

General Topics :: We do not have two selves

We do not have two selves - posted by beloved-vern, on: 2022/7/9 9:53

"For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin-because anyone who has died has been set free from sin." Romans 6:6-7

For a moment, just imagine it. The Father witnessed Jesus dying on the Cross, and He speaks:

"Sin has been punished in full! I can finally join each and every person on earth in their spirit! I can now remove their sinful hearts and replace it with my heart! All they must do is believe my Son has forgiven them, and we can become one! But, I'm still going to make sure part of them is sinful. They need to have a sinful self to fight each day. After all, I don't want them to go wild with this grace! There must be a balance! Too much confidence in what Jesus has just done would be a bad thing. I'll join them, but only the good part. The perfectly-cleansed-forever section of their being? Yes. But the sinful side? Nope. They're on their own. That side-I'll call it their bad self-can cause me to go back on this promise I just made to my Son. They need to deny this part of their nature! Their bad self will have to battle it out with their good self until they die!"

-What a cruel, cruel god. What a lying god. Of course, this isn't the real God, but a description of a double-talking, two-timing deity, religion has made up. Certain churches need a way to explain why we still sin-even though we're forgiven-and what to do about it. "Deny your sinful self!"

The facts are this:

Christians still sin, a lot, and all sins are deliberate.
Christians don't have a sinful self, we only have a sinless self.

The problem is, when we don't understand the difference in our spirit, soul, and body-and what the power of sin is-we can't rightfully divide God's truths. In desperation, we begin making stuff up to suit our flavor of churchianity, having a full repertoire of twisted excuses. Non-gospel, error-filled jargon in which we think that if we're super-smooth or super-aggressive, will be believable.

The idea that we Christians are in a civil war with ourselves until we die-feeding the good dog within, and starving the bad dog-is hocus pocus. We're not fighting a war, and we don't have a bad dog. If we did, then Christ would not be able to make His home in us and the Cross wasn't so great.

Jesus said a house divided will fall (see Mark 3:25). When the religious people were making the claim that He was driving out demons by way of demonic power, Christ made clear that if He was full of demons, He'd leave the demons in people and not drive them out. "How can Satan drive out Satan?" He explained (see Mark 3:23).

Same with us today. How can Christ drive out Christ? Believer, you house Christ! In your body, Jesus lives there! In your spirit, He resides! (See 1 John 4:13, 1 Corinthians 6:17,19).

"I get that, Matt. But He still wants me to crucify my flesh! My flesh is extremely sinful!"

Friend, your flesh isn't sinful, it's holy. It was God's idea! And if you crucified it-which would be impossible after the first nail-you'd be pushing up daisies. Your body is but a tool for your spirit to use. It's an apparatus. Yes, your spirit was crucified, but not your body, not your flesh. Your spirit, soul, and body are blameless! (See 1 Thessalonians 5:23).

However, there are certain passages in the Bible where it seems as if our body is running amuck. The word flesh is used, and appears to be evil. But flesh doesn't always mean body. Sometimes it means the power of sin through the body-as a conduit. There's nothing wrong with the tube-our body-it's what's passing through it-sin. Our flesh by itself is just fine.

The power of sin is but an invisible smog covering every inch of planet earth. It can do nothing on its own and needs a host

ost. Our flesh is that host. Sin can even influence our physical brains-therefore giving us sinful thoughts-then it accuses us that those thoughts describe us. But they do not. This is why you can be in a room by yourself, perfectly still, not watching or listening to anything, and a sinful idea hit you. That was sin. That was not you, Christian, but the force, the power of sin.

Although demons can pester us-but not touch us (see 1 John 5:18)-dark forces aren't always the culprits chattering away, telling us bad stuff. Instead, the force of sin on our brain is to blame.

