

Insights into Fullness of Life in Christ

Unit 5.....What is the nature of man?

Introduction

This series of studies began by looking at the Mystery of the New Testament, the mystery not known about until Paul was taught of it by the Holy Spirit. Paul teaches us that this mystery is "Christ in you" and says that to teach this mystery is to teach the word of God – the gospel, to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the gentiles. (Col 1:25-28) This mystery of the gospel then was spoken about as an invitation to live (Unit 2) and followed by the question, "How then shall we live?" (Unit 3) The fourth unit of study was a particular application of this mystery where Paul spoke to the Galatians about the life of Christ being formed in them.

This next unit examines the nature of man in relation to God. There may be some surprises here for people who have not heard these things before. At first, it may appear to be quite impossible and even controversial, but please read and or listen and check out the references, so you know for yourself. Many have taught it before me and the Lord has shown me its truth. It is a vital component of seeing how our exact nature depends on our relationship with God, either as believers, or in our former unbelieving state. In this study you will begin to see that man does not have a nature of his own, but only that which is provided by God, the provision depending on the spiritual state of the man. In essence we find that scripture says that if we are believers then we become partakers of His divine nature. If however we do not yet know God, our nature will be as a child of wrath, because we have inherited the nature of Adam after the Fall.

There are in fact only two natures mentioned in scripture, one derived from Adam and the second from Christ in the new birth. Because the nature man has is derived from either Adam or Jesus (unsaved and saved) the second important thing to know is that man himself does not have a nature of his own. Once you realize this you will find it to be a tremendous relief. Not knowing this one fact has led to much misunderstanding of the way we live and the ways and means by which we attempt to mature in our walk with God. The major issue here is that mankind, even many believers, tend to see themselves as independent and having to do something to be related to God. However, believers do not have to do anything as Christ has done it for them. Also, an improper understanding of Romans 7:14-25 where these things have sometimes been related to, has led to confusion in the maturation process for many believers. The Romans 7 issue will be dealt with in full in a later study. In the meantime, the aim of this study is to get an understanding of the nature men have as believers and compare it with the nature of unbelievers, so that we will have a proper foundation to live the Christian life from the basis of the life of Christ within us.

In some ways this study on the nature of man is probably one of the most important in the series, as it lays a cornerstone on which the rest is built. So then, let us proceed and find out about the nature of man and how this can positively affect our relationship and our walk with our Lord Jesus Christ.

No.	Thematic Pt	Developmental Point	Illustrations & linkages
1	<p>We will look at three issues here.</p> <p>What is the nature of man (all of point 2)</p> <p>(then later)</p> <p>What differences are there between believers and unbelievers?</p> <p>(still later)</p> <p>Do believers have two conflicting natures?</p> <p>(then finally)</p> <p>Why this issue is important.</p>	<p>Let us start with the scriptures from the New Testament that talk about our nature. The main way the word nature is used in the New Testament is to describe the natural disposition or condition of man. This is the Greek word <i>phusis, Strong's 5449. <u>Only two of the verses that use the word nature actually use an adjective to describe the noun (nature).</u></i> All the others just refer to being as per man's general state, as a believer or unbeliever, or are other Greek words for nature, not relevant to this discussion</p> <p>Occurrence of the word Nature in the NT. It occurs 8 times in the NIV It occurs 12 times in the NKJV It occurs 13 times in the original KJV. See Appendix A below.</p> <p>So in these two verses we have described for us the two possible natures that a human being can have. Either we are by nature children of wrath (before our regeneration) or children of God who are partaking of the divine nature (after our regeneration) Here are those verses.</p> <p><i>"by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be <u>partakers of the divine nature</u>, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." 2 Pet. 1:4 (NKJV)</i></p> <p><i>"among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were <u>by nature children of wrath, just as the others.</u>" Eph. 2:3 (NKJV)</i></p> <p>The New Testament does not talk about any other state, or any state in between these two. There is no independent state which man can have, as many would believe, nor does man have a nature of his own. We are either one or the other. So please wait for that expansion as we proceed.</p>	<p>Confusion occurs when an interpretation of Romans 7:14-25 results in the idea that two concurrent natures are inferred from what Paul said. Nature is not mentioned at all – see later discussion in this study and later in Romans 7.</p> <p>For now, we are going to go on and look at the metaphors the Bible uses to describe our nature in relation to God. There are six of these in the NT.</p>
2	<p>So, what are these metaphors?</p>	<p><u>Believers</u>, those referred to as born again or regenerate, have the opportunity to partake of His divine nature. In scripture, this means believers are referred to as being temples, vessels, parts of a body, branches, slaves and wives.</p>	<p>We are going to deal with each of these in turn.</p>

