

## THE TWO NATURES & STANDING & STATE OF THE BELIEVER

"Sad to say, very few Christians understand the doctrine of the two natures as it is taught in the Word of God. This Fact has caused much confusion and disappointment among God's children. Certainly if believers understand the "old man" as opposed to the new, there would be much less backsliding than is in evidence today. <sup>5</sup>

A lost person has only the old nature through physical birth. The moment a person is saved, he gains a new nature (in addition to the old) by spiritual birth (John 3:6, 7; II Pet. 1:4).

It is a mistake to think that the old nature can be eradicated (i.e. cease to exist). There will always be a continual conflict between the old and new natures.

There are different names for the old and new natures In the Bible.

The New Nature is called:

- The Spirit
- The inward man
- The new man

The Old Nature is called:

- The flesh
- The outward man
- The old man

Where two capacities are focused in opposite directions, there will be conflict. Paul states in Galatians 5:17: "*For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and there are CONTRARY the one to the other.*"

Paul goes into great detail about this conflict in Romans 7. He also states that a Christian can have victory as he walks in the Spirit (Rom. 8 & Gal. 5).

"Before a sinner is converted Satan has things going his way. He holds full sway in the life of the unsaved person and he does not have to put up a fight or try new tricks on his victim. But when the Lord Jesus moves into the heart and takes control, there is a new Tenant in the house. The "old man" does not appreciate being pushed aside and he puts up a fight."

"This fact of continual conflict could lead to real spiritual depression if we fail to view this conflict correctly. Some have evaded the issue by denying that a genuine believer will experience struggle. They declare that either initial salvation

or a second blessing destroys the old capacity for sin. It is exactly this error that John warned against in I John 1:8. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Two factors are important here. It is distinctly the sin nature that is in view, and furthermore, the entire passage is addressed to believers and includes all believers. John is strongly affirming that every born-again person has a sin nature. Anyone who denies this fact is self-deceived." <sup>1</sup>

The very fact that you will die one day proves that you have a sin nature (ROM 5:12).

"Others make the mistake of trying to suppress the old nature by observing sufficient rules. Such a law principle is doomed to failure because it depends for strength on the very flesh from which it seeks deliverance." "As long as we cling to any confidence in ourselves and struggle in our own strength, we only hinder God working in us." <sup>3</sup>

To fully understand the doctrine of the two-natures we must know the difference between:

### STANDING AND STATE.

Great confusion is caused when these two things (standing and state) are combined into ONE UNIT. (i.e. Mixing salvation & service)

Salvation = is a FREE GIFT WITHOUT WORKS; (Eph. 2:8, 9)

Service = Deals with REWARDS, i.e. works; (I Cor. 3:11 -15)

ALL BELIEVERS ARE SAVED BY GRACE WITHOUT ANY MIXTURE OF WORKS.

*"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that NOT OF YOURSELVES; it is the gift of God: NOT OF WORKS, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8,9)*

*"Now to him that worketh is the reward NOT RECKONED OF GRACE, but Of debt." (ROM 4:4)*

A child born into a family is part of that family because of BIRTH. He cannot become unborn. Relationship is by birth.

Obedience or disobedience however, can affect how he gets along IN. that family. This is called FELLOWSHIP.

IN A PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP:

THE DISOBEDIENCE OF THE CHILD DOES NOT BREAK THE RELATIONSHIP - JUST THE FELLOWSHIP.

NOTE THE CHART BELOW:

### Standing deals with:

- Salvation
- Relationship
- (Our position in Christ)

### State deals with:

- Service
- Fellowship
- (Our condition with Christ)

STANDING - Always has to do with our salvation and relationship in Christ. It deals with the new birth; it is everlasting and unchangeable. (John 1:12; 3:16, 36:5:24; I Cor. 12:12-13)

STATE - Has to do with service and fellowship. It can change daily and has to do with the daily walk of the believer. (I Cor. 3:11 -15; 11:32; Heb. 12:5-6) State does not effect salvation.

NOTE: We can lose fellowship, but never relationship. Anyone that believes otherwise is trying to add works to his salvation. God says that salvation is a GIFT and not of works. When a person realizes that his standing (i.e. relationship) is sure; then he can fully concentrate on his fellowship and day by day walk.

