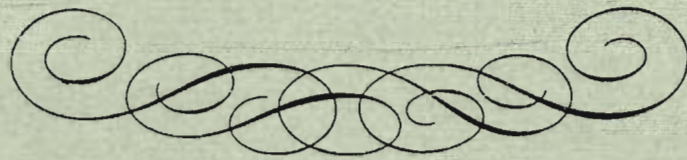


BACK
TO THE
BIBLE

&

ONE-NATURISM



Miles J. Stanford



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9 August 1996

Executives and Board
Back to the Bible
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Dear friends in Christ

Mr. Nickel has kindly suggested that I write a letter to Back to the Bible concerning Dr. Kroll's teaching of the one-nature theory, both on the Broadcast recently, and by means of his latest book, The Joy of Belonging.

This serious error of eradication of the believer's Adamic life and nature is causing harm throughout the Church. It is a product of Covenant theology, and is being spread by Dr. MacArthur, Dr. Needham, and many other well-known leaders.

The material shared here is to help Back to the Bible leadership to realize the seriousness of this Covenant error, and as a result to make an explicit and scriptural stand against that which is harmful to the Body of Christ.

First I will share what Dr. Kroll has written on behalf of one-naturism in his otherwise exceptionally fine book, The Joy of Belonging.

Some Bible students believe that man has an "old nature," which represents our character before we received Christ as our Savior. They call it the "old man" and think that when we receive Christ we receive a new nature and the two natures, "old man" and "new man," share our body, battling it out on a daily basis. They think whichever man is "fed" the most dominates our character.

But I don't see that taught in the Bible at all. Paul says in Romans 6:6, "Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin."

What happened to our old man when we were saved? He was crucified. No one comes down from the cross alive. Our old man was destroyed. Second Corinthians 5:17 says, "old things have passed away." The word for "passed away" is parerchomia, which means "to be removed" or "perish."

There is no "coexistence" agreement. Our old nature is not sharing our body with the new nature. The old nature is gone for good (pp. 82,83).

Dr. Kroll is saying here that he rejects the truth of the believer's two indwelling natures, and that the old Adamic nature is eradicated. (Eradicate: "To pull up by the roots, to extirpate, exterminate, destroy, annihilate." --Webster).

Where the confusion comes, however, is that we still have many of the habits and appetites that were developed under the old nature. This is what Paul is talking about when he says, "Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of him who created him" (Col. 3:9,10).

Notice that Paul says, "You have put off the old man"; therefore don't do those things which you did before you became a Christian. When we do those things we learned under the old man, we operate under the influence of the flesh instead of under the influence of the Spirit. There is no question about our nature here: we are new creatures and have a new nature. It's the old habits of our flesh that trip us up (p. 83).

Dr. Kroll replaces the Adamic life and nature with habits and appetites that were developed prior to conversion. He introduces the "flesh," to which he attributes indwelling sin.

The next time you cave into sin, don't blame your old nature. Your old nature is in the grave. The old man is gone. Blame the flesh and your inability to control your flesh. You grieve the Spirit when you sin because instead of living in the Spirit, you live in the desires of the flesh (p. 84).

We forget that when a person receives Christ and his old nature is crucified, he still has habits and influences solidly ingrained from the practices of past years. Some of these habits are as stubborn as crab grass. It takes the work of God's Spirit, as well as personal effort, to eradicate them (emphasis mine) (p. 150).

Dr. Kroll initially teaches that the Adamic life and nature have been eradicated and are replaced by the "flesh"--habits developed in earlier days. He then advocates the eradication of the fleshly practices by personal effort and the help of the Holy Spirit.

There comes a point when we have to decide which head coach we are going to obey. Even though our old nature is dead, we have strong habits built up during the years we were controlled by Satan (p. 170).

As Christians we still struggle with the problem of sin. This is not a problem caused by the "old man," who was the unregenerate person we were in the flesh. That man no longer exists; he died at Calvary, and Paul asks, "How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?" (Rom. 6:2).

