

**Title:** The New Creation Series – Session 3: The Great Exchange

**Author:** Eduard Serediuc

**Date:** July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016

## Introduction

In this teaching session, we will talk about:

- The legal status and the vital state of humanity before salvation
- The great exchange - the way in which Jesus Christ was made sin for people
- The implications of Jesus' sinless life on earth

## Humanity Before Salvation - The Legal Status and the Vital State

We will analyze the legal status and vital state of humanity before salvation in 2 passages: Romans 5:12, 17-19 and Ephesians 2:1-3.

### Romans 5:12, 17-19 (NASB)

<sup>12</sup> ... through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so **death spread to all men**, because all sinned...—

<sup>17</sup> ... by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, ...

<sup>18</sup> ... through one transgression there resulted **condemnation to all men**, ...

<sup>19</sup> ... through the one man's disobedience **the many were made sinners**, ...

### Ephesians 2:1-3 (NASB)

<sup>1</sup> And **you were dead** in your trespasses and sins,

<sup>2</sup> in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

<sup>3</sup> Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and **were by nature** children of wrath, even as the rest.

- LEGAL STATUS:
  - All people are condemned and guilty before God (Romans 5:18).
- VITAL STATE (the spirit's nature and privileges):
  - People are born sinners because of Adam's sin and not because of their own actions (Romans 5:19).
  - People are not sinners because they do sinful actions, but they do sinful actions because they are sinners in the first place.
  - People are not just considered sinners, but made sinners in the nature of their spirits.
  - People are born in sin and spiritual death (Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1). In other words, people are dead to God in their spirits and alive to sin.
  - The spirit of the prince of the power of the air works in them.
  - People are BY NATURE children of wrath (Ephesians 2:3).
  - The lake of fire and the second death awaits all people (Revelation 20:15).

### Revelation 20:15 (NASB)

<sup>15</sup> And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into **the lake of fire**.

## The Great Exchange – Jesus Made Sin

### 2 Corinthians 5:21 (NASB)

<sup>21</sup> He (God, the Father) made Him (Jesus Christ) who knew no sin **to be sin** on our behalf, so that **we might become the righteousness of God in Him**.

- Question: In what way was Jesus Christ made sin on the cross? Was He made sin only legally OR vitally in His nature as well? Then in what way were believers made righteousness?
- There are 2 prevalent perspectives concerning the answer to the above questions:
  1. Jesus was not made sin in His nature, but sin was only legally (judicially) imputed to Him. By the same token, born again believers remain sinners in their nature, but righteousness is just imputed to them legally.
  2. Jesus was made sin both legally and vitally in His nature, and He took on the nature of Satan. By the same token, born again believers become righteousness both legally and vitally in their nature.
- The answer that we will give and explain in this teaching session is that Jesus was made sin just legally (judicially), but born again believers were made righteousness both legally and vitally (actually in their spirit's nature).
- If Jesus had been made sin in His nature, then:
  1. Jesus would not have been anymore the perfect, blameless sacrifice.

### Exodus 12:21 (NASB)

<sup>21</sup> Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Go and take for yourselves lambs according to your families, and slay **the Passover lamb**."

### John 1:29, 36 (NASB)

<sup>29</sup> The next day he (John, the Baptist) saw Jesus coming to him and said, "**Behold, the Lamb of God** who takes away the sin of the world!..."

<sup>36</sup> ...and he (John, the Baptist) looked at Jesus as He walked, and said, "**Behold, the Lamb of God!**"

The Passover Lamb in the Old Testament (Exodus 12:21) was a "typology" of Christ. Jesus Christ Himself was going to become the Lamb of God (John 1:29, 36). The sacrificial lamb in the Old Testament had to be "unblemished". At the time of sacrifice, a hand would be laid on the unblemished sacrificial animal to symbolize a transfer of guilt (Exodus 12:5; Leviticus 4:3-4; 23-24, 32-33; 22:20).

### Leviticus 22:20 (NASB)

<sup>20</sup> 'Whatever **has a defect**, you shall not offer, for **it will not be accepted** for you.

### Leviticus 4:3-4 (NASB)

<sup>3</sup> if the anointed priest sins so as to bring guilt on the people, then let him offer to the LORD a bull **without defect** as a sin offering for the sin he has committed.

<sup>4</sup> 'He shall bring the bull to the doorway of the tent of meeting before the LORD, and he shall lay his hand on the head of the bull and slay the bull before the LORD.

