

## CHAPTER 10

### The Believer's Two Natures

If I am saved, why do I still sin? Why do I have such a problem with sin while I am here on earth? Why am I still troubled with impure thoughts? Why do I sometimes do what I know is wrong? Why do I sometimes fail to do what I know is right? Why do I continue to battle with temptations? Why do I sometimes live and act like an unsaved person (see 1 Cor. 3:3), even though it grieves me and saddens me when I live this way?

### The Unbeliever's One Nature

The unsaved man has but one nature--a sinful, selfish, corrupt, wicked nature which he received from Adam. How is the heart of man described in Jeremiah 17:9?

- Man's heart is pure and good.
- Man's heart is desperately wicked (incurably sick).
- Man's heart contains some evil and some good.
- Man's heart is mostly wicked, but there is a spark of goodness in everyone.
- Most men have more goodness than they have badness.

1) **Jeremiah 17:9-10.** "The heart is \_\_\_\_\_ above all things, and \_\_\_\_\_." In this verse, the expression "desperately wicked" really means "*incurably sick*." We are so wicked that God says we are like a person who has a deadly, incurable disease. It is a disease far worse than cancer or leprosy or AIDS--it is the number one killer--***SIN!***

2) **Mark 7:20-23.** The Lord Jesus, the Son of God, spoke these words. Did Jesus agree with Jeremiah 17:9? \_\_\_\_\_ According to the Lord Jesus (Mark 7:20-23), is man's heart basically evil or basically good? \_\_\_\_\_ Write down six of the things that go out (proceed) from within us, proving that our hearts are wicked and diseased (Mark 7:21-22):

1.	4.
2.	5.
3.	6.

In Mark 7:23, Jesus described these things as "\_\_\_\_\_ things." After studying Mark 7:20-23, we must conclude that man's basic and biggest problem is (circle the right one):

a. hunger	b. corrupt government
b. poor housing	e. pollution in the water
c. wars	f. an evil and polluted heart

3) **Matthew 7:9-11.** According to these verses, did the Lord Jesus say that men are good or evil? \_\_\_\_\_ According to these verses (especially verse 11), is it possible for an evil person to do good things? \_\_\_\_\_ Therefore, when we see people doing kind and good deeds, does this mean that these people are not evil? \_\_\_\_\_ Unsaved people can sometimes be very good fathers, very good mothers, very good citizens, very good workers on their jobs, etc. However, they still have corrupt sinful natures which they received from Adam. Some people manifest their evil natures outwardly more than others by their profane speech and wicked deeds. Other people do not manifest their evil natures as much outwardly, and they may seem to live in a respectable and moral way. Whether a person seems to be behaving in a reasonable way or not, God's description of the human heart still stands. It is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9).

4) **Romans 3:10-18.** When we look into a mirror we see ourselves as we really are on the outside. If our hair is messed up, the mirror will reveal that. If there is a pimple on my face, the mirror will show this. If there is chocolate smeared on my chin, the mirror will reflect this problem and show me my need to clean up.

What if God were to have us look into a mirror which revealed not our outward appearance, but the true condition of our heart? What if God were to have us look into a mirror to show us what our inner nature is really like? God has given us such a mirror. It is found in Romans 3:10-18. Do these verses present a pretty picture? \_\_\_\_\_ Are these verses a true description of you? \_\_\_\_\_ Does the word "all" in verse 12 include you? \_\_\_\_\_ Does the phrase "all the world" in verse 20 include you? \_\_\_\_\_ Are you guilty before God (v.20)? \_\_\_\_\_ Does the "all" in verse 23 include you? \_\_\_\_\_

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What is one thing that the unsaved person can never do (Romans 8:8; Hebrews 11:6)?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ In Titus 3:3 we have a description of the unsaved person. Is this a good description of what you were like when you were unsaved? \_\_\_\_\_ Another terrible (but true) description of the unsaved person is found in Ephesians 2:1-3. We were "by N \_\_\_\_\_ the children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3).

### **Two Natures in One Person**

When a person is saved, he receives a new nature which is "created in \_\_\_\_\_ and true \_\_\_\_\_ (Ephesians 4:24). The believer has been made a partaker of the D \_\_\_\_\_ N \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Peter 1:4), the nature of God Himself! How does God describe the saved person who is in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17)?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Now that I have a new nature, what has happened to my old sinful nature? Did it disappear? Was it transformed from something evil to something good? Was it totally removed? Was it partially removed?

