

Title: The New Creation Series – Session 5: The Fall of Sin’s Dictatorship

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Introduction

In this teaching session, we will talk about:

- Some definitions of sin and flesh
- What it means to be dead to sin and to not have a sinful nature anymore
- Dying once at the moment of salvation and not daily.

Definitions

- The spirit of man has only 1 nature. The spirit cannot have 2 natures in the same time, in the sense of being both sin and righteousness, or both death and life. The Holy Spirit who is in the believer cannot coexist together with sin.

Romans 5:12, 21 (NASB)

¹² Therefore, just as through one man **sin** entered into the world, and **death** through **sin**, and so **death** spread to all men, because all sinned—

...

²¹ so that, as **sin reigned in death**, even so **grace would reign through righteousness** to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- There is a distinction between SIN as noun and SIN as verb (SINS – sinful actions). The noun SIN talks about nature, while the verb TO SIN talks about sinful actions that come forth mainly because of the presence of the SIN nature, but not only. For instance Adam sinned without having a SIN nature. Moreover, Jesus didn't have a SIN nature. He could have sinned, but He didn't.
- SIN is used as a verb only 2 times in the book of Romans (in 5:12 and 6:15), but 46 times as a noun singular. In all Pauline epistles, SIN is used as verb 14 times while SIN as a noun is used 55 times.
- Useful equivalences:
 - SIN nature = sinful nature = the flesh and produces => spiritual death and darkness.
 - RIGHTEOUSNESS nature = divine nature and produces => spiritual life and light
 - The LAW is the power/fuel of the SIN nature (1 Corinthians 15:56), while GRACE is the power/fuel of the RIGHTEOUS nature.
- The FLESH consists of: the SIN nature of the human spirit, plus the conditioning of the mind (or soul), and plus the lusts/passions/desires of the physical body.
- We can see the flesh as being the spirit nature in the following 2 verses:

Romans 8:9 (NASB)

⁹ However, you are not **in the flesh** but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

Galatians 5:24 (NASB)

²⁴ Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified **the flesh** with its passions and desires.

- We can see the flesh as being in the mind (soul) – fleshly mind in the following passage:

Romans 8:5-6 (NASB)

⁵ For those who are according to the flesh **set their minds on the things of the flesh**, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

⁶ **For the mind set on the flesh is death**, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,

- We can see the flesh as pertaining to the physical body (gr. Sarx) in the following 2 verses:

Luke 24:39 (NASB)

³⁹ "See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have **flesh** and bones as you see that I have."

Galatians 2:20 (NASB)

²⁰ "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live **in the flesh** I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Dead to Sin – No More Sinful Nature

Romans 6:1-11 (NASB)

¹ What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?

² May it never be! How shall we **who died to sin** still live in it?

³ Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?

⁴ Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

⁵ For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection,

⁶ knowing this, that **our old self was crucified with Him**, in order that our **body of sin** might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin;

⁷ for he **who has died** is freed from sin.

⁸ Now if **we have died with Christ**, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

⁹ knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him.

¹⁰ For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

¹¹ Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

- Verse 2:
 - It is obvious that believers didn't die to SIN as sinful actions, but to SIN as nature, because they continue to do sinful actions after salvation. Jesus died to SIN as nature, and not to sinful actions, since He did not have any sinful actions to die to (verse 10).
 - When a person is dead to his/her relatives, family, no matter how much people try to interact with the dead person, there is no reaction.
 - In the same way Adam died to God and to righteousness and so became alive to sin, now believers in Christ died to sin, exited the realm of spiritual death and entered the realm of life.
 - The core of the sinful flesh, the evil principle is GONE. The flesh now consists ONLY in the conditioning of the mind and the desires of the body, which are subordinated to the spirit.
- Verse 6:
 - What is the old self? What is the real identity of a person? Who is the real you? You are a spirit, that has a soul and lives in a body. The old self/identity/real you **IS CRUCIFIED**. That means your old spirit is crucified.
 - The body of sin is DONE AWAY WITH. What is the body of sin? Many commentators of the Bible say that the phrase "body of sin" refers to the physical body which is subject to sin. If that were true, verse 6 would read something like: "our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our physical body might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin." That means believers were crucified with Him, so that their physical bodies would be destroyed, and so they would no longer be slaves to sin. So they will no longer be slaves to sin when their bodies die, meaning in heaven. That is not true. Believers are no longer slaves to sin now. So the body of sin refers to everything that constitutes sin, the constitution of sin. Ex: the body of a car, body of Christ.
 - Believers are no longer slaves to sin, or to the sinful flesh in the sense that it has been removed completely from their spirit. It is still present in their souls (through the mind) and in their bodies, but nevertheless that does not make them slaves to sin according to the Bible. They are not a factor.
- Verse 7:
 - Believers are freed from sin, not in the sense that sin is still in them and they have power to subdue it, BUT in the sense that sin is removed from inside them. They are not set free from sin, but made free from sin.
- Verses 8-10:
 - Christ is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. He died to sin once for all, forever.
 - Now put your name in verses 9-10, because you and Christ are one.
- Verse 11:
 - The word "consider" does not mean that you are still alive to sin, but you should think of yourself as dead. The word "consider" means KNOW THAT IT IS SO even though you still see yourself doing sinful actions. That is the reality and the truth which if you believe, it will eliminate the sinful actions.

