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#### Soul and Spirit pt. 4

We've been talking about the soul and spirit for a few weeks now. Last week I spoke about the soul's entanglement with the old creation. I shared a little more about that Friday night and I wanted to get even more specific with it today.

And, as most of you know, I like to spend some time sort-of hovering around various topics that we look at. It does no good to hear true things unless the person of Truth, the Word of truth, finds room in our heart. Unless the truth of Him starts to become the truth of us because He is our life.

So as we try to understand our soul's attachment to the old creation, let's start by looking again at the old creation. What it is. What was its function. What was its purpose. What is the new creation.

As we reviewed last time, the old creation is all that is natural, of the earth. The old creation is a creation made for Adam, the first man and his kind. It is a creation that is based on natural things, natural senses, earthly realities, and is accessed, observed, and experienced by the five natural senses of man. You can see it with your natural eyes, hear it with your natural ears, etc. It is earthy. It is of earth. It is not spiritual. It is not eternal.

Why is it called the old creation? Because there is a new creation. New – not with referenced to time. The new creation is not "new" because its "newer" or "more recent". Its newer in quality. It is something entirely different, something other than the old. Its not like the new creation is like a new pair of shoes. The same as the old, but more recent. No, the new creation is something altogether different and other than the old. Something that the old pointed to, but could never be. The substance is different.

The old creation is natural. The new creation is spiritual. The old creation is earthy, the new creation is heavenly (and I don't mean a geographic location). The old creation is known by the natural senses. The new creation is known by spiritual revealing, spiritual beholding – in other words, "faith".

[ When you hear the word faith some people immediately lose interest because for them the concept of faith takes things out of the realm of what is real, into a realm of what you are trying to believe in, but cannot experience. That is not what faith is, and anyone who has begun to see by faith, walk by faith, can testify that what faith sees is far more real than what is purely natural. We think that for something to be literal and substantial, it must be natural, earthly. We wouldn't say we believe that, cause we're good ol' Christians. But nonetheless, its what we feel. But what is most literal, most substantial, is spiritual and therefore eternal, and is known by another set of faculties, spiritual faculties ...because you are a spiritual being, and all of these spiritual faculties can be summed up in the word faith. True faith, the product of revelation, sees, walks in, lives by something far more real than the 5 senses of the natural body. Enough on that. ]

The primary purpose for the old creation was for it to be a testimony of the new. And though God has now established the new, our souls continue to find all things in the old. That's where I'm going. But let's look more carefully at the first part.

Again, the primary purpose for the old creation was for it to be a testimony of the new. A pattern of the new.

God's ultimate purposes have, of course, always been eternal. They have always been spiritual. They have never been of flesh and blood. Not of rock and earth and water. God's goal, His destination, His end...what He's aiming at, has always been that which was spirit and that which was permanent. Not that which was natural and temporary.

One day Jesus walked up to the woman at the well and began to talk to her about true worship. True relating to God. The woman begins to bring the earth into view, the temporal, the shadow. And she asks Him, "Sir, your people say that Jerusalem is the place and way to worship God, and we say it is how we do it at this mountain over there". Jesus looks at her and says "Lady, if you want to know the truth, it's neither. It's spirit and truth. Those who want to worship the Father must do it in spirit and truth. It must be that way.

It's not really about your mountains, your temples, your ordinances, your actions, your whatever. The day is coming, and now is, where it's all about spirit and truth.

Everything in the plan of God has always been aimed at the eternal, the spiritual – never the earthly. The earthly was only the testimony of the spiritual. In other words, the day is coming and now is where the testimony will give way to the spiritual reality. And in that day all true worship will be according to spiritual reality.

And so when you read, in the old testament, of Zion – it has always been a spiritual habitation of the Lord, a spiritual place of His dwelling. The body of Christ. The mountain of the Lord. When you read of the city of God, Jerusalem...it always was a foreshadowing of that which is spiritual. A spiritual habitation of the Lord. A spiritual city, with living stones. Heavenly Jerusalem...where you are the living stones. Stones clear as crystal allowing for the light of the lamb to shine in and through.

Ephesians 2:22 – we are "growing into a holy sanctuary in the Lord; in whom you also are built together for a dwelling place of God in *the* Spirit.

When you read in the old testament about a kingdom coming, it is spiritual and eternal. Daniel tells us that. It is a kingdom not made with hands, which never passes away. It has manifestation through the church in the earth. And in that way, and only that way, the kingdom comes on earth as it is in heaven. But it is, in substance, spirit.

Was that clear? How does the kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven? Only in the manifesting heaven in the earth. Not in trying to make an earthly kingdom that looks like heaven.. The kingdom is not earthly. It's not. You can manifest it in the earth as Jesus did...and always said "behold the kingdom is at hand". "Well Jesus", they say looking around, "where is it?" It's not out there. It's not coming in outward

observation, but it is within you. Jesus said to Pilot "my kingdom is not of this world, otherwise my servants would fight".

