

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN OLD AND NEW NATURES IN THE CONVERTED MAN

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Most of us would indignantly resent the suggestion that we bear any resemblance to the notorious Dr. Jekyll-Mr. Hyde of Stevenson's famous novel—the man who, though a respected and competent physician by day, committed fiendish crimes by night. However much we may dislike admitting this fact, however, there is a sense in which every converted person is a kind of Jekyll-Hyde combination. For the Scriptures clearly affirm that there is a continual struggle within every converted man between his old nature and his new. Though we may grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, there is no armistice in this war, there is no cessation of hostilities—until we die.

In a way we could say that the converted man is a bundle of contradictions. He hates and yet he loves God's law. He wills and yet he does not will the good. He despises and yet he commits evil. He is at one and the same time a Pharisee and a publican, a Simon and a Peter, a sinner and yet a saint.

Perfectionists of various stripes, who teach that it is possible for a Christian in this life to attain to a state of sinless perfection, deny the seriousness of this continual struggle. Medieval scholasticism, though affirming the reality of the struggle, misunderstood it. In this brief article, I shall try both to reaffirm the inescapability of this struggle, and to describe its nature.

Scholasticism

The medieval scholastic theologians, under the influence of Aristotelian and Platonic philosophy, watered down the conflict within the regenerate to a struggle between his reason and his passions. We see this very clearly in Thomas Aquinas, the outstanding representative of high scholasticism. For Aquinas the intellect is the highest power in the soul because it is the highest power in God. Man's intellect is, therefore, the most god-like power in him.¹

What, now, did this superiority of the intellect or reason mean for the moral struggle in the believer? In the state of innocence there was an absolute sovereignty of the intellect over the so-called lower powers of the soul (that is, the passions and appetites): "For this rectitude (that is, the rectitude of man's primitive state) consisted in his reason being subject to God, the lower powers to reason, and the body to the soul."² Because of the fall of man, however, these "lower powers" are no longer subject to the intellect, but often go contrary to its rule. Hence there is now a great "rebellion of carnal appetite against reason."³ By means of the restoration of the *donum superadditum* (or added gift of grace) in regeneration, the intellect or reason can gain rule over the lower powers. Virtue, therefore, now consists in the dominance of reason over passion, whereas vice results when the passions are dominant over the reason: "The passions of the soul, insofar as they are contrary to the order of reason, incline us to sin; but insofar as they are controlled by reason, they pertain to virtue."⁴ Hence the essential moral conflict in the regenerate or converted man, for Aquinas, is the conflict of reason versus the passions. If one follows reason, one does good; if one follows the passions, one does evil. In Gal. 5:17 we read, "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh." Illustrative of the way in which Aquinas's presuppositions determine his exposition of Scripture is his interpretation of this passage: "The flesh lusts against the spirit by the rebellion of the passions against the reason . . ."⁵ On the basis of what we have noted so far, it would seem that, for Aquinas, reason, like the customer, is always right; all we need to do, in any doubtful moral situation, is simply to follow the dictates of the reason.

To be fair to Aquinas, however, we should observe that in another section of the *Summa Theologica* than that from which the above quotations were taken, he admits that there may be sin in the reason. He explains that this may happen in two ways; when reason errs in the knowledge of the truth, or when the reason either commands the inordinate movements of the lower powers or after deliberation fails to restrain them.⁶ At this point Aquinas transcends his earlier position, that virtue is the control of the passions by the reason. Here he comes closer to a Scriptural view of man, having been compelled to admit that reason may be deficient, and may either command wrong deeds or fail to check them. The view expressed here, in I-II 74, is, however, not typical of Aquinas's general position.

Generally, Aquinas insists that the moral struggle in the believer is that of reason versus the passions. This conception, however, is derived not from the Scriptures but from Greek philosophy. Both Plato and Aristotle asserted that the intellect was a spark of divinity in man, and that man's intellect was supposed to rule over his passions, the latter being the source of evil. This view is dramatically portrayed by Plato's myth of the charioteer: The soul is like a chariot driven by two steeds. The good horse stands for the "spirited" part of man (*thumos*), while the bad horse—crooked, heavy, shaggy-eared and deaf, hardly obedient to whip and spurs—stands for the appetites (*epithumia*). The charioteer stands for the reason. With great difficulty and tremendous exertion the charioteer manages to keep the bad horse from pulling the chariot into the ditch. After a long struggle the bad horse is finally tamed and brought into line.⁷ It will be observed that there is no real sense of sin here, since an aspect of autonomous man (his reason) is the source of virtue, and since reason finally succeeds in taming the passions which are the source of evil. It is this unscriptural and Greek view of man's moral struggle which dominates the ethics of the Middle Ages.