Romans 7:5; 8:6-9 (NASB)

^{7:5} For while **we were in the flesh**, the sinful passions, which **were aroused** by the Law, **were at work** in the members of our body to bear fruit for death.

^{8:6} For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,

⁷ because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so,

⁸ and those **who are in the flesh cannot please God**.

⁹ However, **you are not in the flesh** but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

- Verse 7:5 – Notice the past tense “while we were in the flesh”, we beared fruit for death. That means NOW we are no longer in the flesh.
- Verse 8:8-9 – Those in the flesh cannot please God. However, we are not in the flesh. Once we have the Holy Spirit in us, we belong to God and the flesh is gone.

Galatians 2:20 (NASB)

²⁰ **“I have been crucified** with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

- My soul or my body definitely have not been crucified. So what has been crucified? The flesh, the old me, the old spirit.

Galatians 5:24 (NASB)

²⁴ Now those who belong to Christ Jesus **have crucified the flesh** with its passions and desires.

- If you belong to Christ, your flesh is crucified, is dead, together with the passions and desires. If you still feel them strong, they are only in your mind and they are lies. They try to convince you that you are still a sinner, that you are still the same, so that you give in to sin much easier.

Galatians 6:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which **the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.**

- I have been also crucified to the world, the world has no real power over me. I still live in the world, and I still feel sometimes the effects and temptations of the world on me, but in reality it has no power over me.

Colossians 2:11-13 (NASB)

¹¹ and in Him **you were also circumcised** with a circumcision made without hands, **in the removal of the body of the flesh** by the circumcision of Christ;

¹² having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

¹³ When you were dead in your transgressions and **the uncircumcision of your flesh**, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,

- Verse 11 - In the same way Abraham was tangibly circumcised in his physical flesh, you were also circumcised tangibly, not in the physical flesh, but in the spiritual flesh.
- The “body of flesh” does not refer to the physical body, but to the constitution of the spiritual flesh. That body of flesh has been removed by Christ’s circumcision.
- Verse 13 – “the uncircumcision of your flesh” - In the past before salvation, you were uncircumcised spiritually, your flesh was still there, and you were dead in transgressions. But now you are no longer uncircumcised. Abraham’s circumcision in the physical flesh is a typology of what was going to happen to those in Christ spiritually.
- Because of the sinful actions that you still do, or because you feel so tempted sometimes, you might feel that you still have a sinful nature, but that is not true. Even without a sinful nature, Jesus felt the

temptation the same way we do, but He did not sin. In the same way, we are still tempted, we feel the temptation, but we do not possess a sinful nature anymore. Adam did not have a sinful nature, and he still sinned.

- The analogy of communism:
 - The power of communism, which was Ceausescu's dictatorship can be likened with the sin dictatorship at the human spirit level.
 - The mindset of communism, which was the conditioning of people's minds under communism can be likened with the conditioning of the human mind (soul) under sin.
 - The deeds/behavior of communism, which were the actual deeds and behaviors of people under communism can be likened with the physical body habits, desires, deeds under sin.
 - The environment and culture of communism, created by the communist regime can be likened spiritually with the world.
 - The forces sustaining communism, which were the secret police and terrorism, can be likened spiritually with the devil and his demons.
 - Some of the characteristics of communism:
 - fear of police – when they would stop you they would always find something and you could not fight for your rights
 - no free speech
 - suspicion in the family because of secret police's rewards and threats in exchange for betraying family members
 - fear of lack or greed – 3 am stay in line for milk, no food, no meat
 - survival mode - workarounds, resourceful
 - bribes to accomplish things – papers/documents, police on the streets, education, hospital, vehicle inspection to pass, etc
 - When the power of communism fell, the forces still fought, and the mindset and deeds were still there for over 25-30 years.
 - Now, after I came out of communism, could I have ever dream to perfection or perfect freedom? Yes of course. The same way, Christians can hope for walking in perfect holiness more and more.
 - When I came to the States, and I immersed myself into democracy, my mind was renewed much faster.

Romans 7:14-25 (NASB)

¹⁴ For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, **sold into bondage to sin.**

¹⁵ For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate.

¹⁶ But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good.

¹⁷ So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but **sin which dwells in me.**

¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.

¹⁹ For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want.

²⁰ But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but **sin which dwells in me.**

²¹ I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good.

²² For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man,

²³ but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me **a prisoner of the law of sin** which is in my members.