The Jews made the mistake of looking for an earthly kingdom. Too often the church is making the same mistake. The kingdom of God is not earthly, though it can be manifested in the earth through His body. "It is now made known through the church". It is now made known. When I say that it is spiritual, it does not mean it is only future when the body dies. How carnal. It is now. It is spirit. It is in you. But it is His spiritual reign and rule.

So...getting back to our subject, when you read of an assembly, a priesthood, a kindred, a dominion, a bride, Israel, a temple – in all of this, the earthly is the pattern of the spiritual, the eternal.

We often don't like that because it doesn't feel real to us unless its earthly. Unless its natural. Unless natural senses can apprehend it. And that is because often our souls have only seen the old creation. To the carnal minded believer, we don't believe anything unless God brings it into our realm. But you see...that's exactly the problem. Salvation isn't bring God into the natural. Its being raised up with Him and seated in Christ. We're getting to that.

All of the old creation was a pattern to some degree. All of it shows forth the glory of the Lord, but in type and shadow. In pattern, but not in substance. How does the old creation do that? Well, in more ways than we could count.

The very earth itself in many ways. The sunrise. Light and dark. Life and death. Reproduction after kind. Sowing and reaping. Harvest.

Get into the Bible and it starts in Genesis chapter 1. So many ways. We've looked at many of them in weeks and months past. Adam and the forming of Eve out from His side. The tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Cain and Able. Noah and the flood. So much, so very much. Everything. Jesus says on two occasions "all of these testify of me".

But even more than that was God's dealing with Israel. God's dealings with earthly Israel was always a foreshadowing of the Israel of God – spiritual Israel. Old covenant Israel always foreshadowing New Covenant Israel.

Starting right from the beginning with Abraham, and all of God's dealings with the first Jew – everything points to the everlasting possession. Everything points to the coming seed, the coming covenant, the coming conquest, the coming victory. Everything, even with the first Jew, points to the eternal, the spiritual.

And then with Isaac and Ishmael, the Jacob and Esau, then Joseph and His brothers. The slavery in Egypt, the exodus, the wilderness, the Jordan. All of it pointing to Christ. And I don't' just mean that it pointed to Jesus of Nazareth. There is relatively little prophesying of Jesus of Nazareth compared to all that speaks of Jesus the Ressurrection. Jesus the living one. Jesus the light. Jesus being made unto us righteousness, redemption, Jesus the dwelling place, the Israel of God, the Judge. Jesus the one who has been made unto us all things spiritual. The new creation in Him. The old creation, the old covenant testify far more of Him in all that is spirit and eternal compared to the 33 years of the Nazarene. It would take us a lifetime to explore even the testimony....and an infinite number of lifetimes to explore the

reality. Hence, everlasting life. This is eternal life, to know you Father, and Jesus Christ, who You sent.

But then the company of Israel – the people of God. He made them into a living testimony, in the natural, of the spiritual. Even in their rebellion and stubbornness, even though their hearts were uncircumcised, he made them into a living testimony of His Son. He made the earthly, the natural, the old creation, the old man into a pattern for the showing forth of the new, the eternal, the spiritual.

That is the purpose of the priesthood, the garments, the tabernacle, the sacrifices, the altars, the incense, the offerings, the feasts, the kings, the kingdom, the veil, the laver, the instruments, the tribes, the blessings, the promises. EVERYTHING.

And while the Israelites lived out this **testimony**, the prophets prophesied the coming **substance**. While the Israelites displayed something of it in type and shadow, the prophets declared the spiritual reality to come in Christ. They spoke of the kingdom that does not pass away. They spoke of eternal life. The dawning of everlasting light. A city of God. They spoke of Zion...something that was not of the earth, not of the old, not of the natural, not passing, not lifeless.

And all of that is what we HAVE inherited in Christ. All of that reality, all of that spiritual substance, is what we have inherited in Christ right now. Not something that we are going to be brought into some day in the sweet by and by. Not something that awaits us when we die.

Listen, death is a pre-requisite for inheriting His life. "Unless you lose your life you will not gain mine". Yes, but it is not the death of the body. Don't try to make that the death of the shell. The earthen vessel is nearly inconsequential. Yes, we are being conformed to His death. Yes, but never in Scripture is the death of the body the means of acquiring or walking in the life of the Son of God. That's the wrong death. Religious Christianity has made that the death necessary for life. And it is not.

But that's beyond our scope. In inheriting Christ, we have inherited all of the spiritual substance of everything foreshadowed, patterned, and promised in the old creation and the old covenant. We have inherited everything!

