

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: Can a lost sinner stop sinning?****Can a lost sinner stop sinning? - posted by RevKerrigan (), on: 2006/8/22 21:33**

I would like to hear everyone's perspective on this. Is a lost sinner in such bondage to sin, that he can't stop sinning unless he becomes Born Again? Or can he stop sinning and does he just need to put his faith in Christ and become Born Again in order to be saved (go to Heaven)? I know this has the possibility of turning into a Calvinistic/Arminian debate... but I hope it doesn't. One stipulation if you are going to participate: please back up EVERYTHING you say with Scripture. NO opinions please...thanks and I look forward to seeing what everyone has to say!

Re: Can a lost sinner stop sinning? - posted by letsgetbusy (), on: 2006/8/22 23:02

Sorry for the long post, but I wanted to post the Scriptures as you asked:

You must repent to be saved:

Ezek 18:30b Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.

Luke 5:32 I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Luke 13:3b and 5b except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

Luke 15:7 and 10 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance...Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

Acts 3:19a Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out

Acts 17:30b God...now commandeth all men every where to repent

Acts 20:20-21 I...have taught you publicly, and from house to house, Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 26:19-20 I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God

Repentance must be granted by God, though:

John 6:65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

Acts 11:18b Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

2 Tim 2:25b if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth

I think Paris Reidhead says it best to not try to figure out the "why" that is stated in Scripture, but rather just understand the "that" stated in Scripture.

We should preach, we should pray, God bringing the increase. Anyone who claims to understand grace worked in the heart by the Holy Ghost to 100% accuracy is either much more intimate with God than everyone on this site, or they are just guessing.

God chooses who are His:

John 15:16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you

...then He draws them:

John 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him

...through the preaching of repentance and the cross:

Luke 24:47 repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations

But clearly the Holy Ghost can be resisted:

Acts 7:51b ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.

This does not discount the foreknowledge and predestination of God's elect:

Eph 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will

Nor does it discount the freedom we are given to reject God:

Rom 1:24 and 26 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

So my take on all this is that God sovereignly chooses a man (John 15:16), but the man is free to resist the Holy Ghost (Acts 7:51). But God has knowledge of everything that will come to pass ahead of time. If the decision was 100% God's and nothing of ours, why would there be a judgment? If the decision was 100% ours, and nothing of God's, you have a God that is not in control.

God always does His part, if man chooses not to do His, and accept the free invitation into God's family, he will burn for eternity. But the Father is not anxious, neither was Christ during His ministry because:

2 Tim 2:19a Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.

Concerning who will be numbered with the saved /lost: He knows, we don't.

Spurgeon put it best (paraphrased), when he said, 'God call out your elect. And then elect some more.' As well as, 'On the gates of heaven, we will see the words "whosoever will." But then, looking back after passing through, will see "the elect of God" on the inside.'

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/8/22 23:15

How do we know what to repent of if we don't have the Mind of Christ because we believe. Our old mind is the mind of Satan. He don't care if we repent or not. When we believe and are born again then our repentance is directed by the Holy Spirit and The Mind of Christ that is now ours.

Hab 1:5 Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for will work a work in your days, ye will not believe, though it be told .

Luk 8:12 Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

Jhn 3:12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you heavenly things?

In believing by the power of the Holy Spirit we are saved and then can repent be baptized, but not before the birthing of Christ in the believer.

John 3:14-19 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten

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en Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by mamaluk, on: 2006/8/22 23:36

Can a "lost" sinner stop sinning?

You're kidding, right? :)

Re: - posted by RevKerrigan (), on: 2006/8/23 0:27

Actually, mamaluk, I'm not. I said this on another MB:

Quote:
-----Do you believe that a lost sinner can stop sinning? My understanding of what the Word says is that they are slaves to sin. The only thing that can give them the ability to live a Holy life is for them to Repent, put their Faith in Christ and become Born Again. Then the Spirit enables them to live a Holy Life...

And then a friend of mine posted this in response to what I said:

Quote:
-----Yes a sinner is capable of stopping his sin. That is why God "commands all men everywhere to repent."
God only commands the possible. He doesn't require apples from peach trees. He doesn't cut down and burn peach trees for not bearing apples.
But his stopping his sin does not justify him before God. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord" and also, without the Lord, no man shall see holiness.
Though a sinner is capable of not sinning, which is why God punishes him, he needs the cross of Jesus Christ to have a right legal standing with God, for the forgiveness of the sins he willfully choose to commit.
But yes, a sinner does not have to sin.
John Fletcher really hammers this in his "Checks to Antinomianism".
He tells a story about a traveler going to a country.
On the road he sees a carriage driving by full of gold that says, "Free Inheritance!".
He asks a man on the road about the carriage and the man says, "Oh, our Lord gives away a free inheritance every day to a random person. He is so good, that he gives it away freely without conditions, upon the person he chooses."
A few minutes later, another carriage drives by with man locked in chains. The carriage says, "Free execution". He asks the same man about this carriage and the man says, "Oh, our Lord is so just, that every day he picks somebody to execute."
The man says, "Well, do the men do anything to deserve this execution?"
The other man says, "Oh yes. They very much deserve it indeed. You see, when they were small children, the Lord has the parents break the legs of the child and not allow them to heal. And now that they are full grown, the Lord asks them to run a race, and when they fail to run the race, the Lord has them executed."

So...I wanted to see what others thought of this concept...

