

Faith Is Action

A close-up photograph of a man with long, light brown hair and a beard, looking intensely at the camera. He is holding a large, ornate silver knife with a bloodstain on the blade. The knife has a highly detailed handle with circular motifs. The background is a cloudy sky.

February 2016 • USPS 184720 • Volume 55 • Number 2

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**THE FOUR BATTLES
OF A CHRISTIAN**

The **FOUR BATTLES** of a **CHRISTIAN**

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Generally, when speaking of the battles with which the Christian believer is engaged or confronted, one automatically assumes that he is opposing his arch enemy, *the devil*. There are **four battles** however, which every Christian must win **before** he can ever exercise power over and defeat Satan. Until the child of God is victorious over these four things, he cannot be victorious over Satan. They are:

Sin, the world, the flesh, and the most deceitful of all: **self!**

Because I believe this latter one to be where many Christians today are the most vulnerable, we will examine this one last. Defeating **self** is the final step before receiving the real power of God and the *second anointing*. When a believer has received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, he has the *first anointing*, but before he can have the *anointing of power*, he must have the victory over this potentially destructive enemy, and the Holy Ghost is given to help him get the victory (Acts 1:8).

The Battle of Sin

Some Christians, sad to say, are still in this place: They repent, get up, and then go back and do the same errant deed all over again. This is followed by another cycle of repentance, sinning, condemnation, repentance, and so on. They have not given *all* of their sins to Jesus, and they continue to fall back into sin and condemnation. Satan knows that in their heart they haven't really given that particular thing up, and therefore, he sets the scene for them to fall back into it.

The Word declares in Romans 6:6: "*Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth, we should not serve sin.*"

The term *destroyed* in Greek means "*to render inoperative, to make inactive.*" The "*body of sin and death*" that Paul described must be crucified, or put to death, and in fact, he declared in 1 Cor. 15:31: "*I die daily!*"

Sin must be defeated. It is of the old man and the old nature. Upon salvation, all past sins are washed away, and the new nature is imparted into the heart of the believer, but the battle of **sin** must be waged as long as he is in this earthly body which shall be changed at the time of the rapture-resurrection (1 Cor. 15:51-53).

Before the new birth, sin had dominion over us. It was our master, and we were its slaves. As in the case of Paul, before his coming to Christ, he declared, "*The good I would do, I do not, but the evil which I would not do, that I do: Because sin dwelleth in me!*" (Rom. 7:19-20)

This is the pitiful condition of the unregenerated man, whom Jesus described as being "*of his father, the devil, and his lusts he will do!*" (Jn. 8:44). This man is a *servant of sin, a slave to sin to fulfil its lusts*. He is ruled by the "*prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience*" (Eph. 2:1). But as children of God, we are new creatures in Christ with the power and authority to defeat sin and indeed, are commanded to:

"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

*Neither yield ye your members (body) as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin... **For sin shall not have dominion over you...***" (Romans 6:12-14).

The new nature leads us to be like Christ, whereas the old nature of Adam led us to fulfil the lusts of the

devil. Being born-again, we have been completely transformed and are being *conformed* into the image of Christ: "*Old things pass away; behold, all things are become new*" (2 Cor. 5:17). This is how one can determine if he is a new creature in Christ. He is no longer a part of the worldly system, and the world no longer has a hold or influence over him. The desire for the things of the world is gone, and he no longer feels the same fellowship for his worldly friends and acquaintances, separating himself from them according to Biblical commandment: "*Wherefore, come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing*" (2 Cor. 6:17).

Make No Provision

It is *the responsibility of the believer to separate himself* from the unclean thing and environment. The same devil that enslaved him as a sinner is always waiting an opportunity to repossess him. If he had trouble with cigarettes before salvation, than he needs to stay a million miles away from them! (Not put a pack in his desk drawer to prove that he can't be tempted anymore!) If his trouble was with sexual lusts, than he needs to stay away from situations and all materials that would arouse any temptation. The Word of God makes it very clear how one can keep from falling into sin:

"...Make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof."