This medieval conception grossly oversimplifies a complex psychological problem—as if the main ethical struggle is simply that of determining whether a given impulse comes from the appetitive aspect of one's nature or from the rational side of his being. Virtue is simplistically defined as following rational and suppressing appetitive, impulses. The ascetic strain in Roman Catholic moralism to which this conception led can still be observed in such typical Roman Catholic notions as the higher morality of unmarried monks and nuns, the necessity for a celibate clergy, and the perpetual virginity of the Virgin Mary. We may also see a relationship between this conception of the moral struggle and the view that good works are meritorious. For the definition of virtue typical of scholasticism involves a quantitative standard of virtue, which necessarily carries with it the temptation to ascribe merit to those in whom the number of times they have suppressed the passions exceeds the number of times in which they have yielded to them.

Calvin

We can now appreciate more fully the reinterpretation of this moral struggle in the converted man which we find in the Reformers. As far as Calvin is concerned, there are some unfortunate traces of Greek and scholastic anthropology left in him. Like the Scholastics he said that the intellect is "the guide and governor of the soul,"⁸ and that the directing part of man is the reason.⁹ Calvin's view of man's original state is, in one respect at least, quite similar to that of Aquinas: "This term, therefore (the image of God), denotes the integrity which Adam possessed, when he was endued with a right understanding, when he had affections regulated by reason . . ."¹⁰ Calvin's psychology here, as others have pointed out, is not very satisfactory; it is as much a faculty psychology as was the scholastic view of man, having been taken over largely from the Greek philosophers.

When Calvin discusses the effect of the fall on man, however, he gives scholastic anthropology a wide berth. Though reason still rules in man's fallen state, it has now become so corrupted by sin that its government is misrule. The trouble with the Greek philosophers, Calvin adds, is that, failing to recognize man's corruption, they describe man as though he had never fallen into sin.¹¹ ". . . Man has not only been ensnared by the inferior appetites, but abominable impiety has seized the very citadel of his mind . . ." ¹² Calvin vigorously opposes those who say that man has been corrupted only in his sensual part and not in his reason:¹³ "They say that there is great disagreement between organic motions and the soul's rational part. As if reason itself did not also disagree with itself and were not at cross purposes with itself, just like armies at war."¹⁴ Against those who teach that by *flesh* the Bible means only the sensual aspect of the soul, Calvin insists that "whatever we have from nature is flesh."¹⁵ In his comment on Gal. 5:17, Calvin takes sharp issue with Aquinas's interpretation: "The spirit denotes the renewed nature, or the grace of regeneration; and what else does the flesh mean, but 'the old man'?" Calvin adds significantly, "Disobedience and rebellion against the Spirit of God pervade the whole nature of man." And in his exposition of Rom. 7:15, Calvin indicates that the struggle here depicted is not simply a struggle between reason and passions but a much deeper kind of conflict, which only begins when a man has been regenerated, and which cuts across all fragmentations of human nature: "Thus, while pulled in two ways, they (believers) fight against their own nature, and nature fights against them." This, in other words, is a conflict between man's whole nature as loving God, and man's whole nature as under the power of the evil one. We see in Calvin, therefore, the emergence of a new understanding of the moral struggle of the converted man.

Luther

We find, however, an even more penetrating analysis of this struggle in Luther. Because of Luther's psychological temperament, he could enter more deeply into both the despair of the sinner and the joy of the redeemed that Calvin was able to do; he was more a man of emotional ups and downs than Calvin was.¹⁶ Luther was not interested in mere theoretical psychology. In the words of one of his interpreters, Luther wished to go beyond a mere "psychologische Ich-Begriff", (Psychological ego-concept) to a "theologische Ich-Begriff" (theological ego-concept) which sees man not just in relation to his psychological functions but in relation to his God.¹⁷ (At this point Luther reminds us of Berkouwer's emphasis that man can never be fully understood unless he is seen in his relation to god.)