So where does this sin problem come from? It comes from the "flesh." The flesh--heart, mind, body--is the trapdoor Satan used to put his fly in our ointment. It is those habits and responses we learned while under the control of Satan. It is the earthly part of man that has not yet been fully redeemed (p. 117).

Thus we have Dr. Kroll's teaching of eradication, which places him, and Back to the Bible, within the realm of Covenantism concerning a vital subject of the Christian life.

The following examples of one-naturism, Covenant and otherwise, reveal identical teaching to that of Dr. Kroll:

DR. JOHN MURRAY (late "dean" of Covenantism) -- "The term 'crucified' is that of being crucified with Christ, and therefore indicated that the old man has been put to death just as decisively as Christ died upon the accursed tree. To suppose that the old man has been crucified and still lives or has been raised again from this death is to contradict the obvious force of the import of crucifixion" (Principles of Conduct).

DR. JOHN H. GERSTNER (Covenant) -- "Instead of proving personal holiness and inner healing, Dispensationalism offers the believer a schizophrenia of two mutually exclusive natures. In other words, the sinful nature produces nothing but sinful acts just as truly as the sinless nature produces nothing but sinless acts.

"Here the dispensational propensity to divide and separate has resulted in an anthropology which can only be characterized as bizarre. Such an anthropology is utterly lacking in a principle of the unity of the human person" (Wrongly Dividing the Word of Truth--A Critique of Dispensationalism, pp, 143,247).

DR. D. MARTYN LLOYD-JONES (Covenant) -- "The old man is the man I was in Adam; that is the man that has died once and forever. He is non-existent; he is no longer there. Your self--your old self--has gone" (Romans Six, p. 65).

DR. JOHN F. MacARTHUR JR. (Covenant) -- "As Christians, our old life has been condemned, crucified, and done away with. In fact, in Romans 6:6 it says, 'Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed.' In other words, the old man is dead, destroyed, removed...it isn't around. You don't have an old man anymore. The moment we believed, by a divine miracle our old man died" (Tape GC 2147).

DR. DAVID C. NEEDHAM -- "We were once 'in Adam.' We are no longer. That person has ceased to exist. The self that Paul was, 'the old self' of Romans 6, no longer has any existence" (Birthright, p. 113).

DR. NEIL T. ANDERSON -- "Your old self and your old nature are gone forever. As a child of God, a saint, you are no longer under the authority of your Old Man. He is dead, buried, gone forever" (Victory Over the Darkness, p. 27).

DR. CHARLES R. SOLOMON -- "Satan, the enemy of souls, has made another critical deception in blinding the minds of believers to the truth that the old man or sin nature no longer exists in the Christian (Rejection Syndrome, p. 106).

"Although the agent distributing the power of sin--the old man--has been put out of business through death, the energy force (residual power of indwelling sin) yet remains" (Ibid., p. 31).

DR. LEE LeFEVRE -- "It has been taught that the old Adamic life didn't really die at the cross. What a hoax to insinuate that we must struggle to overcome that which lies dead in the grave" (Glimpses of Grace).

DR. BILL GILLHAM -- "The now defunct old man" (Lifetime Guarantee, p. 4). "Eliminated and replaced" (Ibid., p. 74). "I claim by faith that the old man is extinct" (Ibid., p. 187).

DR. BOB GEORGE -- "Who was I before? Bob George in Adam. That man is dead and gone; he will never exist again" (Classic Christianity, p. 90).

DR. CHARLES STANLEY -- "I no longer believe that the believer has two natures" (TV broadcast). "All our struggles are spiritual in nature. Each one is a part of an ongoing struggle between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan.

"Every temptation is a small part of a universal struggle between the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of the living God" (Winning the War Within, p. 32). "When you speak the truth out loud, you are reminded that you are not your enemy. And He that is within you is not your enemy. Your enemy is the devil" (Ibid., p. 142).

THE TWO MEN (Romans 5; 2 Cor. 15) -- Under several pertinent headings, we will submit the contrast between the one-nature teaching, and that of the believer's two natures.

