

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Sinners by Choice or Constitution??

Sinners by Choice or Constitution??, on: 2007/3/22 21:49

SINNERS BY CHOICE OR CONSTITUTION?

Here is another great nugget. Are we sinners by moral choice or by physical constitution? Those who advocate a constitutional sin often use Ephesians 2:3.

Ephesians 2:3 “Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desire of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as the others.”

The Greek word for “nature” is “**phusis**” which Strong’s says can actually be translated as “constitution” or “usage”. In context of the whole verse this passage means that those who choose to walk after the flesh, to gratify its lusts and desires, are by their usage of their constitution children of wrath.

The flesh naturally has lusts, cravings, or desire, which can be gratified through the forbidden means of sin. They are involuntary lusts, cravings, or desires, being strictly physical and not moral, and so they do not bring forth moral sin until the will serves them supremely (James 1:15).

These natural lusts, cravings, or desires were the source of temptation for Eve in the Garden (Genesis 3:6). She “saw that it was good for food”, “pleasant to the eye”, and “desired to make one wise”. These were all natural physical appetites which she sought to gratify through sin or disobedience to God. This was the first case in the history of human beings when a human being submitted their will to their flesh rather than the truth of God revealed to their minds. This was the first case in human history of a human individual doing what feels good rather than what she knew was good. And this is exactly what every sinner does.

The physical constitution of man is a mere tool without any inherent moral character. The body is neither moral nor immoral, good nor bad, sinful or holy in and of itself apart from the usage the human will uses it for. As a tool, the body can be an instrument of sin or an instrument of righteousness, depending on what the human will yields it to:

Romans 6:13 “Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”

Romans 6:19 “I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.”

Galatians 6:8 “For he that sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”

The physical body that Christians have is the same exact physical body they had when they were children of wrath, and will remain the same until the glorification (1Corinthians 15:53-54). While the constitution itself is the same, the usage of the Christians constitution has changed. They have obeyed the command to “present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” Romans 12:1

Sin is when the will is submitted to the sensibilities, to the lusts or desires of the flesh. Sinners do what “feels good”, seeking their own pleasure. But obedience is when the will is submitted to what is “reasonable”, performing its “reasonable service”, when the will submits to the intellect, or to the moral truth of God which the Spirit reveals to the mind. So Christians do what they “know is good” for the well-being of others. So those who walk in the Spirit do not fulfill the lusts of the flesh, Galatians 5:16. And those who submit their will to the Spirit, rather than the flesh, have no condemnation in Christ, Romans 8:1.

And it is by willfully escaping the corruption that comes by obeying lust, by yielding unto the moral demands presented by the Spirit, that we become partakers of the divine nature:

2Peter 1:14 "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

Because sinners are enemies of God in their mind through wicked works (Col 1:21), because they are obeying the lust of the flesh or wrongly using their natures, constitutions, or faculties (Ephesians 2:3), all sin in essences consists in a "wrong moral choice" to serve self as opposed to serving God's glory and the well-being of others. This is why there is no scriptural reason for any sort of "physical" regeneration, because there is no such thing as "physical" sin. Rather the Spirit of God brings about a "moral" regeneration, because all sin is a moral choice. Christians are spiritually, not physically, transformed in this life (Romans 12:12).

"No reward, can justly be bestowed, no punishment can justly be inflicted, upon him who is good or bad by necessity, and not by his own choice." Tertullian

Re: Sinners by Choice or Constitution?? - posted by jordanamo, on: 2007/3/22 23:07

"And it is by willfully escaping the corruption that comes by obeying lust, by yielding unto the moral demands presented by the Spirit, that we become partakers of the divine nature."

Your article fails to touch upon the fact that we are incapable of willfully following God and following after the Spirit without His Divine assistance.

"All sin in essences consists in a "wrong moral choice" to serve self as opposed to serving God's glory and the well-being of others."

What is this again? Choice? I'd describe it more as "all sin consists of slavery to the Flesh." A "wrong moral choice" though? You act like this is something that anyone can just "stop" doing by choice. God must create a new heart in you, you cannot stop willingly sinning based on choice.