This simple commandment in

Romans 13:14 works every time. The moral is that one cannot *flirt with sin* and get away. It will get you. The moment you begin to entertain the sinful suggestions of the wicked one, you open up the door to be overpowered. You see, there is *no sin in being tempted*: This is Satan's job to tempt us. (God never tempts us to do evil: He only *tests* us to prove us—James 1:13) We cannot control Satan's evil temptations, but where we get into trouble is when *we make provision to fulfil the lusts of the flesh*, instead of rebuking Satan with the authority of the Word, and removing ourselves from any compromising situation. In other words: Throw out those cigarettes and liquor and porn magazines, and don't sit in a parked car with that man or woman!

No one will ever have power to cast out devils until he first casts the cigarettes out of his pocket, and the fornicator out of his bed, and crucifies his flesh and lusts that are still binding him! The moment he really turns that thing loose in his heart, and is no longer his own, but is completely the Lord's, he is going to have the victory! Paul stated in Galatians 5:24: "*And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections (passions) and the lusts thereof.*"

Crucifying the lusts of the flesh is the only way to overcome the battle of **sin**. Satan is always probing for a weakness, especially the particular lust that bound you the most when in sin. Satan will try to tempt us to sin

by allurements and suggestion. This is where the battle must be won immediately. Any hesitation to resist him at this point will be a cue for Satan that he has found an advantage: "*But every man is tempted*" (to do evil) "*when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.*"

(At this point sin has already been committed in God's judgment. All that remains is for the act to be carried out when given opportunity.)

"...*And sin, when it is finished*" (committed), "*bringeth forth death (spiritual)*" (James 1:14-15).

The Battle Of the World

Put simply, one gets the victory over the **world** by *coming out of it!* If one will separate himself from the world and die out to it, he won't have any more problems with it. It is only when he tries to keep up with the worldly scheme and be a part of it, that he is overcome by it. The Word says in 1 John 3:13: "*Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.*"

Jesus gave the explanation in John 15:18-19: "*If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore, the world hateth you.*"

It is plain to see that if one is a follower of Christ, he has separated himself from the world and its followers. If he is in love with the world and the world is in love with him,

there is something wrong. Jesus declared that He was hated by the world, and His people will likewise be hated and rejected by it. If the world is patting you on the back and singing, “*For he’s a jolly good fellow,*” you are a compromiser.

You must separate yourself from the people of the world, because they are ruled by the spirit of disobedience, and the devil in them wants to destroy the Christ in you. In fact, if you are a friend of the world, God calls you **His enemy** and a **spiritual adulterer**:

“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of this world is an enmity with God? Whosoever will be a friend of this world, is the enemy of God” (James 4:4).

Christians need to wake up and stop *playing footsies* with the world! That is why the Church is so contaminated with worldliness and sin, and even the ministry is rife with sin and lusts: They have allowed worldliness to come into their churches and have defiled their sanctification and pledge to preach and display holiness. There is no way that a Christian can be worldly and not be ensnared by its lusts, because there is **nothing** out there in the world **but lust**:

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world” (1

John 2:15-16).

The World is Corrupt

You cannot have a love affair with the world and have the love of God! How could one possibly be a true child of God and desire the polluted things of the world, knowing it has been corrupted by lust? Peter said that God has called us to glory and virtue.... “*having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust*” (2 Pet. 1:3-4). Yet this battle of the **world** is becoming increasingly dangerous as more Bible standards of righteousness and holiness are trodden down, and an influx of worldly influences is being *tolerated* by the Church. The consequences are, having been fed a diet of worldly fare, they have no spiritual constitution to resist sin, and so they fall back into the first battle, bringing reproach on the Name of Christ.

There is a lot of pressure today being put on ministers and pastors to *let up*, and not be so strict in their preaching and standards of holy living, and as a pastor for over 58 years, I have experienced it, but I refuse to compromise. If I only have ten people in my congregation, I am not going to let the world and its deceitful influence come in. And let’s face it: When you are a true Christian with the Spirit of God, and are letting your light shine, the world isn’t going to want you around anyway, because your job is to convict and reprove the world of its sin!

