

Passivity of the Conscience

In combat when a military unit goes into a defensive position, they always set up a perimeter defense. The outer ring of that defense is a system to warn the unit of approach by the enemy. That outer defense often involves a device called a "tripwire." On today's high tech battlefield this often includes various electrical devices such as scanners or sensors wired to explosives or flares or even laptop computers within the inner defensive perimeter. In its most rudimentary form it may be nothing more than a thin wire stretched across a likely avenue of approach at about ankle height (thus "tripwire") with ration cans containing pebbles to make noise when the wire is disturbed. I guess those days are gone now that rations (called MREs – Meals Ready to Eat) come in foil packs. The point is these tripwires are designed to alert the unit of danger and give them time to react in an appropriate manner.

The human conscience is the tripwire for the soul. It is our outer perimeter defense that warns us of issues and even danger and gives us time to react in an appropriate manner. It is our first line of defense against evil. It consists of a set of norms and standards, which are usually learned in the protective nurturing environment of the family, in school, in church, and at one time even on television. One purpose for these institutions is to equip the person with a solid set of norms and standards with which he would become a law-abiding citizen that functioned within society in a courteous, respectful, and moral manner.

Traditionally in the United States these "norms and standards" are based on Judeo/Christian moral values. They are generally Scriptural. It doesn't matter what your religious preference is or even if you are an unsaved heathen, these values work well in maintaining order and peace within a secular context. Yes, even unbelievers can have a good set of norms and standards and be model citizens.

Guess what? God set it up that way! Marriage, family, and government are all divine institutions established by God for the protection of society, believer and unbeliever alike. Without them as the foundations of society we will have anarchy. Can they become corrupted? Yes indeed, especially government, but today marriage and family are under extreme attack and are in danger of being destroyed. Destroy the family unit and you will have huge social problems.

The conscience often warns us of problems long before we are able to reason the "why" it is a problem. It tells us that something is wrong before we have a chance to rationalize it. The conscience does this from its previous training and conditioning about what is right and what is wrong and makes application even in situations that are not clearly black or white. Even in these unclear gray situations a well-developed conscience with a solid set of norms and standards will at least "raise a red flag."

The danger is that divine norms and standards can be corrupted or even completely replaced with demonic values. When that happens the conscience becomes incapable

of functioning as the tripwire for the soul because the standards it uses are distorted. The conscience no longer functions as God intended for it to function. Believers in this condition reject divine truth found in Scripture, and they trade the truth for a lie. False becomes true, and truth becomes false. Values are turned upside down. And in this situation, if it is true for the Christian, it is doubly true for the rest of society.

Satan's objective is to break down the institutions that perpetuate these solid, even Scriptural, norms and standards. In doing so, he can corrupt the norms and standards themselves and substitute his own. Many believers are in a state of passivity of the conscience. They use satanic doctrines as their moral values and believe in their hearts they are doing right—because Satan has convinced them that wrong is right. Their values are no longer divinely inspired. Their values are corrupted.

It doesn't matter what a culture believes, there are indeed moral values that God never intended for society to change simply because society finds them inconvenient or limiting. The society that rejects these truths is headed for destruction. God will not allow a society that has corrupted values to exist beyond certain limits. All you have to do is look at history to see the truth of this.

We are warned about this danger in passages like 1 Timothy 4

1 Tim. 4:1 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;
2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;
3 Forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

“Seared with a hot iron” in the Greek is *kauteriazō kow-tay-ree-ad'-zo* and means to cauterize and by implication render insensitive. The damaged conscience has scar tissue on it, and this scar tissue is insensitive, in effect rendering the conscience non-functioning in its tripwire function.

Thus far I have focused on moral issues, but the conscience as a tripwire has application beyond moral issues. It is possible, in fact common, for the believer to be in a state of passivity of the conscience and still have a fairly solid set of moral values, but his doctrinal foundation is corrupted. His conscience is operating on a false set of doctrinal values, and he accepts non-Scriptural practices as Scriptural. Even when the Holy Spirit speaks to this person through God's people, he rejects the truth and continues in disobedience to God's will for him. Once false doctrines are allowed into the soul, they become the gateway for more false doctrines. The believer thus deceived becomes passive in his spiritual life, and passive is just as bad as outright disobedience. He may be “doing” but he isn't producing for God because he is distracted into non-Scriptural activity. His witness is not only false it is in opposition to God's plan. He is right where Satan wants him.

