

*When I was first born again at 24 years of age, I received a new nature down on the inside of my Spirit that immediately began to dictate to the rest of my person that sin was wrong. By merit Of the new nature alone, my conscience knew that sin was wrong. No one had to tell me.*

## ***Accountability To Jesus Christ***

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In the language of the Gospel, when we speak of "the activities of the flesh", we are talking about: *“adultery, lust, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”* (Galatians 5: 19-21)

The above are “fleshly” sins Apostle Paul spoke of as the more serious sins against God. But there is another side to the flesh that is every bit as dangerous, though maybe not quite so obvious; and it is amazing how many are willing to excuse or protect areas of the flesh which they are unwilling to change. Paul also mentioned the fact, *“they who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God”*.

In my walk with God, I can still hear myself offering excuses for those weak areas of my life I was not yet willing to change—while at the same time I was protecting those same areas which had become serious problems in my life.

During the four years I attended Southwestern Bible College, now a university, much of the time after classes was spent in the prayer room, and the greater part of *that* time was learning to memorize scriptures and spend time in prayer in the Spirit with other committed Christian friends for my personal growth and edification. In my second year at Southwestern, I married my wife (we are still in love after 45 years). Not knowing much about prayer at that time, I did not realize that part of the edification process was that “committed praying in the Spirit” could work the plan of God in any person's life.

During the nineties, God showed me the church as a whole has dropped her standards of righteousness and true holiness. Instead of living holy, much of the church has begun to search the Word for reasons to justify a promiscuous life style and has finally adopted "grace" as an overall covering for sin, accepting *no condemnation* for their actions. In reality, the word "condemnation" may not have been the word they should have been using, but maybe "accountability" was because they believe "grace" makes them *unaccountable* for their actions once they have been born again. Our nation is literally advocating abortion up to the ninth month and legalizing homosexual marriages; and from that point, the corruption of both—the general population, and the church—appears to be headed for ruin unless we, the people, begin to cry out to God. Many Christians believe, however, that we have waited too long.

In the year 1995, God called me to acknowledge my accountability in areas needing to be changed if I was ever going to realize what Apostle Paul taught in Romans 7-8 and Galatians 5:16-26. Of course, I am not talking about blatant sin but I am talking about an area of my life that I was more willing to protect than to change. As God's Word says, it is the *little foxes that spoil the vine*. (Solomon 2:15).

The hardest years were my youth. Beginning with my 5<sup>th</sup> year of life, I realized my family was not normal; in fact I was raised in a dysfunctional family, and dealt with terrible demonic nightmares from 5 years old till around the revival of 1995 in West Texas—where God finally got hold of me, gave me full deliverance from the demonic visions that attempted to destroy me along with a deep desire to complete HIS will in my life—and not my own desires.

During the four years in Bible College, we birthed two of our four children. At the same time I worked at LTD, Fort Worth, assembling wing assemblies for the Boeing 737; then at Bell Helicopter, also in Fort Worth, building fuel tanks. Still having nightmares and serving God at the same time, studying for the ministry, carpooling daily on the job, and raising a family, things were pretty tight. During these years, being a relatively new Christian, I swallowed all that my brain could handle in the classroom—and followed the calling of pastoral ministries. After graduation, we moved to New Mexico, where we pastored three churches and one in West Texas.

Feeling like a complete failure, I began to pray seriously in the Spirit for God’s perfect will for my life. That is, if there was “His will” for us. Then, in the same small church in West Texas (1995), God showed me some brand new truths in His Word. I learned that my accountability in Christ Jesus was the absolute most important thing lacking in my life up to that point. I began poring over the scriptures to learn more about the God of Heaven and what HE considered important, not what I wanted. It hurt terribly because I was attempting to place my own will *ahead of what Jesus was calling me into*.

I finally saw that Apostle Paul, as presented to me by the scriptures, was able to go from a vengeful and hateful enemy of the Church, to the most gentle man of God who possibly ever lived. I could not fathom any man, after Jesus’ resurrection, so exceedingly on fire for the Lord so soon after Jesus Christ got hold of him on the way to Damascus! And the amazing thing about it, the three years he spent in the desert were his college years, with one difference. He only had one professor—the precious Holy Spirit!

Though Paul was not yet an Apostle, he had a supernatural instructor over that three years. No, not Gamaliel, and not any other man. It was God’s Holy Spirit! The scriptures tell me that Paul began preaching almost immediately. He did not hesitate, but filled his spirit with the words given him through revelation by God’s Holy Spirit!

