To Be Better or Bitter: It’s Your Choice presented by The Ministry of YOU

I began my notes with a quote from Brother Kenneth E Hagin, affectionately known as Dad Hagin. This quote us from his book, Love: The Way to Victory. Along with my Bible the Holy Spirit uses this book as one of my textbooks in the School of the Holy Ghost. I am presently once again reading and studying this book. So, I will be making a lot of references from this book.

“If you know the Bible, the devil will tell you, “You claim to be a Christian, yet you want to do things that are wrong. You couldn’t be saved!” This is a very important issue Brother Hagin is addressing in his statement. It does not matter how saved YOU are, your flesh will still want to do what’s wrong. This is the reason the Bible tells us to keep our flesh under subjection to our spirit, or as what Brother Hagin references as the “the man on the inside.”

Brother Hagin goes on to say, “You’ve got to keep the whole body under subjection to your recreated spirit. The Bible says to present your whole body to God as a living sacrifice. All believers have to keep their flesh under the control of their recreated human spirit, because we still have that old adamic nature in our flesh even though our spirits have been recreated. YOU see, talking about the flesh, there is a beast in all of us. YOU can’t let that beast express itself. YOU need to keep it under control of your spirit. Believers who let their flesh dominate them are carnal Christians. That’s why we need to let the Love of God constrain us, so we can grow out of the babyhood stage of carnality and become mature believers who walk by the light of the Word. Mature believers walk in the light of the law of Love. God’s love shed abroad in our hearts will eventually lead us to victory in life because God’s Love never fails. The Godkind of Love is always victorious.”

First of all, Brother Hagin is helping us to understand that is our responsibility to put our flesh under the subjection of our recreated spirit. No one else can do this for us! The word responsible means to be able to answer for one’s conduct and obligations; able to choose for oneself between right and wrong as defined by the Merriam and Webster dictionary. How do we know this to be true? Because the Word of God tells us the same thing. AMPC Philippians 4:13; I have strength for all things in Christ Who empowers me (I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him Who infuses inner strength into me; I am self-sufficient in Christ’s sufficiency).

This inner strength is flowing to my recreated spirit giving me the inner strength I need to put my flesh in subjection to my recreated spirit. I am emphasizing as the Holy Spirit emphasized to me that our spirits are now recreated. AMPC Ephesians 2:10; For we are God’s (own) handiwork (His workmanship), recreated in Christ Jesus, (born anew) that we may do those good works which God predestined (planned beforehand) for us (taking paths which He prepared ahead of time), that we should walk in them (living the good life which He prearranged and made ready for us to live).

We must realize that our flesh doesn’t want to be better, it wants to be bitter. So, we must begin to recognize that when we are struggling to obey God and His Word, this is a good indicator that we are allowing our flesh to dominate us instead of the recreated spirit being in control! The Apostle Paul explains this phenomenon in his letter to the Romans. AMPC Romans 8:6-8; Now the mind (thinking) of the flesh (which is sense and reason without the Holy Spirit) is death (death that compromises all the miseries arising from sin, both here and hereafter). But the mind(thinking) of the Holy Spirit is life and (soul) peace (both now and forever). (That is) because the mind of the flesh (with its carnal thoughts and purposes) is hostile to God, for it does not submit itself to God’s Law; indeed, it cannot. So, then those who are living the life of the flesh (catering to the appetites and impulses of their carnal nature) cannot please or satisfy God or be acceptable to Him.

Is it just because God is being intolerable to us, and He just doesn’t get it? Absolutely not! When we choose to be bitter instead of better, we cut ourselves off from the Goodness or GREAT SALVATION of our God! He expounds on this through the Prophet Isaiah. AMPC Isaiah 55:6-9; Seek, inquire for require the Lord while He may be found (claiming Him by necessity and by right); call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked (twisted or contrary) forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have Love, pity, and mercy for him, and to our God, for He will multiply to him His abundant pardon. For My Thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways (flesh) My Ways, says the Lord. Here lies the real problem, my dear sisters!