The answer for the believer is in Scripture in passages like these:

Eph 4:17 This I say therefore, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, **18** being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; **19** and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.

Ro 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

This term “renewing” in Romans 12:2 carries the idea of renovation, taking what is corrupted and making it new again. The believer is called to reject what society often accepts and to live by a different standard, a divine standard. That does not happen simply because the believer wishes it so. It is a process—“renewing”—where the corrupted norms and standards accepted by the rest of society are exchanged for a new set of divine norms and standards. This process involves study—like this one.

For the secular world and our nation at large, the problem of how to return to a set of solid moral values is far more complicated. It must, however, begin with the believer as the “salt of the earth,” but as a nation, we may have gone too far to be able to turn back without a lot of pain being inflicted. If this country is to survive, a national conscience must be re-established with sound, Biblically based norms and standards. I said, “Biblically *based*.” That does not mean all of a society must become Christian, but it does mean enough of the society has a solid set of basic moral values and holds the rest of society to that standard.

Passivity of the Human Spirit

We have seen how Satan can induce a believer into a passive state through deception. He may actually think he is being productive or is operating under divine guidance when in fact he is well outside God’s will for his life and is non-productive. Man’s spirit can also be rendered passive.

To understand how the human spirit can be brought to a condition of passivity we need to understand a little about the human spirit. Your human spirit is that part of you generated by the Holy Spirit at the new birth. It is what makes you a literal child of God. It is that part of you that has communication with God through the indwelling Holy Spirit.

First some review: Man is born a dichotomous being with a body and a soul. The soul is our mentality, personality, and intellect—your brain and all its functions. These two are products of the human reproductive process. Some confuse the soul with the spirit and some translations fail to differentiate between the two, but they are two very different

things. Man is not born with a human spirit. Your spirit is a product of divine generation. Let's take a look at the passage that clarifies this, John 3:1-10.

Here we have the dialog between Jesus and Nicodemus, and Jesus tells Nicodemus in order to enter the Kingdom he must be born again. In more modern vernacular, this process Jesus spoke of is also referred to as "regeneration." That term can be a bit confusing because it seems to suggest a *re*-birth and that is not completely accurate. It is referred to elsewhere as the *new* man or *new* creation (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15; Eph. 2:15; 4:24; Col. 3:10).

Nicodemus is understandably confused and Jesus tells him in verse 6, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The body and soul are "born of the flesh," but the human spirit is "born of the Spirit."

The unbeliever does NOT possess a human spirit. He has no need of one, because it is through the human spirit that we have communion with God, and the unbeliever is "without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph 2:12). See also 1 Cor. 2:10-15 for a reference to the spirit of man working in harmony with the Spirit of God and how the "natural man" (unsaved) cannot comprehend spiritual issues (no divinely generated human spirit and no indwelling Holy Spirit).

1 Cor 2:10 these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹ For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ¹² Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. ¹³ And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

¹⁴ The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

¹⁵ The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. ¹⁶ "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

As a believer, you can be driven by your body, your soul, or your human spirit. Pick one, because only one can be in the driver's seat. And guess which is suppose to be behind the wheel? The human spirit is supposed to be controlling the soul and the body and doing so in harmony with the Holy Spirit and God's will. If your spirit is passive, that is your soul or your body is in the driver's seat, you will not be led by the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit leading is effectively blocked by the human spirit NOT being in control of the man.