2.1	One of the aspects of our nature as believers is that we are temples – in which God dwells.	<p>Believers are temples, the dwelling place of the deity, as Paul spoke of in Corinthians.</p> <p><i>"Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are."</i> <u>1 Cor 3:16-17. (NKJV)</u></p> <p><i>"Or do you not know that <u>your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit</u> who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."</i> <u>1 Cor. 6:19-20 (NKJV)</u></p> <p>However, remember that although we have God within us, we are not the deity itself. God is the deity. (We humans are the temple and the Spirit and life of Christ is the indwelling God)</p>	<p>God dwelling in a temple is not a new idea. In the OT, God was said to dwell in the tabernacle and in the actual temple in Jerusalem.</p> <p>The NT metaphor is that the body of the human person is the temple of God.</p> <p>So that is the first metaphor for our nature – that we are a temple in which God can dwell.</p>
2.2	Another aspect of our nature as believers is as a vessel – to contain God.	<p>Paul said, <i>"but we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us."</i> <u>2 Cor 4:7 (NKJV)</u> We are the earthen vessels enabling the power of God to be in us. It is not our power, but God's. You could say that we humans are the cup – and Christ is the coffee. We are the vessels, not the contents of the vessel.</p> <p>Then Paul said, <i>"What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the <u>vessels of wrath</u> prepared for destruction, and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the <u>vessels of mercy</u>, which He had prepared beforehand for glory,</i> <u>Rom. 9:22-23 (NKJV)</u></p>	Our salvation, which regenerated us, gave us the Spirit of God within, so that we are now vessels of mercy (having the divine nature), not vessels of wrath.
2.3	Another aspect of our nature as believers is that we are parts of the body of Christ.	<p>Paul outlined this part of our nature as believers in three verses.</p> <p><i>"so <u>we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members</u> of one another."</i> <u>Romans 12:5 (NKJV)</u></p> <p><i>"For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and <u>have all been made to drink into one Spirit.</u> For in fact <u>the body is not one member but many.</u>"</i> <u>1 Cor 12:12-13 (NKJV)</u></p> <p><i>"And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be <u>head over all things to the church, which is His body,</u> the fullness of Him who fills all in all."</i> <u>Eph. 1:22-23 (NKJV)</u></p>	<p>1 Individually, we are members of one body. 2 The body is the church 3 Christ is the head of that body, the church. So, as believers, we humans are parts of the body of Christ, the church of which Christ is the Head. But notice how we all connected by the Spirit of God.</p>