Re: - posted by RevKerrigan (), on: 2006/8/23 0:30

letsgetbusy...I appreciate your long and detailed response. I believe you bring a very balanced view from Scripture. You and me have very similar theology!

Re: Can a lost sinner stop sinning? - posted by madmatg (), on: 2006/8/23 0:34

As best I can tell he a sinner may be able to stop himself from having some physical manifestations of sin(pharisees) or even "blameless" according to the law(PAUL(Phi 3:1-6) though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; a sinner to righteousness, under the law blameless.")

but the sin which makes us condemned begins in the heart and as long as the heart is without God it is black with evil and though we may gain reprieve from physical sins God considers it to be only "white-washed walls"

(Rom 2:28-29) For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

So I don't believe you can stop sinning(in the sense that every act not done in faith is sin) until your heart has been radically transformed, whether we are totally depraved and God must do it or we have enough to be able to choose God is another subject and for one of those long 200 page (totally depraved vs almost totally depraved) topics ;)

anyways thats my 2c hope it made sense.

Matt

Re:, on: 2006/8/23 0:49

Great thread brother Kerrigan!

These are some very important questions!

Can a sinner stop sinning?

Does God command all men everywhere to repent when he knows that no sinner, anywhere is capable of repenting?

Does God send men to hell for failure to do the impossible?

Re: - posted by Christisking (), on: 2006/8/23 1:30

The problem with many street or so called "holiness" preachers today is that they love to tell people that they have to stop sinning but never tell them how to do it. Thus they are just condemning and accusing and since that is the devil's job they become co-workers of Satan. They love to condemn unregenerate wicked sinners for acting like unregenerate wicked sinners - which is exactly how they should and would be expected to act.

We can repent of our sins (say we are sorry and turn from our sins - change our mind towards sin) but we can never stop sinning without the resurrection power of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. We can change our mind but God needs to change (circumcise) our heart. Some have a false idea that to repent means to stop sinning through the power of our own flesh. They tell people that they must repent and stop sinning, but they never tell them how. They are basically self-righteous who condemn sinners for acting like sinners. Jesus Christ breaks the bonds of sin not our own flesh breaks the bonds of sin. We must teach people what it means to die and be born again. If we do not die then we are still slaves to our sin nature. Many people who have views like your friend deny the doctrine of original sin in order to make their theology work. Ask your friend if he believes in original sin or not. To say that one can stop sinning in the flesh or on their own really mocks and denies the power and the Good News of the Gospel. To preach this Gospel just sets ones up for failure and false conversion. These Scripture are a few of many that state things pretty clearly.

Romans 6

1What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? 3Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death

th? 4We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

5If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. 6For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— 7because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

8Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. 10The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

11In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Romans 6

20When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. 21What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! 22But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. 23For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 7

14We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. 15I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. 16And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. 17As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. 18I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. 19For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. 20Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

21So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. 22For in my inner being I delight in God's law; 23but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. 24What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? 25Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

Romans 8

Life Through the Spirit

1Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, 2because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. 3For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, 4in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.

5Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. 6The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; 7the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. 8Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

9You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. 10But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. 11And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.

12Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation— but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. 13For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, 14 because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." 16The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

Re: Can a lost sinner stop sinning?, on: 2006/8/23 7:09

I have posted this before but I think this clears things up.

Exact quote from Finney's Systematic Theology -- 1851 Edition Lecture 50

"It is true indeed that God requires of men, especially under the gospel, what they are unable to do directly in their own strength. Or more strictly speaking, he requires them to lay hold on His strength, or to avail themselves of His grace, as the condition of being what he requires them to be. With strict propriety, it cannot be said that in this, or in any case, he requires directly any more than we are able directly to do. The direct requirement in the case under consideration, is to avail ourselves of, or to lay hold upon his strength. This we have power to do. He requires us to lay hold upon his grace and strength, and thereby to rise to a higher knowledge of Himself, and to a consequent higher state of holiness than would be otherwise possible to us. The direct requirement is to believe, or to lay hold upon his strength, or to receive the Holy Spirit, or Christ, who stands at the door, and knocks, and waits for admission. The indirect requirement is to rise to a degree of knowledge of God, and to spiritual attainments that are impossible to us in our own strength. We have ability to obey the direct command directly, and the indirect command indirectly. That is, we are able by virtue of our nature, together with the proffered grace of the Holy Spirit, to comply with all the requirements of God. So that in fact there is no proper inability about it."

The grace of the gospel offers you, with every command, the strength to obey, and work in you the very thing commanded. Every command implies a corresponding promise, that is, if we are required to do anything by Christ, the very requirement is an implied promise or offer of all the aid we need to make it possible for us to perform it. Indeed, the command in itself is an implied gift of all needed help. The command itself implies the ability to obey it. Every command of God implies this in the strongest manner. It should be remembered that God is perfect in both love and wisdom: therefore He can not be so unjust as to demand something from us that is impossible for us to perform. THE GRACE OF GOD TURNS THE REQUIREMENT OF THE LAW INTO A PROMISE OF GOD.

