

The Christian's Inner Conflict

Galatians 5:16-18

Intro:

- A. The Galatians had serious spiritual problems.
1. **1:6** They were accepting a false gospel.
 2. **3:1** They had been bewitched.
 3. **3:11** They were preaching justification by law-keeping.
 4. **5:4** They were fallen from grace.
 5. **5:14** They were biting and devouring one another.
- B. The reason for these problems.
1. **Vs. 16** They were not walking in the Spirit.
 2. **Vs. 17** They were following the desires of the flesh. This is true of every problem, doctrinal and moral.
 3. They were experiencing intense inner conflicts.
- C. The two natures in a child of God. **John 6:63**
1. The new birth as taught by Jesus. **John 3:3-8**. Vs. 8 means that the new birth experience cannot be detected by the senses. γεννω = "Begotten".
 2. The new birth as taught by Paul. **II Cor. 5:17-18**. "Creature" = "creation" = κτισις = "a making", "a foundation", "a creation".
 - a. Why have "no confidence in the flesh if it is "new"? **Phil 2:3**
 - b. Why take on the whole armour of God? **Eph 6:11**.
 3. The new birth as taught by John. **I John 3:9**.
 - a. What does John mean? **I John 1:8-10, John 1:11-13**. γεννω = Pass. "be born".
 4. The new birth as taught by Peter. **I Peter 1:23**
 - a. "Born again" = αναγεννω = "to beget again", "to bear again". γεννω = "to beget of the father, to bring forth as of the mother".
 - b. "Corruptible" = φθαρτος, from φθειρω = "to spoil", "destroy", "to corrupt", "to bring into a worse state".
- D. The struggle, the conflict, its source.
1. The conscience of man is learned.
 2. "Conscience" = συνειδησις = "a knowing with one's self", "being one's own witness", "the testimony to one's own conduct".
 3. The conscience of every human being is the place where the Spirit of God works.
 4. The conscience functions as a witness, an accuser,

- an upholder, server of good, source of joy.
5. It can be good, pure, evil, defiled, or seared.
 6. The conscience must be taught and trained. This is accomplished by hearing and doing God's word.

- E. Some biblical examples.
1. Saved - Peter Luke 22:62, John 11:35
 2. Saved - Paul Romans 7:14-25
 3. Lost - Felix Acts 24:25

I. The Answer To This Conflict.

- A. **Vs. 16 "This I say then, walk in the Spirit..."**
1. "Here is my advice..." - Phi
 2. "Walk" = περιπατω = "to tread about", "to be walking", "to conduct one's life", "lifestyle", habitual.
- B. **"...and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."**
1. "Shall not" = ου μη = "not at all" strong neg.
 2. "Fulfil" = τελω = "to bring to the goal".
 3. "Lust" = επιθυμια = "desire".
 4. "Flesh" = σαρξ = "the material side"..
 5. "This is what I have to say: - Let your steps be guided by the Spirit, and then you will never gratify the cravings of your earthly nature" -TCNT

II. The Inner Conflict Stated.

- A. **Vs. 17 "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh:"**
1. "Lusteth" = επιθυμει = "to desire", "to long for", "to yearn for".
 2. "Spirit" = πνευμα = "that which cannot be apprehended by the sense, breath, life".
 3. "For the desire of the Flesh fights against the Spirit, and the desire of the Spirit fights against the Flesh..." -Con
- B. **"...and these are contrary the one to the other..."**
1. "Contrary" = αντικειμαι = "to lie opposite", "to be opposite", "to be totally opposed".
 2. "They are two opposing forces".
- C. **"so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."**
1. "Lest what ye will, those things ye should do."
 2. "So that ye do not the things ye would."
 3. This does not state the impossibility of doing what we will to do but the difficulty.

IV. The Spirit, The Flesh And The Law.

A. **Vs. 18 "But if ye be led of the Spirit..."**

1. "Led" = αγω = "to lead, pass. to be lead" In this instance the Spirit is a guide.
2. "But if you follow the guidance of the Spirit."
3. The Spirit guides through His written word, by the example of the godly, and by the influence of the Spirit on the conscience.

B. **"...ye are not under the law."**

1. "...ye are not subject to law" - TCNT
2. "...you free yourselves from the yoke of the law."
-Knox
3. After Christ nailed the law to His cross the Spirit does not guide any person to keep any part of the law. this includes the 10 commandments, the sabbath, the holy days, etc...