2.4	Our nature as believers is that we are branches of the vine, not the Vine itself, and reproduce the life and fruit of the vine.	<p>Jesus said:</p> <p><i>"I am the vine, <u>you are the branches</u>. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. John 15:5 (NKJV)</i></p> <p>(We humans are the branches, Christ is the vine to whom we are attached)</p>	<p>This is a wonderful metaphor of our attachment to Christ and how it enables us to abide in Him.</p> <p>Without that attachment we cannot do anything.</p> <p>We bear the fruit of the vine only when we are attached to it.</p>
2.5	The nature of believers is that we are also slaves to God. We are not the Master, but do the work of the Master.	<p>Though we were slaves to sin and uncleanness, but Paul was able to say:</p> <p><i>"But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. Rom 6:22 (NKJV)</i></p> <p><i>"But God be thanked that though you were <u>slaves of sin</u>, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became <u>slaves of righteousness</u>." Rom. 6:17-18 (NKJV)</i></p>	<p>So, despite our former sin and uncleanness, by regeneration we were able to become slaves to righteousness.</p> <p>We are slaves of righteousness, because Christ is righteous. The final one of these metaphors of our nature is that ></p>
2.6	Believers are also considered wives with Jesus as husband.	<p>Paul said:</p> <p><i>"Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another— to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God. (Rom. 7:2)</i></p> <p>John said:</p> <p><i>"Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" (Revelation 19:9)</i></p>	<p>Believe it or not but we humans are or will be, wives of our Husband Jesus Christ – the church will be His bride.</p> <p>This is something that will happen at the marriage supper of the lamb in heaven.</p>
	Summary of six aspects of our nature	<p>1 Temples are of little use without a deity. They need to have a deity (true God or another god) resident in them to get direction for their lives.</p> <p>2 Vessels need to be filled in order to be useful. Empty vessels are just ornaments. Believers empty of God cannot function properly.</p> <p>3 Parts of bodies need a head to control them. Imagine a body without a head.</p> <p>4 Branches need a vine or trunk to get sustenance. Branches that are disconnected from the trunk or stem die quickly.</p> <p>5 Slaves need a master to direct them. Without a master, slaves are independent people. Believers who are independent of their God do not know how to live.</p>	<p>6 In the future our nature will include us, males and females are all considered wives, who eternally are married to Christ.</p> <p>So that is the way God describes our nature as human beings. Basically we are beings that need God inside of us or attached to us in order to be complete.</p>

<p>3</p>	<p>Now we know something about our nature, how does that nature relate to our life with God?</p> <p>How can we know who is in charge? Is it God, Satan or us?</p> <p><i>(First we need to define the word deity. It means a god, either being the true God or some other god invented by man)</i></p>	<p>We said earlier that all human beings have either one nature or another – Paul summarized these natures as being the nature of wrath of the unbeliever (the nature of wrath because the unbeliever is subject to God’s wrath) or the divine nature because of the Spirit’s regeneration of the believer’s being. So there are two natures, albeit that the negative one is described in strange terms – the nature of wrath. However, that other nature does exist, not an equal and opposite nature, but a nature nonetheless. We know clearly that believers are, as Peter says, in the process of becoming partakers of the divine nature, because of the presence of the life of Christ and the Spirit of God within him. This indwelling is what enables him to live and move and have his being, as scripture says. Scripture clearly says that without God controlling our lives we cannot live as He would want us to do. But what happens if we are not a believer?</p> <p>Do believers have a (deity) god – and who is it? I have never been completely happy with it with the view that if we don’t have the true God as our deity and in control of our lives then it must be Satan as an alternative deity who must be in control, that seems to me to be saying too much in terms of Satan’s control over them. Please let me comment on those things.</p> <p>Firstly, the unbeliever, who is unregenerate because he does not have the Spirit of God within him is under the control of his own will. Satan, knowing that about each unbeliever, does not really have to do too much controlling because he knows that the soul of the unbeliever is controlling his whole being – and without any Holy Spirit to oversee. So the unbeliever, because he does not belong to God can remain in his damaged state (of being separated from God) without any effort on behalf of the enemy Satan.</p> <p>In one sense it does not really matter who is in control. If the person does not have the true God, (then the god he has, be it Satan or as an unbeliever) he is outside of God’s grace anyway. The main distinguishing feature of the unbeliever is that he does not have the true God in control – and that’s all it takes for the unbeliever to <i>not</i> be a partaker of the divine nature and thus be a child of wrath and either actually or potentially in Satan’s grasp.</p> <p>Believers are filled with the spirit of the true deity – God. They need God to be a head for their body, they need to be connected to a source (trunk) and they need someone to direct them.</p>	<p>It is also important to remember that believers are not some independent entity separate and independent from a deity. They belong to the true God. Believers are created in the image of God, were children of wrath because of the Fall, but have taken the opportunity to be children of the true and living God.</p> <p>Unbelievers are not so fortunate, as their spiritual separation from the true God leaves them independent and open to their own fleshly foolishness and potentially in full control of Satan. However, until they die they have that choice of deciding to belong to the true God, and reaping the benefits of that in life and going to heaven when they die.</p> <p>So, now we understand something about our nature we can go on and examine whether we can have two natures at the one time. The short answer is NO of course, which is contrary to what many believe.</p> <p>I acknowledge this is normally considered outside of acceptable theology (in some quarters) but I also believe that wrong acceptance is a major reason why the church struggles to fulfill its commission.</p>
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4	So, do believers have two natures?	<p>In one sense this question has already been answered. No, they do not and cannot have conflicting natures, despite the readiness of much of the Christian church to believe and teach this. <i>(there are reasons why this is believed and taught – one of the reasons why two concurrent natures are believed is that believers are often seen to falter and the sin nature is blamed for this. However that cannot be true, as the old has passed away the new has come)</i> Not to argue the whole point right now, but remember what Paul said in 2 Cor 5:17.</p> <p><i>“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”</i></p> <p><i>(the faltering that is seen in believers is due to the spirit not ruling over the flesh at that time – more on this in later studies)</i></p> <p>The Biblical truth is we either have one nature or the other, ruled by one deity (the true God) or are independent and actually or potentially in the control of Satan. At birth we have the nature which attracts the wrath of God, because we have all inherited Adam’s nature. When saved, born again, or regenerate, (all meaning the same thing) we become partakers of the divine nature. So I am asserting that there are only two ways possible here. In order to fully answer this question I will now provide some details on the fact that there are only two sides of the spiritual world and therefore only two natures – with one nature relating to each side of the realm.</p> <p>Let us examine the two sides to the spiritual world. Remember that the spiritual world is that part of our world that in effect controls all other physical parts of the world, and is administered by God. These include all things, nature, all nations, kings and rulers and all spiritual powers and authorities. God is sovereign over all. God is over both sides of the spiritual world and Satan is granted temporary and conditional control over parts of it.</p> <p>So, what differences are there between believers and unbelievers? Let us examine God’s word and consider the following comparisons. Every persons life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * is with God or against Him. Luke 16:1 * is in the Kingdom of God or of Satan. Acts 26:18 * is in light or darkness. Acts 26:18 * uses the Spirit of truth or spirit of error. John 4:6 	
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- * is as slaves of righteousness or of lawlessness. Rom 6:19
- * is with sin dwelling in us or free from sin and death. Rom 8:2
- * is as a new man or as the old man. Col 3:9-10
- * is lived by the Spirit or under the Law. Gal 5:18
- * is either everlasting life or a life corrupted. Gal 6:8
- * is lived by the power of God or Satan. Acts 26:1
- * is as a child of God or a child of wrath. Eph 2:3, Rom 8:16
- * is lived as peace or as dead in trespasses. Eph 2:5, Rom 8:6
- * is justified or condemned. Romans 5:18
- * is lived from God's wisdom or man's wisdom. 1 Cor 2:12-14

