

### Volitional Challenges in the Believer: The Internal Conflict

#### I. Gal. 5:17 The Passion War = Conflict between the flesh and the Spirit

##### A. 5:17a The rationale for walking by the Spirit: the flesh always opposes the Spirit

... *for the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh...*

The verb *lusts* = ἐπιθυμέω / epithumeo = “to be passionately set”

- Present Tense = continuous action = “keeps on being passionately set”
- *the flesh* (human nature animated by sin)  $\longleftrightarrow$  *the Spirit*

##### B. 5:17b Rational absolute of this passion war

... *for these are contrary* [absolutely set against] *one another...*

Point: the desires of *the flesh* and *the Spirit* CANNOT be reconciled: they are forever diametrically opposed!

**Romans 8:7** *Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.*

##### C. 5:17c A key result of the passion war

... *so that you* [believers] *cannot do the things that you wish/will\** [as though this conflict did not exist]

\*θελετε / thelete = Present T., Active V., Subjunctive M. from θέλω

#### The Passion War is a Mind War

(See diagram on Page 9)

#### II. Gal. 5:16 Spiritual Victory in the Passion War

##### A. 5:16a The Command

... *I say then, walk in the Spirit* [keep walking in/by the Spirit]

- *walk* = forward progress, lifestyle-suitcase term (49 times in N.T.)
- *in/by the Spirit* = instrumental or locative case (no preposition in Greek texts)  
= forward progress for the Christian is by means of the Spirit

**B. 5:16b** The Effect of the Command

..... *and you shall not\* fulfill the lusts of the flesh...*

\*emphatic negation = οὐ μὴ / ou me (double negative)

EVERY GREEK WOULD IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZE THIS EMPHATIC NEGATION!!

**Principles & Applications**

1. The lust patterns of the flesh are always active, always seeking expression in the believer's mind.
2. The antipathy between the flesh (sin nature) and God's Spirit is forever fixed, the warfare perpetual in the believer's mind.
3. Therefore, when making volitional choices in life, a believer must always ask, "What is motivating this choice, *flesh* or *Spirit*?"
4. The believer need not be controlled by the flesh (as per Romans 6-7). The unbeliever has no such choice; his/her fleshly lusts, though possibly suppressed in one area, will find expression or completion in another.
5. Lust patterns of the flesh include:
  - ego lust
  - power lust
  - approbation lust
  - sexual lust
  - material lust
  - pleasure lust (hedonism)
  - self-preservation lust
6. In the Galatians 5 context, note the repeated admonition to *walk in/by the Spirit* that begins (5:16) and ends (5:25) the paragraph.
7. Finally: there is no idea in the context of pitting one's will against the flesh; such is futile. The only hope for man in the war against sin is the salvation provided by Christ's sacrifice and the life of the Spirit provided for human experience.