From Christian Perfection by Asa Mahan

The sinner is not required to "make himself clean," or to "make to himself a new heart," in the exercise of his unaided powers, but by application to the blood of Christ, "which cleanses from all sin." The grace which purifies the heart is provided; the fountain, whose waters cleanse from sin, is set open. To this fountain the sinner is brought, and because he may descend into it, and there "wash his garments and make them white," he can fulfill the command, "Wash you, make you clean," "make to yourself a new heart and a new spirit," and "cleanse yourself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit." The sinner is able to make to himself a "new heart and a new spirit," because he can instantly avail himself of offered grace. He does literally "make to himself a new heart and a new spirit," ONLY when he yields himself up to the influence of that grace. The power to cleanse from sin lies in the blood and grace of Christ; and hence, when the sinner "purifies himself by obeying the truth through the spirit," the glory of his salvation belongs, not to him, but to Christ.

Re:, on: 2006/8/23 7:17

Quote:

Lazarus1719 wrote:
Great thread brother Kerrigan!

These are some very important questions!

Can a sinner stop sinning?

Does God command all men everywhere to repent when he knows that no sinner, anywhere is capable of repenting?

Does God send men to hell for failure to do the impossible?

If sinful man is not capable of repenting, why would John the baptist exhort people in his preaching to do that? Certainly HE must have thought it possible. Jesus never corrected him, either.

Keep in mind that the cross hadn't happened in that point in time. Therefore, by God's Grace, the ability to repent is granted to everyone. It is when His Grace is "quenched" that one can run from being stiffnecked to reprobate. How quenching, to whatever degree, happens man knows within him and will be judged by his decision in the matter, that cause it. The foreknowledge of God already knows who they are.

Respectfully,

Orm

Re: - posted by Christisking (), on: 2006/8/23 10:24

FreeCD,

Thanks for those quote. That is exactly what I was trying to say. And that is the BIG part that many street preachers and "holiness" preachers leave out. You can't do it on your own - it is impossible.

See there is a BIG difference between condemning sinners for acting like sinners and using the law and other Scriptures that point out sin like 1 Cor 6:9-10 and Eph 5 to show people their need for a savior from sinning and their need to be reconciled to a Holy God who hates sin so much that he sent His Son to save us from the bonds of sin, that we through the finished work of Christ on the cross and the Grace of God we may have power over sin.

Many street preachers just condemn sinners for acting like sinners and tell them to repent and stop sinning. That is like condemning a dog for being a dog and telling him to repent and stop being a dog.

RevK,

I am also interested if you asked your friend if he believes in original sin. If he does then it is pretty easy from their to watch is theory start to unravel and fall apart. Most likely he has denied original sin in order to make this "self-righteous" theology work.

Re: - posted by RevKerrigan (), on: 2006/8/23 11:49

You know, Patrick, I am not for sure what my friend believes in as far as original sin...but I would guess from the posts he has made in the past that he doesn't believe in it at all. By the way, I am in agreement with what you have said. Good posting...

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2006/8/23 13:41

Hi RevKerrigan.

I'd like to repond to something you posted for us in connection with your question. It seems to be something we struggle with, including myself.

You qouted your friend as saying

Quote:

-----God only commands the possible.

At one time I would have thought that was self-evident and reasonable. Not so now.

I would point to the covenant which Moses brought. For instance, where these conditions are put forth

Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the Lord.

I find in this statement a similar expression of what the Lord said to the man who asked Him about gaining eternal life

Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.

would suggest here that the references to the Ten Commandments would not exclude the rest of the statutes in the Law, the Ten were only the 'tenor' of the Law, as in Exodus 34:27

After the man went away and the Lord spoke other words about this, the disciples then asked

Quote:

-----who then can be saved?

to which the Lord replied

The things which are impossible with men are *possible* with God

Something else to consider is the nature of the covenant which Moses brought,

Was it not conditional? and yet I would suggest the conditions on the part of the people could not be met.

And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord.

If such obedience could be rendered, then why this Apostolic comment upon the same covenant

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

No, he does not say it was unfair; rather that it was a curse! So what then, it is fine to believe that God would require men to render obedience under a curse but only if rendering such obedience was, *possible*?

Elsewhere upon this same theme the Apostle writes

Quote:
----- But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man)...

...God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?

Some thoughts.

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/8/23 14:17

The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.

Amen Chris. I also agree with several others including Patrick and FreeCD. Perhaps what we are discussing is the merits of Pelagianism. Can we say that the will of natural man is all that is needed to live a life that satisfies God? I think the New Testament refutes Pelagianism with a consistent "before and after" transformational message. Indeed, the phrase "good news" implies that mankind was in need of some good news.

So, are we to preach the good news or simply preach repentance from sin? What's so good about this good news? Is it simply that you must repent and walk with God...or that now you can repent, through Christ, and walk with God. Regarding a sincere man's ability to repent in his own strength, (beyond the turning from self-reliance) there is this clear scripture.

Act 15:10 Now therefore why do you tempt God, that you should put a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

Paul talked about putting on the 'new man'. Why put on this new man if the old man could get the job done?

(Edit: scripture added)... you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God,...because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But you have not so learned Christ, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Along these lines we see many phrases and statements in the New Testament that seem to put faith-filled new man in a different light than natural man. Consider just 1 Corinthians 1...

" No one can say that you were baptized in my name... He (God) sent me to preach the good news. He commanded me not to use the kind of wisdom that people commonly use. That would take all the power away from the cross of Christ.... we preach about Christ and his death on the cross. That is very hard for Jews to accept. And everyone else thinks it's foolish.

But there are those God has chosen, both Jews and others. To them Christ is God's power and God's wisdom... The weakness of God is stronger than human strength. Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when God chose you. Not many of you were considered wise by human standards. Not many of you were powerful. ...So no one can brag to God.