With such polar opposites, it is quite clear that here is no neutral position somewhere in-between where a person can be, not fully committed to one or the other. Either we are on one side or the other. Jesus said this when He remarked:

*"He who is not with Me is against Me," (Mat 12:30) and:
"For he who is not against us is on our side. (Mark 9:40)*

There is no sitting on the fence. The Bible mentions no middle ground between these extremes.

So we can now see that unbelievers are not born again and therefore unregenerate, not having the Holy Spirit of God indwelling them. As God is not their controller, Satan is still actually or potentially their master and head; they are either operating under the direction of their own flesh or the spiritual direction of the enemy, and as such are sons of disobedience. And they are still subject to God's wrath. (by nature, children of wrath)

So how can believers ever be considered to have two natures?

On this issue of the fallacy of the two natures, Norman Grubb said, *"You won't like this, and you won't believe it. We are turning off beam when we talk about having two natures at the same time. It's all nonsense! You won't like that one! I'm sick of hearing everywhere this theory of two natures. I'm not a half-in-half kind of schizophrenic or something. I'm one person. For one thing, I will show this; why do people read two natures into a chapter which doesn't mention nature at all? Romans 7 doesn't mention nature—it doesn't mention it, and people stick two natures in there."*

We will get to that Romans 7 issue soon.

To sum up so far:

1 So from what we have looked at here, all people are in a position of either being not of the true God - or of the true God. There is no other position or anything in-between the two - thus affirming one nature or the other.