Sinful thoughts can even be religious thoughts. Jesus told a parable about a well-behaved religious man acting "in the flesh" and a humble man acting according to humility-which is what God is looking for:

To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'"

But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'"

I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." (Luke 18:9-14)

The Pharisee was walking according to the flesh-exalting himself by way of Mosaic Law observance. Even though he appeared to be holy by religious standards, he was acting out sin through his physical members: hands, feet, brain, and mouth. The tax collector, however, knew he was living a messed up life and needed God's help. Keep in mind, this was pre-Cross and Old Covenant, this man was not saved because Christians are not sinners, but saints. Afterwards, through this profession by way of faith in Christ, he would have become a saint! (See Ephesians 4:12, Romans 1:7, 1 Corinthians 1:2, Colossians 1:2).

But truthfully, the tax collector could have easily acted like the Pharisee-confident in his sinful actions and attitudes. That would be walking according to the flesh as well. There's religious flesh and non-religious flesh, both are sin through the body. Even thoughts created through our brain such as jealousy-inward flesh-is sin infiltrating our earth-pod.

Therefore, the flesh is not always our body by itself. Our body, by itself, is a suit for our spirit to walk around on this planet. It is good. The flesh is the power of sin coming to life through the body. Sin-not the verbs of sinning but the force like gravity-entered this realm when Adam and Eve first chose to disobey God. So the flesh mentioned quite often in the Bible, more often than not, is referring to sin through our body (see Romans 5:12, Genesis 4:7, James 1:15, Galatians 5:16-23).

You'd think the power of sin would be snuffed out through more behavior-focused, "Repent!" sermons, but just opposite! Sin is enhanced by Mosaic Law pressure, the Ten Commandments, and modern-day church rules! When the thoughts come barreling at sin, it gets stirred up and agitated! It explodes with full force! (See Romans 5:20, 7:5-17).

But-that is sin and not us. We are separate.

Now that we've established what sin is, let's break down our human, three-part makeup. We are a spirit, we have a soul, and we live in a body. Understanding this changed everything for me!

Spirit. The everlasting part of you. The real you. Your identity. Your spirit is either 100% sinful or 100% holy. There is no middle ground based on what we do or don't do. This is your authentic self. For Christians, this is the self Paul describes in Romans 6-the self which was crucified with Christ-killed off. DEAD. That old self was naturally full of the power of sin. That spirit had to die so that Christ could join our new, sinless spirit. God isn't trying to get unbelievers to "clean up their lives" as some might think. No, He's trying to kill them. Christ killed off our sinful spirit, by grace through faith in the Cross, He gives us a new self. A perfect self. A holy, blameless, sanctified in full self! A spirit who is currently enjoying heaven with Jesus! (See Romans 6:6-7, Hebrews 10:10,14, Colossians 1:22, 3:3, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 2:6).

Soul. The customizable part of you. Some people call it the conscience. It can be trained by the power of sin, Satan, de

mons, this world-or by the Holy Spirit. Your soul is your mind, free will, and emotions. It is your thinker, chooser, and feeler. Paul said that it too is blameless. It's the description of your actions and attitudes at any given time. Your soul matures. It's educated by what and who you're allowing it to be influenced by. For this reason, we must protect it. Your eyes, ears, hands and feet, all lead to your soul-not your spirit-which is sealed up inside of God. Your spirit can't be touched, neither can your soul or body, but your soul can be shaped. Guarding what we regularly watch and listen to from ungraceful garbage and things of this world matters. Legalistic teaching and attending sin-rampant places can't change our identity, but such can impact our soul. As a Christian, our soul is meant to be led by our spirit who's combined with the Spirit! (See 1 Thessalonians 5:23, Romans 12:2, Philippians 1:6, 4:8, 1 Peter 5:7, 2 Peter 1:5-9, Ephesians 1:13, 1 John 5:18).

Body. The shell your spirit uses to walk this planet as a part of physical matter. A tool. An instrument. A vehicle. It can be used by our holy spirit for good things, or it can be influenced by the power of sin, resulting in walking according to the flesh (not to be confused with our body) therefore producing bad fruit. The Holy Spirit is in a constant battle with the flesh (again, not our body), it is attempting to prevent you from doing the good things which come naturally from your spirit. The flesh-sinful actions and attitudes through the body, even the brain-is what the Spirit is fighting. The Spirit is not fighting us or a bad version of our self. We are not "the flesh"-we are separate. Remember that when you read Scripture. We are a blameless spirit who was reborn in Christ's Spirit, who has a soul, which is expressed through our body. When the Spirit is at war with the flesh (sin through our body and brain) it's our job to take a step back, stop fighting, and start trusting Him to do His work. When we relax we don't fight sin and the Spirit overpowers the flesh, not us. They are at battle with one another, not us. As we walk according to our true selves-our spirit combined with the Spirit-our body produces good spiritual fruit! (See John 1:12, 3:6-7, 15:5, Galatians 5:16-24, 1 Corinthians 6:17, Ephesians 2:10).