According to another Luther scholar, the most basic concept in Luther's ethics was the antithesis between flesh and spirit.¹⁸ For Luther, however, this was not to be conceived of as a struggle between two different "parts" of man, but between two opposite dispositions of the whole man. Luther interpreted the Biblical concept *flesh* as referring, not just to the sensual or appetitive aspect of man's nature, but to the whole man.¹⁹ Man's fleshliness reveals itself in every area of his life—not just in his passions. In his comment of Gal. 5:19, Luther observes that many of the works of the flesh there mentioned are other than sins of the body. He adds, "It is very necessary for us to know these things; for this word (flesh) is so darkened in the kingdom of the Pope, that they have taken the work of the flesh to be nothing else than the accomplishing of fleshly lust, or the act of lechery; wherefore it was not possible for them to understand Paul."²⁰ In his characteristic way, Luther reveals his contempt for the scholastic view of this struggle:

The schoolmen, the monks, and such other, never felt any spiritual temptations, and therefore they fought only for the repressing and overcoming of fleshly lust and lechery; and being proud of that victory which they never yet obtained, they thought themselves far better and more holy than married men. I will not

say, that, under this holy pretence, they nourished and maintained all kinds of horrible sins, as dissension, pride, hatred, disdain, and despising of their neighbors . . . infidelity, blasphemy, and such-like. Against these sins they never fought, nay, rather, they took them to be no sins at all . . .²¹

What, now, does Luther say about the meaning of *spirit*? For the scholastics, as we saw, spirit in Gal. 5:17 denoted the reason; for Luther, however, spirit meant the whole man transformed by God and turned toward God. Over against the scholastic quantitative standard of virtue, Luther insisted that it is not good works which make the person good, but that it is the person who makes the works good. He uses an interesting illustration:

Just so no one becomes a bishop by doing the works of a bishop, but after he has been made a bishop, he does the works of a bishop. So the works of faith do not make faith, but faith does the works of faith.²²

Virtue, for Luther, is not a mere matter of following reason rather than the passions, but is dependent on the question of whether the person who does this deed is still thoroughly self-centered, or self-forgetfulness gives himself to others.²³ The all-important thing about a deed, Luther would say, is its motivation—a motivation determined by the whole man.

Flesh and spirit, therefore, both mean the whole man. "The whole man is spiritual or the whole man is fleshly, depending on whether devotion to God or devotion to one's own ego has the supremacy."²⁴ Fleshliness reveals itself not just in sensuality but in every activity of which man is capable—even in his moral striving, if this striving is done only for the sake of one's own honor. Luther, in fact, distinguished between two kinds of fleshly people: *sinistrales* (those on the left hand) and *dextrales* (those on the right hand). The former show their fleshliness in yielding to their passions and lusts; the latter reveal their fleshliness by subduing their lusts and practicing virtue. The second type, Luther affirms, is the worse of the two.²⁵ In other words, someone leading an outwardly respectable life may nevertheless be thoroughly fleshly in his inner motivation. Luther probably had Roman Catholic monks in mind, but we think also of Jesus' denunciations of the Pharisees, who were so diabolically evil precisely because they thought themselves righteous.

When grace transforms man, it created a new nature called *spirit*. This does not involve the annihilation of the old nature, since the two natures remain side by side throughout life. For the believer, therefore, life is a constant struggle; in fact, so says Luther on Gal. 5:17, "The more godly a man is, the more doth he feel that battle."²⁶

For Luther, therefore, the real struggle within the believer is a struggle between two whole men: the new man and the old man. One author quotes a statement of Luther's to this effect: "There are two whole men and one whole man."²⁷ The antithesis within man is thus not between two "parts" of his soul, but between two "whole men," one of whom hates God, while the other loves God. Yet this antithesis does not disrupt man's unity. Two reasons can be given for this:

1) *There is psychological continuity between the old man and the new.* Commenting on the last verse of Romans 7, Luther said,

See: as one and the same man at the same time serves the law of God and the law of sin, he is at the same time righteous and a sinner. For he does not say, My mind serves the law of God, neither, My flesh serves the law of sin, but I, he says, the whole man, the same person, serve both.²⁸

