

# *Calvinism & “One-Naturism”*

2009 Bible Conference

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# “One-Naturism”: What Is It?

“**One-Naturism**” is the view held by Calvinists (& Arminians) that a believer upon conversion, no longer has an old nature. He now possesses only a remnant of his old nature which, in time, eventually passes away. A mature believer should not feel the pull of the old (sin) nature.



# John MacArthur

“I believe it is a serious misunderstanding to think of the believer as having both an old and new nature. Believers do not have dual personalities... there is no such thing as an old nature in the believer.” —“Freedom from Sin” - *Romans 6-7*, (Chicago: Moody Press), p.31



# John MacArthur

**“At new birth a person becomes a new creature; ‘old things have passed away; behold, new things have come.’ It is not simply that he receives something new, but that he becomes someone new...The new nature is not added to the old nature, but replaces it.”**

(continue)



# John MacArthur

**“The transformed person is a completely new ‘I.’ Biblical terminology, then, does not say that a Christian has two different natures. He has but one nature, the new nature in Christ. The old self dies and the new self lives; they do not coexist.”**

—MacArthur, “Commentary on *Ephesians*”, p. 164



# Scriptural References

## The Two Natures

- ▶ **Romans 7:22 - “For I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin...”**
- ▶ **Romans 8:5- “They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.”**



# Scriptural References

## New Nature

- ▶ **1 Peter 1:23**- “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.”
- ▶ **2 Peter 1:4** - “...by these ye might be partakers of the **divine nature**...”
- ▶ **Gal. 2:20** - “I am crucified with Christ nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me...”



# **Biblical Terms: Definitions**

## **Old Nature/Sinful Disposition**

**“The disposition which was received from Adam which is contrary to the will of God. It is the principle within man which leads to spiritual corruption, sin, and depravity. The Christian although, freed from its mastery of the sinful disposition, nevertheless, struggles with its influence and power.”**



# **Biblical Terms: Definitions**

## **— “Flesh” —**

**Refers to all that man is by human birth. As flesh, man is weak (Matt. 26:41, Rom. 6:19).**

**The “flesh” is one of the most frequently mentioned areas of unregenerated man that is mastered by the sinful disposition. Romans 7:14 “I am carnal (fleshly) having been sold under sin” (sinful disposition). However, believers, because of regeneration, are “in” the flesh, but not after “the flesh.”**



# **Biblical Terms: Definitions**

## **—“Sin”—**

**“This word (singular) is used 24 times in Romans to refer to the sinful disposition (nature). Romans 7:8  
“Sin taking the occasion...wrought in me all manner of concupiscence (lust).**



# **Biblical Terms: Definitions**

## **—“Freed from Sin”—**

**Romans 6:7-** freed from the position of slavery and dominance that sin as a master has over the unregenerate man. The word “freed” is a legal term.

**Renald Showers-** “The sinful disposition is still with the believer, but no longer holds its legal position as master over him.”

**(New Nature”, p. 76)**



# Biblical Terms: Definitions

## — “Old Man” —

**Romans 6:6 - The unregenerate person in his unregenerate state.**

**Kenneth Wuest - “...the old man here refers to that person, the believer was before he was saved, totally depraved, unregenerate, lacking the life of God.”**

—Wuest, “Romans in the Greek New Testament”, p. 101)



# Biblical Terms: Definitions

## —New Man —

**Colossians 3:10 - The “new man” is the regenerate man in his regenerate state. The new man (or new disposition) is the moral character and nature of God written in the heart of regenerate man by the Holy Spirit.**

**D. E. Hiebert- “Through the implantation of a new nature by the indwelling Holy Spirit believers become partakers in the moral nature of God...this new life with its new attitudes and dispositions is none other than ‘Christ in you, the hope of glory.’”—Com. 2 Peter and Jude, p. 48)**



# **Biblical Terms: Definitions**

## **– “Body of Sin” –**

**Romans 6:6- The physical body of unregenerate man which lives as an instrument in service to sin. The word “destroyed” in regard to the body of sin means to render powerless.**



# Reformed Defense:

- ▶ **Colossians 3:9** - “Seeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds.”
- ▶ **Ephesians 4:22** - “That you put off concerning the former conversation the old man...”



# Anthony Hoekema

## Reformed Defense of One Nature

**“Colossians 3:9-10, for example, teaches us also about the old and the new self. Paul here tells the Colossian believers not that they now should take off the old self and put on the new self, but that they have already done so! They made this change, then, at the time of conversion. The Greek participles are in the aorist tense, which describes snapshot action; Paul is referring to something these believers have done in the past.”**

**—Anthony Hoekema, “Five Views on Sanctification”, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1987), p. 79**



# Anthony Hoekema

## Admitted Difficulty

**“Ephesians 4:20-24 is closely parallel but seems to offer some difficulty. The Greek text has three main infinitives translated in many versions as imperatives.**

**Following this rendering, that passage would convey a command, which would indeed be inconsistent with the view just**

**defended—Anthony Hoekema, “Five Views on Sanctification”, (Grand Rapids, MI : Zondervan, 1987), p. 80**



# W. E. Vine

## Greek Scholar on Eph 4:22

**“Seeing that you have put off” is a translation of one word “apekdusamenoι,” an aorist participle, “to put off.” Another, and likely, rendering of this one form is “putting off.” This is the construction in Eph. 4:22, 25. That the tense is the aorist, of complete and decisive action, provides no reason for rejecting such a rendering, as even when there is a necessity for repeated action, the act should be complete on each occasion.”**

**—W. E. Vine, “Philippians and Colossians”, (London: Oliphants, 1955), p. 179**



# John Gerstner

(1914-1996)

Professor at Pittsburgh  
Theological Seminary

**“The Spirit of God continues to work faith in the regenerate and they therein persevere in good works, always struggling against the remnants of their original sin whose guilt is pardoned but whose power is decreasingly felt until destroyed at death.”** —*Dispensationalism, Wrongly Dividing the Word of Truth*, p.147



# Robert L. Dabney

**“...And if the old nature never loses any of its strength until death... if then any professed believer finds the ‘old man’ in undiminished strength, this is proof that he has never put on the new man.”**

Quoted by John MacArthur; *Vanishing Conscience*, p. 219



# Dr. Jay E. Adams

**“He renews the spirit of the believer’s mind so that the former manner of life, with all of its corrupt habits, patterns, and ways of living called ‘the old self’ or ‘the old man’ may be shed like a tattered, worn, filthy old garment that one throws away.”**

*—Adams, “Competent to Counsel”, Zondervan, p. 218*