5	<p>Easy way to remember.</p>	<p>There is a very easy way to remember the difference between the two natures.</p> <p>* <i>Those partaking of the divine nature forgive – others can't or won't.</i> * <i>Those partaking of the divine nature love – others cannot because they do not have God's love (agape)</i> * <i>Those partaking of the divine nature consider other people first – others think of themselves all the time.</i></p> <p>This quote from Pastor Dan Stone, provides Christians with some advice about the difficulty of seeing these truths.</p> <p><i>"Choosing to believe that you are not both good and evil can be difficult. All the external proof, all of the apparent evidence, all of the sight, supports the opposite: that you have two natures. You are good, yes, a little good, but boy, you are still wicked; you are still evil. Only the Holy Spirit can reveal to you that you only have one nature, not two. In the core of your being you are NOT both righteous and sinful; you are only righteous."</i> (Stone pp 90)</p>	<p>So those without the divine nature cannot forgive, love or defer to others. Such is the state of the world.</p> <p>But is to some degree also the state of the Christian church and that is perhaps because these things are not known to the depth they need to be known.</p> <p>Let us all try and change that to what God intended.</p>
6	<p>Why is this issue of the nature of man important?</p> <p>What is the effect of some modern Christian beliefs on our lives.</p>	<p>It might be enlightening if something is said about why knowledge of the nature of man and the two spiritual realms is important. Without the wisdom of God, both through His Word and through the guidance of the Spirit of God, mankind can and will get everything in life screwed up. That is easy to see. So if we do not realize that there are only two spiritual states in which a man or woman can exist, then our imagination may result in some sort of error into our lives, or some other arrangement – it is almost inevitable. Believing that the two natures can co-exist makes the Christian life impossible – in terms of what God intended.</p> <p>The trouble is that many Christians, from that one section of scripture (Romans 7:14-25) are still believing coexistence of the two natures - that Paul did not have control over his life, when the Book of the Acts says he did. So Christians who believe that Paul had trouble with two competing natures still believe that we also might experience this same thing today. And we do, but not for the reasons they say.</p> <p><i>(There are reasons why this is believed and taught – one of the reasons why two concurrent natures are believed is that believers are often seen to falter and the sin nature is blamed for this. The faltering that is seen in believers is due to the spirit not ruling over the</i></p>	

		<p><i>flesh at that time – more on this in later studies)</i></p> <p>It is only because we have not realized by faith, the full value of the cross, that it was possible to live out from the life of Christ, as Paul himself did - as he learned his lesson from the Holy Spirit.</p> <p>Initially after conversion, Paul acted as though he was some separate self who could fight against sin and who could do right if he chose to do so. But, as he found out, he could not, which he explains in Romans 7. But when he found out that he was only a vessel with no power in himself, he said "what a wretched man am I", realizing that Satan had deceived him into believing that he could live by his own power from this supposed separate state. It was then that he found out the ultimate mystery of God – that the life of Jesus Christ was actually in him and could control his life.</p>	<p>He did not have to try to produce life himself. Christ my life, as scripture says. The God that was <i>in Paul</i> was greater than the god who was in the world, as John remarked in his letter,</p> <p><i>"You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."</i> <u>1 John 4:4 (NKJV)</u></p>
7	Relationship to Romans 7:14-25	<p>The section of scripture that might cause an error like this to occur it is Romans 7:14-25, which on the surface, seem to indicate that Paul did not have control over what he did, as though God was not enough or that Satan was just too much for him. But we know that Paul's life was not like that at all. It was a magnificent victorious life. At this point can I refer you to Appendix B which is a detailed list of Paul's major spiritual achievements. Notice that there are 21 + events that Luke recorded in the book of The Acts of the Apostles. If that history is accepted then it is obvious that Romans 7:14-25 must be read in a different light as scripture does not contradict itself. If you must read something now you can refer to articles about Romans 7 listed in these notes that more fully explain Paul's life and how that period of Romans 7 was really Paul reporting on a short period of his life (from AD 38 to AD 46) whilst the Holy Spirit taught him the whole truth.</p> <p>Paul, while he was having his Romans 7 experience had been confused about what was happening, indicating that confusion in his writing of Romans 7:14-25. However, until the Holy Spirit gave him the wisdom and knowledge he needed to see the truth – that he could live directly out of the life of Christ within him. He eventually realized he had been operating back in Satan's realm through the deception of Satan by trying to live by the Law he knew so well. Because he was saved, theoretically he could have operated fully within the realm of God, <i>but because he did not know</i> he was fully in that realm already, he allowed his sin to confuse him and make him doubt his true state.</p>	<p>That is why many in the modern church are not clear on what God actually planned for us.</p> <p>1 There are several articles explaining Romans 7:14-25. They can be found at:</p> <p>http://www.goodnews.org.au/life/truthgrs-02.html (Searching for the Fullness of God)</p> <p>http://www.goodnews.org.au/life/truthgr-05.html (The Phantom of Romans 7)</p> <p>http://www.goodnews.org.au/life/truthgr-08.html (Romans 7 – Another Look)</p>