God deals with humanity on the basis of just two men, i.e., the first Adam, and the Last Adam. "The first man, Adam, was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a life-giving spirit.... The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven" (1 Cor. 15:45,47).

The first Adam became totally sinful; the Last Adam was, and is, totally righteous and holy. "For if by one man's offense death reigned by one, much more they who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:17).

THE "FLESH" -- The eradicationist, as seen above, dispenses with the sinful Adamic life and nature by relegating the first Adam to extinction. In order to account for sin in the life of the believer, the "flesh" becomes the source of indwelling evil. The flesh is described by such symptoms as: learned and developed pre-conversion habits, appetites, influences, tendencies, residual sin, and according to Dr. MacArthur, "vestiges of our sinful flesh," "graveclothes of our sinful flesh," and "residual fallenness," etc.

The use of these terms diverts the eradicationist from the true indwelling source of sin, in that for him the fallen Adamic life is eradicated.

Satan is the source of all sin in the universe. The first Adam is the source of all sin in humanity--both unsaved, and saved. And Adam became flesh. "And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh" (Gen. 6:3).

Of the saved, Paul said, "But ye are not in the [Adamic] flesh but in the Spirit [of Christ]" (Rom. 8:9). The first Adam is flesh, the source of all flesh. If the Adamic source of flesh is eradicated, so is sinful flesh. Indwelling sin--flesh--must have a source! Effect must have a cause. The Word teaches that "flesh" is a person, not a condition--although there is a fleshly condition caused by a person.

Paul exhorts the believer to "put off...the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" (Eph. 4:22). He does not tell the believer to put off that which is not in residence.

"He that hath the Son, hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:12). By the same principle, he that hath the Adamic old man hath sin; he that hath not the Adamic old man, hath not sin.

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal. 5:24). If crucifixion means experiential death (non-existence), then flesh is non-existent in the believer, because it too has been crucified.

CONDITION VERSUS POSITION -- The late Covenant leader, Dr. John Murr-ray, went to the following extreme in his rejection of the positional aspect of truth:

We appreciate this teaching of Scripture. Every one called effectually by God and regenerated by the Spirit has secured the victory over sin in the terms of 1 John 3:9; 5:18). And this victory is actual [experiential], or nothing.

It is a reflection upon and a deflection from the perverse NT witness to speak of it as merely potential or positional. It is actual and practical as much as anything comprised in the application of redemption is actual and practical (Redemption Accomplished and Applied), p. 142).

Covenant theology fails to recognize positional truth. Therefore, Romans 6:6 is held to be actual experience. The old man, crucified, is therefore to them, extinct. Second Corinthians 5:17 is considered to be experiential--"Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

However, in daily experience from new birth to death (or the Rapture), that is not, and never has been, true of any believer. Old Adamic things are not gone; all things are not new. Positionally, it is true of every believer, and will be experientially at the Rapture--but not before. It is then, and then only, that the old Adamic man will be forever eradicated.

DEATH MEANS SEPARATION -- It is astounding to note how blind one can be, although intelligent and highly trained, to the facts concerning death:

Some views of the Christian life are forced to define death as extinction since they teach that the old man, the sin nature, being experientially crucified, is eradicated. [Error multiplies itself.]

Others, more moderate, consider death as cessation since they teach that, although the sin nature is still present in the believer, he can cease from sinning in this life. Thus death means a cessation of the activities (but not the presence) of the sin nature.

But death does not mean either extinction or cessation; it always means separation! Physical death is the separation of the immaterial part of man from the material body. It does not mean that the person has become extinct, or that he has ceased to function.

"She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (1 Tim. 5:6). Every unredeemed person on earth today is spiritually dead but is at the same time existing and active. However, he is separated from God and this is what makes him spiritually dead.

The second death is the eternal state of separation which unbelievers will experience in hell. There could be no such experience if death means extinction or cessation. Death always means separation, and it does in Romans 6 also.

Since death never means extinction, the mortifying, the putting to death the deeds of the body (Rom. 8:13) cannot mean eradicating them. But it does mean separating oneself from them.

