**Does a Christian have two natures?**

The first problem that comes up with this question is one of semantics. For example, many prefer "sin nature," others prefer "sinful nature," and still others prefer the ambiguous "flesh." Whatever the specific names used for the warring parties, what is relevant is that an ongoing battle rages within the Christian.

The second problem is the actual definition of "nature." How this significant word is defined determines how one sees the distinction between the “old man” and the “new man” and its relevant outworking in the life of the Christian. One way to view "nature" is to understand it as a "capacity" within a believer. Thus, the old man is interpreted as the former way of life, that of an unbeliever. In this sense, the Christian has two competing capacities within him—the old capacity to sin and the new capacity to resist sinning. The unbeliever has no such competition within; he does not have the capacity for godliness because he has only the sin nature. That’s not to say he cannot do “good works,” but his motivation for those works is always tainted by his sinfulness. In addition, he cannot resist sinning because he doesn’t have the capacity to not sin.

The believer, on the other hand, has the capacity for godliness because the Spirit of God lives within him or her. He still has the capacity for sin as well, but he now has the ability to resist sin and, more importantly, the desire to resist and to live godly. When Christ was crucified, the old man was crucified with Him, resulting in the Christian’s no longer being a slave to sin ([Romans 6:6](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%206.6)). We “have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness” ([Romans 6:18](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%206.18)).

At the moment of conversion, the Christian receives a new nature. It is instantaneous. Sanctification, on the other hand, is the process by which God develops our new nature, enabling us to grow into more holiness through time. This is a continuous process with many victories and defeats as the new nature battles with the “tent” in which it resides—the old man, old nature, flesh.

In [Romans 7](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%207), Paul explains the battle that rages continually in even the most spiritually mature people. He laments that he does what he doesn’t want to do and, in fact, does the evil he detests. He says that is the result of “sin living in me” ([Romans 7:20](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%207.20)). He delights in God’s law according to his “inner being,” but he sees another law at work in “the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members” (v. 23). Here is the classic example of the two entities, whatever terms they may carry. The point is that the battle is real, and it is one Christians will wage throughout their lives.

This is why believers are encouraged to put to death the deeds of the body ([Romans 8:13](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%208.13)), to put to death that which makes a Christian sin ([Colossians 3:5](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Col%203.5)), and to put aside other sins such as anger, wrath, malice, etc. ([Colossians 3:8](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Col%203.8)). All this to say that the Christian has two natures—the old and the new—but the new nature needs continual renewing ([Colossians 3:10](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Col%203.10)). This renewing, of course, is a lifetime process for the Christian. Even though the battle against sin is constant, we are no longer under the control of sin ([Romans 6:6](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%206.6)). The believer is truly a “new creation” in Christ ([2 Corinthians 5:17](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Cor%205.17)), and it is Christ who will ultimately “rescue [us] from this body of death. Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!” ([Romans 7:24–25](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%207.24%E2%80%9325)).

This is how the Old Testament Saints were saved too. God told Moses that He will circumcise the heart [cut away] the old heart and put in them a new heart so they will love God and live - Deut. 30:6 – Moses still failed into discouragement after leading the people into victory. –Ref. Numbers 11:15. And so did Elijah was discoursed after a great battle fpr the Lord. Ref. – 1 Kings 19:4. Jonah was discouraged after Nineveh’s repentance unto the Lord. – John 4:3

This is why I believe Paul says at the end of life. - 2 Tim. 4:7 “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:”

Helmers Street Baptist Church doctrinal statement very clearly affirms that the believer has TWO NATURES, a new nature and an old nature: "**We believe that every saved person possesses two natures**, with provision made for victory of **the new nature** over **the old nature**through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit; and, that all claims to the eradication of the old nature in this life are unscriptural."

**The Believers Two Natures - John 3:6**

The Scriptures teach that every regenerate person is the possessor of two natures: one received by natural birth, which is wholly and hopelessly bad, and a new nature received through the new birth, which is the nature of God himself, and therefore wholly good.

**I. The Natural Man. [the old nature]**

A. Ps. 51:5—“shapen in iniquity . . . .”

B. 1 Cor. 2:14—“receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God . . . .”

C. Mark 7:21-23—“All these evil things come from within . . . .”

D. Eph. 4:22—“is corrupt . . . .”

E. Rom. 8:8—“cannot please God.”

F. John 6:63—“profiteth nothing . . . .”

G. Rom. 8:7—“is enmity against God . . . .”

H. Jer. 17:9—“deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked . . . ?”

I. John 3:6—“That which is born of the flesh is flesh . . . .”

By these, it appears that the unconverted man has a three-fold incapacity. He may be gifted, or cultured, or amiable, or generous, or religious—or all these together. But he can neither please, obey nor understand God. The regenerate man, on the contrary, while still having unchanged and unchangeable, his old nature has received a new nature, which “after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

**II. The New Man.**

A. John 1:11-13—“born . . . of God.”

B. John 3:3—“born again . . . .”

C. Gal. 3:26—“children of God . . . .”

D. Eph 4:24—“created in righteousness . . . .”

E. 2 Cor. 5:17—“he is a new creature . . . .” The “new man” is Christ himself.

F. Gal. 2:20—“Christ liveth in me.”

G. Col. 3:3, 4—“Christ, who is our life . . . .”

H. Phil. 1:21—“For to me to live is Christ . . . .”

I. Col. 1:27—“Christ in you . . . .”

J. 1 John 5:11, 12—“this life is in his Son.”

 Between these two natures, there is a conflict. Study carefully the battle between the two “I’s”—the old Saul and the new Paul—in Rom. 7:14-25. It is an experience like this which that so perplexes and discourages young converts, and leads them to doubt their acceptance with God. But the “new man” has a mighty Helper in the indwelling Spirit, and the secret of victory over “the flesh” is to “walk in the Spirit.” Gal. 5:16,17; Rom. 8:12,13.

Gal 5:16-17 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.

Romans 8:12-13 “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 the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”

V14- I am Carnal

V15 – I allow not

V16 – I consent to the law that is good [I agree that I was wrong].

V17 – I didn’t do it – sin did it.

V18 – I find not how to perform that which is good.

V19 – I do evil not the good.

V20 – I didn’t do it but sin did it [the old nature].

V21 – I find a law – evil is present when I want to do good.

V22 – I delight in God’s law with the inner man [the new nature].

V23 – I see the law of members vs mind.

V24 – I am a wretched man.

V25 – I thank God for my mind to serve God over my flesh.

 The Scriptures nowhere teach that it is God’s purpose to improve, or make over, the old nature. The expression, “a change of heart,” is not found in the Word. But the Scriptures do teach that “our old man is crucified with Christ,” that, in that sense we “are dead,” and that we are called upon to make this a constant experience by mortifying (“making dead”) our members which are upon the earth.

A. Rom. 6:6, 7—“crucified with him . . . .”

B. Phil. 3:3—“have no confidence in the flesh.”

C. Gal. 2:20—“crucified with Christ . . . .”

D. Rom. 13:14—“make not provision for the flesh . . . .

**In Conclusion –** The Child of God is to rejoice that God has given them a new nature and is called upon to do whatever it takes in the power of God to walk and live in for the glory of God in all we say and do upon this earth!