

The Spirit Versus the Flesh

Introduction:

As children of God, we have been given the wonderful gift of everlasting life in Heaven. Not only do we have a wonderful future life awaiting us in Heaven, but we may also enjoy a wonderful life on this earth. In John 10:10, Jesus said, *“I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”*

God wants us to live an abundant life, a life filled with His blessings. He doesn't want us to live our lives in bondage to sin. Romans 8:15 says, *“For ye have not received the **spirit of bondage** again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.”* God, our Father, wants us to enjoy the freedom that comes with becoming a member of His family.

Yet, we oftentimes give in to the temptation to sin. We do things we know are wrong to do. We say things we know we should not say. We think things we know we should not think. WHY? Why is it that we still struggle to do right, even after we are saved? Why is it that at times we have such a strong desire to do right, and then at other times we have such a strong desire to sin?

The answer is that every believer has two natures. Every person has a sinful, carnal nature that has been passed down from Adam. (Romans 5:12) Every human is born with this

sinful nature. When a person gets saved, this sinful nature still remains a part of the believer.

Yet, when someone gets saved, they are “born again.” They are given a new nature and made a new creature. This new nature is in a battle with the old, sinful nature.

Here are the topics our lesson will cover:

- I. The sinful nature of man
- II. The Spiritual nature given to believers
- III. The battle between the Spirit and the flesh
- IV. How to help the Spirit win the battle in your life

I. The sinful nature of man

1. Romans 5:12

When Adam sinned, sin entered into the world. Now, death is passed upon all men, because _ _ _ have sinned.

Sin is passed down from generation to generation. Some people think that man is born good and that he learns to do evil as he grows. It is true that as men grow, their sinful nature becomes more prevalent. However, the Bible teaches that all men are born with a sin nature.

Example: No one has to teach a child to be selfish. Children are selfish by nature. No one has to teach a child to disobey. Children are disobedient by nature.

2. Ephesians 2:3

According to this verse, we were the children of wrath by _____ . Before we got saved, we lived our lives like everyone else. We fulfilled the desires of the _____ and of the _____ .

3. Romans 7:14-18

In verse 14, the apostle Paul tells us that he is _____ , sold under sin. The word “carnal” means fleshly, and refers to the sinful nature of man.

In verse 18, he goes on to say that in his flesh dwells no _____ .

4. Romans 8:5-8

To be carnally minded is _____ . (verse 6)

The carnal mind is enmity against _____ , and is not _____ to the _____ of _____ . (verse 7)

Those who are in the _____ cannot please _____ . (verse 8)
This means that those who live in sin, fulfilling the works of the flesh, are displeasing to God.

Following after the desires of our flesh will bring death to our Christian life. It will cause us to live contrary to the Laws of _____ , and we will bring displeasure to _____ .

In Conclusion: We are sinners by nature. We are born with a sin nature. This sinful nature is also referred to as “the flesh.” Our flesh is at enmity with God. This means our sinful nature is the enemy of God. The sinful, carnal nature

of man will bring death to one's Christian life if allowed. It will also cause one to live contrary to the Laws of God. It is impossible to please God and live after the flesh.

II. The Spiritual nature given to believers

1. II Peter 1:4

In this verse, the new nature that God gives to believers is called the _____ nature. It is the divine nature because God the Holy Spirit, Himself, comes to dwell inside of the believer.

2. I Corinthians 6:19&20

These verses teach that the believer's body is the temple of the _____. We are supposed to glorify God in our body and in our spirit, for they belong to _____.

3. Ephesians 4:22-24

We are admonished in these verses to put off the _____ and to put on the _____, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. The term "new man" is a term used to describe the new nature given to believers.

4. II Corinthians 5:17

In this verse, the Bible says that a man who is in Christ (has believed on Christ), is a _____. When a person gets saved, he becomes a new person because the Holy Spirit now indwells him.

In Conclusion: When you get saved, God gives you a new nature. The Holy Spirit comes to live inside of you. He makes you a new creature. He helps you to do right and to fight against the old sinful nature.

III. The battle between the Spirit and the flesh

1. Galatians 5:17-25

In verse 17 we find that the _____ and the _____ are contrary to one another. They are fighting against each other.

In verses 19-21 some of the works of the flesh are given. Write them on the following lines:

In verses 22-23 nine items are listed as being the fruit of the Spirit. Write them on the following lines:

From this passage we can clearly see that there is a big difference between the life of one who is controlled by the Spirit, and the life of one who is controlled by the flesh.

We also see in verse 24 that we are supposed to crucify the flesh with the _____ and _____.

We are admonished in verse 25 to live and walk in the _____.

2. Romans 7:14-25

In this passage Paul is describing the contrasting desires he has inside of him.

In verse 19 he says that he wants to do good, but he doesn't do it. He also states that he ends up doing the _____ that he doesn't want to do.

In verse 21 he states that he has discovered that when he wants to do good, evil is _____ with him.

In verse 23 he talks about a war going on inside of him. One side is seeking to bring him into _____ to the law of sin in his members.

In verse 25 he states that it is only through _____ that he can have the victory over the flesh and sin.

In Conclusion: Every believer has a battle taking place inside of them. The battle is between the Spirit and the flesh. They are warring against each other to influence the believer to either do wrong - **the influence of the flesh**, or to do right - **the influence of the Spirit**.

