

## My "Old Self" and My "New Self"

I should not view my daily life as being a **difficult** and **frustrating** struggle with sin, to be **endured** until I am finally delivered through death (an unpleasant, but necessary experience) into heaven.

Although I want to experience a consistently abundant life, I should not reason that only "very spiritual" believers are able to achieve that goal. God has provided **everything** I need to live the abundant life.

**2 Peter 1:3-4** His divine power has given us **everything** required for life and godliness through the **knowledge** of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness. By these **He has given us very great and precious promises**, so that through them you may share in the divine nature, **escaping the corruption that is in the world because of evil desires**.

*My Christian Life is not just "avoiding" bad behavior,  
but rather Walking in the Spirit.*

Many Christians are satisfied with **NOT** walking in the flesh. But is God simply satisfied with me **NOT** stealing or **NOT** getting drunk anymore?

It's a **misconception** for me to think that my Christian life is simply NOT doing "**bad**" things, characterized by "**bad behavior**".

One of the dangers of behavior-oriented Christianity (**behavior manipulation**) is that I tend to say "Before I was a Christian, I did bad things; now that I'm a Christian I stopped doing those things." But is that completely true for me?

If I am just focused on **NOT** doing bad things, typically it's for **PEOPLE**. BUT if my focus is on doing **what is pleasing** to God, then my focus is on **GOD**.

**If my focus is on pleasing God**, then I will **NOT** be doing the "sins" of my Old Self (walking in the flesh). Often, Christians think that when I'm walking "in the flesh", I can stop that behavior in my own **strength**. Walking "in the Spirit" (the "New Self") can only happen when I'm **abiding** in the Spirit.

*It's not enough just to get rid of the darkness,  
but I need to have LIGHT.*

Why is it **critical** for me to walk in the Spirit?

**Ephesians 4:11-13** And He personally gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the training of the saints in the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ, until we **all** reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God's Son, **growing into a mature man [person] with a stature measured by Christ's fullness**.

1. My human nature is sinful, independent, and beyond repair.

Jer 17:9 The heart is more **deceitful** than anything else, and **incurable**,...

John 6:63 The Spirit is the One who gives life. **The flesh doesn't help at all**....

Rom 3:10-12 As it is written: There is **no one** righteous, **not even one**. ... there is **no one** who seeks God. ... All alike have become **useless**. There is **no one** who does what is good, **not even one**.

Rom 7:18 For I know that **nothing good lives in me, that is, in my flesh**....

Rom 8:8 **Those who are in the flesh cannot please God**.

Gal 5:17 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.

2. I can attempt to improve my outward behavior (behavior manipulation), but God focuses my attention on the root problem - my sinful human nature. My outward behavior is simply the evidence of the real problem.

Matt 5:21-22 (*Jesus said*)... "You have heard that it was said to our ancestors, Do not murder, and whoever murders will be subject to judgment. But I tell you, everyone who is **angry** with his brother will be subject to judgment."

5:27-28 "You have heard that it was said, Do not commit adultery. But I tell you, everyone who looks at a woman to **lust** for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

Matt 15:19 For **from the heart** come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, sexual immoralities, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies.

3. The purpose of the Law is to make evident the sinfulness of my human nature, in order to persuade me not to rely on it, but rather on the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 3:1-5 You foolish Galatians! Who has hypnotized you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was vividly portrayed as crucified? I only want to learn this from you: **Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law or by hearing with faith?** Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, **are you now going to be made complete by the flesh?**

Rom 3:19-20 Now we know that whatever the law says speaks to those who are subject to the law, **so that every mouth may be shut** and the whole world may become subject to God's judgment. For **no one will be justified in His sight by the works of the law**, because **the knowledge of sin comes through the law**. (*See also Heb. 7:18-19*)

Rom 5:20 The law came along **to multiply the trespass**....

Gal 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, self-control. **Against such things there is no law**.

Rom 4:15 For the law produces wrath. And **where there is no law, there is no transgression**.

Rom 5:13 ... **sin is not charged to a person's account when there is no law**.

Rom 10:4 **For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness** to everyone who believes.



**Note:** The Law could be pictured as a sign beside a salty spring in the desert, **"WARNING! THIS WATER IS CONTAMINATED AND UNHEALTHY TO DRINK."**

**Salt-water "looks like" fresh water, but it is unable to support human life.**

4. In Ephesians 4 & 5 Paul lists (on the left side) **things I shouldn't be doing**. But God does not just want us to have a life of **avoiding** sin. Instead, Paul is pointing out (on the right side) that God wants me to have a life of consistently **walking in the Spirit** because God wants to bless me and **He wants to use me in the lives of others**. God wants to bless me and bless others through me!

