

**Devotional Thoughts :: We are just as bad as dogs?****We are just as bad as dogs? - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/12/28 3:07**

Proverbs 26:11 "As a dog returns to its vomit, so fools repeat their folly."

I have been thinking about sin and its nature lately, which to my despair I have found I have more of the sinful nature in me than I wish to have. I began to think about sin and not only how it affects us (death) but how we react to it. We can view Sin as a delectable food as spoken of in Proverbs 18:8 "The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to the inmost parts." Many ascribe sin to a nature (which is true), many claim sin to be an addiction (which is true), many preach sin is caused by the devil (which is true) but the ultimate reason we sin is quite literally this: we love sin. Sin is tasty, it feels good, it fills that empty place on the inside, and it "satisfies". But lo and behold we find our human frames crave this sin, this rebellion against God. We gorge ourselves on it and eat and eat and eat until we begin to feel the negative effects of sin. We begin to have a stomach ache, run a fever, and quite literally to get to the point death begins to rule our bodies and when you are sick you will usually VOMIT.

All of that sin pours out, because Sin is poison to our human frame. Sure it looked like a piece of chocolate cake that would not harm you at all, but as it entered the mouth and into the stomach it is too late to find a deep seed of poison planted in it and our bodies reject it. One of the methods our bodies rejects things is by vomiting it up. Sin has the same effect. Just as our human bodies vomit up undesired food or toxins we can spiritually vomit up sin. As we vomit it up and see the aftermath of what sin had done to us and our loved ones, as we gaze into the now pile of vomit of sin sitting in the toilet or on the floor, imagine if you will taking it and licking it up. I apologize if that is too graphic for some but we silly humans do this with sin. We have felt the effects of sin, knowing it hurts, then seeing sin in its true state (poison) and then completely starting the cycle over again, not with the nice piece of "chocolate cake" but with the vomited mess we just threw up. Pretty gross but its true there has been many times where I have done the same.

Now to get to an important question, how do we stop this? How do we break the cycle? For one, we in our own strength can't, our flesh lunges for it and will win every time. BUT, we have a Heavenly Janitor who has wood chips ready in a bucket to clean the mess up. Only Jesus can clean up the mess we have made, in fact if we turn to Him and ask Him, He is faithful to do the cleaning. So the next time you see the chocolate cake ask the Lord for strength to resist it and the eyes to see the poison it carries and He will help you. Submit to the Cleansing power of Christ Jesus and the Cross!!

God Bless,

Matthew

PS: I acknowledge that eating actual chocolate cake isn't necessarily sinful...unless you don't share with me ;)

Re: We are just as bad as dogs?, on: 2010/12/28 7:22

No! We are not Dogs! We are Saints!

How many natures did Adam before he sinned? ONE

How many natures did Adam after he sinned? ONE

How many natures did we have when we were born? ONE

How Many natures does a Christian have? ONE

It Is Impossible For A Christian To Have A Sinful Nature.

As a result of Adam's sin, we were all born sinners and we received a sinful nature. Our sinful corruption was so bad and thorough that even God, Himself could not repair us. There was nothing God could do with that sinful nature, no touching up, no revising, no improving it and no adding to it could ever make it acceptable in His sight. Our sinful nature was entirely hostile to him and we were His actual enemy. We were so corrupt, so wicked and evil that the only thing

God could do with our sinful nature was to crucify it with Christ.

A person's true nature is the essence of who he is at the very core of his being. As a result of Adam's sin, we were born sinners and we received a sinful nature. This is the actual, factual nature that we inherited from Adam. We all were born alive to sin, dead to God, and without the "LIFE OF CHRIST". So we all became sinners by birth.

The only possible cure for your old sinful life was death. The Good News is that God has already provided the solution for us in Christ. When you were born again you were crucified with Christ and you were buried with Him. Your old sinful nature died and you received Christ' life and His Divine Nature to replace it. You have received His all-sufficient Life in exchange for you old sinful nature.

Your old sinful self died, and you became a New Creation. Your old sinful nature is totally dead and can never be resurrected back to life again! The old you, your sinful nature, the core of who you really were deep down inside was totally destroyed and crucified with Christ on the cross. Now the new you, the core of who you really are, is the Life of Christ. You were resurrected with Christ and have a brand new life - with a brand new nature. Your old sinful nature wasn't changed, IT WAS EXCHANGED with a real life - the very life of Jesus! You no longer have a sinful nature. You now have a nature of righteousness, holiness, blamelessness. You have no need to become a better person, because God has already made you into a new person.

Col. 3:3-4, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

Romans 6:6, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

Gal. 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Eph. 2:1, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

Eph. 1:3, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

1 John 5:11-12, "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

Romans 8:8-10, "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."

