

The Battle of Two Natures, Romans Chapter 7

Going on in the heart of the believer continually.

"When you get saved, it is like putting a refined, civilized man in the same cage with a savage barbarian or a wild beast."

I believe that I was conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity, and that ever since, I have been continually conceiving mischief, and bringing forth vanity.

THIS article of my faith I must of necessity believe, whether I will or no; for if I could not believe it to be true, I should therefore have the more cause to believe it to be so; because, unless my heart was naturally very sinful and corrupt, it would be impossible for me not to believe that which I have so much cause continually to bewail; or if I do not bewail it, I have still the more cause to believe it: and therefore am so much the more persuaded of it, by how much the less I find myself affected with it. For certainly I must be a hard-hearted wretch indeed, steeped in sin and fraught with corruption to the highest, if I know myself so oft to have incensed the wrath of the Most High God against me as I do, and yet not be sensible of my natural corruption, nor acknowledge myself to be by nature a child of wrath, as well as others. For I verily believe, that the want of such a due sense of myself argues as much original corruption as murder and whoredom do actual pollution. And I shall ever suspect those to be the most under the power of that corruption, that labour most, by arguments, to divest it of its power. And therefore, for my own part, I am resolved, by the grace of God, never to go about to confute that by willful arguments, which I find so true by woeful experience. If there be not a bitter root in my heart, whence proceeds so much bitter fruit in my life and conversation? Alas! I can neither set my head nor heart about anything, but I still show myself to be the sinful offspring of sinful parents, by being the sinful parent of a sinful offspring: nay, I do not only betray the inbred venom of my heart, by poisoning my common actions, but even my most religious performances also, with sin. **I cannot pray but I sin, I cannot hear or preach a sermon but I sin, I cannot give an alms or receive the Scripture but I sin; nay, I cannot so much as confess my sins, but my very confessions are still aggravations of them; my repentance needs to be repented of, my tears want washing, and the very washing of my tears needs still to be washed over again with the blood of my Redeemer.**

Thus, not only the worst of my sins, but even the best of my duties, speak me a child of Adam. Insomuch, that whensoever I reflect upon my past actions, methinks I cannot but look upon my whole life, from the time of my conception to this very moment, to be but as one continued act of sin. And whence can such a continued stream of corruption flow, but from the corrupt cistern of my heart? And whence can that corrupt cistern of my heart be filled, but from the corrupt fountain of my nature? Cease, therefore, O my soul, to gainsay the power of original sin within thee, and labour now to subdue it under thee. But why do I speak of my subduing this sin myself? Surely this would be both an argument of it, and an addition to it. It is to Thee, O my God, Who art both the Searcher and Cleanser of hearts that I desire to make my moan. It is to Thee I cry out in the bitterness of my soul, "O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7:24. Who shall? Oh, who can do it but Thyself? Arise Thou, therefore, O my God, and shew Thy self as infinitely merciful in the pardoning, as Thou art infinitely powerful in the purging away, my sins. **The Theological Works of William Beveridge, Vol. VIII, pp. 166-167 Oxford, 1846. Here we see the battle of two natures going on.**

Within every Christian there are two natures: One is the old Adamic nature with which he is born, and the other is a new nature created by the Holy Spirit at the New Birth. Paul wrote about that old nature. "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil I which would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Rom. 7:18-21

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."
Gal. 5:17

This is the conflict between the old nature and the new. Two natures is proof that a person is saved, for only a man who has been **born twice** has **two natures**. So then sin is innate in all of mankind, all mankind is instinctively evil. **"The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked..."** Jeremiah 17:9