Because of what God has done, you belong to Christ Jesus.... He makes us right with God. He makes us holy and sets us free. It is written, "The one who brags should brag about what the Lord has done."—(Jeremiah 9:24)

Blessings,

MC

Re:, on: 2006/8/23 14:21

I just wish that, as Christians, we could all stop sinning!

We're in good company tho. Paul said in several passages that he struggled daily with his flesh.

Krispy

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Re: Can a lost sinner stop sinning? - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2006/8/23 14:30

Quote:

-----Is a lost sinner in such bondage to sin, that he can't stop sinning unless he becomes Born Again?

We must understand the true nature of the problem of sinning. There seems to be a clear distinction in the Bible between 'sins' and 'sin'. Sins are the outward evidence of the inward reality of sin in the heart. Jesus makes this clear as quoted in Mark...

And when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand: There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable. And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

(Mar 7:14-23)

There is an inward problem that must be dealt with, a new nature is required. You've probably heard the story about how you can take a pig and wash it up nice and clean but as soon as it gets the chance it will wallow in the mud again because it is in its nature to do so. It needs a new nature to change this pattern.

Outward sins are pinpointed by the law and can be restrained but inside the true problem remains. As Romans 6 tells us, we are crucified with Christ so that we would no longer serve sin, that is the only way to break the bondage.

In Christ,

Ron

Re: - posted by mamaluk, on: 2006/8/23 15:04

I just want to add this,

John 15:5

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for **without me ye can do NOTHING.** . (borrowing it's precept since I quote it out of context)

Lostness and sinfulness are inseparable, in the spiritual realm, methinks. :)

mamaluk

Re:, on: 2006/8/23 17:00

For a sinner to stop all of his sin, he must come to Jesus Christ.

The greatest commandment is to love God, so the greatest of sins is not loving God. And Jesus said you are either for him or against him. So a sinner that does not come to Christ is against God and therefore in violating of the greatest commandment, and is committing the greatest of sins.

So a sinner must come to Jesus if he is to stop ALL of his sins.

Sinners are slaves of sin. But it's because they choose and present themselves to obey sin that they are slaves of sin.

Ro 6:16 "Do you not know that to whom *you present yourselves* slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves *whom you obey*, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?"

Nobody has to sin. Nobody is forced to sin. Sin is something sinners **let/b happen**:

Romans 6:12-13 "Therefore do not *let sin reign* in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not *present your members as instruments of unrighteousness* to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."

Likewise with holiness. Nobody is forced to be holy against their will. Holiness is something that must be chosen. They must, as the bible says, "obey from the heart"

But without Jesus, a sinner cannot be holy

Now,

A liar can stop lying without becoming a Christian.

A thief can stop stealing even without becoming a Christian.

An adulterer can stop committing adultery even without becoming a Christian.

And doesn't experience prove this? I have friends that have stopped doing drugs, but they haven't become Christians.

I have friends that have stopped robbing people, even though they haven't become a Christian.

But without Jesus Christ, a sinner can never be right with God.

Of course a sinner can stop his sinning. If he couldn't, God wouldn't send them to hell. But for a sinner to truly stop his sinning, he must come to Jesus Christ.

Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. And likewise, without the Lord no man shall see holiness.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2006/8/23 17:29

The definitions of sin are really missing the point here, we need to rediscover the "sinfulness of sin" it is not just the fruits of sin but the heart issue itself that is important. Sinful actions are definitely sin but they are the outflow of a wicked depraved unruly heart that is in opposition to God at its roots. This no man can stop being and therefore there will always be that inclination to allow the outflow of sin, even though people can seemingly address some external things in their lives they can never deal with the root of the issue, pride, selfishness, the desire for the sinner to be exalted as "god".

The heart is desperately wicked who can find it out? Oh only in Christ can our sinful ailment be solved by that eternal balm that Christ offered on the cross, His precious blood.

I think this thread is crying out the need to look into the doctrine of the "depravity of man" UTTER depravity. Let us read some articles by Wesley, Whitefield or any contemporaries in those times on this subject and it will straighten out some of our questions we are posing here.

I do think there have been some great responses but there seems to be a need for people to realize how sinful we actually are.

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Can a lost sinner stop sinning?

Re:, on: 2006/8/23 17:36

It's true, Jesus taught that all sinful actions come out of a sinful heart.

The heart is the root of the issue.

So a sinner must receive a new heart if he is to be holy, not only on the outside of the cup, but the inside of the cup as well!

And the only way a person gets a new heart, is when they come to Jesus.

A new heart which comes at the new birth will make a person a new creature and will cause a man to walk in newness of life!

Re: Can a lost sinner stop sinning? - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/8/23 17:39

Can a sinner stop sinning? A lost sinner cannot stop sinning. Everything a sinner does is tainted with sin (IS 64:6). You cannot do any righteousness apart from God. Therefore, if you're lost you can't stop sinning. If a thief stops robbing apart from regeneration he is sinning when he stops. He stops for sinful reasons, his motives are sinful.

Does God command all men everywhere to repent when he knows that no sinner, anywhere is capable of repenting? That's why salvation is by grace alone through faith alone by Christ alone. We cannot have saving faith apart from a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit. He commands us to repent and believe yet, he provides repentance and faith. If a sinner TRULY wants to repent it's because God's given that sinner the desire.