I'm not entirely clear on this-- I may be wrongfully misunderstanding you-- but my inclination is that this sounds quite legalistic.

Edit: It appears your denying Original Sin.

Edit2: It also appears you've been reading a bunch of Finney... he he. But this explains your preaching more, as to why you rarely touch upon Jesus, the Cross, Resurrection, etc. and instead preach what I would consider a works salvation of people needing to basically willfully turn away from sin as if it was a chain around their neck they could take off by their own will. Surely you understand that Sin can only be "contained" by God via Jesus' death and resurrection?

What on earth was the point thus of Jesus coming to Earth if our sin was based on choice and not on constitution? This is dangerous theology brother.

Jordan

Re: - posted by elected (), on: 2007/3/22 23:57

We are born with the adamic fallen nature, unholy and impure from the mothers womb but we actually sin when we are aware of good and evil in the 'age of accountability' so God will take us account for our wrong moral actions and choices, for our lawlessness and wilful disobedience.

Actual sin is a crime against God, you break his law the moment you have the knowledge of good and evil.

Sinners by constitution that's a paradox at least i dont understand.

Re: - posted by roaringlamb (), on: 2007/3/23 0:14

Sin has brought death. Both actual, and spiritual. Man cannot help himself, as even his best moral action is stained by sin, and unless the fountainhead of sin, the heart, be made alive, there is no hope for him.

Re: Sinners by Choice or Constitution?? - posted by rookie (), on: 2007/3/23 0:46

Quote:
-----And it is by willfully escaping the corruption that comes by obeying lust, by yielding unto the moral demands presented by the Spirit, that we become partakers of the divine nature:

Thank you brother...

In Christ
Jeff

Re: - posted by roaringlamb (), on: 2007/3/23 0:51

Quote:
-----And it is by willfully escaping the corruption that comes by obeying lust, by yielding unto the moral demands presented by the Spirit, that we become partakers of the divine nature:

I don't really see that presented here.

2Pe 1:3 According as **his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness**, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

2Pe 1:4 **Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Re: - posted by elected (), on: 2007/3/23 1:11

Sin brought spiritual death and physical death and eternal separation from God. But while we are accountable to God our soul is not dead, you still feel and think and make choices, the moment you hear the gospel the word of God you receive faith to believe but the choice is yours, then your senses quicken and your spirit is made alive.

The power to choose is ours the grace to save belongs to God. The merit for salvation belongs all to God.

P.S - sorry I think to have expressed myself incorrectly there is no power to choose, our choices are powerless unless there is a prevenient work of grace urging us to accept Christ.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2007/3/23 1:50

Quote:
-----Romans 6:19 "I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness."-----

This scripture says that we "as Christians" should yield ourselves to righteousness as we did before to uncleanness. It does not indicate or say that we could have yielded ourselves to righteousness beforehand! We were in bondage to sin and could not.

"SINNERS BY CHOICE OR CONSTITUTION?" BOTH! willful sinners, disobedient sinners, criminals, yet also in bondage to death and sin and under the sins of Adam. Calvinists do not take away from willful sin but it is a building block onto top of original sin.

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2007/3/23 2:05

Quote:
-----This scripture says that we "as christians" should yield ourselves to righteousness as we did before to uncleanness. It does not indicate or say that we could have yielded ourselves to righteousness beforehand! We were in bondage to sin and could not.

For those who do not believe that the OT saints were of the same nature as us, born from above, how did God's Holy Spirit enable them to find Him and serve Him in righteousness?

In Christ
Jeff

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2007/3/23 3:52

Quote:
-----quoted by Jesse
Sin is when the will is submitted to the sensibilities

My objection to this mini-definition is the same as I state on the accompanying thread... where do we get the concept from that there is something in the soul which can be identified as 'the will'.

Finney's comment on the will is that it is 'self evident'; not to be it isn't.

Quote:
-----rookie on 2007/3/23 7:05:30
For those who do not believe that the OT saints were of the same nature as us, born from above, how did God's Holy Spirit enable them to find Him and serve Him in righteousness?

and for those who think there is no difference what is the possible significance of the fact that the disciples were promised that the accompanying Spirit would become the indwelling Spirit. What was their state prior to the indwelling?