Erdmann Schott sums up Luther's position on this point by saying: "On the one hand I am flesh, and on the other hand I am spirit; these are the greatest possible antitheses, and yet it is the same ego."²⁹

2) The second reason why this antithesis does not disrupt man's unity is that *in the believer, the new man dominates over the old:*"

The faithful, therefore, receive great consolation by this doctrine of Paul, in that they know themselves to have part of the flesh, and part of the spirit, but yet so notwithstanding that the spirit ruleth, and the flesh is subdued and kept under awe, that righteousness reigneth, and sin serveth.³⁰

For Luther, therefore, the old and the new natures are not on the same footing in the believer; the new nature has already in principle won the victory over the old. Though the old nature is still present, the new is in the driver's seat.

Luther has given us some tremendous insights into the nature of the problem. We are therefore greatly indebted to him, as well as to Calvin, for clarifying the issue which is before us.

The Biblical Description of This Struggle

I should like next to invite your attention to a brief analysis of the Biblical description of this struggle. The Bible indicates the nature of this moral struggle within the believer in a variety of ways. A typical Old Testament way of describing the ethical antithesis is to oppose the heart of flesh to the heart of stone. We have already noted the contrast depicted in Gal. 5 between flesh and spirit. Other ways in which the New Testament pictures the opposing forces within the believer is by expressions such as these: new man versus old man; new nature versus old nature; the spiritual man versus the natural man; the inward man versus the law of sin in the members.

There are two Scripture passages in which this struggle is most sharply delineated. The first is Gal. 5:16-24, particularly verse 17: "For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other . . ." Some, like Luther and Lenski, interpret *spirit* here as referring to man's new nature; other interpreters capitalize the word and understand it to mean the Holy Spirit.³¹ Whichever interpretation we adopt, however, this passage clearly depicts the unremitting struggle in the heart of the believer between impulses which come from his old nature and those which come ultimately from the Holy Spirit.

The most vivid description of this struggle, however, is found in Romans 7:14-25. The concluding sentence of this passage is at the same time a summary of its basic thrust: "So then I of myself with the mind, indeed, serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." This passage, as is well known, has been a great battleground for interpreters. From the beginning of the Christian era there have been those who held that this passage does not describe the regenerate man but applies only to the unregenerate. Augustine first shared this view, but later retracted it; his mature judgment was that this passage unmistakably denoted the regenerate man.³² Without trying to list authorities on both sides of this question, let me just say that theologians of Reformed persuasion have generally followed Augustine's later interpretation: Calvin, Luther, Hodge, Shedd, Abraham Kuyper, Herman Bavinck. Recently Herman Ridderbos, Professor of New Testament theology at Kampen Seminary in the Netherlands, has created something of a stir in Reformed circles by championing the view that Romans 7 refers to the unregenerate man.³³ He was, however, soundly taken to task for this position by Professor Berkouwer, in the columns of a Dutch periodical of which both men are joint editors.³⁴

I am convinced that Romans 7:14-25 must be understood as describing the regenerate or, if you will, the converted man. My reasons for taking this position are as follows: 1) The present tense in which the section is written. In verse 14 the tense shifts from the aorist to the present; I conclude that Paul is here speaking of himself in his present, regenerate state. 2) The purpose of this section is to prove that the law is good. Hence the *regenerate* individual here utters his conviction that, despite

the continuing power of indwelling sin, the law is holy. The testimony of an *unregenerate* man to the goodness of the law would not be sufficient to prove Paul's point. 3) The very language of this section points unmistakably to the regenerate man. For what unregenerate man can say, "What I hate, I do"? Can an unconverted person, whose heart has not been renewed by God's Spirit, really hate sin? Conclusive is verse 22: "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man." Could an unregenerate person say this? A person who, according to Rom. 8:7, "is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can . . . be"? 4) The extremely serious view of sin expressed by the speaker in verses 14-25 can only be entertained by the enlightened consciousness of the regenerate. Only a regenerate man will confess that in him, that is, in his flesh, dwelleth no good thing.

If this is the correct interpretation of the passage, what, further, does Romans 7 tell us about the nature of this struggle in the believer? I should like to make four brief observations:

1) The struggle against sin continues throughout the earthly life of the converted person. In other words, there is no armistice in this war until death.