If the believer says that he has no sin (no sin nature), is he telling the truth or is he deceiving himself (1 John 1:8)? \_\_\_\_\_ If the believer says that he has not sinned (not committed any acts of sin), is he telling the truth or is he making God a liar (1 John 1:10)? \_\_\_\_\_ The old sinful nature has not been eradicated or removed. It is still present with the believer.

James 3:2 refers to believers and it says, "For in many things we offend all" or literally "For in many things we all offend." The word "offend" means that we all stumble, fall short, and go astray. We all fail and fall. Even as believers we all have sinned. We all offend, and therefore we all are in desperate need of the mercy and grace of God and in desperate need of His forgiveness and cleansing.

In light of these passages (1 John 1:8,10; James 3:2), we must conclude that when a person is saved, the old sinful nature is not removed, erased or eradicated. The believer still possesses the old nature and will continue to possess the old nature until he is with the Lord, at which time he will be free from the presence of sin forever.

Paul, as a saved man, made the following amazing statements:

**Romans 7:14**---"I am \_\_\_\_\_, sold under \_\_\_\_\_."

**Romans 7:17**---"Now, then, it is no more I that do it, but \_\_\_\_\_ that \_\_\_\_\_ in me."

**Romans 7:18**---"For I know that \_\_\_\_\_ (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth \_\_\_\_\_; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not."

**Romans 7:21**---"I find then a law, that, when I would do good, \_\_\_\_\_ is present with me."

**Romans 7:24**---"Oh, \_\_\_\_\_ man that I am!"

## Facts About the Old Nature

### 1) The Old Nature Does Not Change.

The old nature is incorrigible. It will not change. In fact, when you are saved the old nature will seem even worse! It is desperately wicked and it remains so. It will never become less wicked than it now is. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh" (John 3:6). Flesh is flesh and it will not change to become something else. Man's sinful flesh will always produce the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21). Man's sinful flesh will never produce the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). Only God can do that.

### 2) The Old Nature Does Not Improve

If you are hoping that your old nature will reform itself and improve its behavior, you are going to be very disappointed. That which is "corrupt" (Eph. 4:22) is going to continue to be corrupt. That which is "wretched" (Rom. 7:24) is going to continue to be wretched. "No good thing" (Rom. 7:18) is not going to improve to "some good things." The old nature is sinful and corrupt through and through, and it is never going to improve.

### 3) The Old Nature Is Not Transformed

When a person is saved, the old nature is not transformed into something good. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit" (John 3:6). When a person is born again, the flesh does not transform itself into spirit. It remains what it always was: FLESH. The old nature is not improved and sweetened. It does not undergo a reformation. When a person gets saved, does God transform his old nature into something that is now good? Not at all.

The Bible teaches that my old nature is just as vicious and rotten and sinful and wicked as it ever was: "Put off . . . the old man, which is \_\_\_\_\_ according to the deceitful lusts" (Ephesians 4:22). The new birth is a *creation* (2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10), not a *transformation*. The new birth is the bringing in of a new thing, not the changing of an old. My old nature remains the same. The difference is this: I now have a new nature created by God.

The Bible never teaches that the old nature is transformed. It does, however, teach that believers are being transformed and changed. Here are two examples:

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye \_\_\_\_\_ [changed] by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:2).

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are \_\_\_\_\_ [transformed] into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3:18).

As we grow in the Lord, as we walk in the Spirit, as we obey the Lord, and as we surrender our hearts to Him, HE CHANGES US! Little by little, day by day, we are constantly being changed into His image. I can be more like Christ today than I was yesterday! I can be more like Christ tomorrow than I was today! God can transform me by His grace, but God does not transform the old sinful nature. No, instead He crucified it!

### 4) The Old Nature Can Never Be Purified

When you think of the old nature, you can think of a polluted well. The water in the depths of this well is polluted and corrupt and not fit to drink. You could paint the well, but the water which comes up is still going to be polluted. You could install a brand new bucket with brand new ropes, but the water which comes up is still going to be the same undrinkable water. The problem is with the source. Man's old sinful nature is a polluted stream which began to flow the moment Adam disobeyed God. This water is never going to be purified. It is never going to be cleansed. It will always be polluted by sin.

### 5) The Old Nature Can Never Please God

"So then they that are in the flesh cannot \_\_\_\_\_ God" (Romans 8:8). According to Romans 8:9, a saved person is not in the flesh because he is indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God.