The sacrificial lamb didn't actually become sinful by nature; rather, sin was imputed to the animal and the animal acted as a sacrificial substitute. In like manner, Christ, the Lamb of God was utterly

unblemished (1 Peter 1:19), and humanity's sin was imputed to Him. He was humanity's sacrificial substitute on the cross of Calvary. The transfer of sin on Him was just legal and not vital.

#### 1 Peter 1:19 (NASB)

<sup>19</sup> but (you were redeemed) with precious blood, as of a lamb **unblemished and spotless**, the blood of Christ.

The whole world is currently in sin and separated from God because of the sin nature transmitted from Adam and not because of their own sinful actions. In the same way, Jesus becoming sin in His nature would have meant He was separated from God and blemished, defiled.

#### 2. Jesus would not have had the right to resurrection.

#### Romans 6:23 (NASB)

<sup>23</sup> For the **wages of sin is death**, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This passage says that the wages of sin is death. If Jesus had become sin in His nature, He would not have come back from the dead and He would not have defeated death.

#### 3. Believers can loose their salvation anytime, and that is not biblical.

If it had been possible for Jesus (who was God and had eternal life) to become spiritual death and lose eternal life for a moment, then there would also have been no assurance for believers' salvation and for the gift of eternal life they had received. They could loose it anytime.

He died physically on the cross, and then tasted spiritual death (He entered the realm of death, He went in the place of the dead). He tasted the separation from God, but He was not made sin (or spiritual death) in His very nature (Hebrews 2:9).

#### Hebrews 2:9 (NASB)

<sup>9</sup> But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might **taste death** for everyone.

That does not mean that Jesus did not have completely the potential to sin. He was the Son of Man, He came in Adam's initial position before the Fall, and He fulfilled the whole Law as a man and not as a God (otherwise His sacrifice would not have been accepted by God). His temptations were real, and He had the real potential to sin and enter spiritual death like Adam. Otherwise, His temptations would not have been real (Hebrews 4:15; 7:26).

#### Hebrews 4:15 (NASB)

<sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who **has been tempted in all things** as we are, yet without sin.

#### Hebrews 7:26 (NASB)

<sup>26</sup> For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, **holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners** and exalted above the heavens;

## The Implications of Jesus' Sinless Life on Earth

Jesus living for 33 years a sinless life on earth and dying on the cross (while He had complete opportunity and potential to sin), accomplished the following things:

### 1. It made Jesus the perfect, blameless sacrificial Lamb.

- He was perfected through the sufferings of temptations and of the death on a cross, in order to become the High Priest and the blameless Lamb. People in general cannot achieve righteousness or be called righteous (blameless) without having the opportunity and temptation to be unrighteous (Hebrews 2:10).

#### Hebrews 2:10 (NASB)

<sup>10</sup> For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to **perfect** the author of their salvation **through sufferings**.

- On one hand, Jesus was born perfect, and yet on the other hand He had to be perfected, in the sense of using and applying His perfection from birth in real life. He was born holy and He was the Son of God. Yet He learned obedience through sufferings (Hebrews 5:8-10).

#### Hebrews 5:8-10 (NASB)

<sup>8</sup> Although He was a Son, **He learned obedience** from the things which He suffered.

<sup>9</sup> And **having been made perfect**, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

<sup>10</sup> being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

- Jesus' sufferings never consisted in effects of spiritual death, like physical sickness, lack, poverty, depression, confusion, weakness, failure, etc. He destroyed all those wherever He went. He was never subject to them. His sufferings were temptations and persecutions from other people, and finally death on the cross.
- Can you imagine how much faith Jesus had to have in the garden of Gethsemane, and on the cross as well, that His sinless life and His sacrifice would be accepted by the Father and that He would really come back from the dead? (Hebrews 5:7).

#### Hebrews 5:7 (NASB)

<sup>7</sup> In the days of His flesh, **He offered up both prayers and supplications** with loud crying and tears to the One able **to save Him from death**, and He was heard because of His piety.

Sometimes we as believers are so encouraged during a sermon or a devotional time and then when we face a trial, it's like we forgot everything. It seems like nothing can encourage us during those times. This is kind of the same what Jesus experienced in Gethsemane and on the cross. Being in the midst of suffering, His perception of reality was not that fixed, and He had to fight the fight of faith as well to the end.