For as the heavens are higher than the earth (better), so are My Ways higher (better) than your ways (bitter) and My thoughts than your thoughts. The answer to our problem is we must choose to believe and receive Gods Thoughts and Ways to be better! There is a very important Spiritual principle we know and understand. AMPC Proverbs 23:7; For as he thinks in his heart (mind), so is he. Whatever we decide to think or ponder, meditate on in our mind we will do or become. Paul expounds on this principle in NLT Romans 8:5; Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. It’s simply stated here in the Word of God. If I choose to allow myself to be led and controlled by the Holy Spirit I am going to believing and receiving God’s Thoughts and His Ways. And as I think and ponder His Thoughts and His Ways then I will build these thoughts into my mind, so they now become my thoughts and ways and I become better instead of bitter.

Paul refers to this opposition of the flesh and the recreated spirit in his letter to the Galatians. AMPC Galatians 5:16-17; But I say walk and live (habitually) in spirit (recreated) then you will certainly not gratify the cravings and desires of the flesh (human nature without God). For the desires of the flesh are opposed to the spirit (recreated), and the desires of the flesh are opposed to the spirit (recreated); for these are antagonistic to each other (continually withstanding and in conflict with each other), so that you are not free but prevented from doing what you desire to do.

Paul also wanted to make sure these new believers understood the distinction between the spiritually mature Christian versus the carnal immature Christian. Carnal thinking will lead to carnal actions. AMPC Galatians 5:19-24; Now the doings (practices) of the flesh are clear (obvious): they are immorality, impurity, indecency, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, (ill temper), selfishness, divisions (dissensions), party spirit (factions, sects with peculiar opinions, heresies), envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. (The bitter life)

The better and higher life of the fruit of the Holy Spirit (the work which His Presence accomplishes) is Love, joy (gladness), peace, patience (an even temper, forbearance), kindness, goodness (benevolence), faithfulness, gentleness (meekness, humility), self-control (self-restraint, continence). Against such things there is no law (that can bring a charge). And those who belong to Christ Jesus (the Messiah) have crucified the flesh (the godless human nature) with its passions and appetites and desires.

Brother Hagin also reminds us; “YOU still have the same body and mind YOU always had. And your body will want to do the same things it did before YOU were born again. Your mind will want to think the same thoughts it did before YOU were saved.” For example, when someone offends YOU, your flesh will want to retaliate. Because the flesh is the get-even nature. Thus, why the Word od God says we have to keep our flesh under the control of the man on the inside. Our spirit man has to dominate our flesh.

The Apostle Paul, under the influence of the Holy Spirit has given us some sound advice on how to keep our flesh in subjection to our recreated spirit that is now the holy habitation of the Holy Spirit. NLT 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; We are human, but we don’t wage war as humans do. We use God’s mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps us from knowing God. We capture rebellious thoughts and teach ourselves to obey Christ.

So, at this point it should be crystal clear that it is our responsibility to subject our flesh to our recreated Holy Spirit-filled spirit and it keep that way! The flesh isn’t our body. The flesh is a carnal way of thinking and being. It is the devil’s thoughts and his ways and not God’s Thoughts and Ways which are higher and better than the bitter thoughts and ways of the devil. This why God said through the Prophet Isaiah that our thoughts and ways are not His Thoughts and ways. We have to choose His Thoughts and Ways because the way of the world system is the thoughts and the ways of the devil. AMPC 1 John 2:15-17; Do not love or cherish the world or the things that are in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world: the lust of the flesh (craving for sensual gratification) and the lust of the eyes (greedy longings of the mind) and the pride of life (assurance in one’s own resources or in the stability of earthly things. These do not come from the Father but are from the world (itself).

And the world passes away and disappears, and with it the forbidden cravings (the passionate desires, the lust) of it; but he who does the will of God and carries out His purposes in his life abides forever. Your flesh and body remember the way you thought and acted like the world. We are creatures of habit. The flesh and body are going to want to stay with what is familiar even if it’s harmful. So, they will try and rise up and do what they normally do. This is where the retraining or renewing of the mind must take place. The Holy Spirit has taught me how to manage my thoughts with their attached emotions and not allow my fleshly thoughts to dominate my thinking. This is what we will be continuing to learn together. To be better or bitter is our choice!