

SPIRITUAL VICTORY (16)

QUESTION #5 – What is the spiritual victory significance of God pronouncing a judgment on our sin nature?

Before we discuss the significance of this to our potential spiritual victory, it would be wise for us to examine several passages that speak about this judgment of God. God has included several passages in His Word that inform us that Christ's work on the cross pronounced a judgment against our flesh, sin nature:

Passage #1 - Romans 6:1-10.

By God's judicial calculation and judgment, Jesus Christ's death, burial and resurrection pronounced a victorious judgment against our sin nature. It was this very judgment that enabled the Holy Spirit to take up residency in us. The work of Jesus Christ actually pronounces a condemnatory judgment on our flesh, sin nature (**Rom. 8:3**). According to **Rom. 6:11**, it is vital that we consider this matter. It is important that we acknowledge that the evil sin nature we have has already been judged and condemned by God. At no place is a believer commanded to crucify his own flesh; what he is asked to do is consider the judicial judgment that has already been pronounced on his sin nature. Because of this great judicial work of God, we may consider ourselves alive to God, even though we live with a nature that is not good.

Passage #2 - Galatians 5:24.

This text is so important and so misunderstood. The primary reason for the misunderstanding is the overlooking of the tense of the verb "have crucified" (εσταυρωσαν). The tense is aorist, which means that **at one point in time in the past our flesh was crucified** with passions and desires. That point in time was the moment we believed on Jesus Christ. **This verse is not a statement of what we are to do; it is a statement of what God did.** He pronounced a positional judgment against our sin nature. This judgment was so complete that we became the Temple of the Living God (**II Cor. 6:16**). This is a positional judgment not a personal reality or personal removal. We still have our flesh and we still have a flesh that has its evil passions and desires. This judgment becomes a critical consideration for our spiritual victory. Dr. Chafer observed that for every hundred believers who come to depend on Christ's death for salvation, no more than one grasps this point that is so critical to sanctification (Vol. 6, p. 190).

Passage #3 - Colossians 2:11-12.

God has judicially pronounced a judgment against our flesh, to the point that positionally speaking it has been removed. The link to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ is due to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Spirit Baptism so unites us with Jesus Christ that our sin nature is viewed by God as dead and buried.

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Passage #4 - Colossians 3:8-10; Ephesians 4:20-24.

The verb tenses (mostly aorist) indicate that the putting aside of the old self has already been accomplished by judicial edict of God. This becomes a critical factor for spiritual victory because the injunction here is that spiritual victory is possible because the old man has been judged and put off by God. This is not an injunction to be spiritual so that the old man may be put off. As Dr. Chafer said in his exposition of Ephesians, “The appeal here is in accordance with the injunctions of grace. It is because the old man had been put off that they were to abstain from their former evil ways, rather than that by abstaining from evil ways the old man might be put off. Indeed a renewing of mind by the Holy Spirit is needed (**Ephesians 4:23**)” (*The Epistle To the Ephesians*, p. 122).

Knowing that this judgment has been leveled against our sin nature is vital to spiritual victory for several reasons:

(Reason #1) - It is an issue of what we believe; an issue of our faith.

No spiritual victory will ever be experienced by one who believes the wrong things.

(Reason #2) - It is an issue of rightly dividing and accepting what the Scripture teaches.

The neglect of this kind of teaching is not due to lack of Scripture, but lack of carefully attention and analysis. When we realize that Scriptures teach a Divine positional judgment has been made against our flesh and sin nature, even though we still practically have it, we no longer ignore victory truth, we hit it head on in light of the Bible.

(Reason #3) - It enables us to see God’s grace by realizing truth about what we are.

Martin Luther said this doctrine “breaks into pieces everything that is exalted of man” (*Complete Sermons*, Vol. 2.1, p. 398). When we consider that God has pronounced this judgment against our sin nature that allows us to be classified as His Holy property indwelt by His Holy Spirit, we marvel at His amazing grace. It is critical that we come to a proper recognition of ourselves and our dominant sinful flesh and one of the wonderful things this forces us to do is to be amazed by God’s grace.

(Reason #4) - It causes us to look to God for the victory over our sin nature, and not to self.

God is the One who pronounces judgment against our sin nature and He alone can give victory. The means of power we have for spiritual victory will never be found in a sin nature God has condemned, but in the Holy Spirit’s power that He has granted. The secret of the Lord is for those who fear Him, not for those who admire themselves (**Psalm 25:14**).

However, there, in my opinion are two key reasons why this positional judgment against our sin nature is so important:

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(Reason #5) - It makes the indwelling of the Holy Spirit possible for every believer.

The Holy Spirit cannot take up residency in something evil. Our sin nature is evil and the only way the third member of the Holy Trinity can take up residency in us is that a condemnatory judgment at the Godhead level must be made against that nature, thus clearing the way for Spirit indwelling. God will never have any fellowship with darkness and our sin nature is very dark.

(Reason #6) - It clearly proves to us that spiritual victory will never be found in our sin nature which God condemns.

It is absolutely insane to think that our sin nature, which God has positionally condemned, would be a nature in which we could expect to find spiritual victory. Yet untold millions of Christians believe spiritual victory may be found in them. It will never be. Spiritual victory will be produced by God, specifically by the Holy Spirit. This doctrine is critical to realizing this. A God-honoring walk will never be achieved by our old, condemned nature, but His Spirit.

QUESTION #6 – Who are our enemies against spiritual victory?

Christians are in a big-time war and the enemy forces are far more powerful than flesh and blood enemies (**Eph. 6:12**). Dr. Morgan said “saintship means definite conflict with spiritual forces, spiritual powers of the air” (Vol. 3, p. 83).

The Christian is in war and the presence of the spiritual conflict is not sinful; it is defeat that is sinful. Dr. Stanley Toussaint observed, “God’s child is never asked to live without battle, but he is commanded to be victorious in it” (*Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. 123, Dallas Theological Seminary, pp. 314-315). However, our weapons for victory are by Divine power, not by our power, as Paul said, “for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful” (**II Cor. 10:3-4**).

It is imperative in warfare that we understand our enemies and since we are in spiritual warfare, God has revealed much about ours and He expects we will know ours. The recognition of our enemies further establishes the reality that we cannot possibly experience victory depending on ourselves. We don’t have a chance. It must be said, however, that **none of our enemies are superior to the Holy Spirit**. This is an important acknowledgement, for **spiritual victory will never be found in our sufficiency, but in our dependency on Him**.

There are three main enemies that we all face. Each one is designed to keep us from any spiritual progress or victory. These enemies are real and powerful and prove there is no possible way we may expect to have victory depending on self:

Enemy #1 - There is the enemy of our own flesh.

I believe this is the worst enemy we actually have - our own corrupt, degenerate, sin nature. The reason it is our worst enemy is because there are times when we may isolate ourselves from worldly and even satanic influences, but we cannot ever isolate ourselves from our flesh.