



**The Wheel of Faith
Bible Study Guides
Lesson #10
“The Battle of the Titans”**

Today we are taking another look at **Sanctification**. The last lesson we discussed what Sanctification is, and is not, and when it takes place, and what it does to us.

Today, primarily, we are going to talk about the **Process of Sanctification**. Specifically, how it works in our daily life, and what it looks like in a very real, tangible, practical way, so that we can know what actually is supposed to happen once the process begins.

(Before we get started, I think it would be correct to discuss an aberrant teaching out there on the process of Sanctification. We will briefly discuss a counterfeit, so that when we discuss the genuine you will know why I am making certain emphasis. The teaching is called **Passive Sanctification**.

Like the previous lesson, we discussed the old holiness movements that taught that Sanctification usually takes place in the future experience, and for some they never have it, but still can be saved. Well, they also taught that when the process does begin, it happens in a passive manner on our part. In other words, God mystically changes us without any effort of our own. Like a hand in the glove He bypasses our will, and mystically takes over our minds, and does everything for us. Our job is to just believe in Him.

It is where the saying “Let go and let God” came from. Through mysticism, meditations, incantations and a variety of arcane and esoteric practices, we get in touch with God, and he overpowers our sinful nature for us, and we do nothing. The dangers from this are apparent. It has led many to believe that because they still have the sinful desire to do a certain thing, it is because God has not overcome for them yet. So, they continue to indulge that sin until God takes it away, and there is no more desire for it.

Others are led to believe that you still want to sin because you have not yet truly received the Holy Spirit because you did not pray hard enough or long enough; so they go back to the drawing board, and it leads to spiritual frustration. Others feel because they continue wanting to sin, and messing up, they must be one of the ones that just will never receive the Spirit; so they fall prey to the Jesus Only Movements, and give up on Sanctification all together, and become “Cheap Gracers”.)

Let us now turn to the Bible and look at the truth of the process of Sanctification.

1. Read Romans 7:23

“But I see another law at work _____ me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of _____ at work within _____.”

Blanco’s paraphrase:

“But inside me is a sinful nature. It’s always there urging me to think about myself, no matter how I set my mind against it. It’s even strong enough to take me captive and to overcome my inner most longings to be good”

a. This text makes it hard to deny what Paul is saying. He is saying that he is struggling with sin. Some have argued that this is Paul speaking of himself before

his conversion. But the Greek theologians beg to differ. In most of Paul's verb tense usage in the first six chapters of Romans he uses what is called the *Aorist tense*. The *Aorist* is past tense or unidentified tense. But when Paul writes chapter seven, the shift of tenses to what is called *present active indicative* is clear and deliberate. He is saying that "today within me right now is a sinful nature that I am struggling with.

- **Read 1 John 2:16-17** What terms does John use to describe the sinful nature?
- How does Jesus describe the sinful nature in **Matthew 26:41**?
- **SDA Bible Commentary:** *"Thus Adam and Eve passed on to their posterity a tendency to sin and a liability to its punishment, death. By their transgression, sin was introduced as an infectious power in human nature antagonistic to God, and this infection has continued ever since. It is because of this infection of nature, traceable to Adam's sin that men must be born again."*

b. The above ideas can best be Illustrated this way:

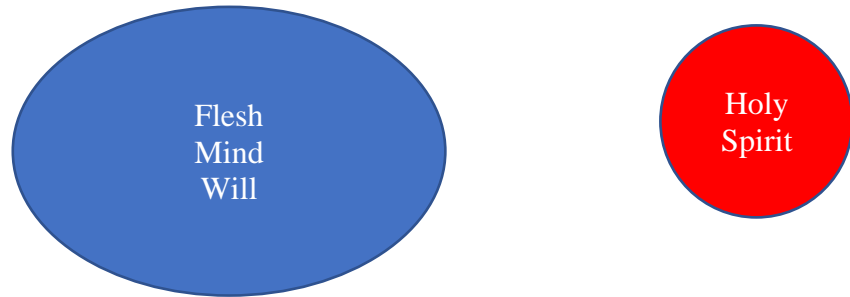
Adam pre-fall – His flesh, emotions, mind, spirit, heart, entire self was 100% in unity with the Divine righteous requirements. His nature was perfect and pure and had a natural capacity to obey.



Then came the rupture, the split, the fall.

Adam post-fall – His nature became corrupted through sin. The Holy Spirit no longer naturally dwells within. Man becomes ruled by his corrupted flesh. His

desires, his will, his choices are dominated by a corrupted sinful flesh influenced by Satan.



- **Medieval churchman:** In the 1200's he said that "*Original justice was God's gift to human beings by which their reason was able to control their lower powers - feelings, desires, passions, and bodily activities. By falling into sin, human beings lost this gift of Original Righteousness. As a result, the original harmony was lost as well, so that now the lower nature of people dominates their reason and wreaks havoc in and through them.*"

2. Therefore, man must be born again through the Spirit so that he now has a new power operating in him; the power that he lost in Eden, or what the Bible calls in **1 Corinthians 2:16:**

"For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him? But we have the _____ of _____."

- a. Now it becomes clear we have a fallen sinful nature that we were born with. (See Lesson Four, **The Sinners Need**). But after Justification we receive the Holy Spirit, and now have a new power via the Holy Spirit operating in us. In this way mankind becomes a duality of flesh and spirit.

- b. What is the result of these two powers operating within us?