2) This struggle, however, does not involve a splitting of the converted person into two egos. If we examine this passage carefully, we shall see that the word *ego*, the Greek word for I, is used here in a twofold sense: in a more comprehensive and in a more limited sense. In verse 15, for example, where Paul says, "What I hate, that I do," he affirms that his ego does the thing he hates. In verse 17, however, he says, "So now it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me." Here Paul tells us that it is no longer his *ego*, his *I*, which does the sin. Obviously, the I which is said to do the wrong in verse 15 is a more comprehensive ego than the I which is said in verse 17 not to do the wrong. When Paul says, in verse 17, "it is no more I that do it," he is not attempting to evade his responsibility for wrongdoing, but he is using *ego* here as synonymous with *new natures*: is not my *new ego*, my *regenerate ego*, that commits this sin. I do not sin, Paul here tells us, with my inmost self, for that inmost self has been renewed. That inmost self is, however, the constitutive principle of my more comprehensive self—the self which includes the old nature. We may not say, therefore, that the old nature which still remains in the believer constitutes a second ego—it is not, strictly speaking, an ego. In the regenerated man the ego, the inmost self, has been renewed.

3) In the converted man, therefore, sin, though present, no longer rules. "It is no more I that do it": the new ego is now in the saddle; that which causes the regenerate to sin is an old nature which, though still active, is no longer in complete control. The very fact that the speaker here can say, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man," substantiates this point.

4) The two natures as here described are related to each other as one dominant nature to another nature which is no longer dominant. We may compare the believer to a country in which the king must continually contend with rebel forces which, however, have already been decisively defeated in battle. During the entire reign of this king, the rebel forces continue to engage in guerrilla warfare, harassing the king no end, but never able to dethrone him. It is in this fashion that I interpret the contrasts found in verses 22 and 25, between the "inward man" and the "law in the members" which wars against the law of the mind, or between the mind which serves the law of God and the flesh which serves the law of sin.

When superficially read, the expressions "members" and "flesh" might suggest to some that Paul is here returning to the Greek dualism of intellect versus passions. This is not so, however; we have learned from Galatians 5 that *flesh* for Paul does not mean just the sensual aspect of his nature, but stands for the entire old nature, which causes man to sin in his mind as well as with his body. Accordingly I con-

clude that Paul is using the word *members* in verse 23 not literally but figuratively. Paul is trying to find a word to describe that aspect of his complex personality which is not his "inward man," or his "mind", or his renewed core. So he uses the word *members* to indicate what we might call the "periphery" of his personality. The distinction between *inward man* and *members*, as here used, is a figurative way of expressing the distinction within the regenerate man between what is essential and what is peripheral in him. What is dominant in me, Paul is saying, is the new nature; what is in the subordinate position is the old nature.

Theological Implications Of This Struggle

What, now, are some of the theological implications of this struggle within the regenerate and converted man for our understanding of the nature of conversion and sanctification. First, in our attempt to describe Christian conversion, let us not ignore this struggle. It strikes me that many studies of conversion, particularly of the psychology of conversion, leave the impression that, after conversion has taken place, a *completely* new and *wholly* different pattern of behavior emerges. In many so-called Christian novels, the impression is given that after the hero has been converted, all his problems are solved, and all his struggles with sin are over. This is, however, not true to the Scriptures. The struggle with sin persists throughout the life of the convert. Perfectionists, who claim that for a special class of believers the struggle disappears, fail to understand the depths of man's sinfulness, tend to have superficial views of the demands of God's law, and tend to foster a "holier-than-thou" attitude on the part of the "sanctified." Too idealistic a view of conversion, as of a change in which a person is suddenly catapulted into angelic holiness, will leave many earnest Christians utterly discouraged and full of doubts as to the genuineness of their religious experiences.

Secondly, the Christian theologian, pastor, educator or psychiatrist ought to recognize the uniqueness of this struggle within the Christian. The struggle we have been discussing is not the same as the moral struggle of the non-Christian. Herman Bavinck has some significant things to say about this struggle in his *Reasonable Faith*:

. . . In the unregenerate also there is often a struggle present. But this is not a spiritual struggle. It is a rational struggle, a conflict between the human reason and conscience, on the one hand, and his will and desire on the other . . . The battle is not waged against all sins, but only against some of them, and for the most part only against certain external and outwardly offensive sins. The struggle is not waged against sin as sin . . .