As you can see, we don't have two selves. We have one self, a good self! ALL OF US IS GOOD! We don't have two natures. We have one nature-God's nature! (See 2 Peter 1:4).

"But Matt, my Bible says I have a sinful nature."

That was a mistake by the publisher. In order to be more readable, the words sinful nature were substituted for flesh in the 1984 version of the NIV Bible. Since then, they've changed it back to flesh. Why? Because the original Greek word was *sarx* which means flesh. It doesn't mean sinful and it doesn't mean nature. It means flesh. So when we read our Bibles, we need to look at each instance of flesh and determine whether or not the context is our body, or sin through the body.

The confusion of sinful nature replacing flesh has messed up a lot of people's theology-mine included, for quite some time. But think about it, if Christians are naturally sinful, then what better a reason to continue sinning? I mean, it's just a natural thing to do, right? This is why Satan wants you to believe you do have a sinful nature.

When we understand that we aren't naturally sinful-that we are sinless spirits with a physical body which can be influenced by a separate force called sin-we can start to walk according to who we know we are! We are God's children! We are good people with good hearts! Sin is not us-it's a parasite-something in us but not us. It's something we can act out but never become, because we've been supernaturally reborn sinless (see 1 John 3:9).

The power of sin in the original Greek is *hamartia*. That is your enemy, and the Spirit fights it, not you. Your body is not your enemy and your self is not your enemy. Demonic forces use this power to make you think something's wrong with you. But in fact, they know everything is right with you! Christian, you are just as righteous as Jesus Christ! (See 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 John 4:17).

So today, my friends, know this: Believer, you have one self, a self whom God is well pleased! You don't need to deny yourself, but be yourself! As you do, sin stands no chance! When Jesus said you must deny yourself in Matthew 16, He was rebuking Peter who just told Him to not go to the Cross. As a matter of fact, Jesus called him Satan. Ouch. But Jesus was aware of who was behind such a thought-the devil, not Peter. God doesn't want Christians to deny who we are, why would He want such a thing? After all, Jesus gave us His life so we could have life-His life! So be yourself today!

A prayer for you: Father, thank you for revealing to me that I have a self just like you. Through the New Covenant, I've inherited your very Spirit combined with my spirit-giving me a heavenly self. Keep teaching me more about who you've made me to be, and empower me to walk it out. Right now, I lift up all who are reading this, directly to you. So many of them are confused. They've been taught they need to feed their good self and starve their bad self-but that's

™s wrong according to your Word. They simply need to live OUT their good self, and realize they donâ€™t HAVE a bad self. The power of sin can influence their flesh and mind-but THEY arenâ€™t sinful at all. Take us deeper into the knowledge of this truth, and the grace in which weâ€™ve tapped into it. In Christâ€™s name I pray, amen.

I did not write this and am uncertain who did.

Re: We do not have two selves - posted by TrueWitness, on: 2022/7/9 16:39

You wrote:

"I did not write this and am uncertain who did."

OK, I found out who did. It's by Matt McMillen and can be found here:

<https://mattmcmillenministries.com/you-dont-have-two-selves/>

I like a lot of what he says. I thought he was going to get into sinless perfection/entire sanctification/second blessing territory but thankfully he didn't.

Yes we have an new spiritual nature given us at the new birth in Christ. But we can also choose to live out of the old identity which appeals to the flesh. I generally avoid debates about how many "natures" we have. We have one mind and one will and we can allow either the flesh or the spirit to sit on that throne and direct our life. It is either me on the throne and Jesus remaining on the cross or me on the cross and Jesus on the throne.

-Daniel