Romans 6:11, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Col. 1:12-14, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet (qualified) to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

Col. 2:6-15, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the

sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it."

The fact is that our sinful nature that we were born with, in Adam, was crucified with Christ on the cross and it died. This happened the second we were born again accomplished by the work of God in Christ. Our new nature in Christ is righteous. The Christian does not have a sinful nature and a righteous nature coexisting together. It is impossible to be both righteous and unrighteous at the same time. We can not be A Child of God and a Child of wrath at the the same time. You can only have one nature at a time because it is impossible to have two opposing natures at once. Jesus said that a house divided against itself can not stand.

Mark 3:25, "And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand."

So why do we sin if our sinful nature is dead and if we now have a righteous nature? Why do we still find ourselves committing the same sins if we have indeed been made righteous by the gift of God's grace? It certainly isn't because we still have an unrighteous nature. In Jesus Christ, we have received a new nature - His very nature! The person we were "in Adam" was crucified with Jesus. However we haven't yet been delivered from the presence of our corrupted body's sin. Our spirits have been redeemed and our soul is being renewed. One day we will be delivered from the very presence of sin, but until we receive glorified bodies, we each possess the power of sin in our bodies. As we trust Christ at each moment, His Life empowers us to walk in victory. However, when we fail to depend on Him, we yield ourselves to the power of sin.

So if we don't have a sinful nature or an old nature anymore, what is it we struggle against? We struggle against the flesh, our habits, and our methods of getting our needs met apart from Christ. It is the flesh that can trip us up, because it fights against who we really are in Christ. Now, make no mistake, you only have ONE nature now and that nature is Christ Himself. We do not to struggle against an old nature that's already dead. But we can rest on Christ and what He has already accomplished for you and will accomplish through you in the future.

Christians still have the capacity to sin. The good news is that we are not identified by our fleshly body but rather by who we actually are! In Christ, sin doesn't define us. We are defined as saints. Nothing we "do" can change that identity, just as nothing we did created that identity in the first place. It was all the work of God and it will always continue to be the work of God. The prodigal son didn't lose his identity as a son, even when he went off and wasted his inheritance.

Have you ever heard this story about the Christian having two dogs (or natures) inside him?

"Inside of me there are two dogs, one of the dogs is mean and evil, the other dog is good, the mean dog fights the good dog, all the time".

When asked which dog wins he reflected for a moment, and said ... "the one I feed the most."

This is a LIE that we have to starve our "old nature" and feed our "new nature" because the TRUTH is that when we were born again our old nature died and it was replaced with Christ's Life. So when you accepted Christ at salvation, you were put into Christ and your old nature was crucified with Him on that cross and when He was resurrected, you were resurrected also-in Him and Him in you. You were "born again" with His new nature. The old once ceases to exist.

Paul explains this clearly in many verses (the message):

Romans 6:6-11, "Could it be any clearer? Our old way of life was nailed to the cross with Christ, a decisive end to that sin-miserable life - no longer at sin's every beck and call! What we believe is this: If we get included in Christ's sin-conquering death, we also get included in his life-saving resurrection. We know that when Jesus was raised from the dead it was a signal of the end of death-as-the-end. Never again will death have the last word. When Jesus died, he took sin down with him, but alive he brings God down to us. From now on, think of it this way: Sin speaks a dead language that means nothing to you; God speaks your mother tongue, and you hang on every word. You are dead to sin and alive to God. That's what Jesus did."

As Paul said, "could it be any clearer?"

Colossians 3:3-4, "Your old life is dead. Your new life, which is your real life-even though invisible to spectators-is with Christ in God. He is your life. When Christ, your real life, shows up again on this earth, you'll show up, too-the real you, the glorious you. Meanwhile, be content with obscurity, like Christ."

Romans 6:1-3, "So what do we do? Keep on sinning so God can keep on forgiving? I should hope not! If we've left the country where sin is sovereign, how can we still live in our old house there? Or didn't you realize we packed up and left there for good? That is what happened in baptism. When we went under the water, we left the old country of sin behind; when we came up out of the water, we entered into the new country of grace-a new life in a new land!

Romans 6:3-5; "That's what baptism into the life of Jesus means. When we are lowered into the water, it is like the burial of Jesus; when we are raised up out of the water, it is like the resurrection of Jesus. Each of us is raised into a light-filled world by our Father so that we can see where we're going in our new grace-sovereign country."

Galatians 2:19-21, "What actually took place is this: I tried keeping rules and working my head off to please God, and it didn't work. So I quit being a "law man" so that I could be God's man. Christ's life showed me how, and enabled me to do it. I identified myself completely with him. Indeed, I have been crucified with Christ. My ego is no longer central. It is no longer important that I appear righteous before you or have your good opinion, and I am no longer driven to impress God. Christ lives in me. The life you see me living is not "mine," but it is lived by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I am not going to go back on that. Is it not clear to you that to go back to that old rule-keeping, peer-pleasing religion would be an abandonment of everything personal and free in my relationship with God? I refuse to do that, to repudiate God's grace. If a living relationship with God could come by rule-keeping, then Christ died unnecessarily."