The spiritual struggle which believers must conduct within their souls has a very different character. It is not a struggle between reason and passion, but between the flesh and the spirit, between the old and the new man, between the sin which continues to dwell in believers and the spiritual principle of life which has been planted in their hearts³⁵

These two forces stand, armed and militant, over against each other, battling for the whole of the human person. In one and the same reason of one and the same person there is a battle going on between faith and unbelief, between truth and falsehood; in one and the same heart there is an opposition between pure drives and desires and impure ones; in one and the same will an evil lust opposes a good one The struggle is in very fact a struggle between two beings in one and the same being.³⁶

We must, therefore, not give people the impression that, when one is converted, all conflicts automatically cease. In one way, conversion means the resolution of the most basic conflict of life, since a new center of loyalty has been established. In another sense, however, one could say that when one has been converted the real con-

flict has just begun. Calvin affirms, on Romans 7:15, “. . . This conflict, of which the apostle speaks, does not exist in man before he is renewed by the Spirit of God . . .” It is only after conversion that the real battle against sin as sin is joined; this battle continues to the end of life.

The Christian psychotherapist, therefore, may not simply adopt as his goal the removal or resolution of all possible conflicts from the life of his counsellee. We may make a similar statement about integration. In one sense conversion means the integration of all of life around a dominant loyalty to Christ. In another sense, however, integration must be avoided like the plague—that is, the attempt to integrate the old nature with the new. It is this type of compromise, I suppose, of which our Lord spoke when he said to the Laodiceans: “Because thou art neither hot nor cold, I will spew thee out of my mouth” (Rev. 3:16).

Third, the recognition of this struggle greatly complicates the problem of arriving at a satisfactory definition of Christian conversion. There is no simple formula by means of which we can define this struggle. We may not say that there are now two ego's in the converted man since, as we have learned from Romans 7, there is only one ego in the strict sense of the term, the renewed ego, and the old nature is no longer in control, but is “in the periphery” of the personality. Neither are we permitted to reduce this conflict in the converted man to a battle between the conscious and the unconscious phases of his existence. While acknowledging the contributions Freud has made to our understanding of human nature, we must recognize that he had no appreciation for what is distinctively Christian about this struggle within man. We may at least learn this from Freud: the struggle within the believer can never be identified with a battle between conscious and unconscious, but is one which cuts across the dividing line between conscious and unconscious. Whereas it is popularly thought that Freud's Unconscious, with its lustful desires, is somewhat comparable to the *old man* of Christian theology, it is, in fact, often precisely the impulses of the old nature which are in the forefront of our consciousness, while the motivations of the new nature are for the moment buried in the subconscious.

Fourth, the recognition of this struggle greatly complicates the ethical problem as well, and forbids any simplistic dichotomy of our actions, in Pelagian fashion, into deeds which are wholly good and other deeds which are wholly bad. Bavinck has written penetratingly on this:

In every deliberation and deed of the believer . . . the good and the evil lie, as it were, mingled through each other. The measure and the degree to which both are present in any particular thought or deed differ greatly, of course, but nevertheless there is something of the old and something of the new man in all our actions and thoughts.³⁷

Fifth, a proper understanding of the nature of this conflict within the converted man will help us to see that, though the constancy of the struggle often makes us discouraged, the existence of the struggle is an evidence of divine grace. For this reason I wish to register a protest against people who are always saying, “We must get out of Romans 7 and into Romans 8.” Though Romans 7 is predominantly negative in its approach and Romans 8 is predominantly positive, yet there is a profound sense in which we never get out of Romans 7. As a matter of fact, perhaps many of us have never yet fully entered into Romans 7. How many of us can honestly say that, every time we do something wrong, we feel in the depths of our hearts that it was not our innermost self that did this? When considered from this point of view, Rom. 7:14-25 presents a high ideal indeed, and pictures the essential, inner victory of the Christian over sin: the victory which says, “I delight in the law of God after the inward man.”