A person should serve Christ because he loves Him, not because he is afraid he will lose his salvation.

Because every Christian has two natures, he has the choice of following the old man or the new man. God obviously wants us to walk in the Spirit.

### WHAT DID PAUL MEAN WHEN HE SAID, "I DIE DAILY"??

"When a man lies dead in his casket he can no longer satisfy fleshly desires - they died with him. Paul asks, *"How shall we that are DEAD TO SIN, live any longer therein?"* (ROM 6:2).

Notice Paul did not say that sin is dead to US. but WE are dead. To SIN. <sup>5</sup> The point is not that the old nature is destroyed, but that our obligation to obey it is ended.

"In the late France-German war all the Germans in England were called upon to serve in the German army. A person seeing his German friend walking about, asked him how it was he had not gone to the war. 'Oh,' he replied, 'Because I am dead.' 'You are dead!' was the answer; 'Explain yourself.' 'Well,' he said, 'I did not want to go to the war, and I found a young man who offered to go as my substitute; he went instead of me, he took my place, and was killed. Now that was counted just the same as though I had been killed, and

so I am considered a dead man, and they can never take me to be a soldier any more.' Now you see the man himself was not actually dead, but he was counted so by the government, although he was really alive. So with us, Christ our substitute, died, and that is sight" <sup>2</sup>

"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be DEAD INDEED ONTO SIN, but ALIVE UNTO GOD through Jesus Christ our Lord" (ROM 6:11).

*"We are to reckon ourselves dead to sin - not through our own power, not through our own 'good' living, but by the merit of the Lord Jesus. Remember - all of our 'goodness' is as filthy rags. He accepts only the spotless righteousness of the Lord Jesus! So do not attempt to cultivate the 'good' qualities you have. Yield all to Jesus. Feed the spirit-man on the things of the Spirit and you will become a full grown spiritual man and receive a full reward (II John 8). Expect nothing of the flesh and depend entirely on Jesus.*

It is not enough to recognize that the flesh is no good. We are not to FEED it. We must 'make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof (ROM 13:14). Some Christians make it easy for the flesh to feed. They do this by the magazines they buy, the books they read, the places they go, the television programs they watch, and in many other careless ways. God's Word commands, ABSTAIN FROM ALL APPEARANCE OF EVIL' (I Thess., 5:22). <sup>5</sup>

### THE FLESH HAS A WORLDLY APPETITE.

"By way of illustration, there is a story about an animal trainer who starved a tiger almost to the point of death. He did not feed the tiger with raw meat and gave him no taste of blood for weeks, until the animal lay in the cage as though he were almost dead. The trainer would go into the cage every day and stroke the tiger's head, and the subdued beast would lick his master's hand. But one day, not noticing a scratch on the back of his hand with a tiny trickle of blood oozing from it, he reached out to stroke the animal's head as usual and then the smell of warm blood reached the nostrils of the tiger. He had not tasted blood or raw meat for weeks. He had been starved until he appeared to be almost been starved until he appeared to be almost helpless; but the smell of blood revived him and with blazing eyes he pounced on his trainer who but a moment before had felt the warm stroke of the tiger's tongue on his hand! The tiger nature had not changed, and the moment he came in contact with the smell of blood all the fury of the jungle was revived.

So it is with the old nature. We may starve it and reduce it to a minimum of manifestation, but the fatal moment we attempt to pamper it by giving it a taste of the world (no matter how refined that taste may be) it will revive and, crouching tiger-like, will spring up against our spiritual life.

The only way to control the habits and desires of the flesh is to keep the NEW MAN on the throne and keep him strong and healthy by feeding the right kind of spiritual food.

YOU CAN NEVER ACTUALLY KILL THE OLD NATURE, BUT YOU CAN SUBDUCE IT."

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO FEED BOTH NATURES AT THE SAME TIME.

"The food that feeds ONE nature with STARVE the other. That is, the two natures within the Christian cannot be fed on the same thing" <sup>5</sup>

Now if a Christian gives way to the desires of the flesh, he will become miserable and unhappy because of the depressing effect it has on his divine nature. He will not lose his soul's salvation, but he will lose his joy, victory and reward.