### The Passion War is a Mind War, Gal. 5:17

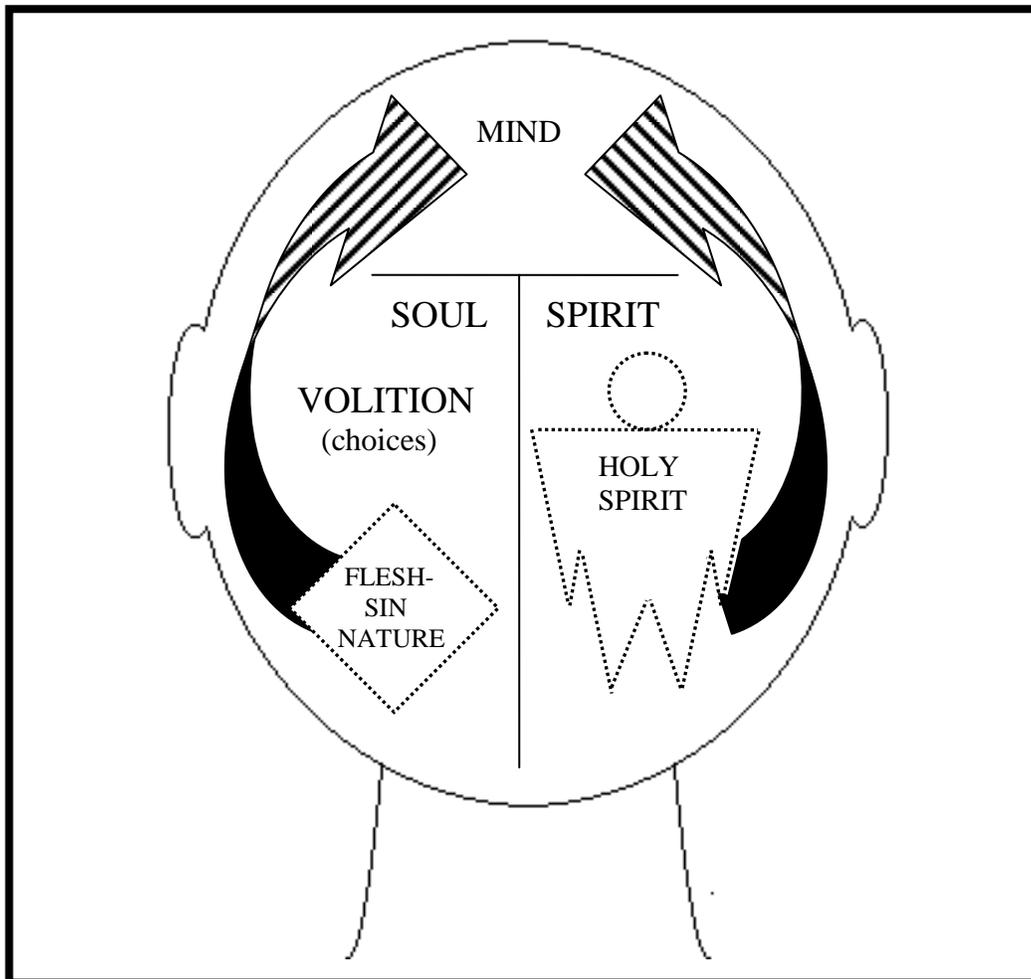
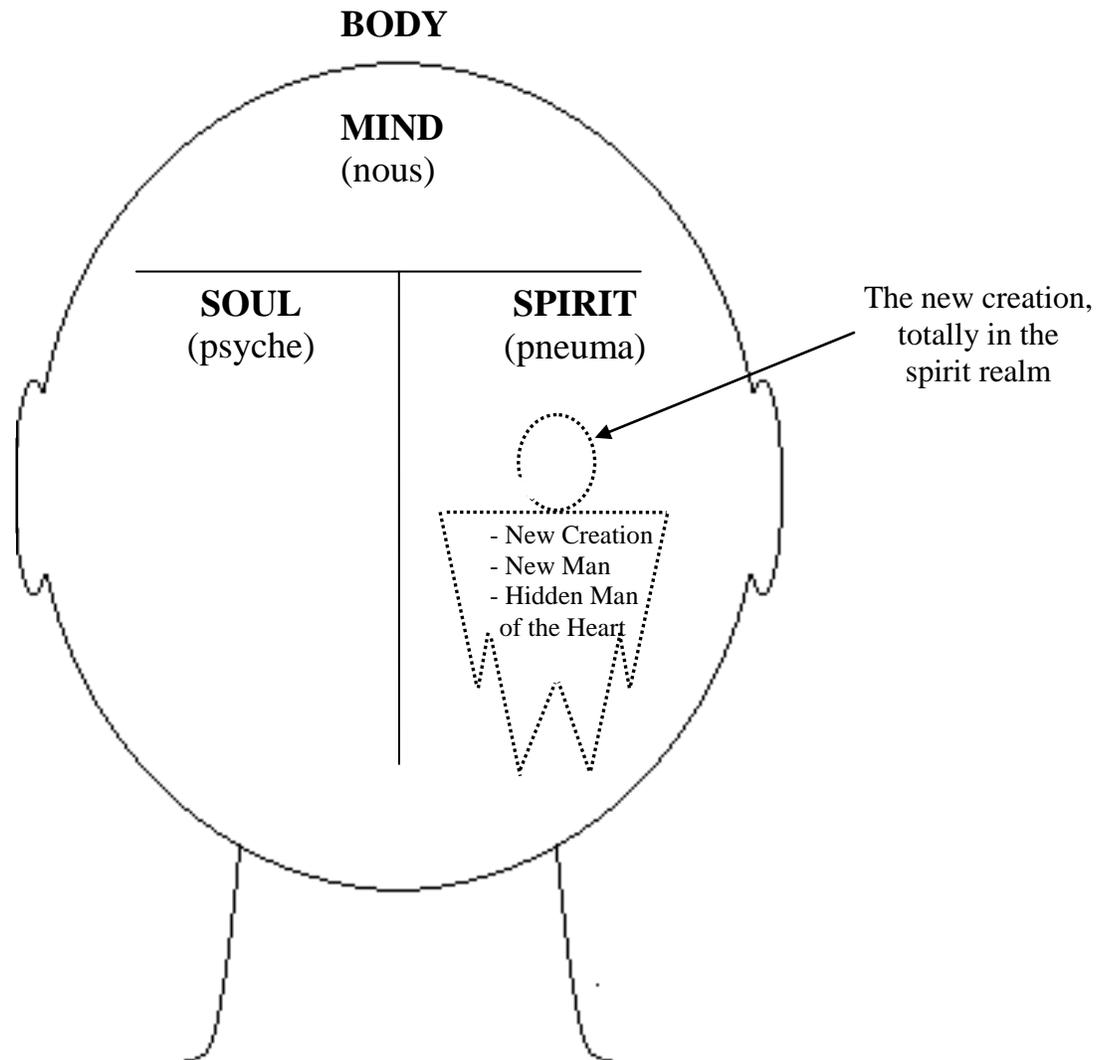


Illustration: A believer may desire to be the world's greatest golfer. At issue, since he belongs to God by redemption, is the will of God (the mind of the Spirit) in the matter and the problem of the flesh. **JUST WHAT IS PROMPTING THE DESIRE, FLESH OR SPIRIT?** By maintaining right relationship with God's Spirit, the believer can rest in His leadership and make decisions compatible with God's (the Spirit's) desires.

## THE NEW CREATION IN CHRIST JESUS

“If anyone is in Christ, (he is) a new creation...” 2Cor. 5:17



### THUS BEGINS THE CONFORMATION PROCESS IN CHARLIE BROWN

#### Facts about the New Creation in Charlie Brown:

1. IT IS NOT THE OLD MAN MADE OVER.
2. IT IS NOT THE MAKING OVER OF THE OLD MAN.
3. IT IS A COMPLETELY NEW SPIRITUAL CREATION.
4. IT IS A SPIRITUAL CREATION THAT REQUIRES SPIRITUAL SUSTENANCE (DOCTRINE).
5. IT IS IN THE IMAGE OF CHRIST.