The unsaved person is in the flesh, and this person can never please God (verse 8).

**Proverbs 15:8:** "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight."

**Even when the unsaved person performs a religious act (offering a sacrifice, saying a prayer, etc.), God is not pleased. It is done in the flesh.**

**Proverbs 15:9:** "The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the LORD: but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness."

**The way of the wicked is detestable to God. No matter which way he goes, no matter what he does, he cannot please God. "An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked, is sin" (Prov. 21:4). Plowing the field is normally considered to be a constructive and needful activity, but the unsaved man cannot even please God in this.**

**Proverbs 15:26:** "The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the LORD: but the words of the pure are pleasant words."

**The thoughts of the wicked are detestable to God. God is not pleased. "And you, that were sometime alienated and \_\_\_\_\_ in your \_\_\_\_\_ by wicked works" (Col. 1:21).**

#### 6) The Old Nature Remains With the Believer "Until Death Do Us Part"

As believers, we will have our old nature until the day we die or until the day that Christ comes to take us home to heaven (1 Thess. 4:13-18). When we were unsaved the old nature dominated everything that we did, including our thoughts, words and deeds. We could not help but sin. We were slaves to sin. We could do nothing but sin. There was no battle within us. The old nature dominated and had no opposition. It takes two to fight.

**Clarification:** When we say there is no battle in the heart of the unsaved person, we are referring to the battle between the old nature and the new nature. This does not mean that the unsaved person has no battles between right and wrong. First of all, the unsaved person has a **conscience** which condemns him if he does something which he knows to be wrong. This kind of inner battle does exist. Also there are certain **restraints** put upon the unsaved person. He may want to do certain things but his parents may have other ideas. He may want to want to speed on the highway but he fears the police and the penalties that are involved should he get caught. He may want to train for the Olympics for self-centered reasons (fame, acclaim, etc.) but he may lack the self control that is needed for such training. He may want to lose weight for selfish reasons (to attract the opposite sex, etc.), but may battle with his cravings to eat more than he should. So the unsaved may have all kinds of battles, but one thing they do not have: the battle between the old and new nature.

After we were saved, we possessed two natures, the old and the new. At this point there was a battle between the two natures: "For the \_\_\_\_\_ lusteth against the Spirit, and the \_\_\_\_\_ against the flesh; and these are \_\_\_\_\_ the one to the other, so that

ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal. 5:17).

As a saved person I have a choice. I can choose to walk in the Spirit or I can choose to walk in the flesh (Galatians 5:16). The believing heart knows that the only way to please God is to walk in the Spirit and to allow God to control his life. When the believing heart fails to walk in the Spirit, then he is convicted and bothered and grieved (compare the example of "righteous Lot" in 2 Peter 2:7-8). As believers, God has set us free from the power of sin, and we need to claim that victory by faith.

When the believer goes to be with the Lord, a great final transformation will take place (see 1 John 3:2; 1 Cor. 15:52-53) and the believer will finally be without sin and will no longer possess a wicked sin nature. He will then be free from even the presence of sin.

<p><b>Saved from the Penalty of Sin:</b>  <b>Justification</b>          This takes place when I get saved.</p>
<p><b>Saved from the Power of Sin:</b>  <b>Sanctification</b>          This takes place throughout the Christian life as I yield to God and walk in the Spirit.</p>
<p><b>Saved from the Presence of Sin:</b>  <b>Glorification</b>          This takes place in the next life when I am with Christ forever.</p>

### 7) The Old Nature Was Condemned By God

God did not change the old nature. God did not transform the old nature. God did not improve the old nature. Rather, God condemned it. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, \_\_\_\_\_ sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3). Our sinful nature was condemned at Calvary's cross. DEATH is the only answer.

"Knowing this, that our \_\_\_\_\_ is [was] crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed [rendered ineffective], that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Romans 6:6). God's solution to the problem of the old sinful nature involved Calvary's cross.

### The Old Man

What is the "old man" (Rom. 6:6; Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:9) and what is the "new man" (Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24)? The old man refers to all that I am and all that I have in Adam; the new man refers to all that I am and all that I have in Christ. The old man is my old life in Adam; the new man is my new life in Christ. The one refers to the SELF LIFE; the other to the CHRIST LIFE. The one has to do with FALLEN MAN; the other has to do with REDEEMED or REGENERATED MAN. The old man is the old self; the new man is the new self, the new creature in Christ.

