



## NO LONGER I

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**Note:** This teaching can be used after viewing the DVD of Graham Cooke teaching the first session of International Council in Houston in 2011 or after enacting the *Three Dream Skit* to reinforce moving away from old ways and old mindsets to living life as God intended us to live, with Jesus as our example. Behavior is the echo of belief. We have not just been saved *from* something. We have been saved to live on earth as it is in Heaven.

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**Galatians 2:20** *I have been crucified with Christ, it is **no longer I** who lives, but Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

When Jesus dropped by the Pool of Bethesda in John 5, the scripture says crowds of sick people lay on the porches. One of the men lying there had been sick for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him and knew he had been ill for a long time, He asked him, 'Would you like to get well?' Now the man was entrenched in the way things had always been done and even though the Great Physician questioned him, the man missed the point. Not only was he physically lame, he was spiritually blind! He had no perception that the clash of two kingdoms was taking place and he had a ring side seat.

Before we received our new life in Christ, we were entangled in darkness, lost and blind to the ways of Heaven. However, once Jesus came into our hearts, all things became new. (2 Corinthians 5:17) Old ways of doing things passed away – completely disappeared, came to an end, and ceased to exist.

That is what Jesus was saying to the man lame for 38 years - that old way of healing was not working too well for him and Jesus was there as the forerunner of a new way to be healed. *Stand up, pick up your mat and walk!* Healing no longer depended upon the work of being rolled into the pool first. Healing came through obeying the command of the Lord. *Stand up! Pick up! Walk!*

In the first dream, the old man in the old car represents life without Christ. We walk in darkness. We notice sin and bad behavior. We think less of others and more highly of ourselves. We are quick to judge, quick to anger, quick to offense, quick to point out faults and mistakes.

In the second dream, the old man in the new car represents someone who has received Christ, but still walks in old, lifeless ways. He has new life available to him through his relationship with Christ, but he lives, instead, in judgments and is even religious. The fruits of the Spirit are not in operation. He worries. He carries unforgiveness. He is working to be better, but never is able to hit the high mark. Doing things in his own strength, he always falls short and feels worthless, never measuring up to what others expect. He looks for self-help programs to make him better. He goes for counseling hoping to find relief. Christ set you free. Stay free!

In the third dream, the new life available in our relationship with Christ is freely flowing. The new man in the new car tells the story that we should live daily. We have responsibilities to stay in Christ and bring Heaven to earth each day. It is not a difficult task as Christ did all the work for us!

As Kingdom leaders, our role is to see the best in every situation – in people and in circumstances. Rather than looking at the bad behavior of a person, we look deeper and see the gifts and potential that God placed within each person. We call them up in their God qualities. To only point out the wrong, reinforces what we do not want to see. We speak to their identity, who Christ made them to be and we help shape them in their new role in the earth. You might say, we are moving them out of an ‘old man’ mentality into a ‘new man in a new car’ mentality. We are using positives to overcome negatives.

As a leader, we use our role to influence others by setting examples and leading the way. What God has done for you, He will do for others. In reality, your testimony is the beginning of your ministry. That is why you need to have a current experience or encounter with the Lord. If your last encounter is from 20 years ago, then you are leading from memory, not experience.

As a leader, it is important that we continually point people towards their identity. Resources are attracted to our identity. Favor is attracted to our identity. Those things are not attracted to our position or our title. It is not about position. It is about placement and God has placed us *in Christ* and we should stay there. We should not go back and forth. We have died and our life is hidden in Christ with God.

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. When the Bible says that we have fallen short of glory (Romans 3:23), what is being said is that we have fallen short of goodness as a lifestyle. What do you think living a lifestyle of goodness looks like?
2. Thinking about the third dream of the new man in the new car, list ways your Aglow group can begin to be an avenue of blessing in your community. The new man looks beyond behaviors and bondage and sees potential in each person.
3. Every one of us needs someone to point out to us the beauty of who we really are in Jesus. Our struggle really is not with sin, it is with knowing and living out of our true identity. As a group, talk about how you can call each other up to a higher level without pointing out bad behaviors.
4. Part of our responsibility as a leader – and everyone is leading, we all have people we influence – is to help establish a Kingdom culture on earth. That is what Jesus was doing each day of His life. He untangled people from a religious system and showed them how to bring the things of Heaven to earth. How can your Aglow group help to establish a Kingdom culture in your community?

5. Reread question 4. How do you feel you have been entangled in a religious system that has kept you from receiving the fullness that being in Christ offers to you?

6. Reread question 4. How do you feel you are being untangled from a religious system? What has changed in your ways of thinking or acting?

7. Speak these words out loud: It is no longer me that is living. It is Christ that is living in me. So I think like Christ thinks because my mind is covered over with His mind. God saved me so Heaven could get on the inside of me. With Heaven on the inside of me, I can change my world. In Christ, I think right thoughts. In Christ, sin has no hold over me. Sickness cannot live in me. Disease has no place in me because Jesus and sickness are like oil and water - they do not mix! In Christ I have an inheritance. So I say good bye to living with meager possibilities. The favor of God that surrounds me draws resources to me like bees are drawn to honey. When Christ came to live inside of me, I became a totally different person than when I was born. Even if my family was dysfunctional, being in God's family makes me have a new Father! That is what it means for me to have a new identity in Christ!

Read this out loud each day until you begin to believe it and it causes you to see yourself in a different light.