Instead, we have a generation of

preachers, preacher's wives, and their followers who have mixed themselves with the world, and God's people have become confused and untaught in holiness as a result. I believe that Christians should be able to be distinguished from the world's crowd, and this is what God's Word teaches:

"And be not conformed" (to copy or imitate a pose or adopt a mode of conduct. It means "to fit into a mold") *"to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God"* (Romans 12:2).

The child of God is not to fit himself into the mold of this world, as offered by Hollywood and Madison Avenue and the atheistic philosophers of this day, but he is to fit himself into the mold of Christ, looking into the perfect mirror of truth of the Word of God.

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world..." (Gal. 6:14).

The Battle Of the Flesh

We have now waged the first two Christian battles in which we have

"reckoned ourselves to be dead to sin," and have separated ourselves unto the Lord, saying, "Goodbye, world, Goodbye!..." We must now wage the third Christian battle to kill the ole **flesh**, or he will kill us! *"For to be carnally minded,"* Paul stated in Romans 8:6, *"is death!"*

How do you know if you are being governed by the **flesh**? The preceding verse gives the answer:

"For they that are after the flesh do mind (tend to) the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit" (Romans 8:5).

The carnal man is concerned with the natural, earthly life. He spends more time shopping, watching television, playing sports, fixing and cleaning the house, or even just *sleeping a*

lot, than in prayer, fasting, studying God's Word, and going to church. His focus is on the carnal life, while his spiritual appetites are dull. This may appear to be a somewhat harmless state for a Christian to be in; albeit being spiritually-minded would be more desirable: But this is a very dangerous misconception; for the carnal mind is, in fact, *an enmity against God*:

"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, and neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7).



The term *enmity* means “to be hostile.” The carnal man is hostile to the Word of God and will buck against It. This is a process that begins gradually as one who was once on fire for God and spiritually-minded, *begins to leak out*. No one leaks out overnight. Nobody backslides overnight. It is a continual letting down of the spiritual life that culminates in the perpetration of sin. It begins in the *natural mind*, followed by the next stage, *the carnal mind*, and is culminated in the third stage of *sin and demonic control*.

Non-Spiritual VS. Anti-Spiritual

To explain the *difference* between the *natural man* and the *carnal man* and their two stages, we will examine the Greek text of 1 Corinthians 3:1-3:

“And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto **carnal**, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto you were not able to bear it, neither yet are ye now able.”

The Greek word translated *carnal* in verse one is *SARKINOS*, and it means to be “*earthly, natural*.” It is best understood as being “*non-spiritual*,” and is characterized by babes in Christ who are unable to receive the strong meat of the Word. One who has become natural-minded, which is the first stage of the carnal man, is *non-spiritual*. His spiritual appetites being dulled, he does not desire or understand the Word of God.

Not corrected, he will regress to the next stage, which is no longer just *non-spiritual*, but now is **anti-spiritual**: “For ye are yet carnal: for where there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not **carnal**, and walk as (unregenerated) men?” (verse 3).

In this verse a *second* Greek word is used for what is still translated *carnal* in the KJV. This word is *SARKIKOS*, and it means to be “*hostile and resistant*” to the Word of God, and is characterized by the evil works of the flesh that are rooted in the depraved nature: *envy, strife, division*. In this state, one not only no longer desires spiritual things, but he is now hostile to them. He has become *anti-spiritual!*

The three stages of leaking out to the point of sin and backsliding are defined in James 3:15: “*This wisdom ascendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.*”

Again, we see that the natural man (earthly) is the first step towards leaking out. He is the one that we referred to in Romans 8:5 as “minding the things of the flesh.” It may seem like no-harm things at first. You know, maybe he’s just a *workaholic* who works, works, works, until he has no time for prayer and Bible reading, and of course, he is too tired to go to church. After all, he has to get up early and go to work, or maybe he is always working overtime and can’t go. When he is at home, he watches TV instead of spending time with the Lord. If he does get to

church now and then, he is bored by the preaching, because his spiritual understanding is so dulled. This man is *earthly*, but he won't stay that way long if he doesn't put on the brakes, and this is why:

While *the spiritual mind* is fertile soil for the Word of God to be sown in, the *natural mind* is fertile soil for the seeds of lust to be sown in! The Bible teaches that there are *two sowers* who are sowing: One the good seed, and the other the evil. (Ref. Matt. 13:24). When one becomes *earthly and natural*, he is susceptible and fertile soil for the seeds of lust. Thus, he then becomes *sensual*, which means that he is now dominated by the evil appetites of the flesh, and lust is conceived in him. The final stage is when lust is conceived, bringing forth sin, and he then becomes *devilish*, controlled by demonic powers.