Passivity of the spirit is the paralyzing of the human spirit and can come about in a number of ways:

- Ignorance of how the spirit functions – If the believer is ignorant of the fact he even has a human spirit and/or how it functions (and many are) then he will often be driven by his soulish nature of bodily needs. The spiritual life is non-functioning.
- Wrong mental conclusions or wrong thought from mixing up feelings, such as physical, soulish, or spiritual and not knowing which is which can cause confusion. Is it your body talking to you? Your sin nature? Or your spirit?
- Drawing upon the soulish life instead of the spirit. Are you being led by your sin nature instead of your spirit in cooperation with the Holy Spirit? Your mind can read your five senses very well. Your mind ought to be able to read your spirit as well. When your spirit is telling you something, your mind ought to be able to sense that just like it senses input from the five senses. If it cannot, the input may be from your sin nature and not from your spirit and thus not from God.
- Worry or trouble over the past or future checks the free operations of the spirit, and makes the outer man and outer affairs dominant over the spirit. The spirit becomes locked-up, so-to-speak.
- Exhaustion of the body and mind are often the means that Satan uses to gain access to your human spirit. Haven't you been so exhausted physically or stressed mentally to the point you can't think? You become numb! That is an extreme example of what I am talking about, but it can become dangerous to your spiritual life long before you reach that point of exhaustion when your mind just wants to shut down. I experienced this the day my dad was buried.

When you become so preoccupied with “life” and “getting by” that it dominates your thinking, you are shutting out the function of your spirit and your relationship with God. Satan wants you highly stressed and focused on that stress. We are called to use our free will and our intellect and think with doctrine, right? That is kind of hard to do when you are exhausted or under stress. The military, police and firemen work under extremely stressful and physically exhausting conditions. Their actions, even when exhausted or under stress, must be correct and must be automatic, or someone gets hurt or dies. This is why they train so hard, so even when under stress and exhaustion they will respond in the appropriate manner. And this is why you, as a believer, must learn doctrine, how to apply it, and why you will get tested in its use.

2 Tim. 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

The danger is we will let our soulish needs or bodily needs consume our attention and get us focused inwardly. When that happens the human spirit is no longer in control of the person; his sin nature or some bodily need or lust is controlling the person.

That is what passivity of the spirit looks like, and that state completely destroys the immediate and personal relationship the believer has with God through his human spirit. Sadly, many believers are in a passive state and are completely unaware of it.

Passivity of the Whole Person

These passive conditions we have been looking at have one more level. They can reach a point where the believer becomes completely passive and completely ineffective for God and His plan. At this stage every part of the person is being affected.

One version of this is Satan appealing to that part of our sin nature that has a tendency toward asceticism. Asceticism is the human tendency to personal sacrifice on an extreme level. It is practicing extreme self-denial in pursuit of a religious experience.

This is from a misinterpretation of Col. 2:23 “if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world...” These people who tend to be ascetics withdraw from the world because they see it as evil. As Christians we are told not to be of this world, but we are charged with going out to the whole world in the Great Commission. The ascetics I am speaking of aren’t a bunch of home schoolers; they become hermits and give up food and drink and even basic hygienic practices. They reject these things as indulgences of the flesh. The monastic system of the early church appealed to this side of man. These people separated themselves from society and gave their lives to prayer and self-denial.

I am not speaking of the call to totally surrender, abandoning ourselves to God, where the believer places his will in harmony with the will of God. This is far more severe and a distortion of that principle.

The problem with asceticism is often motivation. Many do this because they see it as a means for gaining the approbation of God. If it is in any expectation of blessing they are deceived into a passive condition. If think you can do something, anything, that will cause God to bless you—you can’t! This concept of blessing for righteous behavior (recompense) and cursing for unrighteous behavior (retribution) is a false doctrine. At one time Israel was under such a merit system called the Law of Moses. God made a covenant with a peculiar group of people, Israel, and promised certain blessings if they obeyed and certain discipline if they did not. But that was Israel under the Law. We are not under the Law, we are under grace (Ro. 6:14-15). There are natural “reaping what you sow” consequences of our behavior, good or bad, and that is a divinely designed system.

Everything in this world comes from God; it is His to give or withhold. Look around you and you will see very unrighteous people blessed enormously, and a lot of very “righteous” people poor as a church mouse. And you will see the righteous suffer and the unrighteous die happy. That is because God doesn’t use a merit system to bless people, at least not under the grace system, which we are under today.