	OLD SELF (Walking in the flesh)		NEW SELF (Walking in the Spirit)
4:14-15	... no longer be little children, ...	<b><u>BUT</u></b>	speaking the truth in love, <b><u>let us grow</u></b> in every way into Him who is the head ...
4:17-24	... You should no longer walk as the Gentiles walk, ... You took off your former way of life, the old self ...	<b><u>AND</u></b>	... <b><u>being renewed</u></b> in the spirit of your minds; you <b><u>put on the new self</u></b> , the one created according to God's likeness in righteousness and purity of the truth.
4:25	... Since you put away lying, ...	...	<b><u>Speak the truth</u></b> , each one to his neighbor,
4:28	The thief must no longer steal.	<b><u>INSTEAD</u></b>	he must <b><u>do honest work</u></b> , ... so that he has something <b><u>to share</u></b> ...
4:29	No foul language is to come from your mouth,	<b><u>BUT</u></b> (silent?)	... only <b><u>what is good for building up</u></b> ...
4:31-32	All bitterness, anger and wrath, shouting and slander must be removed from you, along with all malice.	<b><u>AND</u></b>	<b><u>be kind and compassionate</u></b> to one another, <b><u>forgiving</u></b> one another, just as God also forgave you in Christ.
5:3-4	But sexual immorality and any impurity or greed should not even be heard of among you. ... Coarse and foolish talking or crude joking are not suitable,	<b><u>BUT</u></b> <b><u>RATHER</u></b>	... <b><u>giving thanks</u></b> . (as a habit)
5:7-10	... do not become their partners. For you were once darkness, ...	<b><u>BUT</u></b>	... <b><u>Walk as children of light</u></b> ... <b><u>discerning what is pleasing to the Lord</u></b> .
5:11-13	Don't participate in the fruitless works of darkness, ...	<b><u>BUT</u></b> <b><u>INSTEAD</u></b>	... <b><u>expose them</u></b> . ... Everything exposed by the light is made clear.
5:15-16	... (walk) ... not as unwise people	<b><u>BUT</u></b>	<b><u>as wise</u></b> — <b><u>making the most of the time</u></b> , because the days are evil.
5:17	...So don't be foolish,	<b><u>BUT</u></b>	<b><u>understand what the Lord's will is</u></b> .
5:18-21	And don't get drunk with wine, which leads to reckless actions,	<b><u>BUT</u></b>	<b><u>be filled by the Spirit</u></b> : speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and <b><u>making music from your heart to the Lord</u></b> , <b><u>giving thanks always</u></b> for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of Christ.

*... walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. (Gal. 5:16)*

In Romans chapters 7 - 8, Paul presents God's perfect solution (walking in the Spirit) to my human nature (walking in the flesh).

Some Christians find themselves habitually living in a Romans 7 experience (a desert experience) and some would point to the apostle Paul to prove that he too, had the same struggles that we have.

Every Christian should understand their human nature does not disappear and is hopeless (the Law in Romans 7 serves this purpose). That means I cannot please God and live for Him under my own strength.

Paul did pass through Romans 7. He did not stay there but "resided" in Romans 8. God has made the same provision for me. His nature, His Holy Spirit living in me, is more powerful than my human nature.

5. God never intended the Law to be a means by which I could make my sinful nature acceptable to Him, but rather He used the Law to demonstrate how "totally unacceptable" my sinful nature is.

Romans 7:7-13 ... **I would not have known sin if it were not for the law.** For example, I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, Do not covet... So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good. Therefore, did what is good cause my death? Absolutely not! On the contrary, sin, **in order to be recognized as sin,** was producing death in me through what is good, so that through the commandment, **sin might become sinful beyond measure.**

6. Paul experienced what every Christian needs to learn, that my sinful nature did not disappear and is not improved since I became a Christian. No matter how hard I try, I cannot make it conform to God's character in my own strength.

Romans 7:14-16 For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am made out of flesh, **sold into sin's power.** For I do not understand what I am doing, because I do not practice what I want to do, but **I do what I hate.** And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree with the law that it is good.

7. Paul became aware that the sinful nature no longer represented his real desires, but what other option did he have?

Romans 7:17-24 **So now I am no longer the one doing it, but it is sin living in me.** For I know that **nothing good lives in me, that is, in my flesh.** For the desire to do what is good is with me, but there is **no ability to do it.** For I do not do the good that I want to do, but I practice the evil that I do not want to do. Now if I do what I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but **it is the sin that lives in me.** So I discover this principle: When I want to do what is good, evil is with me. For **in my inner self** I joyfully agree with God's law. But I see a different law **in the parts of my body,** waging war against the law of my mind and taking me prisoner to the law of sin in the parts of my body. What a wretched man I am! **Who will rescue me from this dying body?**

8. God's solution is to provide a new nature that is totally compatible with His character, creating a "new self" walking in the Spirit as compared to my "old self" walking in the flesh.

Romans 7:25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, **with my mind** I myself am a slave to the law of God, but **with my flesh**, to the law of sin.

Romans 8:1-4 **Therefore**, no condemnation now exists for those in Christ Jesus, because **the Spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death**. What the law could not do since it was limited by the flesh, God did. He condemned sin in the flesh by sending His own Son in flesh like ours under sin's domain, and as a sin offering, **in order that the law's requirement would be accomplished in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit**.

Romans 8:5-8 For those who live according to the flesh think about the things of the flesh, **but those who live according to the Spirit, about the things of the Spirit**. For the mind-set of the flesh is death (*absence of life*), but the mind-set of the Spirit is **life and peace**. For **the mind-set of the flesh is hostile to God** because it does not submit itself to God's law, for it is **unable to do so**. **Those who are in the flesh cannot please God**.

Romans 10:4 **For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness** to everyone who believes.

Galatians 2:19-20 For through the law I have died to the law, so that I might live for God. **I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me**.

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, self-control. **Against such things there is no law**.

### **Paul did not reside in Romans 7, nor should I.**

I am freed from the power of my human nature. I can do everything that God wants me to do. The only time I will walk in the flesh is when I choose to. If I walk in the Spirit, I will NOT walk in the flesh!

I don't have to walk in fear of my sinful human nature, but I need to respect and be aware of the attraction of sin in my life.