Does God send men to hell for failure to do the impossible? God sends men to hell because of their sin. Sin which they love and have chosen over Him. No one who has TRULY sought after God will be cast out. Your sin doesn't make you a sinner... you are a sinner therefore you sin. If the devil sinned and was cast from heaven what makes you think we'll get away? By the way, pitying the poor sinner is proof of an uninformed mind. That sinner deserves to go to hell. God doesn't owe sinners anything. You don't deserve to go to heaven. It is by God's mercy that we don't get what we deserve.

Re:, on: 2006/8/23 17:46

Quote:
-----Does God send men to hell for failure to do the impossible? God sends men to hell because of their sin. Sin which they love and have chosen over Him.

Yes, a sinner deserves hell because they have chosen sin.

But was the sinner capable of not choosing sin?

Or did they simply do what they had no choice but to do?

Can they choose to submit to God, or can they only choose to submit to sin?

Of course, I would say they did have a choice, and can submit to God, but they choose sin, and therefore deserve hell eternal.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2006/8/23 17:55

Quote:

-----But was the sinner capable of not choosing sin?

No because he is depraved and born into sin, that is clear teaching of scripture. "Or did they simply do what they had no choice but to do?" **yes** we all have gone astray and he has laid on HIM the transgressions of us all. People could choose holiness and righteousness but that would not suffice at the judgement seat that is why Jesus died and shed His blood.

His dying was not a "help" for us to add our righteousness and good choices to it, but it is EVERYTHING! without it we are lost and in darkness. In the old testament blood sacrifice and men trying to live as best as they could sufficed but after the death of Christ all are given the free gift of eternal life, the tree of life opened freely. The flaming swords of the Law being put away and free access through faith and repentance to this new and living way.

Re:, on: 2006/8/23 18:03

De 30:19 - "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life"

Re: - posted by RevKerrigan (), on: 2006/8/23 18:04

I think Greg hit the nail on the head at what I am trying to get at. When I say that a lost sinner can't stop sinning, I mean he can't stop sinning. He sins because he is a sinner and we shouldn't expect anything else from him. He is utterly depraved and has a wicked, wicked heart. I don't have to teach my one year old daughter to touch something that I have told her not to touch a million times. Even after I have disciplined her for it and threatened more discipline if she continues in it...right as she is about to walk away, she reaches her little hand back and touches it anyway. She knows what is coming and knows it is wrong, but she does it anyway. Why? Because she has a rebellious heart. She was born that way and I can't change that. My wife and I have been talking about this quite a bit lately. The purpose of me and my wife teaching our kids God's Word and His Commandments is not so they will strive to walk perfectly in them. It is so they can see that they can't walk perfectly in them. No matter how hard they try, they won't be able to do what God desires of them. It is THEN, that they will see their need for the Savior and cling to the Blood Stained Cross for Mercy. Isn't that the whole reason for God's Law (Galatians 3:24). And the Ten Commandments is not the only thing Paul is referring to in Galatians 3:24. He is referring to anything that God has said TO DO or NOT TO DO. Those are God's commandments, God's Law. When I go out and preach, I couldn't, in good conscience, tell the people about their sin, call them to repent and fail to speak to them about the source of the power that they must tap into in order to overcome sin in their life! It must be Faith in Christ and abiding in Him! Otherwise, they might try to straighten up their life (and might be able to stop stealing, lying, etc.), but will end up only straightening out on the outside. They will be outwardly reformed to a certain degree, but lacking in inward TRANSFORMATION! They will be like Pharisees. White washed tombs, but with dead man's bones inside. I wonder what it would have been like if instead of Ezekiel commanding the dead bones to come alive like God told him to, if told them to act like they were alive. My guess is they would still sit around like dead bones. BUT, if they come alive first, they will NATURALLY behave like live men, because THEY REALLY ARE! This is what is missing in MANY of the Open Air Preachers that I see today! They speak so much of sin and repentance (And I believe it does need to be spoken of), but they forget to talk about becoming Born Again, what that means, how it happens and what the results are. They fail to say something like this, "Don't try to go home and clean up your life though. Repent of your sins and come to Christ in Faith. HE will make you a new Creature! Then you will walk in newness of life because HE HAS CHANGED YOU!" Unfortunately, I fear, that because repentance and sin is preached on SOOOOO Much, without a balance of preaching on the resurrection power of Jesus raising someone to newness of life, people go away thinking there is nothing they can do to change their situation. AND they are right!! There is nothing THEY can do! They must come to Christ and allow Him to do it for them! Even after one becomes a Christian, Christ must live the Christian life for them. That is the ONLY way one can walk victoriously through this life...is by submitting to Christ and allowing Him to live the Christian life through them. I think this lack of preaching on this is one of the reasons why people get so angry with some preachers when they preach open air. It makes them feel like the preacher is belittling them. Like he is better than them because he is walking in Holiness and they are not. But if it was just explained to them that they can walk in victory over sin through the power of the Spirit, maybe they would take their mustard seed of faith, repent and believe it. Then they would see for themselves and be Born Again.

I know this is long, but as far as the definition of sin is concerned, I think many open air preachers have a very shallow definition. They stick to 1 Cor. 6:9-10, Galatians 5:19-21, etc. The definition of sin is found in these verses: 1 John 3:4, R

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omans 14:23, James 4:17, Romans 3:23. Romans 3:23 says it all though. Sin is missing the mark. It is falling short of the Glory of God. Who is the Glory of God...Jesus in the Flesh is the Glory of God. He was perfect in EVERY WAY! He is the mark we fall short of! If we haven't arrived...if we aren't exactly like Jesus in every way...then we still miss the mark ourselves! God Bless...

