Taking Off the Old Self

Ephesians 4:22-24

For the past two Sundays, our focus has been on transformation. Not change, but transformation. Change is temporary, transformation is permanent. A caterpillar transforms into a butterfly. That's permanent.

To be aligned with God is to be transformed. It is a decisive decision. A decision to be embraced, not merely considered. It is decisive because it is not gradual. The decision is not gradual; the growth is.

Paul didn't say, "Patch up the old self." He said, *Take it off*. Strip it away, throw it aside like a rotten garment. Don't fold it neatly into the closet for later use, and don't tuck it under the bed in case you want to wear it again. He said, Discard it.

Because the old self is **not neutral**. **It is not harmless nostalgia. It is corruption alive and breathing, a garment laced with decay.** Every time you slip back into it, the stench of death seeps into your spirit, and the longer you wear it, the harder it is to believe you were ever made for anything else.

Why We Cling to What Kills Us

Here's the tension: we grow comfortable with our pain. As strange as it sounds, brokenness becomes familiar. We know its shapes, designs, contours; we've mapped its shadows, we've learned how to live in its dysfunction as if it were home.

That's why God's call to transformation feels so disruptive. Who are we if we lay down the identity that suffering carved into us? What do we become when we step out of survival mode and start to live a Christlike life?

And yet, holiness refuses to let us linger halfway. God is not interested in cosmetic renovation. He is holy, which means He demands a radical relocation. Light and darkness cannot cohabit. Death and life cannot share the same address.

Not Renovation but Resurrection

Too often, we treat being "made new" like a remodel, new paint on the walls, updated appliances, but the foundation and structure stay the same. That's not the gospel. The gospel is not renovation, it's resurrection.

Resurrection requires death, a clean break, a burial of the old before the new can rise. Nothing of the former identity remains except the memory of who you were and the miracle of who you've become.

That's why the language of Scripture is so severe: *crucify the flesh, put to death the deeds of the body, take off the old self.* You cannot straddle both worlds. You cannot halfway die.

The Voices That Hold Us Back

This transformation isn't just about habits, it's about the voices we allow into our most vulnerable places. Because every voice either advances your becoming or undermines it.

Think about it. The friend who comforts but never challenges you keeps you tied to mediocrity. The group chat full of distractions numbs you but never lifts you. The old acquaintance who only sees you as who you used to be chains you to an identity God already crucified.

These aren't neutral presences. They are influences, and the voices you give authority to in crisis will either carry you forward into life or quietly drag you back toward death.

So, ask yourself: who shapes your perception? Whose wisdom do you lean on? Whose approval do you crave? These aren't casual questions; they are diagnostic. They reveal whether you've truly stepped into the new creation or whether you're keeping the old self on life support.

Why God Must Be the First Voice

Here's the anchor: your human connections will only ever be as healthy as your divine one. If God isn't your first call, every other voice will distort His will in your life.

When God is your source, your speed dial, your anchor, you begin to see clearly which relationships align with your destiny and which ones tether you to your past. Without Him as first voice, you'll fill your contact list with echoes of your own fears, justifications, and compromises.

That's why transformation so often requires relationship transitions. Some voices were seasonal, not eternal. Some were for a lesson, not for a lifetime. Some were never meant to shape you at all.

Discernment requires courage. Courage requires clarity. And clarity only comes when God has first place.

The Cost of Refusal

But hear this: to resist transformation is to fracture yourself. To hold onto the old self is to fight against the very thing that makes you whole. What feels like self-protection becomes self-destruction.

You cannot become new while clutching the old. You cannot live resurrection while avoiding death. You cannot walk in light while still calling darkness a familiar friend.

Holiness pulls you toward integrity, toward alignment where your actions, thoughts, desires, and relationships finally converge into one true identity. No more divided heart. No more double life.

A New Frequency

So, when the old voices call, and they will, you answer with holy defiance: *I've changed my number. I don't live there anymore.*

This isn't arrogance. It's clarity. It's knowing you cannot serve two masters, cannot inhabit two kingdoms, cannot live from two identities.

You've been relocated by grace. You're tuned to a new frequency. Death can't reach you anymore.

The Invitation

The invitation is clear: take off the old self completely. Not gradually, not partially, not conditionally. Step fully into the resurrection you were already given.

Surround yourself with voices that call you forward, not back. With companions who remind you of life, not death. With people who challenge you toward holiness instead of comforting you in brokenness.

Make God your first voice, your most trusted contact, your anchor in every crisis. And let every other relationship find its proper place in the light of that connection.

Final Word

This is how true transformation happens, not by adding but by subtracting, not by improvement but by replacement, not by evolution but by revolution, not by renovation but by resurrection.

The question is not whether God is willing. The question is whether you're ready to take it off, once and for all.

Blessings,

Pastor Gool