Flip side of this is an appeal to the lascivious side of our sin nature. The person becomes gluttonous in the demand for the supply of his bodily needs. The body and its desires dominate the soul. Men can live in the realm of the human spirit, or the body, or the soul. Living in the realm and control of the human spirit is called "spiritual," because it is in harmony with the leading of the Spirit of God.

Living in the realm and power of the soul is what we call "soulish" or "carnal." This person is driven by his sin nature. This person is often deeply involved in mental attitude sins, because he is looking to satisfy psychological needs through thinking himself superior to others.

There is a subset of this "soulish" man where the person is completely dominated by their bodies. Physical lusts, be it food, drink, physical pleasure of some sort, or sex, becomes their motivation for living. One extreme can manifest itself as obesity. Another extreme can be those driven by a need for physical fitness. In either case bodily needs take priority over everything they do. I am not suggesting that every out of shape person or every person who is into physical fitness is in passivity of the body. I know wonderful and spiritual Christians who are over weight and others who are very much into physical fitness, but they need to be very careful, because they are particularly susceptible to this deception.

This should not be construed that the Christian is to neglect bodily needs or physical fitness and a healthy lifestyle. It is a warning of the danger that this can become a consuming passion to the point that it dominates the life to the neglect of God and God's plan for the believer.

The question is what will dominate your life? God would prefer you live in the spirit, a living sacrifice and testimony against Satan. Satan would prefer that you be a slave to your sin nature or your body. A believer deceived by evil spirits will tend to live in a state dominated by his sin nature or by his body. Either way you are passive towards God and God's plan and a non-functioning Christian. The things of God are either distorted into false doctrine or are simply put aside, and what you get is spiritual apathy. The Christian is brought to a condition where he is dull to spiritual things, yet at the same time he may be keenly aware of social or worldly elements around him. That should be a wake-up call that something is wrong with your relationship with God.

The Perils of Passivity

The believer is never called to anything resembling a passive state. We are always called to use our free wills to decide for God and His plan as revealed to us. He desires the surrender to His will by active choice to do His will as it may be revealed to us. God requires for His working, cooperation with His Spirit and the complete use of every faculty of the whole person. Therein is the danger of passivity.

You are in passivity of the will if you have failed to use your will and choose for God. Are you in some way deceived into thinking it doesn't matter? "I don't have to use my will. It is ALL God's will anyway. Whatever happens will happen." That is passivity of the will.

Do you think you ARE doing God's will, when in fact you are busy doing what you want? Or more accurately what Satan wants? Your free will is God given and He expects you to use it. To put your will in a passive state is to open yourself to any kind of leading by unclean spirits. Your will is one of the most important elements of the angelic conflict, and there is an expectation that you will use it.

Have you given up because you just aren't smart enough for this? That is passivity of the mind. "God can't really use me, I am too dumb! Just keep feeding me milk; that is all I can handle. Don't want any meat! Please, no tough doctrines where I have to really think about it. Don't make me have to figure all this out!" If that is your attitude then you have placed your intellect into a passive state. You are called to use your mind to reason, examine and test. Failing to do so is to ASSUME all that comes at you is divine in nature, and we know that is not always true.

And when should we assume? NEVER!

Satan would prefer it if the believer never examined anything, just passed it on through. This is an open door to unclean spirits. This is a classic failing of many believers and many denominations. They have become conditioned to receive whatever the "authority" they have set up delivers, but often that authority is an unclean spirit or a person deceived by one. Once you have sucked this stuff in, you have another problem, error that must be dealt with.

Have you closed your mind to Scriptural arguments? Certain that you KNOW in your heart and all this Bible study stuff is just a lot of baloney? "This is just a bunch of fairy tails or hocus pocus, who can believe all this is really true?" Or more common among believers - You know this doctrine or that doctrine is "correct" but refuse to acknowledge Scriptural evidence or teaching that clearly and Biblically are in conflict with what you think you know? Then your judgment and reason are in a passive state.

