

Eternity Daily Bible Study

(A ministry of Eternity Christian Fellowship)

Walking In The Spirit - 4

Topic: The New Nature

Date: 24th July 2009

One of the keys to walking in the Spirit is to realize that you now have a new nature (2 Corinthians 5:17) that gives you the power to carry out Christ's commandments.

This new nature is created in righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24) and is in the image of God (Colossians 3:10). Indeed it is Christ in you - the hope of glory! (Colossians 1:27). Now we will look a bit further at these four verses:

2 Corinthians 5:17 MKJV *(17) So that if any one is in Christ, that one is a new creature; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

Ephesians 4:24 MKJV *And you should put on the new man, who according to God was created in righteousness and true holiness.*

Colossians 3:9-14 MKJV *Do not lie to one another, having put off the old man with his deeds (10) and having put on the new, having been renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, (11) where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, foreigner, Scythian, slave or freeman, but Christ is all things in all. (12) Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender feelings of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, (13) forbearing one another and forgiving yourselves, if anyone has a complaint against any. As Christ forgave you, so also you do. (14) And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness.*

Colossians 1:27 HCSB *God wanted to make known to those among the Gentiles the glorious wealth of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*

Walking in the Spirit is, for all intents and purposes, exactly the same as living out from your new nature, the new creation that you are. You have a new self that is created in righteousness and truth and when you tap into this and 'put it on' you live in righteousness and truth. The new nature is the nature of Christ and cannot sin, nor is it able to do so because it is born of God and not of the flesh (1 John 3:9 which we will look at more tomorrow).

You are a new eternal person, trapped in an old body (which will pass away), and in conflict with its lusts – the lusts of the flesh. The idea is to tap into the new eternal righteous person and to put off the old lustful wicked nature completely.

So we see in Colossians 3:9-14 that Paul tells us to put off our 'old man' with its wicked deeds (which includes lying in this case) and to put on the new man. We are to substitute the new life for the old life. The new life replaces the old life completely. Just as when I put off my gardening clothes and put on my normal clothes. I don't go out

the door wearing gardening gloves and old jeans with paint on them! I have taken them off completely and put on a complete set of new clothes. So we are to take off the old man completely and to put on the new man in its place. Old things have passed away, behold all things are new!

Colossians also tells us that this new nature is the nature of God's chosen elect – it is holy, beloved, meek and gentle:

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The new nature is from Heaven so it is peaceful, wise and good (James 3;17,18) and is full of the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22,23). Thus the new nature is a big change for most of us – for instance being 'long-suffering' is not natural to the old nature at all! The new life we have in Christ is so different to the old life that there is no possibility whatsoever of just 'educating the old nature' into Christ-likeness. In fact the old nature needs to be crucified and 'killed off' (Galatians 5:24)

The only chance we have of truly living the Christian life is to let Christ in us live it for us. Thus it is a conscious decision to chose Christ over the flesh, day after day. We have to make a faith decision to walk in the Spirit. We have to choose to follow our righteous new nature. And this can be a struggle:

Galatians 5:16-25 HCSB *I say then, walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. (17) For the flesh desires what is against the Spirit, and the Spirit desires what is against the flesh; these are opposed to each other, so that you don't do what you want. (18) But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. (19) Now the works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, moral impurity, promiscuity, (20) idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambitions, dissensions, factions, (21) envy, drunkenness, carousing, and anything similar, about which I tell you in advance--as I told you before--that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. (22) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, (23) gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law. (24) Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. (25) If we live by the Spirit, we must also follow the Spirit.*

Now you do not have to construct the new nature, it is already there, it is Christ in you the hope of glory. It is not a matter of studying up on all the virtues and figuring out how to do them one by one. The virtues and righteousness of God are already there. They are in you. They come with the package known as eternal life. You just need to allow them to be expressed. You just have to choose them, to put them on. Like clothes that are already in a drawer you just have to reach in and choose to wear them.

Your part is simply to follow the Holy Spirit by faith. You do this by choosing the Spirit over the flesh again and again. You spend time in prayer, worship, bible study and in good works that God has called you to do. You make no provision for the flesh. You ignore evil. You flee temptation. You meet with the brethren and you watch and pray so

that you will not give in to your old nature. As you do these things the new man is 'put on' and the old man is 'put off'.

It is not complicated, you simply say "Yes" to God and "No" to your flesh. As you do that the spiritual life will naturally come forth out of you. The new nature, which is God's eternal life within you, will be manifested. The glory of God will come forth as you walk in the Spirit by faith.

2 Corinthians 3:18 HCSB (18) *We all, with unveiled faces, are reflecting the glory of the Lord and are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory; this is from the Lord who is the Spirit.*

More on this aspect tomorrow , Lord willing.

Blessings,

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