Re: - posted by Christisking (), on: 2006/8/23 18:09

Jesse,

I am glad to see you are changing your tune. You previously wrote:

Quote:

-----Yes a sinner is capable of stopping his sin. That is why God "commands all men everywhere to repent."

God only commands the possible. He doesn't require apples from peach trees. He doesn't cut down and burn peach trees for not bearing apples.

and

But yes, a sinner does not have to sin.

This is the type of attitude many street preachers have that I spoke of previously. This type of attitude leads to self-righteous condemnation and accusing sinners for being sinners and thus being co-workers of Satan the great accuser. These preachers condemn sinners for their dress, lifestyles, music, entertainment etc. and tell them that must repent and stop sinning. They condemn apples trees for acting like apple trees and producing apples.

Do we use the law or sins mentioned in Scripture to point out the fact that(as Greg so apply put it) we have a terrible heart condition that we can't fix - that we need a heart transplant - YES ABSOLUTELY. The sin shows us or diagnoses the problem - original sin or our heart condition. To tell sinners that rap music or provocative dress (for example)is a sin and that they need to repent and stop sinning is just condemning and useless.This type of self-righteous condemnation preaching just pushes people away from Jesus and hardens their hearts.

I am glad to see you change your tune and realize that - no a sinner cannot stop sinning on his own - sinners need a heart transplant or they will just continue to sin because they have a sinful nature.

Re:, on: 2006/8/23 18:20

A sinner can stop sinning, by coming to Jesus.

Apart from Christ, a sinner can only partially stop sinning (because being against Christ and not loving God is a sin). I know people in AA and NA who have given up drugs and alcohol. But a sinner can never receive a new heart and become a new person without Jesus.

But because sinners do not have to sin, but because they choose to sin, God sends them to hell. They choose to lie, steal, cheat, reject Christ, not be born again etc etc.

God does not burn apple trees for not producing peaches. Nor does he burn peach trees for not producing apples.

God only expects from us what is possible, and what is possible, is obedience towards God.

God will only ask us to do what He Himself gives us the ability to do, by His grace.

So the only way a sinner can be set free from all his sin, (which includes the sin of not believing and repenting) is by becoming a Christian.

Re: our works or His workmanship - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2006/8/23 18:56

Hi Compton, hope you are doing well.

Important point here, a sort of line of demarcation if you will

Quote:

-----Paul talked about putting on the 'new man'. Why put on this new man if the old man could get the job done?

To continue that line of thought in terms of the source of our new life and the question of man's ability to turn himself, I think of this verse

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

and this, from the Psalms

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Though this latter verse may not appear to apply to us, I think it does in a very real sense; in the same way that God was the maker of the Nation of Israel has He not created us anew in Christ?

But the Lord hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, even out of Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as ye are this day.

What power did they have of themselves to leave Egypt?

What power then does the thing formed have of itself? to make itself or to determine in what way it shall be formed?

In the case of a Christian, is it **all** not supernatural through and through? And if *supematural* then **not at all** natural. Their salvation was wrought outwardly, upon the visible, outward man, ours inwardly upon the hidden man of the heart.

What did Jonah cry from the belly of the fish, but that

Quote:

-----Salvation is of the Lord.

While it may be a nice sort of fantasy to imagine Jonah making a fire in the fishes belly in order to induce it to cough him up we should not imagine that any burning zeal of our own could ever compell the power of sin and death to relinquish its hold upon us.

Yours for Christ,

Christopher

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2006/8/23 19:05

"But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." -Matthew 9:13

Re: - posted by Christisking (), on: 2006/8/23 22:44

We need to make sure that we let sinners know that they can never stop sinning apart from Jesus Christ other wise we just put them under bondage to the law and we create in them the condition of those who try to be obedient to the law through the power of the flesh in Romans 7. Paul seems to put it pretty clearly -

Quote:
----- 9Once I was alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. 10I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death.
11For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. 12So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good. 13Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! But in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it produced death in me through what was good, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.
14We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. 15I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. 16And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. 17As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. 18I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. 19For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—I keep on doing. 20Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.
21So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. 22For in my inner being I delight in God's law; 23but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. 24 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? 25Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!
So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

Jesse wrote,

Quote:
-----But because sinners do not have to sin, but because they choose to sin, God sends them to hell. They choose to lie, steal, cheat, reject Christ, not be born again etc etc.

This statement is wrong and in direct to the passages from Romans above. How can you justify this statement with the Romans passages? You are almost there Jesse, but you seem to be missing the mark. Do you understand that we sin because we are sinners not we are sinners because we choose to sin? There is a big difference. Do you deny the doctrine of Original Sin like most of your friends and the others you preach with? This seems to be the only way you can make your theory work.

Watchman Nee explains it very well. I think this will help clear things up.

