



## GUIDELINES DAILY COMMENTARY ON LIVING WITH DR. HAROLD J. SALA

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Subject: Temptation, sanctification

# BREAKING THE BONDAGE OF YOUR OLD NATURE

*Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. Romans 8:1-2*

Do you ever feel yourself being torn between what you know is the *right thing* to do and what you really *want* to do? If you answer, “no,” either you’re not telling the truth, or the battery of your conscience has gone dead. The struggle is an old one. Even Paul experienced the conflict. He candidly told of the battle which waged in his heart. He said, “When I want to do good, I don’t; and when I try not to do wrong, I do it anyway” (Romans 7:19, *Living Bible*).

God’s Word is very clear. When you are born again, God accepts what Christ did and applies it to your account. Paul wrote, “For he has rescued us out of the darkness and gloom of Satan’s kingdom and brought us into the Kingdom of his dear Son” (Colossians 1:13, *Living Bible*). That in itself is pretty awesome. It means you have been transplanted spiritually.

Does that mean that you will automatically do the right thing? Not for a minute. In a sense it means that you begin the most ferocious battle of your life. Yes, you are God’s child. Yes, the Holy Spirit has come to indwell your life. Yes, you belong to Jesus Christ. But you are still in the world, and your old or sinful nature wars with your new spiritual nature.

Paul told the Romans that we should consider our old natures to be dead. In other words, you don’t feed your flesh. You don’t make it easy to do wrong. You avoid the areas of weakness which you know can easily entrap you. Like what? Every person has to answer that for himself.

Simply put, you have a will of your own, and God won’t take that away from you. Yes, God’s Holy Spirit can and does give you strength and help, but you are the one who has to decide the path you will take.

If you are fighting this old battle of the two natures, take to heart the following three guidelines:

**Guideline #1: Keep your relationship with the Lord warm and personal.** It’s right here that you often win or lose the fight. This means you must take time to fellowship with other Christians, you must take time to read His Word and to spend time in prayer. When you fall spiritually, you must quickly admit your failure, confess it before God and your brothers and sisters, and ask for God’s strength and help.

**Guideline #2: Keep the right company.** No, I’m not suggesting that you break off friendships with everyone who is not a Christian. To the contrary, God wants you to be salt and light, and the salt has to get out of the shaker to make a difference, and the light has to go beyond the door of the church. But I’m saying that if you are involved in a relationship which you know is wrong, break it off once and for all. You will never have the assurance you are God’s child as long as you fail in this area.

**Guideline #3: Form the right habits.** “The chains of habit are too weak to be felt,” said someone, “until they are too strong to be broken.” Replace wrong habits with right ones.

A final thought. No, Paul didn’t give up on the battle between right and wrong. Romans 7, where Paul talked about the struggle, is followed by Romans 8, which begins, “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1). God is still in the business of breaking the bondage of ourselves and setting us free through the power of His Spirit. This is the real answer.

Resource reading: Romans 7-8:1