The old man is characterized by that fallen sinful nature received from Adam; the new man is characterized by that divine holy nature received from God at the time of the new birth. The old man is born of the flesh; the new man is born of God. The old man came about by natural birth; the new man came about by the new birth. The old man is "CORRUPT according to the deceitful lusts" (Eph. 4:22; and compare Romans 7:24); the new man is "after God (according to God, patterned after God, a reflection of God, etc.) . . . created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:24). The new man is a new thing which did not previously exist but which was created (Eph. 4:24; 2 Cor. 5:17). Five years before you were saved the new man did not exist at all, but the old man did!

The old man is not [simply] the old nature, though it involves the old nature; the old man is characterized as having a nature that is opposed to God, and this nature stamps its character on the activities of the old man (Roy Heubner).

The old man is described by his works (his deeds) in Ephesians 4:25-31: He is a wicked liar (v. 25), he has a rotten temper (v. 26), he is a evil thief (v. 28), he has a corrupt mouth with garbage flowing out of it (v. 29) and he is characterized by bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking and an unforgiving spirit (verses 31-32). In contrast the new man speaks truth (v. 25), gets angry in the right way at the right things (v. 26), works hard and knows how to give (v. 28), speaks that which is good and that which edifies (v. 29), is characterized by kindness, tenderheartedness and a forgiving spirit. The new man is a reflection of God, the One who created Him!

### How Do We Handle the Old Man?

How then does God deal with the old man? God does not change the old man. God does not transform the old man. What did God do with your old self? What did God do with all that you are and all that you have in Adam? Romans 6:6 answers this: "OUR OLD MAN WAS (past tense) CRUCIFIED WITH HIM." God condemned the old man, judged him and poured out His wrath on Him when the blessed Saviour died on the cross. My old man was crucified!

**"Was crucified"**--It is done! It is finished! You do not need to crucify the old man! It already was done 2000 years ago. It is not something that you do, it is something that God has already done! It is not a command to obey; it is a fact to believe! You do not need to deal with the old man. He has already been dealt with on the cross! Those who try to conquer the old man will never win!

In Romans 6:6 we need to make a difference between our position and our experience. This verse is not a reference to the experience of a Christian, as many Reformed men teach. **"Our old man was crucified"** is a fact pertaining to our position in Christ. In our actual experience our old man often seems very alive and well, but we must not go by our experience. We must go by what God has said (the FACTS!). The fact of your position is that your old man was crucified with Christ. Claim that fact by faith in spite of appearances to the contrary! Reckon it to be so! The more we claim this fact by faith, the more it will become true in our actual experience. The more we reckon on our position the more God the Holy Spirit will make it true in our actual condition. *Faith is the key.*

Consider Colossians 3:9-10. Note carefully the language. It says, "you have put off" and "you have put on." These are not commands, these are facts. Why has the old man been put off? Again the answer is found in Romans 6:6. The old man has been put off because God put him on the cross! My old man was put off and crucified at Calvary! The new man has been put on the

moment I was saved because I am a new creature in Christ!

Now consider the language of Ephesians 4:22,24. Here we are told to do something! Put off and put on! These are commands! But did not Colossians chapter 3 says that it has already been done? Discern the difference:

### **Colossians sets forth the fact; Ephesians appeals to faith!**

**In Ephesians we are told to do in faith what Colossians tells us our God has already done in fact!** How do I put off the old man? By reckoning that God has already done it! By reckoning that my old man was crucified with Christ. How do I put on the new man? By reckoning and considering myself as a new creature in Jesus Christ! By faith in the work done at the cross the old man is put off; by faith in my glorious position in Christ the new man is put on.

Another illustration of this same principle is found in Galatians 3:27 and Romans 13:14. The first passage tells us that we have put on Christ. The second passage gives us the command: "Put on Christ!" Galatians 3:27 is the FACT (you have put on Christ!). Romans 13:14 appeals to FAITH (we are told to do in faith what God has already done in fact!).

Consider Galatians 2:20--"I (the old man in Adam) have been crucified with Christ, nevertheless I (the new man in Christ) live, yet not I (the old man in Adam) but Christ lives in me (the new creature in Christ), and the life which I (the new man) now live in the flesh, I (the new man) live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me!"

### **Two Serious Errors**

There are two common errors of our day among those who claim to be true believers:

**1) The error of SINLESS PERFECTION.** Suppose someone were to say, "God has saved me and I no longer have an old sinful nature! I never have a problem with sin any longer." What does God say about such a person (1 John 1:8)?

