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THE TWO NATURES

By the late C. D. Cole

Every believer in Christ has a conscious experience of two natures, but there are comparatively few who understand the doctrine of the two natures. Having the experience and not being able to account for it has been the cause of much sorrow and discouragement. For example, the new convert is rejoicing in his new found relation to Christ; he has broken with the past and has found association with the people of God; he is determined that the old way of sin is gone forever, and that henceforth the pathway to the city of God is a pathway of perfect peace, when suddenly he is confronted with the stubborn fact that the old forces of sin and fleshly inclinations are in him quite as strong as ever. He is amazed, discouraged and distressed, and in many instances he thinks he has lost his salvation. Many saved people go through life with their minds in a state of uncertainty and their hearts bowed down in grief for the lack of teaching about the twofold nature of the saved person.

Much of this trouble is the result of a misconception of the doctrine of REGENERATION. What is regeneration? Is it repairs made upon the old man? Is it a patchwork or improvement of the condition, either of the spirit or body of a person? Is it the destruction of the old man and the creation of a new man? Is it the eradication of all the elements of sin in a person replacing them by elements of goodness and holiness? NO, regeneration is none of these. Well, then what is regeneration? You answer, "It is a new birth". Quite right, but what is the new birth? You answer, "It is the birth of the Spirit". Right again, but what does the Holy

Spirit do in effecting the new birth? Now, it is a patent fact that all of us owe our existence in the physical world to a birth or generation. We were born into this world. Our physical existence is the result of a physical birth. Now, what is the physical man composed of? What are his constituent elements? He has body, soul, and spirit. James says the body without the spirit is dead. Then if the natural man does not have a spirit his body is dead. He has a spirit, but his spirit is dead to God and holiness.

Now according to the law of generation, like begets like. Hence, that which is born of the flesh is flesh. Now every man as a result of his first birth is ruined and is dead in trespasses and sins (Rom. 8:7). Notice that the flesh has a mind, and it is the nature of the mind of the flesh to be against God; it is incurably rebellious. This proves that the new birth is not the improvement of the old man. To be born again means to have a new nature imparted to us. This new nature is called a new man (Eph. 4:24), and a new creature (II Cor. 5:17). It is a life from above, a different kind of life from that of the first birth. In the first birth we receive physical life; in the second birth we receive spiritual life. In the first birth we receive temporal life; in the second birth we receive eternal life. Through generation or the first birth, Adam bequeathed to us a nature that was sinful, a nature opposed to God; Through regeneration, the Son of God bequeathed to us a sinless nature, a nature that longs for God and holiness. By generation, I am a son of man; by regeneration, I am a son of God. I have two distinct natures in one personality. I am a two-fold being;

a son of man and a son of God. These two men, the old and the new, are contrary to each other and as long as I am in this present body, these two natures will wage relentless warfare (Gal. 5:17), (Rom. 7:15-25).

This bible lesson is given that Christians may understand themselves, so that they will not glory in the flesh, for the flesh profiteth nothing (John 6:63).

I. THE FLESH

1. There is a nature of the flesh. (Eph. 2:3). Usually when we speak of the flesh we mean the body, but the Bible uses the word flesh in another sense--in the sense of nature. The flesh has a mind, and a will, and a heart. These are all against God.

2. This nature came by the first birth. (John 3:6; Eph. 4:22).

3. This nature is called the "Old Man". (Rom. 6:6; Eph. 4:22).

4. This nature is called the "Natural Man". (I Cor. 2:14; Eph. 2:3).

5. This nature is enmity against God. (Rom. 8:7).

6. There is no good thing in it. (Rom. 7:18; Jer. 17:9; Matt. 15:19).

7. This nature cannot be changed. (Rom. 8:7; Jer. 13:23).

II. THE NATURE OF THE SPIRIT

1. There is a nature of the spirit. (John 3:6).

2. This nature was received by birth. (John 3:6)

3. This nature is called "The New Man". (Eph. 4:24).

4. This nature is called a "New Creature". (Gal. 6:15).

5. This nature is sinless. Peter says we are partakers of the Divine nature (II Pet. 1:4). Paul says the new man is created in righteousness and true holiness. (Eph. 4:24).

III. THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE TWO NATURES

1. These two natures of flesh and spirit dwell side by side in every believer. (Gal. 6:7,8; Rom. 7:22,23).

2. These two natures are not congenial and result in an inward conflict in the child of God, causing him to long for deliverance from the Old Man. (Rom. 7:24).

IV. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BELIEVER TO THE FLESH IS FIVE-FOLD

1. He must never think he can improve it and never try to make a fair show of it. (Rom 7:18; 8:7).

2. He must starve it. (Rom. 13:14).

3. He must reckon it to be dead judicially. (Rom. 6:6,11).

4. We are to mortify it. (Col. 3:5).

5. We are to put it off. (Eph. 4:22). We must not manifest it. We must keep it under by the power of the Spirit.

V. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BELIEVER TO THE SPIRIT NATURE IS ALSO FIVE-FOLD

1. We are to reckon ourselves as alive in the spirit. We have spiritual life as well as physical life. Our sphere of existence is not in the flesh, but in the spirit. (Gal. 5:25).

2. We are to walk in the nature of the spirit. (Gal. 5:25).

3. We are to put on the new man. (Eph. 4:24). Let the new man tell us where to go and what to do.

4. We are to feed it on the Word of God. (I Peter 2:2).

5. We are to depend on the energy of the Holy Spirit.

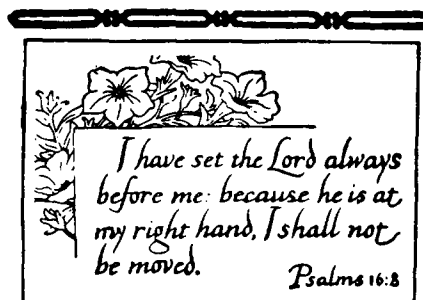
VI. SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER

1. That we will not get out of the fleshly nature until death or the coming of Christ.

2. That the food that sustains one nature will starve the other.

3. You cannot feed both natures at the same time.

4. You can always sow to the flesh even as others who have not the spirit. (Gal. 6:7,8).



FAMOUS LAST WORDS

1. "I am going to give up my class, but don't worry, I'll continue to be faithful in my church attendance."

2. "Lord please make her (him) well, and I promise you, I'll never miss another church service."

3. "Lord, if you'll let me have this better paying job, I'll give You your portion."

4. "Lord let me have this new car and I'll dedicate it to You."

5. "O Lord, please let our child be born healthy and whole, and we both promise You we'll have him in Sunday School and Church Service every Sunday."

6. "Please Lord, if I can have this woman as my wife, I vow unto You we'll both serve you faithfully."

7. "We're going to get some of our big bills out of the way and then we'll begin to tithe."

8. "Aw listen, we can miss a few weeks of tithing and then catch up later."

9. "Don't worry, if we can't think of something by Sunday morning, we can always say the baby isn't feeling too well."

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JUST SUPPOSE

Just suppose the Lord would begin tomorrow to make people as sick as they claim to be on Sunday.

Just suppose the Lord should make people as poor as they claim to be when asked to help finance His program.

Just suppose the Lord should have everyone stoned to death for covetousness as was Achan.

Just suppose the Lord should let some parents look into the future and see what their example and lax control did for their children.

Just suppose — and then, by the help of the Lord, go forth and live and serve as if eternity was soon coming.

It is! *I come quickly* says the Lord.

**"BY THEIR FRUITS
YE SHALL KNOW THEM"**

Matt. 7:20

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