



## **WOW: Word Of the Week**

### **Measles**

**August 31, 2022**

In a recent WOW, I unpacked the Greek word “kainos” -- new, not in point of time, but in quality and character, something that has not been before. Christians walk in “newness” of life, the old person is totally dead and gone, all things are new, with constant renewal in the Holy Spirit.

Now what too often happens is that we decide to walk with Jesus and then we come face to face with the realities of life, our own needs, what we want, even what we think we deserve. “I deserve to be happy.” When we are baptized, God gives us a new name. He writes that new name on us our lives, in our hearts, but he does not write in indelible ink. The things of this life, possessions, houses, lands, pleasure, entertainment — these and other “such likes” can easily smudge or even blot out the new name.

Oswald Chambers described it this way: some Christians have “spiritual measles.” Newness is sporadic in their lives, only in spots, sometimes yes and sometimes no. Spiritual measles may be invisible to others – after all, we do all we can to look OK. When spiritual weakness cannot remain hidden, some Christians have developed an interesting way to justify spiritual inconsistency—they wear their inconsistency with pride.

Following and at times quoting Chambers.

The disciple of Christ should display the new name everywhere. But some struggle with continuous renewal in the Holy Spirit, so they develop a reverse pride. Generally, pride is self-exalting, calling attention to self. Pride is usually Pharisaical, “I am thankful I am not as this publican.” But there is a reverse pride, “I am no saint, I constantly struggle, I am imperfect, I am a mess.” I am inconsistent in my Christian life and I am proud to say it. After all, no one is perfect. Many Christians find “publican pride” acceptable – but such blasphemes God. Such denies God’s ability to make us new in Christ. Such denies the renewing power of the Holy Spirit.

Think with me. Such a person is saying, “I am much too weak and hopeless, I am in such bad shape that God cannot change me, I am beyond living a life worthy of the gospel.” I will never be able to live in absolute newness of life. Why can you not be a saint? It is either that you do not want to be a saint, or that you do not believe God can make you one.

Let God write “newness” in every corner of your life, on your heart, across your life, on a banner you will carry high, on your name tag that you wear every day everywhere. Live up to your name. Change your conduct. “Newness of life” – every day in every way. Jesus saves us “just as we are.” But when Jesus saves, we will never stay as we were. Victorious resurrection living is possible in Christ, newness of life, because of the renewing power of the Holy Spirit!