

***Fanning it into Flame***  
**Sunday, August 14, 2011**  
**A New Operating System**

Everyday we are faced with decisions concerning our lives, many are trivial, some are very significant. Beginning in the Garden of Eden Adam and Eve had to make choices. They were allowed to eat from all the trees in the garden except the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Their failure to keep that command brought about death and a major shakeup on this planet. The good news is that Christ paid the penalty for sin and made the way for us to live life the way God intended, i.e. in relationship with him. The new birth provided a whole new way of thinking. We actually receive the mind of Christ. All things are now possible for the one who puts their trust in Christ. However, although we actually become a new species in him, we don't lose the memory of who we were without him. Our personality remains in tact. Our memory remains in tact. The way we once responded to circumstances can still pop into our minds as the way to handle the situation. That's when the decision process comes into play. We must choose to act out of our new nature and not our old one.

I recently visited a member of our church who was incarcerated for impersonating an FBI agent. He is a very likeable young man who we all love and were dumbfounded by his actions. He came to our church after receiving Christ at the County Jail where he was doing time for a few things, one of which was the same, impersonation. When I spoke to him I shared this analogy of computer operating systems. They are what enable the computer to function. When we receive Christ as Savior and Lord, he gives us a new operating system and we are to do everything out of that system. The ability to use the old system is still there because God wants our will involved in our relationship with him. He wants us to choose him. He wants us to love him and trust in him because we want to, not because we are incapable of anything else. The old system can seem comfortable to us because it's all we ever knew. We even like some of the ways it functions as we mistakenly think we are more in control because of our knowledge of how it works. I told this young man that he was clinging to something that made him feel alive, but it was not real. He needs to let go of the past and cling to the new.

**Romans 8:1-39 (NIV)**

*<sup>1</sup> Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, <sup>2</sup> because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. <sup>3</sup> For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, <sup>4</sup> in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit. <sup>5</sup> **Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.** <sup>6</sup> **The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; <sup>7</sup> the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. <sup>8</sup> Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. <sup>9</sup> You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.** (emphasis mine)*

This message is certainly not a new one, but it is relevant to all of us no matter what level of spiritual maturity we're at. We can so easily succumb to utilizing the old system. It's a very subtle thing that takes place. We can even couch it in spiritual language so it feels like the new, but it's not. God wants us to rely on him and trust him in every circumstance. He wants to be intimately involved in our lives. If you find that worry and stress are becoming more commonplace, you may be utilizing the old operating system.

**Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)**

*<sup>5</sup> Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; <sup>6</sup> in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.*