\_\_\_\_\_ Another might boast, "Since I have been a believer I have never sinned, not even once." What does God say about such a person (1 John 1:10)? \_\_\_\_\_

**2) The error of SINFUL IMPERFECTION.** This is a more common error among Christians. A person might say, "Even though I'm saved, I still have my old sinful nature, and I can't help but sin. I'm a slave to sin, and no matter how hard I try, I continue to fail and fall!" Such a person has never realized that the Christian life is to be a life of V \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Corinthians 15:57; 1 John 5:4). God has set us free from \_\_\_\_\_ (Romans 6:18,22 and see Romans 6:2,11-14)! Just because we may fall into the muck and mire of sin does not mean that we need to wallow in the mire as a way of life.



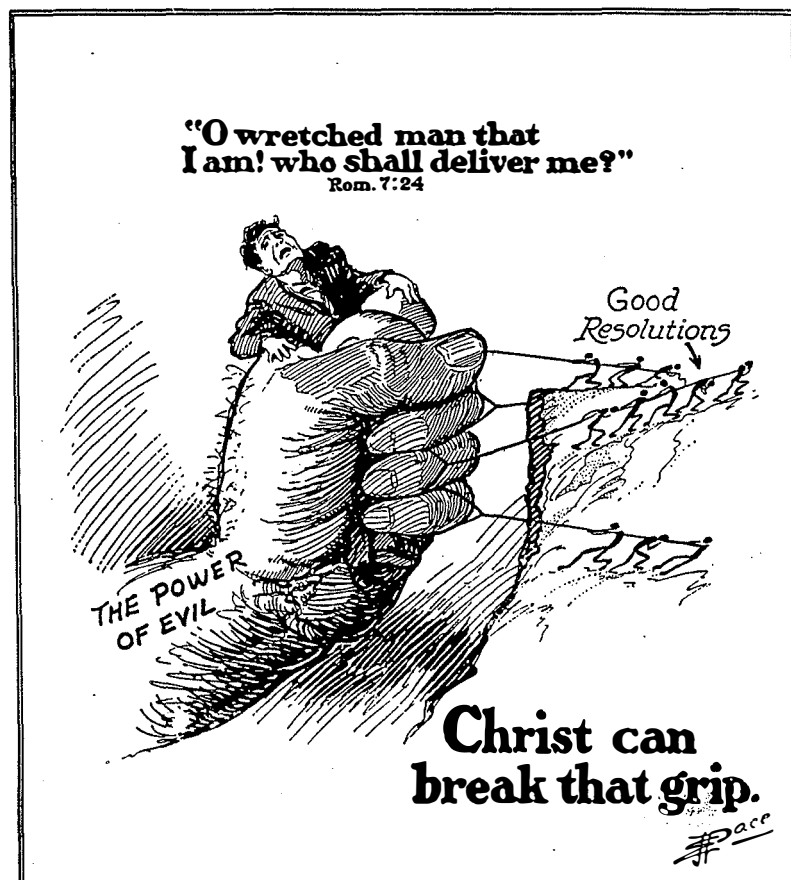
## God's Twofold Provision

### God's Provision for Victory Over Sin

At the beginning of the day I can say, "Lord, I thank You that I need not sin (1 John 2:1a--"that ye sin not"). I thank You that Christ has set me free from sin. I thank You that my old man was crucified with Christ. I thank You that Christ lives in me and that You have made it possible for me to have victory over sin. Lord, I desire to walk by means of the Spirit so that I do not fulfill the lusts of the flesh (Gal. 5:16). I want You to control my life so that the fruit of the Spirit will be evident (Gal. 5:22-23). I thank You that I died to sin and I do not need to be enslaved by it any longer.

### God's Provision for Restoration

At the end of the day I can say, "Lord, I thank You that I have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous One (1 John 2:2b--"if any man sin...."). Lord, I have fallen short, and have failed to be the believer that You want me to be. I have failed to trust You and claim Your full provision for victory. I thankfully confess my sins and claim Your full forgiveness and restoration to fellowship (1 John 1:9). Lord, thank You for Your grace and mercy and cleansing power.