If you are a Christian and living in defeat and are struggling with sin you now you must believe what Christ has already done for you and in you by faith! All this is a done deal because it was all accomplished for you and given to when you became a Christian. Now if Christ does live within you, His presence means that your sinful nature is dead, but your spirit becomes alive because of the righteousness he brings with him (Romans 8:10 Phillips).

Your old evil desires were nailed to the cross with Him; that part of you that loves to sin was crushed and fatally wounded, so that your sin-loving body is no longer under sin's control, no longer needs to be a slave to sin; For when you are deadened to sin you are freed from all its allure and its power over you (Romans 6:6-7 Living Bible).

You may ask, if Christ makes believers dead to sin and if my evil nature is crushed - why do I still discover old evil desires popping up? Why is there still an evil presence in my body? Why am I still capable of doing sinful things like all other sinners? Why should I be a Christian, if it doesn't break the power of sin?

Maybe you haven't heard yet, or maybe it sounds too good to be true, but Christ totally freed us to all sin at Calvary. You can now "walk out" on the devil! You can throw down your load of sin, walk away from Satan's dominion, and enter into a new life of freedom. Let me show you what the Bible means when it talks about dying to sin. When Lincoln emancipated the slaves, the "issue" of slavery died. Not the slave master--not the slave. The slave could walk away free, saying to himself: SLAVERY IS A DEAD ISSUE. THE OLD SLAVE IN ME IS DEAD. I AM A FREE MAN.

When someone receives Christ, what is it in him that dies? Sin doesn't die. Satan doesn't die. Nor does the evil tendency die. The "issue" or the "controversy" dies. Sin created a controversy in the heart of man about who was in control and the battle between good and evil was the result. God simply emancipated the mind from sin's control, killing the controversy of slavery to evil.

When the Bible says, "We die to sin," it simply means that to us THE ISSUE IS DEAD! There is no more argument--THE MATTER IS NOT NEGOTIABLE--MANKIND WAS EMANCIPATED AT CALVARY! The issue as to who is in charge is dead! Paul used legal terms to describe the Christian's freedom from sin's bondage. The same legal terms are used daily in Congress: THE BILL IS DEAD. THE AMENDMENT WAS KILLED. THE RESOLUTION DIED.

The Bible says, "...he that is dead is free from sin...Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe we shall also live with him" (Romans 6:7,8). What that means is simply this: Since the matter of your slavery to sin is a dead issue, seeing that Christ has already declared you emancipated, you are now free to live as a new person in Christ. In other words, you have died to slavery, so why go back and pick cotton for the devil?

Now the slave could slip back into the field and pick a few more rows of cotton- - perhaps through fear or instinct - -but that, in no way, made him a slave again. He was free, but he had to exercise his freedom. The proclamation couldn't force compliance, and neither could the slave master force him to return. It was a matter of the will of the slave. Christ declares we are free by faith, but we must act as a free person.

Satan decreed a law that, as prince of the world, all living souls were his subjects. God's Supreme Court KILLED THAT LAW OF SIN. It died because Satan could not enforce it anymore. God declared it unconstitutional and substituted His own law--THE LAW OF THE SPIRIT, giving Him all rights to the believer's body.

After years of trying to understand what Paul meant by DYING TO SIN or DEATH OF THE OLD NATURE, I now see how simple it all is? Sin doesn't die, only the SLAVERY to it dies! Its power over me dies. So now I don't have to go around trying to die or struggle to feel dead. Nothing in me dies except the law that held me in sin's control. Sin is still present in me, but I am no longer under its control.

Think of freedom from sin as a divorce. Christ takes the believer to His Father, the Judge, and gets a divorce from sin so that He can take that same believer as a bride to Himself. Christ loved us while we were still living with sin; He died to prove that love; and that gave Him the right to annul sin's claim on us.

This divorce makes us dead to the claims of the old affair, but it doesn't stop the old illicit lover from coming around to harass, seduce, or try to press a new claim. Satan never accepts such an annulment without a fight. He will come, calling with threats, with compromises, with alluring offers. But legally, Satan no longer has a claim on any believer. Paul wrote, "...having died to that which once held us, we now serve in newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the Law" (Romans 7:6).

