

## A “Spirit-led” Life

We are, by nature of the fact that we are human beings with free will, prone to engage in sin. It’s just part of who we have come to be. It obviously is not what God intended for mankind when He created us. We have a tendency to blame God for making us susceptible to sin, kind of “what do you expect? We’re ONLY HUMAN!”

James teaches us something I brought out in an earlier NEWSLETTER article that OUR sin is not HIS fault. **James 1: 13-15** says this:

***“When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”***

Because of the fact that part of Himself came to earth in the form of the man Jesus Christ, our weakness in the face of temptation became something more obvious. God knew mankind would sin, which is why He put a plan in motion to redeem us. That plan was completed in the sacrifice of his Son, who lived the perfect life, taught us what God expects of us, and was sacrificed in order to take our sins away.

Once being cleansed of our sin, Satan doesn’t leave us alone. He wants us to fall prey to the sinful nature that, for lack of a better term, comes naturally. That is why we are encouraged to live a **“new life”** dedicated to resisting temptation (with God’s help – **1 Corinthians 10:13**) and living for Him. Doing so means to resist the sinful nature and do what the Spirit of God instructs us to do through our knowledge of His word.

This is what Paul tells the Colossians in **Colossians 3:5-10**:

***“Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.”***

That new self, renewed in knowledge in the image of God, will show himself or herself to be a different person, attempting to please God in every way. We are instructed in **verses 12-14** to:

***“...clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of***

***Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.”***

Certainly unnatural as far as man is concerned, but commanded by God – telling us how we should be. As Paul points out to the Romans in **Romans chapters 7 and 8**, it is the difference between the ***“mind governed by the flesh”*** and the ***“mind governed by the Spirit.”*** He tells them (and us) in **Romans 8:6**: ***“The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.”*** I choose ***“life and peace”*** over spiritual ***“death”***, don’t you? Live ***“according to the Spirit”*** in this life— your reward awaits.

---Johnny Stephens