²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the **body of this death?**

²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh **the law of sin.**

- Whenever I mention that we no longer have the flesh or that we are no longer sinners, many Christians begin quoting this passage from Romans 7:14-25, describing Paul's seeming conflict, and thus affirming that what Paul is talking about there is his experience after salvation, since a non-believer would not have the desire to uphold the law of God. However, we will see that what Paul describes in the second part of Romans chapter 7 is his experience before salvation, and not after.
- First of all, the people of Israel and the Jews were accustomed to the Law of God and they were trying to uphold the Law as non-Christians. Secondly, Paul was a teacher of the Law and he knew the Law by heart in his mind and he tried to obey it without being a believer in Christ. Thirdly, even as non-believers, we still have the knowledge of good and evil in us and we have a conscience, although we do not have the ability to do only good all the the time.
- Verse 14 says that Paul is of the flesh, sold into bondage to sin. However, earlier in Romans 6:7, 14 Paul says that we are freed from sin and sin shall not master over us.

Romans 6:7, 14 (NASB)

⁷ for he who has died **is freed from sin.**

...

¹⁴ For **sin shall not be master over you**, for you are not under law but under grace.

- So, how can Paul still be sold into bondage to sin in chapter 7, when he was freed from sin in chapter 6? That would be possible only if, in chapter 7, he is talking of the time when he was a slave of sin, that is, before salvation. Moreover, earlier in Romans 7:5-6, Paul says he was ONCE in the flesh, and his sinful passions were aroused/incited by the Law (which is spiritual and holy). When he was released from the Law, the Law remained the same, but he was released in the sense that he was no longer aroused by it, because he died to that which he was bound – that is, his sinful passions and the flesh.

Romans 7:5-6 (NASB)

⁵ For while **we were in the flesh**, the sinful passions, which **were aroused** by the Law, **were at work** in the members of our body to bear fruit for death.

⁶ **But now** we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which **we were bound**, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

- 1 Corinthians 15:56 says that the power of sin is the Law. Whenever the Law came in contact with the sin nature in me, it produced death. That meant I was bound by the Law. When I was released from the Law, the Law did not change, but I changed. I have become the Law, because the Holy Spirit came into me. So there was no longer a negative reaction, because sin was no longer in me.

1 Corinthians 15:56 (NASB)

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and **the power of sin is the law;**

- Verses 17 and 20 of chapter 7 say that sin dwells in him. However, that is not possible after salvation. Sin does not dwell in the temple of God. Sin cannot coexist with the Holy Spirit.
- In verse 21, Paul says that evil is present in him, but we saw until now, that evil cannot be present in a believer, in the nature of his spirit.

- In verses 23-25, Paul mentions that he is still a prisoner of the law of sin and a prisoner of the body of death (body of flesh, body of sin), but then in Romans 8:2 he says that the Law of the Spirit of life has made him free from the law of sin and death, so he can no longer be a prisoner to those.

Romans 8:2 (NASB)

² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus **has set you free from the law of sin and of death.**

Dead to Sin Once

Matthew 16:24-27 (NASB)

²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, **he must deny himself, and take up his cross** and follow Me.

²⁵ "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

²⁶ "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

²⁷ "For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.

- Matthew 16:24-27 and Mark 8:34-37 and Luke 9:23-26 describe the same passage about denying yourself and taking up the cross, with the exception that the Luke version adds the word "daily".
- Many Christians interpret these verses as referring to denial of pleasures and to obedience. It is something like "I want to do this, I like to do this", but for the sake of Christ I will sacrifice myself. They feel like they are losing something valuable and pleasurable, but it is worth it since God says so. They feel like they are trying to deny what they really are and trying to keep the beast inside under control. That is completely wrong.
- Verses 16:25-27 show us clearly that the context is about salvation, it is a context of life and death, of losing or saving your soul, and not of daily obedience. If we are talking in the context of salvation, then the believer dies ONLY once in his spirit at the moment of salvation, and then reinforces that death daily in the mind and the body. That is the way the passage in Luke could be understood (daily), although in the NKJV of the bible there is a note specifying that the Masoretic text does not contain the word "daily".
- Jesus talks about the cross, but at that point in time He had not died yet on the cross. Yet, he still makes reference to the cross. He is preparing the people for salvation by letting them know that they have to be crucified in order to be saved. In that way, when He will be crucified, they will be crucified in Him.
- These passages could be also understood as if Jesus was trying to show the people how impossible it was for them to get saved on their own, that they had to be crucified every day in order to atone for their sins, pretty much like the way they had to bring sacrifices for sins on and on repeatedly. He might have wanted to show them how much people were in need of a Savior and that they could not save themselves.

1 Corinthians 15:30-31 (NASB)

³⁰ Why are we also in danger every hour?

³¹ I affirm, brethren, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, **I die daily.**

- 1 Corinthians 15:30-31 - Here Paul talks about dying daily in the context of persecution, that he was every day almost to the point of death physically. He was not talking about dying daily in the context of denial and obedience.

- In Romans 6:2 above - We died (past tense) and it's a one time thing at salvation.
- In Romans 6:3 above - We were baptized into Christ ONCE in water, meaning into His death. We are not still being baptized into His death continuously, or still dying.
- In Romans 6:6 – As Christ was crucified ONCE, so are we crucified only once.

Memory Verses

Galatians 2:20 (NASB)

²⁰ "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Galatians 5:24 (NASB)

²⁴ Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

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 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!