No Christian can now say, "I can't help myself. I can't break from my sin." Paul was finally delivered from this kind of talk, and so must we be! Satan can't make you sin now; but your old slave nature can attempt to reassert itself. If Christ did not break the power of sin, the crucifixion was a hoax. You will always be a slave until you quit excusing your weakness by claiming to be helpless. You are not helpless as a child of God. You are not the devil's patsy anymore. Pretending to still be a slave of sin is an alibi Christians use to put off facing the responsibility of their freedom. And so we should not be like cringing, fearful slaves, but we should behave like God's very own children, adopted into the bosom of his family (Romans 8:15 Living Bible).

Now Christ has made us free. Now make sure that you stay free and don't get all tied up again in the chains of slavery (Galatians 5:1 Living Bible). Freedom from sin's slavery must be accepted by faith. The whole thing then is a matter of faith on man's part, and generosity on God's (Romans 3:16 Phillips). Faith is something you do about what you know. Knowledge means nothing unless it is acted upon.

The children of Israel received the good word that God had given them Canaan for a homeland. That information would have meant nothing at all to them if they had remained in Egypt as slaves. But the Bible says, "By faith...they forsook Egypt...by faith they passed over the Red Sea" (Hebrews 11:27-31). The Israelites did not march to the border of Canaan, fire one volley of arrows, and expect all the enemy armies to drop dead. The land was theirs, but they had to possess it "one dead soldier at a time."

What does that have to do with my getting victory over the grip of sin? Everything! Christ settled the issue of slavery to sin by declaring me emancipated from its dominion, but I have to believe it to the point that I do something about it. It is not enough to say, "Yes, I believe Christ forgives sin. I believe He is Lord. I know He can break the power of sin in my life." You are mentally consenting to what you heard. But faith is stepping out on that promise of freedom and acting upon it.

Face the facts. All your other methods to find peace and freedom have failed. You cried a river of tears; you made a thousand promises that you broke; you tried self-control, self-denial, and various self-help programs. After all you have tried; you still ended up with unfulfilled longings you could not understand or overcome. You found yourself unable to stop sinning. You were, at times, driven into sin through sheer boredom and mental depression.

The problem is that you have not yet gotten to the root of your problem. You may have heard that Christ has emancipated you by dying on a cross, but you will never enjoy that freedom until you give God what He asks of you--and that is A TRUSTING MIND. He wants you to believe what He has told you is true.

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For without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he exists, and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him..." (Hebrews 11:6). Faith is simply taking God at His Word and acting upon it. The true believer is the person who can say, "God said, therefore I believe it. I'll stake my life, my future, my eternity on it. If God has decreed that I am a free person--if He tells me sin no longer has power over me--if He says my faith in Him makes it all possible--THEN I ACCEPT--I GIVE UP MY USELESS STRUGGLE--AND I YIELD ALL TO HIM. I DO BELIEVE!"

The most important move you ever make, as a believer, is the move you make right after you fall. Satan whispers, "You are rotten to the core, sensuous, childish, and immature. You will never be holy; you will never be anything in God. So quit! Give up. It's useless to try. Go back! God is too high and holy; it's too complicated and difficult; you'll never figure it out. It's all over!"

Lies--all lies! So you thought you had freedom and lost it? So you think people will call you a phony? So you sinned with your eyes wide open--knowing better--with the Holy Spirit screaming in your ears? So you never thought you could do such a vile thing again? So what? Your fall is not fatal. Once again, confess and accept God's fact that you are totally forgiven, holy and that your sinful nature is dead because of what Christ has already done for you. You are still His child. You are not a slave to sin. His loving kindness is greater than all your sins. Look up, rejoice, and take heart!

Any sense of broken fellowship with God is in your own mind, not God's. His loving kindness is everlasting. Nothing will change that, not even neglecting to read your Bible. That old nature you think squelches your holy desire? That isn't your old nature! The old nature is dead. It's only your flesh and the power of indwelling sin "messing with your mind." Affirm the truth! Christ is your life, no matter what you do or don't do."

Stop your everlasting introspection. You won't find victory, probing around the garbage dump of your mind. That would be like a losing general, crossing the enemy lines to consult with his foe, asking, "Can you please tell me what I'm doing wrong? I want to defeat you, but I can't seem to make headway. What am I doing wrong?"

When Paul talks about sin in regards to Christians, he says that sin dwells in our "members" (bodies). (Romans 7:17-20). Sin is not the Christians nature; rather sin dwells in our temporary, corruptible bodies. Our bodies are not who we are. Our bodies are not our identity. Our bodies do not define who we are. Our bodies will eventually be put in the ground or burned into ashes, but "we" will live on. "We" will live on, because "we" are spiritual! We are spiritual beings with a righteous nature who happen to live temporarily in sinful bodies.