8	So where did Paul's life strength come from?	<p>However, all of this was not a problem. In God's grace, this was a temporary state for Paul, whilst the Spirit of God taught him his true position in Christ. Consequently, present day Christians who do not realize the full implications of a wrong interpretation of Romans 7, thinking they are operating in both spiritual realms, can never truly get into the fullness of life offered, that is inherent in a full understanding of the passage.</p> <p>Paul did not have to try to produce life. The life of Jesus was already in Him. It was just that he had not fully realized it yet. The Holy Spirit had to set him aside for 3 years in Arabia, Damascus and Tarsus in order to teach him these truths.</p> <p>Many Christians of my acquaintance (including myself until 1999) still consider themselves to be independent selves and having a human nature of their own. The truth is that we don't have any nature at all.</p>	<p>As believers we only express the nature of the deity which resides in us – which in the case of believers is the true God, and manifest that nature.</p> <p>As we said, there are only two sides to the spiritual realm, one controlled by Satan under God's supervision and the other entirely controlled by God. Scripture does not provide any other option or alternative.</p>
9	Conclusion	<p>We as human beings of God's making need a God inside of us or using the branch and vine metaphor of John 15, a God to whom we are attached in order for us to be complete and live as God intended. We need to know, remember and live these things.</p> <p>There are only two natures possible All humans live out of one nature or the other Many church traditions believe there is a conflict between two natures. This belief limits their ability to live in faith and spirit.</p>	<p>In order to live in fullness of faith and to walk in the Spirit we need to believe what Paul has lived and taught on these things – which is that we are privileged to be partakers of His divine nature. And to believe and live accordingly.</p>
10	References	<p>Some Christians are confused on this whole issue. Readers should consider taking time out to study this and related topics. Further reading may be done from the following resources.</p> <p><u>Yes I Am</u> by Norman Grubb. Christian Literature Crusade, Fort Washington, Penn, 19034 or on the internet listed at http://www.goodnews.org.au/life/index-gr.html Chapter 8 – Humans have no nature and Chapter 9 – The Only Two Natures.</p> <p><u>The Rest of the Gospel</u> by Dan Stone and Greg Smith. Published by One Press P.O. Box 832442, Richardson, Texas 75083. Chapter 8 – One Nature.</p> <p><u>Treasures of Darkness</u> Sylvia Pearce. Chapter 1 - What is Man? Published by Not I but Christ Ministries, Louisville Kentucky. Contact details are listed at: http://www.goodnews.org.au/life/index-gr.html</p>	

I leave the last word to Norman Grubb. He summarized this matter as follows.

"I only have one nature. I was a child of Satan, but in my condition as a child of Satan I wasn't so dead, I wasn't so much a child of Satan, that I couldn't hear God. And God could influence me. But I was basically a child of Satan. I was basically egocentric. I basically followed myself, but God could influence me. And He could move upon me and He did move me until He finally found and won me. But God wasn't my nature, and those influences about me didn't change my nature. My nature was a fallen one. Now I have gone on the other side. My nature is a redeemed one. My nature is a Divine one, but I am influenced by the other fellow. He influences me, but he is only an influence. And sin is not my nature, the world is not my nature, the devil is not my nature—God is my nature!"

There is something within me that revolts against sin, and if the devil trips me up into sin I grieve over it because I have a new nature. But that other one isn't my nature, it's the influences around me. My new nature is Christ in me and I crucified with Him. That's where the pure heart comes. That's where sanctification is. That's where new life is.