The Flesh Defeats Many

This is no time to leak out of the Spirit and get carnal! We better get our flesh crucified and keep him crucified, because no matter who you are, or how spiritually strong you may be, if you just let down and leak out, your ole flesh is going to have a resurrection with all of his evil appetites and desires. And if you haven't gotten the victory over your flesh yet with the affections and lusts thereof, Satan knows that all he has to do is stir up your flesh, and he's defeated you before you even get started!

All Satan has to do is get a *Del-*

lah, and ole Samson will quit fighting every time! All he has to do is get a *Bathsheba*, and David will throw off his armor, put on his nice clothes, and go relax up on the rooftop! Their enemies were their own flesh, and my biggest enemy is *Brother R.G. Hardy*, and your biggest enemy is *your flesh!*

You had better learn to kill the flesh, or he will kill you! The Philistines didn't defeat Samson: His flesh got him! The enemies of Israel didn't defeat David: His flesh defeated him! God had anointed him to be the king and lead His people in battle and inspire His armies, but instead he decided to stay home and relax in the sunshine. But the Devil boasted: "I got you now, David! I couldn't kill you when I had all of my armies surrounding you with their armor and swords and spears—But now, without even a bow and arrow, I will defeat you: I am going to watch your flesh finish you off!"

Paul recognized that his flesh was his greatest enemy, and he knew the consequences of allowing it to take control. He testified in 1 Cor. 9:27: "*But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.*"

These are *boxing terms* in the Greek, and literally mean "to *punch oneself in the eye until it is black and blue.*" Paul regarded his body as his enemy, and he acted to keep his body a slave to his soul, not permitting his soul to be a slave to his body. For he

knew that even he could become a castaway if the flesh gained control.

God showed me something very early in my Christian experience that really shook me to my soul: *He showed me that my flesh doesn't care if my soul goes to Hell!* The only thing that the flesh cares about is satisfying its lusts while it's alive, and does not care if my soul burns in hell for it! *Why?* Because it knows that it has to die or be changed. God did not save this body. It is beyond redemption. He saves the inner man and will give him a new body. When I realized this, I determined that my flesh was not going to send my soul to Hell! I don't care how much he fights me, I am going to pray and fast until I've got him under, and then I'm going to keep him under! Bathsheba and Delilah aren't going to get me!

Now as soon as you determine that you are going to be spiritual, your flesh is going to buck you. You will find out just how crucified your flesh is, *especially when God tells you to fast!* After missing just one meal, you'll think you are going to die! Yet if you went all day without eating because you were busy doing housework, etc., you wouldn't even think about it. *But then, you weren't striving to kill the flesh either!* The moment that you determine to be more spiritual, the flesh is going to fight back!

"For the flesh lusteth" (old English for *strongly desires*) *"against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to*

the other" (Galatians 5:17).

The Line of Demarcation

One cannot be carnal and spiritual too. These are contrary to one another, and they desire opposite things. Therefore, when one is trying to pray and fast, etc., and he finds that something is hindering him, he has come to the *line of demarcation*: He is not being fully controlled by the spirit man, and there is a war going on, and he, in the middle, is being torn apart. The flesh is pulling one way, and the spirit is pulling another. Unless he breaks through in prayer and fasting, the natural mind is going to take control and pull him more and more into the carnal, until he is not only *thinking carnally*, but is *acting in the carnal nature*.

This is the danger of living close to the *teeter line*, instead of launching out into the depths of the Spirit. As long as you live close to the line of demarcation, you are subject to be pulled either way. You have not gotten far enough into the spiritual walk to live unhampered by your flesh, and it is always rising up, trying to pull you back from the Spirit. Once you have launched all the way out into the Spirit, the flesh will not put up any contest against the spiritual mind.