When Paul wrote to churches that had very obvious problems with sin, he never referred to them as "sinners saved by grace." He never told them "they were not perfect, just forgiven," either. No, Paul referred to them as saints. Saints are holy people who are set apart, righteous, justified, cleansed, and purified. Paul addressed them as who they really were - saints. When Paul talks to them about their sin, he tells them that by the grace of God and by the Spirit they should put away their sinful deeds. Now the only reason that they could do this was fact that they are righteous, since they are saints, since they've been forgiven, since they are holy, since they've been washed and cleansed and purified, and since the very life of Jesus lives in union with them.

The Bible does not say Christians are sinners. It does not say that they have a sinful nature. In fact the good news is that our old sinful nature was crucified with Christ. God made them holy and righteous. The Holy Spirit reveals this fact to us and then appeals to our righteous nature as the means by which to overcome and put away the deeds of the flesh. Even when Paul referred to himself as the "chief of sinners," remember that he's not talking about his current condition. He's referring to his past. If anyone had the right to crown themselves the chief of sinners, it was his past life that would reign supreme! But now, having become a partaker of the divine nature, Paul and those he wrote to, and you and I and anyone else who has been born again simply through faith, can never call themselves "sinner" again!

The Bible gives us good news. Jesus Christ will deliver us from these bodies of death! Our corruptible bodies will be exchanged for incorruptible bodies and our mortality will be exchanged for immortality. In the meantime, we trust in the righteousness of God that is ours as a gift. Trust the reality that you are one with Him, even if you sometimes don't act like it. Trust in who you are in Christ, and end the focus on sin that dwells in you, but is not you. Trust that you have one nature - the divine nature!

The way to overcome, and to live in victory over the sin that dwells in our bodies is not to think of ourselves as "sinners saved by grace." We are not "sinners." We are righteous saints who sometimes submit to sin that dwells in our members. Some say we're sinners saved by grace. Some say we're saints saved by grace. So what? We all sin in the

end, right?

Knowing who you are - your true nature, your true identity as a saint in Christ - makes all the difference in how you go about living your daily life in Christ. If you're just a "sinner" who's begging God daily for grace, then I believe you've missed the whole point of the life that God gave us. God didn't come and dwell in us so that we could say we're merely sinners saved by grace. He deposited His VERY LIFE into us! His Life has become our life. His life is divine. We have His Divine Nature because we have Him! If we see ourselves in this light - the light of the truth of who we really are - then we will begin naturally growing in ways that "sinners" can never grow. What shows on the outside will begin to match the true reality of what has already taken place on the inside. Peter called this "growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

In the same way, a Christian who is sinning is simply not behaving naturally. Your actual, factual nature - given to you as a gift from God - is righteous. You are a saint. Your nature is not righteous and sinner. You are a righteous person who sometimes sins, but sin is not your nature! Well, what about when I walk after the flesh? Again, the flesh is not your nature! In fact, quickly, let's talk about the difference between the "flesh" and the "sinful nature," and then discuss how neither one describes the reality of who we are in Christ.

Sinful nature: This is the actual, factual nature that we inherited from Adam. When we were born, we had this nature. But when we were born again, this nature died and we took on the new nature of righteousness - a gift from God. Paul said, "I have been crucified with Christ" and "I died." Those are powerful statements! So, what died? What was crucified with Christ? Our bodies obviously didn't die. Our souls didn't die - we can still think and feel and we still have a "will." So what died was our spirit that had been born in Adam - our sinful nature. When we were born again, we still had these old bodies and souls, but our sinful nature was killed - dead, gone, crucified - forever - and we were raised to life with the righteous nature of Christ.

Flesh: The flesh can be described as our own efforts to live this life apart from God. When we had the sinful nature, it was quite easy for us to simply walk according to the flesh. That is, to walk according to our own way of doing things apart from God. When our sin nature died, and when we were born again as new creations with righteous natures, it became natural for us to walk after the Spirit. But yet anytime our souls (mind, will, emotions) are not secure in the reality of who our spirits have truly become in Christ, we still find ourselves trying to live our lives by our own methods, even by our own religious methods. But all it is is walking after the flesh.

To make it clear, the flesh and the sinful nature are not synonymous. The NIV unfortunately translates the Greek word "sarx" as "sinful nature" several times, when the word "sarx" actually means "flesh." This can really lead to confusion, because the flesh is NOT the sinful nature! The sinful nature has died. We could not be partakers in the divine nature if we were still partakers of the sinful nature!

The Christian has just one true nature, but that nature needs continual renewing (Colossians 3:10). This renewing, of course, is a lifetime process for the Christian. Even though the battle for sin is constant, we are no longer under the control of sin (Romans 6:6). The believer is truly a "new creation" in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17), and it is Christ who will ultimately "rescue" from this body of death. Thanks be to God - through Jesus Christ our Lord! (Romans 7:24-25).