Refusal to correct error despite efforts by the Holy Spirit through God's people will lead to hardness of the heart (scar tissue) and more false doctrines. The longer the truth is rejected the deeper the believer is drawn into the deception and the more difficult it is to get him out. When something is presented to you, you best give it a thorough hearing, use your mind and doctrine, and determine if your closely held theology is really true— or is it in error.

I have come to a change of heart about several doctrines. The Holy Spirit worked on my heart and presented the truth to me. I weighed it against the Word, prayed about it, and changed my theology as a result. Obviously you must use Scripture and sound doctrine as a guide. Passivity of judgment or reason will not allow this. "I am right and nothing

you can say will change my mind!” That is arrogance and a hostile mindset to the truth, and it is digging your grave just a bit deeper.

2Ti 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure **sound** doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

“Sound” in the Greek means healthy or figuratively: uncorrupt. The idea is that some doctrine is healthy for your spiritual life, and some is not. Those suffering from passivity of reason or judgment reject what is “healthy” for them in favor of what is unhealthy.

Are you so open to supernatural reasonings that no warning bells ever go off? “God said...!” so I must follow at all costs!” That is true if God did indeed say it, but you ought to be sure it was from God. The conscience is God given. It will warn you of things long before your intellect will, but it can become corrupted with false teachings delivered as deceptions by unclean spirits. It can also be rendered inoperative through the suggestion that you don’t need it by those same unclean spirits. They will suggest to you, “Just listen to the leadings from God.” Of course they will make you think it is from God when in reality it is from Satan.

Your conscience is a tripwire for danger, but once it is shut down as unneeded and becomes passive or is corrupted with false doctrines it becomes unreliable. What was false becomes true and what was once true is false. Or the believer simply ignores its warnings in favor of these supernatural leadings. Many believers are caught in this very deception. If the tripwire is not working you are receptive to false teachings, because there is not that small voice in your head saying, “Wait a minute!”

Are you in tune with your “self” and not your spirit? Are you a slave to your body and are led by it? A slave to your sin nature and led by it? Are you so intent on “getting by” day-by-day, making a living, so stressed that you are more attuned to the physical than the spiritual? Have you shut out your spirit? Have you put your spirit into neutral—rendered it passive? This is easy to do!

In this process you close yourself off from the Holy Spirit and any leading from God. Remember, your soulish nature (psychological satisfactions), your bodily needs (exhaustion, stress, lusts), or your human spirit can be in control of the person at any time—pick one. And it had better be your human spirit, because if your spirit is shut out of the process, the Holy Spirit cannot lead you, and you will not be in the will of God. Those caught in this often cannot get free without a severe shock to get their attention. Even then, if the person is far enough gone that may not work.

Have you reached the extreme, where the person begins shutting down and becoming dysfunctional? These people have damaged relationships; they burn bridges, are irritable, easy to anger, lose control, and develop irritating habits? Has Satan so succeeded in distorting your perspective that you have problems with relationships? This is a person on the extreme and close to psychosis. They have built up massive amounts of scar tissue; they have a damaged conscience, increased blindness, and an

intensified disturbance of the soul and spiritual unrest that requires great effort to suppress. This person is a casualty in the angelic conflict, and his chances of recovering from his wounds are not good. Be honest - I bet everyone of you could see yourself somewhere in one or more of these descriptions, and that is not an accusation or judgment on my part. What I mean is this is more common than most of you realize. It doesn't always take on its most extreme form.

I know what many of your are thinking - This isn't going to happen to me. I submit to you not only will it happen to you, but it more than likely already has. You just failed to recognize it. The only question is at what level have you been deceived into a passive and unproductive state? That charge ought to shake you to the core.

Luke 22:31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired *to have* you, that he may sift *you* as wheat....

Grain is agitated or sifted in a fan or sieve to separate the wheat from the chaff (husks). The grain remained in the fan, and the lighter chaff and dust were thrown off. Christ says that Satan desired to try Peter; to place trials and temptations before him; to see whether anything of faith would remain, or whether all would be found to be chaff. Will he only talk the talk or walk the walk?

How about you? When Satan sifts you like wheat what will be your reaction?