Quote:
----- You will scarcely find the word 'sinner' in the first four chapters of Romans. This is because there the sinner himself is not mainly in view, but rather the sins he has committed. The word 'sinner' first comes into prominence only in chapter 5, and it is important to notice how the sinner is there introduced. In that chapter a sinner is said to be a sinner because he is born a sinner; not because he has committed sins. The distinction is important. It is true that often when a Gospel worker wants to convince a man in the street that he is a sinner, he will use the favourite verse Romans 3:23, where it says that 'all have sinned'; but this use of the verse is not strictly justified by the Scriptures. Those who so use it are in danger of arguing the wrong way round, for the teaching of Romans is not that we are sinners because we commit sins, but that we sin because we are sinners. We are sinners by constitution rather than by action. As Romans 5:19 expresses it: 'Through the one man's disobedience the man were made (or 'constituted') sinners'.
How were we constituted sinners? By Adam's disobedience. We do not become sinners by what we have done but because of what Adam has done and has become. I speak English, but I am not thereby constituted an Englishman. I am in fact a Chinese. So chapter 3 draws our attention to what we have done—all have sinned—but it is not because we have done it that we become sinners.
I once asked a class of children. 'Who is a sinner?' and their immediate reply was, 'One who sins'. Yes, one who sins is a sinner, but the fact that he sins is merely the evidence that he is already a sinner; it is not the cause. One who sins is a sinner, but it is equally true that one who does not sin, if he is of Adam's race, is a sinner too, and in need of redemption. Do you follow me? There are bad sinners and there are good sinners, there are moral sinners and there are corrupt sinners, but they are all alike sinners. We sometimes think that if only we had not done certain things all would be well; but the trouble lies far deeper than in what we do: it lies in what we are. A Chinese may be born America and be unable to speak Chinese at all, but he is a Chinese for all that, because he was born a Chinese. It is birth that counts. So I am a sinner not of my behaviour but of my heredity, my parentage. I am not a sinner because I sin, but I sin because I come of the wrong stock. I sin because I am a sinner.

We are apt to think that what we have done is very bad, but that we ourselves are not so bad. God is taking pains to show us that we ourselves are wrong, fundamentally wrong. The root trouble is the sinner; he must be dealt with. Our sins are dealt with by the Blood, but we ourselves are dealt with by the Cross. The Blood procures our pardon for what we have done; the Cross procures our deliverance from what we are.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2006/8/23 23:06

Quote:

-----Watchman Nee explains it very well. I think this will help clear things up.

Excellent article by Watchman Nee brother!

"In that chapter a sinner is said to be a sinner because he is born a sinner; not because he has committed sins. The distinction is important."

Re:, on: 2006/8/24 0:27

Was it not unreasonable for Pharaoh to demand bricks when he gave the Israelites no straw? And was it not unjust for Pharaoh to later punish the Israelites for not producing the bricks?

Would it not be a slander on God's character to imply that He is as unreasonable and as unjust as Pharaoh, to demand repentance and yet not give the ability for repentance, and then later punish the lack of repentance?

E. M. Bounds, the great methodist author on prayer, agrees with this point, because he said, "Does God give commandments that men cannot obey? Is he so arbitrary, so severe, so unloving, that He issues commandments that cannot be obeyed? The answer is that, in all of Scripture, not a single instance is recorded of God having commanded any man to do a thing that was beyond his power. Is God so unjust and so inconsiderate to require a man something that he is unable to do? Certainly not! **To infer is to slander the character of God.**"

Before I start hearing, "Heresy! Heresy!" Or "Heretic, Heretic!" Wait one minute. Those who are quick to cry heresy at this point are also men who build upon the foundation laid by Augustine. But even **St. Augustine** spoke rightly when he said, "God does not demand impossibilities."

By definition, does not the "choice" to sin require the choice not to sin? If it's something you cannot help but to do, then it's not a "choice" at all by definition.

Does a baby choose to be born? No, it is beyond its choice. But what if I said, "yes, a baby chooses to be born." But then someone says, "What? You think a baby chooses to be born? Do you mean to say then that a baby can choose not to be born?" To which I reply, "Oh no no no. I do not mean to imply that a baby can choose not to be born. But only to imply that a baby chooses to be born." My own reasoning would be absurd!

Likewise when a person says, "A sinner chooses to sin" and then go on to say, "but a sinner cannot choose not to sin."

A sinner deserves hell for choosing to sin. It's a choice, because they would have chosen not to sin. They can choose to sin against God and against man, or they can choose to love God and love man.

Isn't this truth the essence of this scripture:

De 30:19 "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:"

Here God Himself says that you can choose life, or you can choose death. In order to choose one thing, you must be able to deny that same thing. In order to choose sin, you must be able to deny sin.

John Fletcher agrees with this point, because he wrote, "forced obedience is a contradiction in terms".

In order to "pick up your cross, deny yourself, and follow Me" you must have the ability to "pick up your cross, deny yourself, and follow Me".

Jos 24:15 - "choose you this day whom ye will serve" Who you serve is your choice. If in fact, the will is free, then it is your choice. To have it any other way is to deny that the will is free, which some of you say, but I know some of you are not willing to say.

I know some of you believe that the will is free, and yet deny that a sinner can choose not to sin. And of course if they choose not to sin, they will become a Christian. Because it is a sin not to become a Christian, because if you are not for Christ then you are against Christ.

I would like to appeal more to great men, whom I feel might be more warmly received by some on these boards than I would be.

JOHN WESLEY AND JOHN FLETCHER

In the days of **John Wesley**, other Christians called him a heretic for his doctrine. So **John Fletcher** came to the aid of Mr. Wesley, and publicly defended the doctrine Wesley taught. Thus we have the wonderful two volume set, "Checks to Antinomianism" by John Fletcher.

