

Two Natures

The Bible Center Constitution, Articles of Faith currently states,

Section 9. The Two Natures of the Believer

We believe that every saved person possesses two natures, with provision made for victory of the new nature over the old nature through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit; and, that all claims to the eradication of the old nature in this life are unscriptural.

(Rom 6:13; Rom 8:12-13; Gal. 5:15-25; Eph. 4:22-24; Col 3:10; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 3:5-9; Rom 7:18-24)

What are some other names for the “sin nature” in those verses?

Does a person have to live according to their nature inherited from their parents? Why or why not?

What conflict with the sinful nature did Paul talk about in Romans 7:14-25?

What specific steps could one take to “put off the old self” and to “put on the Lord Jesus?” (Ephesians 4:22-24)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What examples does Paul cite of how to work this out (Eph. 4:25-32)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Some people teach that it is possible to “eradicate the old nature” in this life. Usually these people are identified with Methodism or one of its offshoots, the Holiness Movement or Pentecostalism. There it is known as “Perfectionism” or “Entire Sanctification.”

This doctrine of entire sanctification by the filling or baptism of the Holy Spirit was popularized by a Methodist lay couple, Phoebe (1807–1874) and Walter Palmer. Beginning in 1840 she and her husband embarked on an itinerant ministry that eventually took them throughout the United States, Canada, and the British Isles, spreading their newfound faith. The teachings found in her book *The Way of Holiness* (1843) and her periodical *The Guide to Holiness* (first called *The Guide to Christian Perfection*) were influential in establishing what became known as the Holiness Movement. Mrs. Palmer followed the Oberlin Theology and John Fletcher in their identification of entire sanctification with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. She also emphasized that entire sanctification was an endowment of divine power for service, linking holiness with power. Her theology was adopted by holiness denominations such as the Wesleyan Methodists, the Free Methodists and the Church of the Nazarene, as well as the Salvation Army and the Keswick Movement in England.”³³

There are those who teach that it is possible to have an “experience” of Sanctification, which they call a “second work of grace.” It is described in the following quotation:

The heart is purified, cleansed and made holy. It is purged of that inbred sin nature; and from that time on, temptation comes only from without, not from within a heart that is sanctified. No one ever becomes so completely perfected that he is not subject to temptation. But one has greater and more glorious victory after he is sanctified because he no longer has to contend with the carnal nature. It has been removed.

Guy Duffield in *Foundations of Pentecostal Theology* (p. 240) goes on to say, “How wonderful that would be if it were true!” D.A. Carson writing an editorial in the April 2010 edition of journal *Themelios*, says, “As far as I can tell, the numbers who defend such perfectionism today are rather depleted.”

Is it possible to completely finish the spiritual battle this side of heaven? Why or why not?