey, “The New Man and the Old in the Believer: God’s New Covenant in the Christian Life of Sanctification.” (The First Convention of the South Central District, Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod: St. Mark Lutheran Church: Duncanville, Texas: June 11-12 1984), paragraph 74.

⁷⁴ Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, (Translated by Robert C. Schultz. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 243.

The Third Use of the Law

One of the issues the Lutheran Confessors dealt with was problems with understanding how God's law applies to a believer. Does a believer need the law? Remembering the Old and New Man of a believer helps to understand the interplay of the law and the gospel as the *Solid Declaration* states:

However, since believers in this world are not perfectly renewed—the old creature clings to them down to the grave—the battle between spirit and flesh continues in them. Therefore, they indeed desire to perform the law of God according to their inner person, but the law in their members struggles against the law of their mind [Rom. 7:23]. To this extent they are never without the law, and at the same time they are not under the law but in the law; they live and walk in the law of the Lord and yet do nothing because of the compulsion of the law. [...] For this reason, too, believers require the teaching of the law: so that they do not fall back on their own holiness and piety and under the appearance of God's Spirit establish their own service to God on the basis of their own choice, without God's Word or command.⁷⁵

A believer is both the Old Man and the New Man. A believer still needs and still is affected by both the law and the gospel. Believers need the law and gospel because they still have the Old Man.

*My personal favorite—Richard Lauersdorf*⁷⁶

This entire thesis has examined the passages and evaluated applications, but if you really want to learn how to preach and teach the Old and New Man elegantly and personally, you need to learn from a seasoned expert like Pastor Richard Lauersdorf.

Living the Christian life is truly a doing and so often a painfully slow doing. Some days it goes better than others; we take four steps forward in holy living. Other days it seems the bottom drops out and we take six steps backward. Some days we can stare those pet sins right in the eye and resolutely say, "No." Other days those sins scuttle us without our ever firing a shot. Never does the doing end in this life of sanctification on earth.

Didn't we say that in Christ we *are* new creatures? How come then this lifelong, painful struggle to be new creatures? It's because of the Old Adam, that old sinful nature we inherited from our original set of parents. Before we were regenerated, the Old Adam was in the saddle in our hearts, riding us hard, not even having to use his spurs to urge us on in a life of sin. Then came the Gospel in Word and Sacrament through which the Spirit worked faith, punched our Old Adam on the jaw and pushed him right off the saddle. New life holds the reins now. Love for God replaces hatred; trust takes over the place of

⁷⁵ Kolb and Wengert, *Book of Concord*, (FC SD VI paragraph 19), 590.

⁷⁶ Although I almost could not decide between Lauersdorf and J.P. Meyer's description of the Old and New Man in his article, "What is the fear of God?"

doubt; walking after God flourishes willingly in place of taking orders slavishly from the devil.

But our Old Adam doesn't give up. He's bruised and battered. He's lost his seat in the saddle of our heart, but he's not content to lie in the trail dust. He attacks again and again, seeking to regain what he has lost. Though his strength is broken and he's lost absolute sway over the heart, he's still a formidable foe. Here's no annoying fly we can swat easily aside, no 90 pound weakling in whose face we can kick sand with impunity. He's an out and out foe who's out to regain complete control. No wonder Paul used strong terms like "crucify" (Galatians 5:24) and "put to death" (Romans 8:13) when writing what we are to do with this foe. All our life this fierce battle between the Old Adam and the New Man rages. All our life we are saint and sinner at the same time.⁷⁷

The applications of the Old and New Man metaphor are flexible and diverse. Their richness reflects the complexity of a believer's life and assists in beautiful application of both law and gospel.

Conclusion

The teaching of the Old and New Man flows from many sections of Scripture, especially Romans 6-8, Galatians 5, Ephesians 4, and Colossians 3, which were studied in detail in part one of this thesis. These sections do not hesitate to present the metaphor of the Old and New Man in all its complexities, including the paradoxes. Only an imagery which can say that the Old Man and the New Man are both dead and alive can handle the complexity of the believer's life with all its competing desires and actions. God has given believers a robust metaphor for the rugged and battered life of sanctification.

When the metaphors are examined closely, it becomes apparent that original sin is the referent of the Old Man. That is, the Old Man is picture language of the inherited portion of original sin. The New Man's referent is more difficult to identify because of the various uses of the word *πνεῦμα* (spirit) and the other metaphors used to describe it (e.g., new creation). Nevertheless, the New Man's referent is clearly the aspect of a believer which is completely renewed and produces all the good things God desires from his believers. These two aspects of a believer—the Old and New Man—war against each other constantly until heaven where the Old

⁷⁷ Richard Lauersdorf, "Spiritual Renewal as Proper Understanding of the Relationship between Justification and Sanctification," <http://essays.wls.wels.net/bitstream/handle/123456789/2913/LauersdorfRenewal.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>, Accessed November 12, 2016.

Man will not exist. When believers learn to live more in accord with their New Man instead of their Old Man, they mature in their life of sanctification.

Misunderstanding of the teaching of the Old and New Man as well as misapplications of the teaching hurt believers. Some of these misunderstandings start with the Bible passages (e.g., not seeing Paul as speaking as a believer in Romans 7). Other misapplications grow from false beliefs about sanctification. For example, some hold that believers can become free from sin in this life on earth. Others, who do not see original sin as a horrific problem, do not see the Old Man as a major influence in their lives. These and the many other misapplications of the teaching prevent believers from maturing in knowledge of themselves and how God works in them.

In this world believers experience setbacks, confusion, and frustration in themselves and their lives of sanctification. For these same believers, the teaching of the Old and New Man can give them an immense amount of comfort and understanding because the imagery vividly describes what is happening inside them. With the internal battle raging, believers could easily become discouraged and begin to doubt their salvation when they realize they are not doing everything God has required of them even though they are believers. For these people God gives this teaching to help them grasp their inner battle and identify their struggles as something that are real and constant. The teaching of the Old and New Man can both calm believers who are confused and worried, but it also confronts them and equips them for a life of sanctification. Teaching believers about the Old and New Man shows them how and when to apply law and gospel. Believers bring glory to God and benefit themselves and others when they do not neglect this biblical picture language of the Old and New Man.

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