

Short Talk

(SHT049)

Which nature are you growing in?

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SHORT TALK: “WHICH NATURE ARE YOU GROWING IN?” (SHT049)

Aim of Short talk:	To enable people to recognise the battle that is going on between their “sinful nature” and their “new nature in Christ” – and that the nature that they “feed” will be the nature that is stronger and that will grow.
Main themes:	Natures – sinful and new, Growth, Discipleship
Biblical references:	Colossians 3:1-5, Romans 6:11-14, 7:19-25, Ephesians 2:3-10, Galatians 5:16-17, 24, 6:8, 2 Corinthians 5:17
Props:	Two plastic swords. One sign that says “SINFUL NATURE” that can be put around a person’s neck. One sign that says “NEW NATURE IN CHRIST” that can be put around a person’s neck. Card headband that says on the front of it, “I AM A CHILD OF GOD.” Table with a variety of food on it, for example, bread rolls, apples, bag of crisps. Two chairs.

.....
Have you ever seen a battle take place?

- Perhaps you have seen one on television or on a film you have watched.

This morning I need two volunteers who are willing to take part in a battle to come and help me.... *(Give each volunteer a plastic sword. Around one person’s neck place a sign that says, “SINFUL NATURE.” Around the other person’s neck place a sign that says, “NEW NATURE IN CHRIST”)*

OK – I want you to have a mock battle with each other with your swords.....

- Try not to hurt each other. *(Watch the battle for a few seconds then carry on talking as the two people carry on with their battle).*

As children of God we have two natures battling within us.....

- like you can see here. *(Point to battle taking place)*
- Our sinful nature fights against our new nature in Christ.

Our sinful nature is the part of us that wants to go our own way, *(Point to person wearing sign “SINFUL NATURE”)*

- do what we please,
- and rebel against God.

Our new nature, which was brought to life through the power of the Holy Spirit when we trusted our lives to Jesus wants to go God’s way, *(Point to person wearing sign “NEW NATURE IN CHRIST”)*

- it wants to do what pleases God,
- it wants to obey God.

These two natures are at war with one another.

- You may have noticed this war going on whenever you want to do something like pray or read your Bible.....
- suddenly all sorts of things distract you.
- Not only that but it feels like something within you is trying to stop you.

There are a number of ways for our new nature in Christ to win the battle,

- but I want to mention two of them. (*Stop the battle and hold up the arm of the person wearing the sign "NEW NATURE IN CHRIST"*)
- The first way is to believe the truth of who you really are.

You are a child of God with the power of the Holy Spirit living within you. (*Place headband with the words "I AM A CHILD OF GOD" on the head of the person wearing the sign "NEW NATURE IN CHRIST"*)

- Your real life is in relationship with Jesus....loving Him and serving Him,
- not in doing what you want when you want.

The second way for your new nature in Christ to win the battle is to feed that nature and starve the sinful nature.

- OK...would my two volunteers like to come and sit at the table. (*volunteers sit at the table*)

Now when we feed our sinful nature....we starve our new nature in Christ.

- So go ahead sinful nature and enjoy eating the food on the table....
- I am sorry new nature, you will simply have to watch. (*"sinful nature" volunteer eats*)

We feed our sinful nature with things like gossip and unkind words,

- hate and unforgiveness,
- anger, jealousy and selfishness...
- OK that's enough of feeding the sinful nature.....stop eating.

If we choose to feed our new nature in Christ.....we will starve our sinful nature.

- So go ahead new nature and enjoy eating the food on the table.....
- I am sorry sinful nature, but this time you will simply have to watch. (*"new nature" volunteer eats*)

We feed our new nature in Christ with things like worship, prayer and Bible reading,

- Encouraging words and serving other people,
- Love and forgiveness,
- Patience, thankfulness, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.
- OK stop eating.

The more we feed one nature rather than the other,

- the stronger it grows and the weaker the other nature becomes.
- We need to choose each day which nature we are going to feed.

If our new nature in Christ is to win the battle going on within us,

- we need to feed it and starve the sinful nature.
- That is the way we will grow as Christians.....

So can I encourage you this morning to think about which nature you are feeding each day.

- What are you reading? Which nature is that feeding?
- What are you watching on television and film? Which nature is that feeding?
- How are you spending your time? Which nature is that feeding?
- What are you thinking about? Which nature is that feeding?
- Who are you hanging out with? Which nature is that feeding?

Feed your new nature in Christ and the Holy Spirit within you will make you more and more like Jesus.