There are degrees of being in control of the Spirit, and degrees of being in control of the flesh. *"Walking in the Spirit"* means to walk in control of the Spirit. When the Word refers to *being in the flesh*, it means

being controlled by the flesh. There are two opposite minds: One is the *law of sin and death*, and the other is the *law of the Spirit of life in Christ*. (Ref. Rom. 8:2). One mind or tends to the law of the Spirit of God, and the other mind the law of sin and death. Paul commanded the Christian in Galatians 5:16: “*This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*”

You won't have any problem with your flesh when he is crucified. He doesn't *talk back* when he's dead! But when he starts saying, “It's too hot to pray,” or “You're too tired to go to church...” then he needs to be crucified! Grab him by the collar and get him on his knees, and put him to praying *until he feels like praying!*

The reason why many Christians are fainting today is they are not praying. Jesus said in Luke 18:1, “*Men ought always to pray, and not to faint.*” And if you don't pray, you are going to faint spiritually, and the flesh is going to get revived. Then he is going to try to trick you into reasoning with the carnal mind that there isn't any harm in doing the natural things, and a “little bit of this and a little bit of that” won't hurt, but the Wiseman said, “*It's the little foxes that spoil the vine!*”

“*Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify (put to death) the deeds of the body, ye shall live*” (Rom. 8:12-13).

The Battle Of Self

We have one more battle to win *before* we can have the power of God and be used by Him in a great way: **Self.**

Maybe God is already using you a little, but this one thing always crops up and hinders you from being used in a greater way. I am not talking about *self in the flesh*: By now he should be dead! But I am talking about *self in the spirit*. You see, one can have his flesh crucified and still be *self-willed*.

For instance, Jesus never had any problem with sin, or the world, or even His flesh. When Satan tempted Him on the Mount of Temptations, he could not get to Him with the lust of the eye, or the lust of the flesh, or the pride of life. He had the victory over that stuff! The *only thing* He had to pray for **three times** was in Gethsemane when He had to win the fight over *self-will*; to bring *His will* into subjection to *His Father's will*; to cry out in anguished prayer: “*Not MY will, but THY will be done!*” That was His greatest human struggle, and that's where a lot of Christians are today.

They are *spiritual*, having come out of *sin*, the *world*, and crucified the *flesh*, but they are not in subjection to the Holy Spirit. The devil knows he can't get them with sin, and the world doesn't hold any enticement for them, and they have learned to buffet their flesh. He won't come to them through these things that they have overcome. *The*

battle is not in the flesh anymore: It is in the spirit! And Satan is not going to send his *Delilah or Bathsheba*, but rather, he is going to come as “*an angel of light,*” and an apostle of Christ! (See 2 Cor. 11:13-15).

John Strongly Warned

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1).

Likewise Peter also warned *“There shall be false teachers creeping in unawares, bringing in damnable doctrines, and even denying the Lord God”* (1 Peter 2:1). When one has become *spiritual* and is no longer hampered by the flesh, he is not only in contact with *God’s Spirit*, but can also be in contact with *seducing spirits and teaching demons*:

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils” (1 Tim. 4:1).

One has to be *in the faith* before he can *depart from the faith*. Many give heed to those who with the aid of seducing spirits and teaching demons, deceive them unto damnation. (Many false doctrines have gotten their start within the last hundred years, and not surprisingly, as this is one of the signs of the last days.)

One reason why many Christians give heed or pay attention to these false teachers and ministers is *they feel an anointing upon them* when

they preach and teach. Certainly they have an anointing upon them, but the question is “*Which anointing?*” It is often evident that a *spirit is speaking through them*, but what must be discerned is “*Which spirit is speaking?*” *“Beloved, believe not every spirit!”*

The Three Spirits At Work

There are three spirits at work in the world and that can speak through individuals: *God’s Spirit, Man’s Spirit, and Demonic Spirits*.

Man’s spirit can easily be identified as “*sounding brass and tinkling cymbal.*” There is no anointing upon it. But if an anointing or flow or force can be felt, then it is one of the *two supernatural spirits* speaking, and you must distinguish *which of the two it is*, because if it is *God’s Spirit*, then you must obey Him. If it is the devil’s spirit operating, no matter how inspired it may seem, you must reject it!

