

## The Path of Victory (Part 3)

### *You Can Be Right Without Feeling Right!*



Christ's followers are alluded to as 'soldiers' (2 Tim. 2:3). So we should not be surprised when we find there are wars to fight. One of the great battles in the Christian life is coming to grips with the issue of our emotions, or feelings. The proper order in navigating the Calvary Road is: Fact, Faith, and Feeling. Too often God's people reverse the order: Feeling, Faith, with Fact bringing up the rear. And the result is disastrous. The truth is you can "do right" even if you don't "feel right!"

The process of spiritual growth is simply replacing temporal appearances with eternal realities, and living it out. Yes, there are times when you don't feel dead to sin, don't look dead to sin, and maybe don't act dead to sin. Many are the days when you look the same, think the same, and feel the same—but you *know* you are not the same. Your new nature is simply not at home with sin. You know you are not the same because the Word of God says so!

Years ago I watched a television documentary about a young man who had amnesia. He did not know his name, his parents, or where he was born. He was clueless about his identity. A kind woman befriended him. Every weekend she would drive him to different parts of the country hoping he would see something that would trigger a memory. How sad to learn of this man who could not remember who he was. But how much sadder to find scores of Christians who have not forgotten—they have never known who they really are "in Christ!"

Our family signed up for a service to monitor those who would try to steal our identity. But stolen identity did not start with modern technology. It began long ago as Satan has worked at a fever pitch to prevent God's people from discovering their identity in Christ.

You are not "in the flesh." Something has happened to you that has moved you out of that realm. Paul made it crystal clear when he said, "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you" (Rom. 8:9). The center of your existence is no longer "in Adam" (flesh). Your reference point is "in Christ." A believer cannot exist "in the flesh" because, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal. 5:24). Once you have been made a partaker of the divine nature you have gained a new identity.

You may not be "in the flesh," but the flesh is still in you. And this is where the rub comes. Victory cannot mean the absence of conflict because Galatians says, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the

other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (5:17). Here is depicted the real life conflict which is so common to many of us.

Every person has a body, soul, and spirit. Your "soul" consists of mind, emotions, and will. It is through the soul that you interact with the world. Your "spirit" is the inner part of you with which you relate to God. It is possible for your feelings (soul) to be moving in one direction while your inner man (spirit) is centered on Christ. In other words, you can be right without feeling right. In the final analysis, you and I are either walking by faith or by sight. Faith is when a man determines a thing to be true even when it doesn't seem to be true.

It is not necessary, or possible, to live in an emotional stratosphere all the time. Emotions come and emotions go, but "Jesus Christ" is "the same yesterday, today, and forever." The facts of the gospel never vary regardless of our circumstances or the ever-changing culture which surrounds us.

The power once held by the "old man" has been broken. "Knowing this that our old man has been crucified" (rendered inoperative) (Rom. 6:6). Faith is the only way to please God. That means you can only relate to God on the basis of faith which is a function of your spirit. Nothing else counts. When God says our old man is crucified, then we must take that by faith regardless of our feelings. Once you *see* the truth, you must *seize* the truth, and then you will *sense* the truth. As we choose to place our faith in the fact, our feelings eventually catch up. The good news is you do right without feeling right because you are right by virtue of the Cross.

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