Putting to death the deeds of the body does not mean these deeds will no longer be a part of our existence, but it can and should mean that they need not be any longer a part of our experience. --Selected

GENETIC HEREDITY -- The first Adam passed on his fallen and physical nature to his children, as parents have done ever since. "Behold, I was shaped in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Ps. 51:5). "That which is born of the flesh is flesh" (John 3:6). "Fathers of our flesh" (Heb. 12:2) produce progeny of flesh.

Each individual receives his Adamic old man from his parents. If the old man were eradicated from Christian parents, their offspring would be void of Adamic life and nature. (Hitler's Arian dream.) I have yet to encounter such children in Christian homes, or elsewhere.

THE "BODY OF SIN" -- A word from others more qualified than I is in keeping here:

As for "the body of sin" (Rom. 6:6), Paul is not thinking of the body of flesh and blood; the evil was more deeply rooted. "The body of this death," or "this body of death," is more like "the body of sin" in verse 6.

It is that heritage of human nature subject to "the law of sin and death" which he shares with all sons of Adam, that massa perdionis in which the whole of the old creation is involved, and from which, for all his longing and struggling, he cannot extricate himself by his own efforts. --F.F. Bruce

What in Romans 6:6 Paul calls the "body of sin," in Romans 7:24 he calls the "body of death"; and the oppressive power of this body of sin and death is what produces a "law of sin and death" in his members (Rom. 7:23). It is the resistance of that still resident old Adamic nature he is experiencing. --F.W. Grant

EVASIVE ACTION -- Eradication instills in the believer a tendency to avoid responsibility for personal sins. Considering

his old man eradicated, he is wont to shift the blame for his sin upon factors from his past--old habits and tendencies, dysfunctional family conditions, etc.

Dr. Kroll states, "The next time you cave into sin, don't blame your old nature. Your old nature is in the grave. The old man is gone. Blame the flesh."

Many avoid responsibility for personal sin by blaming Satan. Heretofore it was, "The devil made me do it"; but now it is, "Satan did it." "Dr. Bill Gillham says, "Satan accomplished his goal through your thought life, masquerading as the now defunct "old man." Dr. Neil Anderson prays:

We thank You for opening our eyes to see the strength, weaknesses, good memories, painful memories, corporate sins, and spiritual attacks of evil enemies. Thank You for helping us grasp our spiritual battle with the demonic powers (Setting Your Church Free, p. 320).

But Samuel said to David, concerning his sin, "Thou art the man" (2 Sam. 12:7). Mark wrote, "For from within, out of the heart of men [saved or unsaved], proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts..." (Mark 7:21,22). James wrote, "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust" (James 1:14).

"IT'S ME, O LORD!" -- Every candid believer knows full well that the sin that dwells in him is manifested by the identical characteristics that it had before he was saved--nothing new, or different. It is the same old man that it ever was--Adamic self himself.

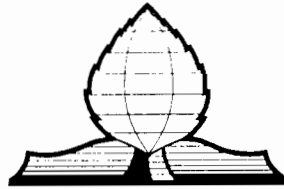
Every honest Christian knows his indwelling old Adamic life and nature very well, having grown up in it. It is not symptomatic habits, etc., but hard-core Adamic life and nature. "If we confess our sins.... If we say that we have not sinned" (1 John 1:9,10). I know you are in there!

RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP -- Eradication positions one inside Covenant circles, and opposed to orthodox, fundamental realms concerning a vital aspect of the Christian life. The Church is being taken into bondage by the infiltration of law-based Covenant theology.

Back to the Bible has a long and honorable spiritual heritage, for which we truly praise God. It owes it to the Lord, His Word, and its vast constituency, to repudiate eradication, and to stand firm for the truth of the rightly-divided Word concerning the believer's two natures.