Don’t be fooled by what seems to be *an anointing in operation*: The Word of God declares: “*You shall know them by their fruits*”—not their *gifts!* (Matt. 7:16 & 20).

You can never judge a person just by his *flow or anointing*, but by the Spirit and Word of God. Man’s spirit can also speak with a *flow*, but man’s spirit is not anointed by the power of God. **Self** can rattle on a blue streak in the sky, but it takes the Spirit of God to fight the devil, and it takes *His anointing* to break the yoke and bondages of Satan!

Another clue that *man’s spirit* is

in operation is when all the vessel speaks is “*I, I, Me, Me.*” The Word teaches *love seeks not its own*, and when this is the substance of his message, it is nothing but **self** and is not God’s Holy Spirit. Jesus said, “*When the Spirit of truth comes, He will testify of Me*” (Jn. 15:26).

This is a major failure of many Christians whom God could use in a great way in His ministry, but whenever He begins to use them, ole **self** gets in the way! Instead of letting the Spirit of God move and be exalted, they allow *their own spirits* to be lifted up and hinder God’s Spirit from doing the work. This is the nature of **self**: To glory and be seen of men, and to have the preeminence. Instead of *lifting up Christ*, he wants to testify of *himself*, and the anointing and power *he has*.

Another thing about **self**: He is *easily offended*. When things do not suit him and go his way, he’ll just *quit*! He’s not worried about the ramifications to the work of God or His flock. He’s just concerned about *himself*. God could be moving in a mighty way and ready to send a great revival, but let **self** be offended, and he will get mad and cut off the precious moving of God’s Spirit.

Self has a strong will and does not want to heed the admonition of God’s Word. Therefore, it is hard to bring under subjection. It is bent on doing its own thing, regardless of how much you try to reason with him. I have known many Christians who never got the victory over self,

and they faced disastrous situations because of their strong self will and resistance to sound counsel. They would not heed, but went on and did what they wanted, in spite of God’s warning. It was not until they got themselves in a real jam and needed God to intervene that they finally admitted their mistakes, and *sometimes not even then, if self is really in control!*

Satan is most successful in coming as *an angel of light* to someone who is full of self. He just tells them that *they are special*, and God has a *special revelation just for them*, and ole self just eats it up! Satan knows their problem is in their spirit where they have never gotten the victory over self-will. He does not come to them with sin or the world or the flesh, but because they are so *spiritual*, he comes with a lying, seducing spirit. They swallow it right down when he tells them how spiritual and wise they are, and God has a special revelation just for them *that no one else has!* (Not even the Word of God!)

Many of the false prophets who have come up with *new doctrines* have declared, “*The Angel of the Lord stood by my side and spoke to me and told me...*”!

I believe it was an angel all right, but *whose angel?* Paul, the one to whom was given the doctrines of the New Testament for the Church, declared in Galatians 1:18: “*But though I, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you,*

than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”

Self is a destroyer in the Church today, and many ministries have been aborted because of it. A great many Christians have never realized any spiritual growth because of it, and remain in a perpetual infant stage even though they may have been saved for years. Like a thwarted toddler who doesn't get his way, they throw an ole “*Pentecostal pout*” whenever they don't like the way things go.

It's like being eighteen years old and still in kindergarten: Because they've never passed the test and battle of self, they are spiritually stunted, and the tragedy is, most of the time self is so blind, he doesn't even know it! The devil doesn't have to worry about their ever rising up to tear down his kingdom: He knows that if anything, ole Self will do more damage to the cause of Christ than it ever will do to his.

The Final Challenge

The reason many Christians do not have the power to defeat the devil is they have never passed the tests of these *four battles!* Every time they go to fight the devil, he brings up one of these and stops them cold! If one does not have the victory in even one of these four things, the devil will surely find out.

Unless and until the child of God has won the victory over these four pitfalls, *he is not even in the fight against Satan!* When he has conquered **Sin**, come out of the **World**,

crucified his **Flesh**, and defeated **Self**—*then* he can challenge the devil, knowing that he is more than a conqueror, with power over all of the power of the enemy!