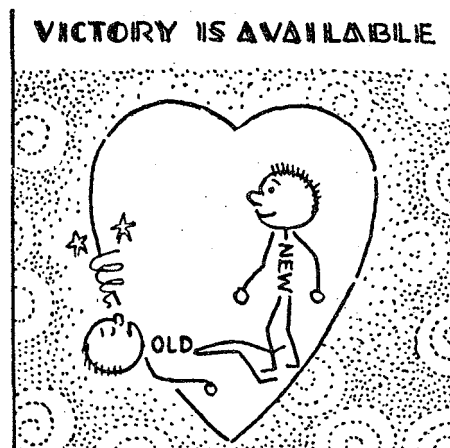
**The Two Natures--A Comparison**

As we have studied, every believer has two natures--the old and the new. Let us now summarize what the Bible says about the believer's two natures:

<b>THE OLD NATURE</b>	<b>THE NEW NATURE</b>
<b>Received by natural birth from Adam</b> (wholly and hopelessly bad)	<b>Received by the new birth from God</b> (the nature of God Himself, therefore wholly good)
<b>Pertaining to the old man in Adam.</b> See Ephesians 4:22--"The old man which is _____ according to deceitful lusts."	<b>Pertaining to the new man in Christ.</b> See Ephesians 4:24--"the new man which after God is created in _____ and true _____."
Incapable of doing good (as God counts good) --See Romans 7:18-19	Incapable of sinning--see 1 John 3:9; Eph. 4:24
At war with the Spirit (Gal. 5:17)	At war with the flesh (Gal. 5:17)
Opposed to God and His will (Rom. 7:15-23)	Delighting in God and His will (Rom. 7:18-22)
Manifested by the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21)	Manifested by the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23)
Who or what dwells in the believer according to Romans 7:18?  _____	Who or what dwells in the believer according to Galatians 2:20? _____  The power of an indwelling Saviour.

**The Two Natures--A Battle!**

Within each believer there is a great struggle for control! Who is going to control your life? Who is going to win the battle for control--the old you or the new you?



Notice the great war and conflict and struggle that is taking place (compare Galatians 5:17). Notice who is fighting in this contest:

The New	The Old
The one who agrees with and delights in God's law (verses 16, 22)	Indwelling sin (verses 17,v. 20)
The one who hates sin (v.15)	The flesh in which is no good thing (v. 18)
The one who desires and wills to do good (verses 18, 19)	Ever-present evil (v. 21)
"The inward man" (v. 22)	The "wretched man" (v. 24)
The renewed "mind" (verses 23, 25)	The flesh that is under the law of sin and death (verses 23, 25)

This inward battle is described by Paul in Romans 7:15-24. In the following verses, write in "old" or "new," depending whether the pronoun "I" is referring to Paul's old nature or his new nature. The first few are done for you:

"For that which I (**old**) do I (**new**) allow not: for what I (**new**) would, that do I (**old**) not; but what I (\_\_\_\_\_) hate, that do I (\_\_\_\_\_) . If then I (\_\_\_\_\_) do that which I (\_\_\_\_\_) would not, I consent unto the law that it is good....(go to verse 19) for the good that I (\_\_\_\_\_) would I (\_\_\_\_\_) do not: but the evil which I (\_\_\_\_\_) would not, that I (\_\_\_\_\_) do...."

Paul's new nature wanted to do what was good and right but his old nature was determined to do what was sinful and wrong! The battle is not hopeless. Victory is available for every child of God (see Romans 7:24-25)!

An old Indian, who had newly found Christ as his Saviour, expressed the problem in this way: "In my heart there are two dogs that are continually in battle, a white dog and a black dog." The missionary asked him, "Which dog wins the battle?" The answer was simple, "The one that I feed!" How can we feed the new nature? What have we been feeding upon spiritually? What do we meditate on? What do we fill our mind with (Philippians 4:8)? What is our main focus (2 Cor. 3:18)?

The Bible says, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not \_\_\_\_\_ for the \_\_\_\_\_ (the old sinful nature)" (Romans 13:14). If you were to spend a day in the woods or at the beach, you would probably bring along some provisions (some food and drink) so that you would not starve! God tells the believer not to make any provisions for the flesh, but rather to **starve it!**

What is God's method for victory over the old nature (Galatians 5:16; Romans 8:4)?

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**Within my earthly temple, there's a crowd;  
There's one of us that's humble, one that's proud;  
There's one that loves his neighbor as himself;  
And one that cares for naught but fame and self.**

**There's one that's broken-hearted for his sins;  
And one that unrepentant sits and grins.  
Two natures live and dwell within,  
But thanks to Christ there is victory to overcome my sin!**

**---Source Unknown**

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### Helping and Hindering Hands