Resting in Him,





BACK TO THE BIBLE™

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August 20, 1996

Mr. Miles J. Stanford
840 Vindicator Drive, #111
Colorado Springs, CO 80919

Dear Mr. Stanford:

Your letter to the executives and board regarding Dr. Kroll's teaching has been read and shared among the leadership here at Back to the Bible. Steve Nickel sat down with Dr. Kroll, and they discussed the matter. Unfortunately, Dr. Kroll is now on the road again and knew he couldn't get a response to you in a reasonable time. That's how I came into the picture: Steve asked me to respond because of both my theological and family background.

First of all, I want to say how much I personally profited from your teaching on the Christian life back in the 1950s when I was a Bible school student. On several occasions, Dad and I discussed what became his favorite chapter in the Bible--Romans 6. I think it was through him I first came to read the *Green Letters* and made some major progress in understanding the life of faith and holiness to which God has called us in Christ.

I am not able to answer for Dr. Kroll regarding the intricacies of his understanding of the biblical teaching on sanctification. My acquaintance with him, however, has shown me that he takes the problem of indwelling sin within the believer very seriously, as well as the power that is ours through faith in Christ to fight against and overcome it. While I appreciate your concern expressed at the bottom of page 7 that "eradication instills in the believer a tendency to avoid responsibility for personal sin," I have not observed any tendency in this direction in Dr. Kroll's teaching. We at Back to the Bible remain very sensitive to the constant threat and deception of sin within our very nature as believers, as well as the greater power of God's deliverance through Christ. I believe these emphases have not changed here at Back to the Bible since my father was the Bible teacher.

Thanks for taking time to share your concerns with us. Let us pray for one another. We desire nothing more than to remain faithful to the Scriptures and to the whole counsel of God that is revealed there.

Yours in fellowship with Christ,


Herbert Epp

Ministry Assistant

HE:lb

cc: Dr. Kroll, Steve Nickel, Herb Epp



WOODROW KROLL, GENERAL DIRECTOR



MILES J. STANFORD
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Wednesday
11 September 1996

Mr. Herbert Epp
Back to the Bible
P.O. Box 82808
Lincoln, Nebraska 68501

Dear brother Herbert

Thank you for your good letter of the 3rd. I appreciate your kind sharing of the material from your father's sterling book, How God Makes Bad Men Good.

The reason I requested the material is to contrast it with the diametrically opposite position that exists between what your father taught concerning the believer's two natures, and what Back to the Bible is now advocating via broadcast and publication.

I quote from your father's book, How God Makes Bad Men Good:

After an individual is justified by faith in Christ, he discovers that he still has a sin nature (p. 141).

...understanding this, that every believer has two natures, and that they are in conflict (p. 144).

The sin nature does not die, or cease to exist, when a person trusts Jesus Christ as Saviour. But the individual himself dies [died] to the sin nature (p. 145).

From Dr. Kroll's new book, The Joy of Belonging, I read:

What happened to our old man when we were saved? He was crucified. No one comes down from the cross alive. Our old man was destroyed (p. 82).

There is no "co-existence" agreement. Our old nature is not sharing our body with a new nature. The old nature is gone for good (p. 83).

The next time you cave in to sin, don't blame your old nature. Your old nature is in the grave. The old man is gone (p. 84).

Herbert Epp

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11 Sept. '96.

I don't know how serious you--and Back to the Bible--consider this discrepancy to be, Herbert, and the adverse influence it has upon the Body of Christ.

For one thing, it will shift Back to the Bible, and members of its listening and reading constituency, away from the dispensational/positional realm, and closer to the dangerous Covenant anti-dispensational and anti-positional realm of law-oriented Covenantism.

You will lose many who stand for the former, and gain many who stand for the latter. No doubt the ministry of Mrs. Elliot has already contributed to this.

The Covenant, one-nature, eradication error results from the lack of dispensational/positional teaching. When Romans 6:6 is held to be actual and experiential, rather than judicial and positional, it is only natural to deduct that the Adamic life is eradicated from the life of the believer.

Enough for now, dear brother. I value your friendship in the Lord.

Resting in Him,



P.S. The enclosed Position to Person is my gift-book to you. It is based upon the dispensational/positional teaching.

cc: Dr. Kroll
Steven Nickel

[There has been no response to this letter.]