Sixth, a true appreciation of this struggle will be an effective antidote to spiritual complacency. “The more godly a man is, the more doth he feel that battle.” Do we

feel it? Are we aware of the fact that, at every moment of decision, we are placed before the choice of following the Spirit or the flesh? Are we aware of the subtle forms of fleshliness which creep into our holiest activities? Do we know that our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against "spiritual hosts of wickedness," and do we daily put on the whole armor of God? As Christian soldiers, we face a daily battle. How well are we fighting it?

The battle between the new and the old natures rages until we die. Yet the very fact that the battle is raging within is a ground for hope. One author has put it this way:

It is the glory of the grace of God that it makes us enemies of our own selves. God's word splits the Christian, so that the believer becomes a double man. The one man is, however, always conquered by the other—yet not conquered in any other way than that in which the whole world is conquered for the Christian. Not in feeling—at least not fully—but in faith and in hope. In faith—meaning that we feel it either not at all or only imperfectly. In hope—meaning that a day is coming in which we shall feel it perfectly.³⁸

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FOOTNOTES

1. *Summa Theologica*, Part I, Question 93.
2. *Ibid.*, I, 95.
3. *Ibid.*, II-II, 164, Article 1.
4. *Ibid.*, I-II, 24, 2, ad 3.
5. *Ibid.*, I, 95, 2, ad 1.
6. *Ibid.*, I-II, 74, 5.
7. *Phaedrus* 246A.
8. *Institutes* I, 15, 7.
9. *Ibid.*, I, 15, 8. One sees clearly Calvin's dependence on the Greek philosophers for much of his psychology when one observes that in the new McNeill edition of the *Institutes* 8 of the footnotes to I, 15, 6-8 refer to Plato, Aristotle, or both.
10. *Inst.* I, 15, 3.
11. *Ibid.*, I, 15, 8.
12. *Ibid.*, II, 1, 9.
13. *Ibid.*, II, 2, 4.
14. *Ibid.*, I, 15, 6 (McNeill edition).
15. *Ibid.*, II, 3, 3.
16. See the illuminating recent psychological comparison of Luther and Calvin in Eberhard Grossman's *Beiträge zur Psychologischen Analyse der Reformatoren Luther und Calvin* (Basel: Karger, 1958).
17. Erdmann Schott, *Fleisch und Geist nach Luthers Lehre* (Leipzig: Scholl, 1928), pp. 52-59.
18. Carl Stange, "Luther und das Sittliche Ideal," *Studien zur Theologie Luthers* (Gutersloh: Bertelsmann, 1928), p. 170.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 183.
20. *Comm. on Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1930), p. 490.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 472-73 (on Gal. 5:17).
22. Ewald M. Plass, *What Luther Says* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1959), II, 721, under item 2252.
23. Stange, *op. cit.*, p. 170.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 173.
25. Schott, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
26. *Com. on Galatians*, p. 475.
27. "Sunt duo toti homines et unus totus homo," *Weimarer Lutherausgabe*, II, 586, quoted by M. A. H. Stomps, *Die Anthropologie Martin Luthers* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1935), p. 148.
28. *Luthers Römerbriefvorlesung*, Ficker, II, 176, 5-9; quoted in Schott *op. cit.*, p. 54, footnote 1.
29. Schott, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
30. *Comm. on Galatians*, p. 475 (on Gal. 5:17).
31. H. Ridderbos in *New International Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956) and S. Greijdanus in *Korte Verklaring* (Kampen: Kok, 1922). Calvin is somewhat ambiguous here, speaking both about man's renewed nature and about the Holy Spirit in the same paragraph (on Gal. 5:17). Appeal to the Greek text will not help us here, since in the oldest mss. of the Greek New Testament all the letters are capitals.
32. *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians*, I, 22 (*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, First Series, V, 384).
33. *Commentaar op het Nieuwe Testament: Aan de Romeinen* (Kampen: Kok, 1959), pp. 162-171.
34. "Een Nieuwe Commentaar op Romeinen," *Gereformeerd Weekblad*, Vol. 14, Nos. 41-44 (April 10-May 8, 1959), pp. 321, 328, 337, 345.
35. *Our Reasonable Faith*, trans. Henry Zylstra (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956), pp. 492-93.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 494.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 495.
38. Schott, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-72.