

# The Conflict Between Flesh and Spirit

- The Holy Spirit devoted almost two chapters in the book of Romans to give detailed information about our fleshly body and the eternal inner man within.
- The conflict we feel when being tempted is based on these two different parts of our being seeking fulfillment
- *For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. Rom 7:22-24*
- *Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, 1Pet. 2:11*

# A Critical Distinction

- *Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned — Rom 5:12*
- There is a vast difference in the hearts of men.
- Those who feel this conflict are the children of God.
- The vast majority of men and women feel no conflict at all.
- *Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Gen. 6:5-6*
- Through Noah, God gave everyone who had any conflict between their flesh and spirit an opportunity to repent and enter the ark. None did.

# This war the Sign of Spiritual life

- *This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; 19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. Eph 4:17-19*
- This is the world from which we were drawn. It is all too easy to be drawn back in again.

# The World From Which We Came

- *And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, 3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. Eph 2:1-3*
- Dead in trespasses and sins.
- In the lusts of our flesh
- Fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind
- By nature children of wrath just like the others.

# The Gospel Created or Revealed It.

- When we heard the gospel, our mind was either the treasure in the field or the pearl of great price.
- For many the gospel was the relief of fighting and losing this battle again and again, feeling our own wretchedness.
- For others that feeling was awakened when we heard the gospel.
- But it is this conflict that separates us from the ungodly.

# Those who War and those who Don't

- *that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. 3 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles — when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. 4 In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. 5 They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. 6 For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. 1 Pet 4:1-6*
- This passage reveals the closeness between those who have and those who have not left the world.

# We Must Carefully Monitor this Conflict

- *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. 1 John 2:15-17*
- *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. Gal 6:7-9*
- If there is no war we have lost the battle.

# Gospel Designed to reveal Conflict

- *For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.*
- *I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Gal 5:13-18*
- The battle must be waged both before and after each sin. Only the wretchedness of this conflict will bring godly sorry and repentance.
- *NKJV*

# Conflict Leads to Godly Sorrow

- *Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. 14 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. Jas 1:13-15*
- *For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. 11 For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter. 2 Cor 7:10-12*

# The knowledge and desire for War

- *Beloved, I beg **you** as sojourners and pilgrims, **abstain** from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, 1 Peter 2:11-12*
- ***You** ... Therefore **put to death your members** which are on the earth: Col 3:5*
- ***you put off**, concerning your former conduct, **the old man** which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that **you put on the new man** which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. Eph 4:22-24*
- Only when we are aware and feeling the war can we stop it through repentance.

# The Clear Sign of Defeat or Victory

- *For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. 6 To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. 7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. 8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. Rom 8:5-8*

# The Obligation that will Save our Soul

- *So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh: 13 for if ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but if by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live. Rom 8:12-13*
- *As long as this is true we are on the right path.*
- *For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. Rom 7:22-24*

# Knowing it is Sin ... Now we Can Stop

- *For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh sold under sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. 16 If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. Rom. 7:14-16*
- This conflict will always lead to repentance and repudiation. It is the necessary first step to growth.