I've been made whole now; I am crucified with Him, I dead to sin, dead to the world, dead to Satan. Risen—ah, not I, not I—Somebody else is inside me when I am risen. I am risen and this One is joined to me now. He is my life. He is my centre. Now I am a new person, a holy person, a heart-pure person, walking with Him there but under all sorts of adverse influences which come through the world and through the flesh. But that is not my life nor is it my nature."

This is the fifth in a series of articles to further outline and provide resource for believers to move towards Fullness of Life in Christ.

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Availability. This study is for use in one to one teaching or in small groups by those who know this experience for themselves, or by those open to the Spirit to learn together.

Appendix A

The word NATURE – as per King James Version

Notice the importance of Ephesians 2:3 and 2 Peter 1:4

- Romans 1:26 For <1223> this <5124> cause God <2316> gave <3860> <0> them <846> up <3860> (5656) unto <1519> vile <819> affections <3806>: for <1063> even <5037> their <846> women <2338> did change <3337> (5656) the natural <5446> use <5540> into <1519> that which is against <3844> nature <5449>:
- Romans 2:14 For <1063> when <3752> the Gentiles <1484>, which <3588> have <2192> (5723) not <3361> the law <3551>, do <4160> (5725) by nature <5449> the things <3588> contained in the law <3551>, these <3778>, having <2192> (5723) not <3361> the law <3551>, are <1526> (5748) a law <3551> unto themselves <1438>:
- Romans 2:27 And <2532> shall not <2919> <0> uncircumcision <203> which is by <1537> nature <5449>, if it fulfil <5055> (5723) the law <3551>, judge <2919> (5692) thee <4571>, who by <1223> the letter <1121> and <2532> circumcision <4061> dost transgress <3848> the law <3551>?
- Romans 11:24 For <1063> if <1487> thou <4771> wert cut <1581> (5648) out of <1537> the olive tree which is wild <65> by <2596> nature <5449>, and <2532> wert grafted <1461> (5681) contrary to <3844> nature <5449> into <1519> a good olive tree <2565>: how much <4214> more <3123> shall these <3778>, which be the natural <2596> <5449> *branches*, be grafted into <1461> (5701) their own <2398> olive tree <1636>?
- 1 Corinthians 11:14 Doth <2228> not even <3761> nature <5449> itself <846> teach <1321> (5719) you <5209>, that <3754>, if <1437> <3303> a man <435> have long hair <2863> (5725), it is <2076> (5748) a shame <819> unto him <846>?
- Galatians 2:15 We <2249> *who are* Jews <2453> by nature <5449>, and <2532> not <3756> sinners <268> of <1537> the Gentiles <1484>,
- Galatians 4:8 Howbeit <235> then <5119> <3303>, when ye knew <1492> (5761) not <3756> God <2316>, ye did service <1398> (5656) unto them which by nature <5449> are <5607> (5752) no <3361> gods <2316>.
- Ephesians 2:3 Among <1722> whom <3739> also <2532> we <2249> all <3956> had our conversation <390> (5648) in times past <4218> in <1722> the lusts <1939> of our <2257> flesh <4561>, fulfilling <4160> (5723) the desires <2307> of the flesh <4561> and <2532> of the mind <1271>; and <2532> were <2258> (5713) **by nature** **<5449> the children <5043> of wrath <3709>**, even <2532> as <5613> others <3062>. {*desires: Gr. wills*}
- Hebrews 2:16 For <1063> verily <1222> he took <1949> <0> not <3756> on <1949> (5736) *him the* nature of angels <32>; but <235> he took on <1949> (5736) *him* the seed <4690> of Abraham <11>. {*took not...: Gr. taketh not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold*}
- James 3:6 And <2532> the tongue <1100> *is* a fire <4442>, a world <2889> of iniquity <93>: so <3779> is <2525> (5743) the tongue <1100> among <1722> our <2257> members <3196>, that it defileth <4695> (5723) the whole <3650> body <4983>, and <2532> setteth on fire <5394> (5723) the course <5164> of nature <1078>; and <2532> it is set on fire <5394> (5746) of <5259> hell <1067>. {*course: Gr. wheel*}