### 2. It assured Jesus' resurrection. It gave Him the right to be resurrected from death back to life.

- If Jesus had not been killed by people on the cross, He would have continued to live forever. Death could not have touched Him, because He never sinned.
- Jesus was resurrected back to life not because He was God, but because He lived a sinless life while on earth. Death could not hold Him and had to "spit" Him out.

- If Jesus had remained in death, that would have meant He was sinful as well, because only those who sin die. That would have meant His sacrifice had not been accepted by the Father, and consequently all believers had remained still in their sins, because there was no longer a substitutionary payment for the sin of the fallen humanity (1 Corinthians 15:12-19).

#### 1 Corinthians 15:12-19 (NASB)

- <sup>12</sup> Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?
- <sup>13</sup> But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised;
- <sup>14</sup> and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain.
- <sup>15</sup> Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised.
- <sup>16</sup> For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised;
- <sup>17</sup> and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; **you are still in your sins.**
- <sup>18</sup> Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.
- <sup>19</sup> If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.

- Jesus' death without the resurrection would not have been enough to atone and pay for humanity's sins and for justification. By His resurrection, He was first justified, and through His justification, the rest of the people in Christ are justified (Romans 4:25; 10:9-10). People need to believe in His resurrection for salvation, and not only in His death.

#### Romans 4:25 (NASB)

- <sup>25</sup> He who **was delivered** over because of **our transgressions**, and **was raised** because of **our justification**.

#### Romans 10:9-10 (NASB)

- <sup>9</sup> that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God **raised Him from the dead**, you will be saved;
- <sup>10</sup> for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

### 3. It gained the righteousness that was going to be given to believers. He fulfilled the whole Law and obeyed God to the end.

- Jesus was sinless and yet He died and experienced both physical and spiritual death. That was not right in God's justice. So, God reconciled that death by crediting it as payment for humanity's sins. Now, after believers' sins had been remitted, they would have been back at square one where Adam was created initially, and left to earn their righteousness by works as Adam was supposed to. Jesus' sacrifice paid humanity's debt of sin (the negative side), and brought it to 0. However, God took a step forward and put believers on the positive side forever: He credited to believers not only Jesus' death and resurrection, but also His life, that He lived on the earth. The righteousness that Jesus earned by works, He gave to believers freely as a gift, both legally and vitally. First, He declared them righteous, then He made them righteous in their nature, and as a result of righteousness, He also gave them eternal life (the one from the tree of life) as a gift. That is why believers are now in a more elevated position than Adam's, that is in an UNCONDITIONAL FIXED STATE OF righteousness and eternal life.

- So, Christians don't have to work anymore (or to try to be holy) in order to gain God's favor, or God's righteousness, or to be more blessed, or to maintain their salvation. The believers' work of holiness is now for the pleasure of God, and because their nature has changed into righteousness as well.
- This Great Exchange was possible, because at the Last Supper in Matthew 26:28, Jesus entered into a blood covenant with His disciples, and consequently with the whole human race.

**Matthew 26:28 (NASB)**

<sup>28</sup> for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many **for forgiveness of sins.**

That meant everything disciples and believers in general had, will belong to Jesus now, and everything that Jesus had, will belong to believers. So, Jesus and the disciples (believers of all time) became one. That's why when Jesus Christ went on the cross, believers went on the cross with Him, they died with Him, and were raised with Him.

- Finally, Christians are not sinners saved by grace. We could say either that THEY WERE sinners, but now they are saved by grace, OR even better: Christians are saints saved by grace. They can no longer sing songs that affirm brokenness, weakness, or sing lyrics that don't align themselves with the God's truth (i.e. "renew a right spirit within me", "cast me not away from thy presence", "do not take the Holy Spirit from me"). Those things will never happen to Christians. They were true for David in the Old Testament in Psalm 51, but not for Christians today. You might say to me: but we all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). Yes, but that was before salvation, not after.

If you have any questions from the Bible or from this teaching session, or you have a personal problem (in finances, in marriage, with children, with addictions, or with a sickness in your body, etc.) for which you need prayer, please don't hesitate to contact us at [contact@eduardserediuc.org](mailto:contact@eduardserediuc.org) or directly from the website from the Contact section -> General Inquiry form. My wife and I will take the time to answer you and pray for you. May God bless you!