

LIVING BY THE HOLY SPIRIT IN VICTORY OVER THE SIN NATURE

IV. Assurance Of Victory Over Living By The Sin Nature

(Galatians 5:24-26)

I. Introduction

- A. Many New Testament passages teach the need for believers in Christ to live righteously, but the experience of many is a personal failure to achieve that righteous life, what leaves them frustrated and discouraged.
- B. At times believers may think that the influence of Satan, the world or one's own sin nature are too great ever to allow them to gain victory over living by the sin nature.
- C. Galatians 5:24-26 teaches assurance of victory over living by the sin nature, so we view it for our insight:

II. Assurance Of Victory Over Living By The Sin Nature, Galatians 5:24-26.

- A. First, Christ in His death provided the positional basis for experiential victory over the sin nature, Gal. 5:24:
 1. After describing the works of the sin nature in Galatians 5:19-21a followed by his listing the contrasting fruit of the Holy Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23, Paul wrote that they who belong to Christ Jesus have "crucified" (*stauroo*, "crucify," Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 772-773) the sin nature with its passions and desires, Galatians 5:24 ESV.
 2. Paul never taught "self-mortification," so by his statement in Galatians 5:24, he referred to a believer's spiritual position in Christ, that by means of spiritual baptism by the Holy Spirit at conversion (1 Cor. 12:13), a believer is positionally baptized into Christ's death, Rom. 6:3. (Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 609)
 3. Then, "(w)hile co-crucifixion took place potentially at the cross, it becomes effective for believers when they are converted" to Christ upon believing the Gospel of Christ, Ibid.
 4. Accordingly, though the sin nature was not eradicated at conversion (cf. 1 John 1:8-10), "victory over the sinful nature's passions and desires has been provided by Christ in His death." (Ibid.)
- B. Second, "(f)aith must" then "continually lay hold of this truth or a believer will be tempted to try to secure victory by self-effort," an endeavor that will result in failure to gain victory over living by the sin nature, Ibid.
- C. Third, Paul then directed his readers to live by the Spirit's power in victory over the sin nature, Gal. 5:25-26:
 1. Galatians 5:25 begins with a "first class" conditional clause where *ei* appears in the protasis, the "if-clause" followed in the apodosis, the "then-clause" with the verb rendered "we live" in the indicative mood (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 661; Dana & Mantey, A Man. Gram. of the Grk. N. T., 1955, p. 289), so we can paraphrase the clause to read: "**Since** we live in the Spirit . . ."
 2. We believers positionally live in the Holy Spirit due to the cross of Christ, so Paul then urged that we match in our experience of walking in the Holy Spirit with our position that we enjoy in our spiritual life in the Holy Spirit, Galatians 5:25. This "walk" is attained by mentally relying by faith on the Holy Spirit to live a righteous life in victory over the sin nature. (Galatians 2:20)
 3. Applying this directive to the practical needs of the Galatian readers who were expressing conceit in provoking and envying one another under the influence of the "Judaizing error" in their midst (Ibid., Bible Know. Com., N. T.), Paul urged them to rely on the Spirit that they might not commit these sins, Gal. 5:26.
- D. These truths apply even if a believer has very great distortions in the character of his sin nature due to a terrible background he has experienced in his earthly life (as follows):
 1. Lest one think that the distortions that have occurred to his sinful nature are too great to be overcome by a "walk" in the Holy Spirit's power, we must claim the truth that our sin nature completely positionally "died" at the cross, just as Jesus Himself fully died as evidenced by the flow of "blood and water" from His side so that the Roman soldiers did not bother to break His legs to hasten His death, John 19:31-35.
 2. Accordingly, since the sin nature is reckoned to be positionally completely dead, its distorted character traits because of one's troubled background are of no consequence as one lives in the Holy Spirit's power. The believer merely needs to function by the Holy Spirit to function in complete spiritual righteousness.
 3. Furthermore, the Holy Spirit is God (cf. Acts 5:3-4), and God is omnipotent, that is, all-powerful, so He is not limited in providing victory over any obstacle to His righteousness when He controls the believer!

Lesson: *We believers were positionally crucified with Christ so that our sin nature positionally fully died. Thus, by relying on God the Holy Spirit in an act of faith, we can live free of that nature and its passions and desires even if that nature is badly distorted. If we positionally live by the Holy Spirit, may we experientially walk by that Spirit.*

Application: *May we take advantage of our positional total death with Christ to live in newness of life by the Spirit.*