As Paul says – "do you not know that all things are yours" or "**All** of the promises of God have become yes and amen in Christ" Or "He has given us **every** spiritual blessing in Christ" This is the great declaration of the new covenant – "But NOW in Christ."

Christ has brought us through his death, burial, and resurrection, into a new creation in Him. A place to dwell, a place of life, an eternal kingdom, an everlasting possession. Zion. The city of God.

Now some of you might be thinking – "well, yes Jason, I can see that the Bible says all of this, but that makes no sense. How could I have every spiritual blessing? How could I have every promise of God? I don't see it anywhere! And friends, that is exactly my point. That is exactly our problem.

Here is why I just went through all of that. For one reason only, simply to say this: that we are still seeking in the old creation what He has established and finished in

the new. I said it all because our souls, though we are born of the spirit, born of the substance of eternity, born in Zion...apart from the revealing of Christ, our souls still seek all that is promised, foretold, typed, shadowed, and prophesied in the old creation. We are looking for the living among the dead.

And that is what I was trying to get at last week when I was saying that I have been seeing more and more the incredible extent to which my soul is entangled with the old creation. My soul is entangled with and will not disassociate with that which God has put away – that which has served its purpose as a testimony, but has none of the substance. The old creation painted a picture of Christ, and then Christ came to live in us. But I had fallen in love with the painting.

I was talking last week about how I was walking around during the Christmas season noticing, to my discomfort, the extent to which my soul, my emotions, my desires, my plans, are largely caught up in things that lack life. I was not trying to say that I needed to stop doing this, or do more of that. Its not that at all. Its not about what I was doing or not doing. Its not about playing too much cards or not doing enough devotional reading. Its not that.

My complaint, my problem, was not something I was doing or not doing. It was the conspicuous lack of life and reality in whatever I was doing. It was the entanglement with death in all that I was doing. It was an uncomfortable awakening to the reality that the best of death is still dead.

I was talking to somebody this week about Philippians 3, where Paul says that he has suffered the loss of all things that were gain to him, but when he saw them clearly, he counted them but dung.

And I know that this is slightly gross, but lets say you were born into a giant vat of dung. Dung is all that you have ever known. And Christ offers you a ladder out of the dung into a hot shower. Sounds great, right? What more could a person living in dung want?

Wouldn't it be strange and tragic if everyone believed in the ladder, believed in the shower, but remained in dung? Oh we love the shower. We love the ladder. Lets talk about it in small groups. Lets read books about it. Lets get a shower study manual. Lets sing songs about it. Lets study the theology of the shower. Lets memorize the descriptions of it. Lets split up into little dung denominations because we can't really agree on what the shower is like. Lets sculpt some dung into our best imagination of the shower.

Ok, I know that is gross. I don't mean to be offensive. But do you see the extent to which we know our salvation as concepts? Concepts. Familiar concepts. We know the new creation as a concept. But our soul still finds its home in dung. We know spiritual life as a concept. We know resurrection as a concept. A true concept. We know the shower as a concept.

All things of Christ are merely concepts until they are revealed by the Spirit to your soul as spiritual reality. New Creation – oh yeah, I learned what that means. Abiding in Christ – I taught that in Sunday School. Kingdom of God – I read about it, can't wait til I see it. Concepts.

But when the rubber meets the road...when it comes to actually finding purpose, finding identity, finding relationship, finding substance...concepts don't cut it, and we turn to the old creation. We look to dung for our definition of ourselves.

And that brings us back to the revelation of Christ in you. That which is eternal, that which is new, that which is life, that which is spirit MUST be revealed as we come to him like little children...or all the soul ever knows is the old creation. And the soul will continually and necessarily seek all things of life and purpose where there is nothing at all but an earthly shadow and pattern.

And, I suppose as we have all seen, even in the abundance of shadows there is the inescapable, gnawing, haunting reality that something is dreadfully absent. That something is Christ's life - the substance of our salvation.

But in the revealing of Christ comes the circumcision of the soul. Or, as the Bible so often says "the circumcision of the heart". The old creation must be cut loose from the soul. Not that your body leaves it, but that you come to seek nothing of life in it. I'm not speaking of ceasing certain bad activities. Please don't turn this into religion.

The old creation must be cut loose from your soul. But that creation only comes to an end in your heart as another takes form. The one ceases to be your place of residence as another becomes your home. One disappears as the other comes into focus. That's the way of this thing. Thus the renewing of our mind to see where we really are. Thus beholding in a mirror the the glory of the Lord and being transformed into the same image. Thus coming to know the truth and the truth setting us free.

And you realize, in the seeing of the new that the old has nothing but a promise of the new. You realize, but only in the seeing of the new, that the old is dung compared with gaining Christ. And you let it fall away. You happily stand still then and let the flint knife cut away what you don't even want to keep. Its easy to let the Lord cut away from your heart something you have no use for whatsoever.