When Christ was crucified, the old man was crucified with Him, resulting in the Christian's no longer being a slave to sin (Romans 6:6). We "have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness" (Romans 6:18). At the moment of conversion, the Christian receives a new nature. It is instantaneous.

When a person receives Christ, he is given the very nature of Jesus. A Christian does not gradually become righteous -- he has been given the gift of righteousness in the person of Christ! 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, "that God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him". You may behave more righteously than you do right now, but you will never be made more righteous than you are today. Every Christian has the nature of Christ. How can we get holier than that?

When our focus is only on behavior, we are living a legalistic, performance based kind of "Christian" life. God's prescription is that our focus should be on Jesus. Abiding in Him will allow us to live in victory. Our lifestyle is not built on values, Christian or otherwise. Our life is Christ! As we abide in Him, His righteousness is expressed through our lifestyle. Apart from him, even our "good" deeds are nothing more than empty religion. Jesus said, "Apart from me you can do nothing". We can preach, pray, teach, witness, give, and do a hundred other things, but they all add up to zero in God's eyes if we aren't abiding in Christ. Don't get caught up in living by values. Live by His life. An expression of Christ is real Christian

ity. Abide in Him!

At the cross of Jesus Christ, the trunk (source) of sin in our lives was completely severed. The flesh patterns of our past may still cling to us like vines, but there is no source of life to sustain them anymore. The cross of Jesus Christ destroyed the power of sin in your life by dealing a death blow to your old nature! Do you want to walk in freedom over the flesh patterns of your past? Appropriate by faith that the cross was sufficient. Allow the life-giving power of Christ's life to surge through you like nutrients from the ground passing through the roots into the tree to produce fruit.

You may recognize old fleshly vines clinging to you that grew over a period of years, but as you trust Christ to express Himself as your very life, you will see those vines wither and lose their grip on you. Keep your eyes on Jesus. By His grace, He will prune away the life-draining patterns that rob you of His life flowing without restriction in and through you. He will free you daily from sin's power and will produce the fruit of the Spirit in your life.

A person can certainly act or behave like something he or she isn't, but that doesn't change his or her true nature. If I got on all fours and started barking like a dog, chewing bones and chasing the mailman, it's not that I'm behaving out of a "canine nature". I'm simply behaving in a way that doesn't represent my actual nature. I don't have two natures. I'm not a human and a dog. I'm a human who's acting like a dog. But "who I am" is not my body anyway. I am a spiritual being who has become one spirit with God (1 Cor. 6:17). The more I dwell on the reality of this, rather than dwelling on sin that dwells in my body or who I was in Adam, the more "who I am" will work its way out to show on the outside! So, I praise God that I am in Him and He is in me, and that I'm no longer related to "the first man Adam," who "became a living being," but I'm now related to "the last Adam," who "became a life-giving spirit!" (1 Cor. 15:45)

When we were born we were identified as "sinners." Now, after coming to Christ by faith, we have a new identity as saints! We are not "sinners saved by grace." It is grace alone which has saved us, but now in addition to having been forgiven of our sins, we have been made holy, blameless and righteous - saints! That is actually, factually what God has made us to be! He doesn't just "see" us as holy and righteous. He has made us holy and righteous.

If you believe you still have a sinful nature you will act like you do; believe that you are a holy, purified saint who admittedly sins at times, but who hates that life-style, and you'll be highly motivated to act like such a saint." Our new life in Christ is lived by trusting and resting in what God has already done, and in His very life which is in union with ours forever!

Rom. 6:3-7, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.

Eph. 4:17-23, "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Col. 3:9-10, "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:"

Peter 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: 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."

1 Cor. 6:9-11, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

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Eph. 2:12-16, "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby."

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/12/28 8:27

"Why do we still find ourselves committing the same sins if we have indeed been made righteous by the gift of God's grace?"

"However we haven't yet been delivered from the presence of our corrupted body's sin. Our spirits have been redeemed and our soul is being renewed. One day we will be delivered from the very presence of sin, but until we receive glorified bodies, we each possess the power of sin in our bodies."

I understand all you are saying. These quoted from you post are what I view as the "Sinful Nature". And as long as I am still in the fleshly body, my own body will betray me but truly its a heart issue here. I agree with all you have placed but is it possible your definition of Sinful Nature is different from mine? I know I am dead, and Christ is alive but it doesn't take away my flesh that wars against my Spirit. I sin because I choose it and as long as it's my choice and I choose sin I am the lowest in the Kingdom and the Chief of Sinners saved by Grace through Faith.

Re: We are just as bad as dogs? - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2010/12/28 8:55

Matthew,

Your title reminded me of a quote by Vance Havner, a now-deceased Baptist evangelist who was known for his 'country flavored' observations.

The quote: "I used to say the country is going to the dogs, but I quit out of respect to the dogs!"