The foremost subject in his ministry would be “Stop Sinning!” Paul said many times as quoted in his epistles:

*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, **who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.** For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. 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, condemned sin in the flesh:***

I always felt in my Spirit that Jesus gave us a definite plan as Christians. He taught that we have two natures: **a) the lust of the flesh; and b) the walk in His Spirit**, or “the fruits of the Spirit”, if dealing with our behaviors—as the scriptures show we must. The old nature is described as “lust of the flesh” and “under the Law”. They are the same, because they *always* lead mankind toward spiritual death. Satan uses our flesh against us on a daily basis. Because he is much more experienced in the ways of man than the average Christian, he deceives many through deceit and corruption, causing them to fall away from serving God. I have not figured out to this day why it is so easy for our enemy to bring so many to the deceptions of sin.

After that, I stumbled on another scripture that exhilarated my Spirit. I realized finally that Apostle Paul, by the Holy Spirit, taught what, to me, was the answer to all the failures Apostle Paul spoke about in Romans 7. I actually found the answer for myself as I pored through Paul’s epistles!

You remember, don’t you, that Paul, in Romans 7, spoke sincerely about all his desires and hopes of his ability to follow Jesus in faith—in Grace—but also saw the impossibility of accomplishing that very

thing? So, Satan has also deceived many who claim Christianity, but believe they are totally free to sin any time, without necessarily having to fall on their faces in repentance. Some have even shared with me their belief that there is no possibility whatsoever they would be penalized at The Judgment Seat of Christ because “their flesh is dead, but “the Spirit is alive” in them, protecting them from *any* judgment.

But we who understand the scriptures realize we cannot walk in the Holy Spirit, while at the same time, be contaminated with “the lust of the flesh”. (Rom. 8:1; and Galatians 5:16-18) Apostle Paul taught in Romans 7, that he personally experienced *being contaminated* by with the “works of the flesh” prior to salvation. (Rom. 7:8-20). He also, in Romans 8: 1-11, shared the solution to “the works of the flesh”. The solution? Paul stated in Romans 13:13-14:

*<sup>13</sup> Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. <sup>14</sup> But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.*

Now, see how Apostle Paul shows the church how his transition from “works of the flesh” to “his walk in the Spirit” took place. You see, Paul would not have penned Romans 7 *at all* if he was yet living in the flesh; and he *had to be a Christian* in order for the Lord to anoint his ministry in this chapter. In fact, Paul was not in sin; rather he was “testifying of his evil past” to the present world, and glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ. This is essentially the same testimony he gave governors and churches for the duration of his ministries.

Now Paul takes us to Galatians 5:16-26: Let’s continue his teaching on “The lusts of the flesh” vs. “The Walk in The Spirit”. Paul fully answers all the questions concerning this subject given in Romans seven, so we might understand the difference in “following after the flesh” against “Walking in the Spirit”.

*This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.<sup>17</sup> For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: **and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.** <sup>18</sup> But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.*

When Paul stated in Galatians 5:18, “*But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law*”, he meant If you consistently walk in the Spirit, you are not under law, but under Grace, and you now have the strength to resist the sinful nature whenever you are tempted; but if you fail, you remain in the flesh.

Now, Paul gives us the penalty of death if we wrongly choose “the flesh”. *Do not choose wrongly!:*

*<sup>19</sup> Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, <sup>20</sup> Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, <sup>21</sup> Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, **and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.***

And finally, Paul impresses all Christians to be wise and walk in The Holy Spirit of God. (vss. 22-26):

*<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, <sup>23</sup> Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. <sup>24</sup> **And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.** <sup>25</sup> If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*

As I learned, I wept. I remembered the whole thing like it was yesterday. And you know, God did not show me any of this to bring me under any kind of condemnation. But rather He did this to give me the strength I needed for change, for as long as I continued to offer myself excuses, or to justify myself for allowing anything in my life that should not be there, then I was preventing God's power from setting me free. As long as I excused myself for giving in to something I had been redeemed *from*, then I was not taking responsibility for change.

### **Commanded to "Sin Not":**

Let's take a look at what it really means to confess our sins and to have God, not only forgive us, but cleanse us for all unrighteousness.

Beginning with I John 2:1: "*My little children, these things write I unto you, that you sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*"

Notice the instruction John is giving to you and I as believers. He is saying "these things write I unto you *that you sin not.*" The first chapter of First John is the information we need to keep from sinning. John would not have said what he did had there not been people then, as well as now, who were sinning and had deceived themselves into believing that they were not ... calling darkness light and excusing the darkness by claiming to be in fellowship with God when they were not.

Look at the first chapter of First John and find out what he wrote that would keep us from being deceived by sin. I John 1:6-9 says:

*"If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

Continuing to offer excuses for myself was the same thing as saying God's salvation plan did not have enough power to keep me from falling back into sin. And, as I said before, the conscience I had received at my new birth was enough to tell me that sin was wrong, and enough to keep me from going back into sin. Romans 8:15-16 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. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:*"

Did the devil made us do it because God did not give us power over all the power of the enemy? Is the temptation more than we could bear because I Corinthians 10:13 does not apply in our case? "*There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*"

*The problem is that most of us carry the attitude that justifies and offers excuses for ourselves into other areas of our lives where we do not want to be accountable.*