James 3:7 For <1063> every <3956> kind <5449> of beasts <2342>, and <5037> <2532> of birds <4071>, and <5037> of serpents <2062>, and <2532> of things in the sea <1724>, is tamed <1150> (5743), and <2532> hath been tamed <1150> (5769) of mankind <5449> <442>: {kind: Gr. *nature*} {mankind: Gr. *nature of man*}

James 5:17 Elias <2243> was <2258> (5713) a man <444> subject to like passions as <3663> we are <2254>, and <2532> he prayed <4336> (5662) earnestly <4335> that it might <1026> <0> not <3361> rain <1026> (5658): and <2532> it rained <1026> (5656) not <3756> on <1909> the earth <1093> by the space of three <5140> years <1763> and <2532> six <1803> months <3376>. {subject...: of the same *nature*, that is, a fellow mortal} {earnestly: or, in his prayer}

2 Peter 1:4 Whereby <1223> <3739> are given <1433> (5769) unto us <2254> exceeding great <3176> and <2532> precious <5093> promises <1862>: that <2443> by <1223> these <5130> ye might be <1096> (5638) **partakers <2844> of the divine <2304> nature <5449>**, having escaped <668> (5631) the corruption <5356> that is in <1722> the world <2889> through <1722> lust <1939>.

Appendix B - Summary and chronology of Paul's life

Paul had an incredible life as a believer – So, Paul the Apostle - this is your life!

Paul <i>filled with the Holy Spirit and with joy.</i>	Acts 13:52	AD 46
Paul <i>healed.</i> (through power of God)	Acts 14:9-1	AD 46
Paul endured <i>many tribulations.</i>	Acts 14:22	AD 47
Paul preached <i>truth.</i>	Acts 16:14	AD 50
Paul exorcised <i>evil spirits.</i> (through power of God)	Acts 16:18	AD 50
Paul praised God in <i>difficult circumstances.</i>	Acts 16:25	AD 51
Paul's <i>life was a witness.</i>	Acts 16:25	AD 51
Paul was <i>in control of every situation</i> he faced.	Acts 16:31	AD 51-52

(Jesus was in control living Paul's life for him and in control at all times)

Paul <i>taught effectively.</i>	Acts 17:11	AD 52
Paul received <i>personal guidance</i> from the Lord	Acts 18:9-10, 23:11	AD 52
Paul performed <i>miracles.</i> (through power of God)	Acts 19:11	AD 54
Paul's words <i>convicted people</i> of their sins.	Acts 19:18-19	AD 54
Paul brought <i>people back to life.</i> (power of God)	Acts 20:10	AD 57
Paul received <i>words of knowledge</i> from the Lord.	Acts 20:23	AD 57-58
Paul <i>sacrificed his life</i> for the Gospel.	Acts 20:24, 21:13	AD 57-58
Paul <i>suffered</i> for the Gospel.	Acts 21:30, 21:13	AD 57-58
Paul told by Lord to leave Jerusalem - <i>word from Lord.</i>	Acts 22:17-18	AD 58

Paul received **personal guidance** from the Lord
Paul was **protected** by God.

Acts 23:11

Acts 28:5

AD 58

AD 60

Paul experienced **suffering and persecution**. 2 Cor 6:4-10 as one example of many.

Paul's movements

Paul converted in AD 37 - then to Damascus. Saw Annanias. Preached Christ in Synagogue – escape Jews via basket.

Went to Arabia - 38-40 AD then Damascus again, then Jerusalem for 15 days in AD 40. Barnabas introduced Paul . (Acts 9:27) to the apostles then, after Paul's visit to Arabia in AD 38-40.

Then Paul went to Cilicia and Syria and Tarsus in AD 40. He stayed there until Barnabas took him to Antioch, where his real ministry started in AD 45 (Acts 13:1-3).

Notice then, the top item on this list where Luke says Paul was filled with the Spirit, just one year later in A.D. 46. He ministered everywhere during that time. In AD 57-58 he went to Jerusalem again. In AD 58, the Lord told Paul he would witness for Him in Rome. Arrested by Jews – rescued by Romans – taken to Caesarea, eventually to Rome.