IV. How to help the Spirit win the battle in your life

1. Romans 6:6-18

In verse 11 we are told to reckon (consider) ourselves to be _____ to sin, but _____ unto God.

Verse 12 teaches that if we allow sin to reign in our bodies that we will _____ it in the _____ thereof.

Verse 13 admonishes us to yield (or submit) ourselves to _____, and not to yield our members as instruments of _____.

In your own words, write down the meaning of verse 16:

We can help the Spirit win the battle in our life by yielding to the Spirit and not yielding to the flesh. As we allow the Spirit to lead and guide us, we will become the servants of righteousness. On the other hand, if we allow the flesh to lead us, we will become the servants of sin and death. If you yield to sin over and over again, you will become a slave, in bondage to that sin, and it will be difficult for you to get victory over that sin.

However, as you yield to the Spirit over and over again, He will become your Master. **He can give you the victory over any sin!**

2. Colossians 3:1-2

In verse 1 we are admonished to seek those things which are _____.

Verse 2 tells us to set our affection on _____, not on things on the _____.

We need to be focused on God and the things of God! Many times we get focused on the things of this earth. Whether it be employment, schooling, health problems, financial problems, or family problems; we all have many things in our lives that demand our attention. We must be careful not to get so caught up in the things of **this life** that we forget about the One Who had given us life.

Here are some things you can do to help you stay focused on God.

- 1) Read and study the Bible each day. The Bible is God's Word and tells us what God wants us to know and do. It tells us about God.
- 2) Spend time each day thinking about God and His Word and His Works. (Look around and consider all that God has made.)
- 3) Spend time each day talking to God in prayer. Confess your sins to Him. Praise Him for Who He is and what He has done. Bring your requests to Him.

3. II Corinthians 10:4, 5

In these verses, we find that the weapons for the Spiritual warfare in our lives are not c _____. This means they are not of the flesh. We do not fight the battle against our sinful nature with physical strength.

We are to cast down (destroy) anything that would rise up against the knowledge of God, and we are to bring into _____ every _____ to the obedience of Christ.

We can win the battle against our sinful nature by getting rid of the things in our lives that are ungodly, and by being obedient to Christ in every area of our lives.

4. Ephesians 5:18

In this verse we are commanded to not be _____ with wine, but to be filled with the _____.

A man who is drunk is under the control and influence of alcohol. The alcohol affects what he says, where he goes, and what he does. He is not in control of himself.

Likewise, a man who is filled with the Spirit is under the control and influence of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit affects what he says, where he goes, and what he does. His flesh is not in control, because he has yielded control of himself to the Holy Spirit.

Here are some thoughts on being filled with the Spirit:

1. You must desire to be filled with the Spirit.

You must desire to have God fill every area of your life. This means that if you have things in your life that you know God would not be pleased with, you must confess them to God and allow God to cleanse you of them. (I John 1:9) Keeping sin in your life will hinder you from being filled with the Spirit. Light and darkness do not mix. (II Corinthians 6:14)

2. You must ask for the filling of the Holy Spirit.

Luke 11:13 says, “*If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy _____ to them that _____ him?*”

In this passage, Jesus was teaching His disciples about prayer, and in verse 13 He gives us an illustration of a father and his son.

If an earthly father will give good things to his children, **how much more** will the Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him? God strongly desires for us to be filled with His Spirit, but He wants us to ask for His filling. If a child has a strong desire for something, it is only natural for that child to go to his father and ask for what he wants. If we as God’s children truly desire to be filled with God’s Spirit, then it will be natural for us to go to our Heavenly Father and ask Him for the Holy Spirit to fill our lives.

In Conclusion:

To help the Holy Spirit win the battle over our sinful nature, we should:

1. Yield (or submit) to the Holy Spirit.
2. Set our affection on things above, and stay focused on God. We should daily:
 - Read and study the _____
 - _____ about God and His Word and His Works
 - Talk to God in _____

3. Forsake our sin and be obedient to Christ in every area of our lives.
4. Be filled with the Spirit.

REVIEW – The Spirit versus the flesh

I. The sinful nature of man

- A. Because Adam sinned, sin and death entered into the world. Now, death is passed upon ___ men.
- B. All men are born with a sin _____.
- C. The sinful nature of man is also referred to as the f_____.
- D. Our sinful nature is the _____ of God.

II. The Spiritual nature given to believers

- A. When a person gets saved, the _____ comes to dwell inside of him.
- B. We are to glorify God in our body and in our spirit, for they belong to _____.
- C. When a person believes on Christ, he becomes a _____ creature.

III. The battle between the Spirit and the flesh

- A. Every believer has a battle taking place inside of them. The battle is between the _____ and the _____.
- B. The flesh influences us to do _____, and the Spirit influences us to do _____.

IV. How to help the Spirit win the battle in your life

- A. We need to yield (or submit) to the _____.
- B. If we yield to the flesh, we will become the servants of _____.
- C. We need to set our _____ on things above.
- D. We need to bring every thought into captivity to the _____ of Christ.
- E. We need to be _____ with the Spirit.
- F. We should d_____ and a__ for the filling of the Holy Spirit.

Assignment: Choose at least 2 of the following verses, memorize them, and say them to your teacher.

- Romans 6:16
- Romans 8:6
- Romans 7:18
- Ephesians 5:18

Application: What will you do based on the truth you learned in this lesson?

Your name: _____

Name of teacher: _____

Signature of teacher: _____

Date completed: _____