THE BIBLE CLEARLY TEACHES THAT GOD WILL CHASTEN HIS DISOBEDIENT CHILDREN. (HEB. 12 & I COR. 11)

Anyone who has the attitude that "Now I'm saved, I can go out and sin all I want", has never truly been saved.

Friend, perhaps you have not frankly confessed your sin and backsliding to God: The Bible says,

"IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS, HE IS FAITHFUL AND JUST TO FORGIVE US OUR SINS. AND TO CLEANSE US FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS" (I JOHN 1:9).

THERE IS A BIBLE WAY TO DEAL WITH AND CONQUER THE OLD MAN.

1. Reckon the old man dead unto sin.
2. Reckon yourself alive unto God through the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. Yield to the Holy Spirit and make no move or plan without His leading.
4. Feed the new man daily with the living Word.
5. Walk by faith and not by sight.

"Thus is the Christian encouraged and invited to walk in the Spirit in full surrender to Him, with the assurance that by his so yielding, the Spirit will bring complete victory to the Christian life." <sup>5</sup>

1 - THE BELIEVER'S TWO NATURES by Joel T. Andrus, Pub. by Back to the Bible Broadcast.

2 - THE TWO NATURES by F.K., Pub. by Tract Evangelistic Crusade.

3 - THE BELIEVER'S TWO NATURES by E.G. Hadley, Pub. by Grace & Truth, Inc.

4 - THE TWO NATURES by John D. Jess, Pub. by The Chapel of the Air, Inc.

5 - THE TWO NATURES by Oliver B. Green, Pub. by The Gospel Hour, Inc.

6 - AFTER WHAT I DID AM I STILL SAVED? by Ron Downs, Pub. by T.B.C., Lubbock, Tex.

# Does a Christian have two natures?

**Question: "Does a Christian have two natures?"**

**Answer:** Sanctification, to provide a simplistic definition, is the process in which God makes the Christian holy and enables the Christian to grow into more holiness through time. In order to discover how this is done, the student of the Scriptures must decide how the old nature, or old man, or sin nature relates to the new nature, or new man, or righteous nature.

The first problem that comes up between Christians is that of semantics. Much has been written to delineate a view which is in essence the same as another view. For example, many prefer "sin nature", others prefer "sinful nature", and others prefer the ambiguous "flesh." Not that distinctions cannot be made between these three although miniscule in degree (depending on the particular sanctification system), but it should be noted that all the respected views agree that within the Christian there is a constant battle raging inside. Whatever the specific names used for the warring parties is irrelevant. What is relevant is that the battle is happening and ongoing.

The second problem that comes up within the discussion is the actual definition of "nature." How this significant word is defined will determine how one sees the distinction between the old man and the new man and its relevant outworking in the life of the Christian.

#1 One way to view "nature" is to understand it as a "capacity" within a believer. Thus, the old man is interpreted as the former way of life, or that of an unbeliever. In this sense, the Christian has two competing natures within him the old and the new nature. At the moment of conversion, the Christian receives a new nature. It presents a duality within the Christian where sometimes the old man is in control and sometimes the new man is in control. The problem with such a view, however, lies in the fact that when Christ was crucified, the old man was crucified resulting in the Christian no longer being a slave to sin (Romans 6:6).

#2 The other view defines "nature" as a "desire" within the believer. The old man is crucified, according to Romans 6, but the Christian still has a propensity to sin. This is why believers are encouraged to put to death the deeds of the body (Romans 8:13), to put to death that which makes a Christian sin (Colossians 3:5), and to put aside other sins such as anger, wrath, malice, etc. (Colossians 3:8). All this to say that the Christian has just one nature, but that nature needs continual renewing (Colossians 3:10). This renewing, of course, is a lifetime process for the Christian.

In summation, does the Christian have two natures? Yes and no, depending on how you define nature. If nature is a capacity, no the Christian is never dualistic in nature. He either is a child of God or he is not. If nature is a desire, yes the Christian has a war going on inside (see Galatians 5:16-17). Even though the battle for sin is constant, and sometimes a battle the Christian will lose, he is no longer under the dominion of sin which characterizes the old man, or the non-Christian (Romans 6:6). The believer is truly a "new creation" in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17)