

Dear PARTNER,

When God gave Moses the ten commandments, why did He choose to write them in tablets of stone? Why didn't He just tell Moses the ten commandments? Was God trying to reveal something to mankind by writing those laws in rock-hard stone? Yes! The answer to these questions are revealed in this verse:

**2 Cor 3:3 Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.**

By writing the ten commandments in tables of stone, God was revealing to man that he is born into this earth with death in his nature. Since the fall of Adam, every man and woman born on the earth had that death nature passed down to them from generation to generation. The spirit within an unregenerate person is symbolized by those rock-hard tablets of stone.

God is a Spirit (John 4:24), and it is His desire to deal with man directly in his spirit. But as long as man had this stony, sin hardened nature passed down from Adam within him, God had to deal with man externally by giving him the Law. The prophet Ezekiel spoke of the coming dispensation when God would no longer have to deal with mankind externally by the Law, but would be able to fellowship with man directly in his heart.

**Ezek 11:19-20 And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.**

Ezekiel was prophesying of the day we live in ... on this side of the cross. He was speaking of the new birth that is now available to man since the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the most simple English, at the new birth God removes that old sin nature, that old stony heart we received from Adam at our first birth and replaces it with a new nature, a soft and pliable heart of righteousness we receive from the Last Adam ... Jesus Christ! (1 Cor 15:45)

The new birth changes our basic nature. At our very core, in our spirit, we literally pass "from death to life." (John 5:24) God no longer has to write His laws in tablets of stone for us. He has written His laws in our hearts. We no longer have to look to Laws engraven in tablets of stone to know that it is wrong to steal, for example. The spirit within us, the new nature itself, tells us that it is wrong to steal. Now this brings us to a very interesting verse in the new testament. Paul wrote this letter to born again people living in Galatia:

**Gal 5:18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.**

The King James version of the bible has capitalized the word "Spirit" in that verse, implying that Paul is speaking of being led by the Holy Spirit. As you most likely know, the Greek word used in the new testament for "spirit" is "pneuma." The only way you can know if the writer is speaking of the Holy Spirit or the reborn human spirit is to see how the word is used in context.

By reading the entire fifth chapter of Galatians, we soon find out that Paul is speaking of the reborn human spirit here, not the Holy Spirit. He is explaining the warfare that every believer encounters when he tries to live righteously ... to be "led of the reborn spirit" that God has placed within him at the new birth. We have received a righteous nature in our spirit, but sadly, our bodies have not yet been glorified. That's why Paul explains further:

**Gal 5:16-18 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For 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. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.**

The warfare Paul is describing here could not be between the Holy Spirit and man's fallen flesh. All of the members of the triune Godhead are ... God! We speak of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost! If the puny, fallen flesh of man was to wage war against God the Holy Spirit ... the flesh would be "toast" in an instant! No, the warfare is going on between our fallen flesh and the reborn human spirit we received within us from the Lord Jesus Christ.

How do we win this war? Paul wrote this letter to the Galatian believers because a group of teachers had come telling them that the way to win the warfare was to focus their attention once more on the written Law. These false teachers were pointing them back to the commandments written in tablets of stone, as though they were still people with a "sin nature" who had to be controlled externally by the Law.

No, no, no, a thousand times NO! Paul is saying, "Don't go backwards. That's the way God dealt with unregenerate man under the old covenant. You have been born again. God has written His laws in your heart now. Learn to be led by your reborn human spirit and you will conquer by your new nature and overcome the lusts of the flesh. That's why God has put the new nature within you. Walk by that new nature and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh."

Sue and I love you and appreciate you. We thank God for your generous and giving heart. God bless you!

Your friend and co-laborer,

*Gary Carpenter*