

# Two Men Fighting Inside

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”  
John 3:6

## Introduction:

1. We are always at war ... every moment of our lives on earth ... until He changes us gloriously.
2. Conflict occurs, because the old man is not removed in regeneration, though God could have.
3. We might fantasize about fighting Philistines, Mormons, or Democrats ... but we have a greater war.
4. We have a war against our own lusts, even ignoring the devil and the world (I Pet 2:11; Jas 4:1-2).
5. Last week we saw the NT's emphasis on our character, conduct, and lifestyle as evidence of election.
6. Corinthian believers were manifestly declared to be an epistle of Jesus Christ by the Spirit (II Co 3:3).
7. All believers are able to progress from glory to glory to the image of Christ by that Spirit (II Co 3:18).
8. It is our goal to grow in grace, not to backslide or to stagnate as Christians (II Pet 3:18; I Pet 2:1-3).

## The Natural Man, the Old Man, or the Flesh

- A. Physical birth to human parents gives you a depraved nature of flesh from Adam (John 3:6).
- B. Our state by nature is spiritual death to God and truth, while obeying the devil (Eph 2:1-3).
- C. God is not in all the thoughts of the natural man in any humble, loving way (Ps 10:4; 14:1-3).
- D. From the time of conception, your nature is corrupt against God and holiness (Ps 51:5; 58:3).
- E. Before regeneration, we are perverse and profane (Eph 4:17-19; Titus 3:3; I Peter 4:1-5).
- F. No natural means can move natural men to godliness (I Cor 2:14; Isaiah 26:10; Luke 16:31).

## The Spiritual Man, the New Man, or the Spirit

- A. Spiritual birth by God, called quickening or regeneration, gives a new godly nature (Jn 3:6).
- B. This man is entirely the opposite of the old man with great spiritual abilities (I Cor 2:14-16).
- C. This work of God takes the same power as raising Jesus from the dead (Eph 1:18-20; 2:10).
- D. God gives us faith, all things for godliness, and a holy nature like His (II Pet 1:1-4; Col 3:10).

## The Conflict

- A. Conflict occurs, because the old man is not removed in regeneration, though God could have.
- B. Paul plainly described this conflict that kept him from serving God perfectly (Rom 7:14-23).
  1. These verses do not say that Paul lived in sin all the time, for he did not always sin.
  2. Paul justified the Law and condemned himself, and he could not live without sinning.
  3. Paul described that he was torn between principles of good and evil seeking his soul.
  4. There are three parties or principles in this passage – Paul, his old man, his new man.
- C. Paul described this conflict further as war between the flesh and the Spirit (Gal 5:13-26).
  1. The conflict between the flesh and Spirit means that we cannot live without sin as we would; it does not mean that we cannot live above sin as we should.
  2. We walk in the Spirit by avoiding and hating the listed works of the flesh and doing the listed spiritual fruit by the power of the Spirit.
- D. The seed of God in you, or your new man, will not allow you to sin unconsciously (I Jn 3:9).
- E. It can allow a Lot, Samson, David, or Peter to sin ... but they were vexed and/or repented.
- F. Lot chose Sodom and lived prosperously, but his soul was always vexed: his old man made a devastating choice that ruined his life and family, but his new man hated it (II Peter 2:7-8).
- G. If you choose like Lot (there are lots of choices), you can destroy yourself (I Tim 6:9-10).

- H. We have a war inside, fleshly lusts fighting against the soul (I Pet 2:11; Jas 4:1-2; Rom 7:23), and it is when these lusts are allowed to reign that fighting occurs among saints (Jas 3:13-18).
- I. A Christian allowing sin in his life is the most miserable of all men, for he has no pleasure.

### **The Cure**

- A. Jesus Christ our Saviour did not have an old man, for he did not inherit it from Adam like us.
- B. Paul wondered about a cure or deliverance, and he saw it in Jesus Christ (Rom 7:24-25).
- C. If you keep reading on into the next chapter, you will see him and us cured (Rom 8:1-5).
- D. We need liberty and adoption (redemption/glorification) of our bodies (Rom 8:18-23).

### **The Commandment**

- A. Our *old man* was practically crucified with Christ, so we should not serve sin (Rom 6:1-13).
- B. We are to put off the *old man* and put on the *new man* contrary to our race (Eph 4:17-24).
- C. We are to put off the *old man* and put on the *new man* contrary to our race (Col 3:8-17).
- D. God put a new man in us to will and to do His good pleasure; we work it out (Phil 2:12-13).
- E. We are to work from God's mercies in transforming our mind by our new man (Rom 12:1-2).
- F. We are to avoid any provision for the flesh in inputs or opportunity for sin (Romans 13:14).
- G. Paul did not allow his old man to get the upper hand and raise the risk of failure (I Cor 9:27).

### **The Commitment**

- A. The commitment of *faith* is our belief in Jesus Christ for salvation and repentance from sin.
- B. The commitment of *baptism* figuratively buries our old man to rise to life with the new man.
- C. The commitment of *membership* is our covenant to love and serve one another in our walk.
- D. The commitment of *warfare* is taking the armor of God and putting off the old man daily.
- E. This is the Christian religion, and this is how we love, please, and serve Jesus Christ.

### **Conclusion:**

- 1. If we do these things as we should, we are a manifest epistle of Christ read by all men (II Cor 3:1-3).
- 2. We have three getting baptized today, who are burying their old man and raising their new man.
- 3. For the rest of us, we should be even more conscious of our struggle with opposing men inside us.