- Read **Galatians 5:17**

"For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. These are in _____ to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please."

- The Greek word for opposition is **antikeimai**, which means, an adversary, or hostility to someone. And again, Paul uses the present tense to say, *My flesh is at war against my spirit today, now.*
- **Thought questions:**
Does the experience of your life speak to truth about the battle that rages between the flesh and spirit within you?
Have you known other experienced Christians of aged years that will testify to the same truth?
Does the Bible and experience and church tradition teach a sanctified experience as passive or active?

3. Read Romans 8:4

“For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not according to the _____ but the _____”

(From the above text Paul reinforces the idea that we have a flesh and spirit battle going on. Yet more importantly he tells us how we can overcome the flesh. He says that we overcome the flesh by walking in the Spirit.

a. How do we walk in the Spirit?

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“Many are inquiring, "How am I to make the surrender of myself to God?" You desire to give yourself to Him, but you are weak in moral power, in slavery to doubt, and controlled by the habits of your life of sin. Your promises and resolutions are like ropes of sand. You cannot control your thoughts, your impulses, your affections.and causes you to feel that God cannot accept you; but you need not despair. What you need to understand is the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man, the power of decision, or of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will. The power of choice God has given to men; it is theirs to exercise.... you can choose to serve Him. You can give Him your will; He will then work in you to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Thus

your whole nature will be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ”.
SC 47.1

b. What part does the will play in overcoming the flesh?

- The will is the power of choice, the power of decision that God has granted to man.
- Read **Romans 8:5**

“For they that are after the flesh do _____ the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the _____ of the Spirit.”

(The **trick** to winning the battle between the Flesh and the Spirit is to **exercise your will** or your **power of choice**. When temptation comes your way, when you feel the anger rising, or the desire to look, the temptation to act or do anything against the will of God, in that moment The Holy Spirit will cry out to your mind, and at the same time Satan through the flesh will also be crying out. You have a choice to make in a split-second, and what you set your mind on will determine the victor. If you set your mind on God, if you cry out to Him for deliverance then you will cease that train of thought and have the victory. But if in that moment you ignore the voice of the Spirit, and you indulge the desire of the flesh, you will sin.)

- *“Jesus came to bring moral power to combine with human effort, and in no case are His followers to allow themselves to lose sight of Christ, who is their example in all things. He said, “For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth”* **ISM 262**
- The human effort in the work of sanctification is to choose to listen to the Holy Spirit and cry out to God for deliverance in our battle with the flesh.
- *“We cannot save ourselves from the tempter’s power; he has conquered humanity, and when we try to stand in our own strength, we shall become a prey to his devices; but “the name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous **runneth** into it, and is safe.” Satan trembles and flees before the weakest soul who finds refuge in that mighty name.”—**Manuscript 15, 1908. {CTr 219.6}***

- Our effort is in the running, the calling out, the crying out to God.

Thought question: Read this statement then **discuss** what it means in light of the process of Sanctification. What are you up against? How are you going to handle your flesh?

- *‘Being justified by faith, he has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ **Romans 5:1**. But because this experience is his, the Christian is not therefore to fold his hands, content with that which has been accomplished for him. He who has determined to enter the spiritual kingdom will find that all the powers and passions of unregenerate nature, backed by the forces of the kingdom of darkness, are arrayed against him. Each day he must renew his consecration, each day do battle with evil. Old habits, hereditary tendencies to wrong, will strive for the mastery, and against these he is to be ever on guard, striving in Christ's strength for victory.” **AA 476***

4. **Read Romans 8:13** What is the result of living in the Flesh or living in the Spirit? How important is this idea?

*“The expulsion of sin is the act of the soul itself. True, we have no power to free ourselves from Satan's control; but when we desire to be set free from sin, and in our great need cry out for a power out of and above ourselves, the powers of the soul are imbued with the divine energy of the Holy Spirit, and they obey the dictates of the will in fulfilling the will of God.” **DA 466***

- This is the point of **Romans 8:13**, said well in the above quote. We expel sin out of our lives when we **choose** not to partake of the desire of the flesh that is clamoring for it. When we cry out for the power of God to deliver us, this is the act of expulsion on our part, and God in response gives us victory.
- a. Since setting our mind on God (**Romans 8:5,13**) is a way that we can overcome the flesh. What are some ways we can be preemptive against the flesh? In other words, what are some ways we can beat the flesh before it even gets started?

b. Read Hebrews 4:12, Deuteronomy 6:6-9: Discuss also the power of prayer in aiding you to be victorious over the flesh.

5. What should we do when the flesh does overcome us?

a. **Read 1 John 2:1-2.**

While God does not ever want us to be overcome by sin and Satan or the flesh, He has taken into consideration that often this may be the case. And therefore, He has provided a daily mechanism whereby we can still be forgiven. When we fail, we simply return to the **Wheel of Faith**, and get back in right relation to Him. We should never sin or act presumptuously towards this great grace of God, but at the same time, we should always know that it is there for us when we slip and fall.

b. **Read Philippians 3:12-14** What is this saying?

Is sanctification or the battle between the Spirit and Flesh temporary, one-time event, or is it a life long struggle?

c. When will this battle be over? **Read 1 Corinthians 15:53**

IN CONCLUSION:

The opportunity to test the waters on today's subject usually will come fairly quick; and when it does, now you are armed with tools for victory. Determine to practice the next conflict between the Flesh and the Spirit with the principles learned today.