

Of the Spirit or the Flesh?

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of where suggestions to do something arise from. Do the temptations come from the indwelling Holy Spirit of a Christian, or are they a desire to do whatever feels good to one's flesh?

For those that may have not been able to discern what was of the flesh, Paul gave a clear explanation of some of the "works of the flesh". They are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness ("lustfulness and indulgences of animal desires"), idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance ("disputing that causes disagreement, discord, and dissensions"), emulations ("contentions"), wrath, strife, seditions ("causing commotion"), heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like ..." (Gal. 5:19-21). His checklist should make it easy for one to evaluate if a behavior or feeling one is having is the old sin-nature controlling a person.

The preacher also listed some



"If everyone is doing it a Christian probably shouldn't be!"

— Barbara Brinkworth



of the things that, if one was doing them, one could tell if the Holy Spirit was involved. The old nature would have nothing to do with committing these activities, so one could know that God's Spirit was probably involved in them. The "fruit of the Spirit" included: "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22-23).

If we are able to detect what we are involved in or are feeling is of God, we will find that we will seldom face temptation's grasp (Gal. 5:25). If one keeps far from the edge of sin, they will rarely be in any danger of falling over the edge! Obey the Spirit, and one will not give the sin-desiring flesh any control.

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You Can't Hide It!

Bill Brinkworth

One of my favorite illustrations for helping young people understand that we are all sinners is a 12-inch-long, innocent looking "empty" tube. On the outside of the Gospel magic trick a woman is etched.



I explain to the children that we may look pretty or handsome on the outside, but our "insides" are a different matter. Next, I open the hinged-tube and show that there is nothing inside. As I run my hand over the inside of the opened tube, I relate that no one can see the sin we have committed — except God. If one was to look in our ear, down our throat, or even if a surgeon was to open us up and look around, no one would see our sins, but we are guilty of many iniquities. We may even

look Christian and behave extremely well, but God knows our dark, hidden secrets. We are all sinners, even though some may not suspect us of it.

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"

Rom. 3:23

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A Christian may be saved on the inside, but he will still fight the temptations of the flesh — until the day he dies! Paul gives the only solution for keeping the sin-seeking human nature, that we were born with, at bay. That temptation-resisting advice is "... Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." (Galatians 5:16)

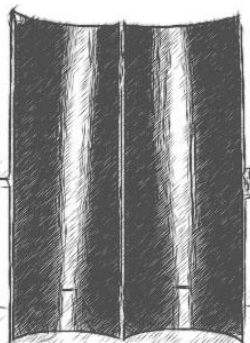
To avoid life-controlling temptations, and often the life-ruining consequences they bring, be wary

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After closing the tube, I slowly pulled out one brightly colored silk after another. With each silk, I assigned to it a sin that we are guilty of. "This green silk reminds me of the sin of jealousy I committed when I was jealous that my little brother got something I didn't. This blue silk



reminds me of the many times I trusted my own way, rather than looking up and asking God what He desired me to do. The red silk reminds me of when I get angry at someone and never forgive them. This black silk reminds me of the dark, dirty sins I did when I thought no one saw me." On I went assigning a sin to each of the 12 or so silks.

After letting the string of 12 "sins" fall to the floor, I again opened the illusion to show that it was empty. I reminded them that although no one saw the "sins" they were there, and God knows about every one of ours. They all grieve Him and separate us from Him because He is Holy and we are not.

Closing the tube again, I continued to pull out 12 more "sins" (No, I won't tell you how I pulled all the silks from the empty tube). I repeated that we were all sinners, and would continue to sin, unless we sought God's help. It was the perfect time to give the Gospel invitation.

I then proceeded to tell the audience that no one can go to Heaven because of their sin. That is terrible news. There is more frightening news; there is a wage for our horrible sins — Hell, but, I continued, there is good news. *"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."* Rom. 6:23

Jesus is the only one that never sinned. He is God's only son, and He loves us very much. He loved us so much that He died on the cross for our sins. His Father excepted only Jesus' blood payment to pay for all our sins. If we ask Him to be our Saviour, Jesus will save us from eternal punishment for our sins. We can be saved, and have

a place with Him forever. *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* John 3:6

After doing that illustration many times, I did something and realized that also illustrated an important principle very well. After I was finishing my Gospel magic illustration, I bent over and picked up the two large piles of colored silks and tried to put them, so everyone could see, back in the hinged tube. They would not fit. As hard as I tried to fit the pile back in the tube, they stuck out. The sins could not be hidden, and then I taught that other important biblical truth. "As you can see I cannot hide these 'sins' from you, and that all can see them sticking out. That's what our sins look like to God. We may have forgotten them. We may try to hide them from our family and friends, but they are not hidden from God."

I addressed the audience again with another question, "If your neighbor or friend could look at you and see your unhidden sins, I am sure you would be embarrassed. Well, God sees all you have done against Him and His commandments. Are you not also embarrassed? What are you going to do about it?"

"O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee." Psalm 69:5

At that time many were convicted and came forward under deep conviction of their sins. Many got saved after seeing this simple illustration. Many privately confessed their sins to God at that time and got their relationship with God right.

How about you? Have you ever had all your sins forgiven? Have you confessed them to God the Father and got your relationship with Him right?

Just One Sin

C. H. Spurgeon

If there was but one crack in the lantern and the wind has found it, the candle will be blown out. One spark can blow up an ammunition magazine and shake the whole country for miles around. One leak can sink a vessel and drown all on board. One wound can kill a body. One sin can destroy one's life! How great a mischief one unguarded sin may cause us.

"So long as you see one star in the sky the sun is not risen. As long as one leak admits the water into the ship it is not safe. If one sin reigns in a man's heart, and is practiced in his life, Jesus is not his only king." — Guthrie

"So SIN IS TO WALK IN THE WAY OF THE HEART ..."