Hard to forget this, isn't it? :-)

ginnyrose

Re: - posted by knitefall, on: 2010/12/28 9:20

TUC, that was a very long post I probably won't read. Please condense your statement on why and how we sin then, down to one sentence.

To TUC, on: 2010/12/28 10:18

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But who so looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

(Jas. 1.19-26)

Tuc:

Dear Brother, you have written half-truth on this thread.

Could it be that maybe you might be only seeing half of the picture because certain (other) Bible verses are not being I

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ooked into closely?

As well, not just you, but several others here misunderstand the meaning, from a Biblical perspective, of the word death = to be cut off (from)--which is hardly non-existence.

To say that Jesus' followers have only one nature is to say we believer's are disembodied.

Sin comes from the nature to sin and not God's nature growing from within us to manifest fruit outwardly.

These might interest you:

<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/singlefile.php?lid=11895>

<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/singlefile.php?lid=11896>

Shalom to each,
as you continue
to grow in the grace
only in Jesus Christ,

gregg

Re: To TUC, on: 2010/12/28 11:09

Coming back to re-read, it was seen that the above post did not tell all.

sooo. . .

If indeed we do attain, not until the resurrection of those who have walked in the righteousness given through Jesus Christ can our flesh with it's will and ways be translated to become like Him.

By the way, there is strong agreement with of what you say that is right--most of which accords with the Bible.

God Bless,

gregg

Re: - posted by knitefall, on: 2010/12/28 11:30

yes, the no condemnation Gospel!

Unless you are speaking to a person who has not yet accepted Jesus. Then they need a revelation of the depth of their depravity. Like many early great ministers have pointed out.

Why we sin, on: 2010/12/28 11:41

So why do we sin if our sinful nature is dead and if we now have a righteous nature? Why do we still find ourselves committing the same sins if we have indeed been made righteous by the gift of God's grace? It certainly isn't because we still have an unrighteous nature. In Jesus Christ, we have received a new nature - His very nature! The person we were "in Adam" was crucified with Jesus. However we haven't yet been delivered from the presence of our corrupted body's sin. Our spirits have been redeemed and our soul is being renewed. One day we will be delivered from the very presence of sin, but until we receive glorified bodies, we each possess the power of sin in our bodies. As we trust Christ at each moment, His Life empowers us to walk in victory. However, when we fail to depend on Him, we yield ourselves to the power of sin.

I am no longer a sinner! I am 100% righteous, on: 2010/12/28 11:49

In fact I am as righteous as Christ is.

2 Cor. 5:21, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Re: , on: 2010/12/28 12:04

Paul, to believers wrote:

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

(II Cor. 5.1-11)

How can one be judged for deeds done IN THE BODY if this is no longer part of their nature?

. . .and if our bodies (and minds) have nothing to do with our New nature, how could Paul write Rom. 12.1-2?

THE NON-EXCLUSION CLAUSE:

Jesus said,

"For every one shall be salted with fire. . ."

(Mk. 9.49a)

Why God's people, too?

It is an issue of faith(fulness) in Him alone or not.

Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire.

(Heb. 12.28-29)

Consider now this prophecy through Isaiah:

Now will I rise, saith the LORD; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself.

Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble: your breath, as fire, shall devour you. And the people shall be as the burnings of lime: as thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire.

Hear, ye that are far off, what I have done; and, ye that are near, acknowledge my might. The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites.

Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure. Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.

(Is. 33.10-17)

Amen.

Re: I am no longer a sinner! I am 100% righteous, on: 2010/12/28 12:10

by tuc on 2010/12/28 7:49:15

In fact I am as righteous as Christ is.

2 Cor. 5:21, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

"Might be made" is not "are already made."

Re: I am A NEW CREATION!!!, on: 2010/12/28 13:32

If I bark like a dog does it make me a dog? No it just means that I am behaving contrary to who I really am. Even if I bark one million times, I will never become a dog.

Yes I may behave contrary to who I really am - 100% righteous and completely dead to sin but that can not change these facts.

If I behave contrary to who I really am, it does not mean I have a sinful nature.

I am A NEW CREATION!!!

Re: - posted by knitefall, on: 2010/12/28 15:45

yes, yes. absolutely!

But now do not forget that there are still those who live in their earth suit still!

They live the Faith Life IN Jesus and also live on the earth in their corrupt bodies and fouled soul! What do we do with them? should we kill them because they cannot perform perfectly like their new nature says!?

And if they have a new nature, what was their old? and where did it go?

(keep in mind, I know that Rom 5, 6, 7 and 8 hold these answers)

paulwhiteministries deals with this a lot.

You got your sinful nature when you were born in Adam, on: 2010/12/28 16:02

You got your sinful nature when you were born in Adam.