The Slide Into Destruction

There is a pattern that the believer often follows once trapped in passivity and deceived by Satan. This pattern represents a spiral into destruction as the believer's failed spiritual life becomes not a testimony for God but one for Satan.

It begins with disobedience; it may be willful or it may be that the believer was deceived into merely thinking he was doing God's will. In either case the believer is held accountable for his fall from grace. Adam sinned and he knew it, whereas Eve was deceived, but both were held accountable. This first failure opens the door to Satan and his lies. Once in disobedience the believer becomes highly susceptible to Satan's deceptions.

In a condition of passivity and having bought into the lies of Satan, the believer often has a second problem, and that is the refusal to correct error despite efforts by the Holy Spirit through God's people. That is passivity of the reason or judgment in full bloom. The believer becomes hardened in his belief in the lie and refuses any efforts by believers to correct his doctrinal error. The truth from the Word of God is presented and ignored or rejected.

This is often accompanied by the rejection of Biblical authorities, such as pastors, evangelists, or others in authority. This is further hardening of passivity of reason or judgment. If true doctrines are rejected then the authority presenting the doctrines must also be rejected.

What follows is, by necessity, self-justification. This is driven by pride. In this condition the believer's mind is not only completely closed to the truth, but he begins the process of justifying and vigorously defending his deceived condition.

At this point we often have the onset of significant levels of influence by unclean spirits to deceive. This is very often accompanied by "visions" of the deceased or even Biblical persons such as Jesus or Mary. I believe demon influence could be an issue from the first stage, but here the doors are thrown open and it intensifies. There is no Scriptural evidence to support visions and dreams in this age. There are a few instances recorded in the apostolic period of the New Testament, but only a few, such as the conversion of Paul on the road to Damascus. There is nothing in the NT to indicate this is normal for this age.

There is the adoption of arrogance or hostility as a mindset; hostility to the truth and those with the truth, as hardness of heart increases. Scar tissue builds up, rendering recovery more difficult, because it is harder for the truth to penetrate.

There is the substitution of unscriptural doctrines and practices and the deceived believer becomes an active voice for false teaching and error.

Severe damage is done to the conscience, and as a result of the failure of the "tripwire of the soul" being corrupted, spiritual blindness increases. This creates a vacuum of the conscience. "Nature abhors a vacuum." That vacuum, therefore, sucks in even more error, and the conscience is further corrupted, and even more false doctrines are accepted as truth.

Once the believer reaches this point there is an increased disturbance in mind and spirit requiring greater effort to suppress. There is an onset of serious psychological problems often characterized by major conflicts in interpersonal relations. I am not saying all psychological disorders are the result of deception and passivity. Many are indeed physiological in origin, but many are not. Secular psychology rarely recognizes the existence of the latter, but it is no less real.

Once the believer begins this slide, the spiritual norm of divine production is no longer happening and in some cases even impossible. They may think they are doing the work of God, when in fact they are into asceticism—denying himself worldly things because they are "corrupting." Or they may lean toward altruism, "doing his best for God," but it is for nothing because it is all based on corrupted and false doctrines. Some "good" may come out of it, that is some may actually benefit, but the underlying motivation is demonically inspired to assuage the deceived believer's own arrogance. This condition is exactly that of the Pharisees of Jesus' day, when he described them as like a

“whitewashed tomb,” looks pretty on the outside, but there is nothing but a rotting corpse of a spiritually dead person inside.

The believer is never called to anything resembling a passive state. We are always called to use our free wills to decide for God and His plan as revealed to us. God desires the surrender to His will by active choice to do His will as it may be revealed to us. He requires for His working, cooperation with His Spirit and the complete use of every faculty of the whole person.

Oswald Chambers puts it this way in his little devotional *My Utmost for His Highest* Updated Version in the September 8 entry when he says this:

“The warfare is not against sin – Jesus Christ conquered that in His redemption of us. The conflict is waged over turning our natural life into a spiritual life. This is never done easily, nor does God intend that it to be so. It is accomplished only through a series of moral choices. God does not make us holy in the sense that He makes our character holy. He makes us holy in the sense that he makes us innocent before Him. And then we have to turn that innocence into holy character through the moral choices we make.”