You Got Christ's very LIFE and DIVINE NATURE when you were born again.

This is what is called the exchanged life because God takes your life and freely gives you Christ's Life instead of yours. Your old sinful self was crucified with Christ and you no longer live. You have died, and no longer have a life. You have received His all-sufficient Life in exchange for your old corrupt self. Now the Christian life isn't yours to live. God does not depend on you to live His Life for Him. He knows that it is impossible for you to live His life, so He gave you His life when you were born again. You do not live for Him - He lives for you. Now you can fully depend on God's Life rather than depending on what you do or do not do. You no longer need to make promises that you can never keep or try to dedicate and rededicate your life to Him. You now have Christ living His Life through you. You no longer have to try to make the Christian life work through your own efforts and resources. It is only made possible by your union with Christ in His death, burial

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and resurrection.

Re: We are just as bad as dogs? - posted by UntoBabes (), on: 2010/12/28 16:14

mguldner,

Thank you for the original post,

One of the things I have found helpful in the fight against sin is when it is first conceived in the mind, to drop everything if possible and run to God in prayer. At first, with a particular sin this will be frequent but I have found through experience that when we resist the Devil, he does flee....well, only to return with another form of sin. But God truly honors that and will eventually give the victory. Once the relationship with the Father is established through the frequent visits to the throne of grace, it is no longer a focus on sin and our fight with it, but rather a love relationship with the Father and the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit that feels so sweet to lose. It replaces the sweetness of sin.

Re: , on: 2010/12/28 16:42

I agree about the dog bit. I know exactly what your talking about brother Matthew.

You know it's easy to quote the scripture about what we are in Christ. I wonder if our tune would change if we are in dire straits ready to be hanged or tortured.

Paul was telling us statements of facts to which Christ had done for us, the actual words were never meant for us to go around quoting them as some spell or a conjuring. We don't need to say, "I am dead to sin" twenty times a day, it's statement of fact. Paul is telling us, "Recognize" that your dead. We can't change the conditions of the testament, what is written therein is written. We need to come to an understanding that we are dead indeed unto sin and alive unto God. Without it, we will wander from pillar to post and yes every time we sin we will feel like a dead dog. Until we understand that Christ took away sin once for all on the cross and by His death and resurrection He has created a new creation to all them that come to trust in His name.

Re: , on: 2010/12/28 16:46

...there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.
(Eccl. 7.20)

If we think, walk and talk like Jesus Christ does that make us Him? No, it just means that we are behaving contrary to who we really are. Even if we deny ourselves, take up our crosses, and follow Jesus example for every day the rest of our lives, we will never become Jesus Christ.

Yes, we may behave contrary to who we really are - 100 righteous and completely dead to sin but that can not change these facts.

If we behave contrary to who we really are, it does not mean that the human nature to sin is no longer a part of us.

More than likely, it's an attempt to establish a self-righteousness through our own efforts.

We are new creations abiding in Jesus Christ.

God accounts us 'as though we were righteous' through trusting confidence, constantly abiding in Jesus' sacrificial work completed on the execution stake.

This is the meaning of justification.

Now, being 'accounted as though we already were righteous' and 'growth into the righteousness of God' through constantly abiding in Jesus Christ are two completely different things.

Growth into the righteousness of God through constantly abiding in Jesus Christ is known as sanctification.

God who cannot lie, sees and calls things as though they already were.

Man cannot righteously do this except in agreement with what God reveals to us on a personal basis.

If we were actually 100% righteous already, even death would not lay our bodies down.

As things stand, though the imputation of righteousness (in Jesus Christ alone) can become an established fact for us, though one can become transformed from glory to glory through the process of sanctification, we still await the complete metamorphosis translating us into sons of God.

Jesus made it very clear that all sin proceeds from:
the seat of our affections,
the core of what makes us who we are in the earth,
namely our heart.

Committing just one sin proves that the nature of/to sin is still a very big part of who we really are.

O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.

Thus saith the LORD,
"Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited.

Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

Thus saith the LORD,
"Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.
(Jer. 10.23 to 17.5-10 to 9.23-24)

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Re: , on: 2010/12/28 17:02

Hey TUC,

Come on over for some chocolate fudge ice cream, chocolate cake and refreshing beverages. . .JAVA TOO.

Really, right now there's plenty here for everybody reading.

Any takers?

All y'all are welcome to come visit.

g

Re: - posted by knitefall, on: 2010/12/28 17:51

I'll invite jimp and we'll all have a ball!

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/12/29 12:19

"Come on over for some chocolate fudge ice cream, chocolate cake and refreshing beverages. . .JAVA TOO."

Not sure where you live but I am guessing that would be quite a trip for chocolate cake but Im sure it will be well worth it.
:)