Now Wesley did not deny **original sin**. But he also taught **original ability** because of **free-will** and he also taught **Christian perfection**.

No doubt, some of you today will call Wesley a heretic for teaching perfection and original ability. But some of you may respect the great doctrines taught by these men of God.

So with an open heart, read the following writings of John Fletcher:

"if repentance and faith are absolutely impossible to them, and Jesus came to denounce destruction to all who do not repent and believe, let every thinking man say whether he might not be called with greater propriety the destroyer of the world rather than the Savior of the world; and whether preaching the Christian gospel is not like reading the warrant of inevitable damnation to millions of wretched creatures."

"In what a pitiful light does your scheme place our Lord! Why did he "marvel at the unbelief" of the Jews, as if they could no more believe than a stone can swim? And say not, "he marvelled as a man;" for the assertion is absolutely unmanly. What man ever wondered that an ass does not bray with the nightingale's melodious voice? Nay, what child ever marvelled that the ox does not fly above the clouds with the soaring eagle?"

The same observation holds with regard to repentance. "Then he began", says St Matthew, "to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not." **Merciful Savior, forgive us! We have insulted thy meek wisdom, by representing thee as cruelly upbraiding the lame for not running, the blind for not seeing, the dumb for not speaking!"**

Fletcher goes on with his very STRONG point!

"Suppose a schoolmaster said to his English scholars, "Except you instantly speak Greek you shall all be severely whipped," you would wonder at the injustice of the school tyrant. But would not the wretch be merciful in comparison of a Savior, (*so called*) who is supposed to say to myriads of men, that can no more repent than ice can burn, "Except ye repent, ye shall all perish"? **I confess, then, when I see real Protestants calling this doctrine the pure gospel, and extolling it as free grace, I no more wonder that real Papist should call their bloody inquisition *the house of mercy*, and their burning of those whom they call heretics as *an act of faith*."**

Fletcher goes on to make the simple point that, "everyone shall die for his own *avoidable* iniquity."

Now before you are quick to call Fletcher a heretic for defending Wesley's belief in original ability, my advice would be to be slow to speak, and quick to listen. Read the bible, pray, meditate, and see if the Lord doesn't confirm that He only asks of men to do what He gives them the ability to do.

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/8/24 0:39

Many thanks ChrisJD,

Quote:

-----...it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves

I was hoping this was the essence of my post, but thanks for making this clear! (I find that a tricky part of communication is to identify those assumptions we have and give them fresh expression.)

Remembering my own conversion a few years ago, there was an abundant sense of gifted grace from God to a wretched sinner. Although I had been well schooled as a layman in Christian things, I never had fully seen how woefully insufficient my own righteousness was, and how wonderfully sufficient God's righteousness through Christ was for all men.

One day in my home, I was reading John 3. Obviously I had read it many times before, but on that day my own heart and mind felt like the Hoover Dam holding back a great lake of sins and sinfulness. Sorrow and shame tried to take me by the throat but in that moment this great dam of sin was broken---not by any intent or determination I had of breaking it but from an invisible hand that seemed to act with a purpose beyond my own feeble willpower or sense of regret---the walls of self-righteousness suddenly began breaking, crumbling, and my vast reservoir of guilt and shame poured over draining away. My own body was the embodiment of that dam; I could not emotionally stand under the release of it, while my eye testified of the waters that poured out.

So to be clear, the matter of whether a lost man can stop sinning by his own will and power is settled for me. Even if a religious man wanted to repent, he could only do so as a depraved man without Christ. Only God can bring His Spirit to dwell in us...and write His righteousness on our very hearts.

A scripture that comes to mind is Isaiah 65. In it we first see the true nature of merely religious men.

"I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name... A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick; Which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments, which eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable things is in their vessels; Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day....."

So much for human religious attempts to put on Godliness. Praise God that the Gospel is not called the "Repentance", but it is called the "Good News!" Isaiah 65 continues...

...I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there...And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

I can certainly testify, that even while I was in the church 'practicing' Christianity I remained depraved. Indeed my practice had deceived me into believing my religious ambitions were for Christ's sake. As a result of my own satisfaction according the Gospel-proved standards many measure their salvation by, I really was not looking for anything more at all.

Yet, before I called, the Lord answered me. And by the time I did cry out in my darkness to the living God, He was right there already listening.

MC

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Can a lost sinner stop sinning?

Re: - posted by RevKerrigan (), on: 2006/8/24 0:53

Jesse said:

Quote:
-----Read the bible, pray, mediate, and see if the Lord doesn't confirm that He only asks of men to do what He gives them the ability to do.

He gives them the ability to do it through His Holy Spirit, through Regeneration, through becoming Born Again. If man could live a sinless life without becoming Born Again, then why do we even need the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives? Why do we need to become Born Again? Why is there a New Covenant? Is the Holy Spirit just an add on to help us resist sin ever more strongly? These are just some quick questions that came to my mind...by the way, I don't think I would ever call Wesley a heretic. He may have some doctrine wrong, but just as I have heard said many times, "The most surprised people in Heaven will probably be the preachers." I will think, pray and meditate on this some more...and will respond later!

Re:, on: 2006/8/24 0:55

To be sinless is to be without sin.

And since Jesus said, "you are either for me or against me"

And the greatest commandment is to love God.

And we love God by obeying God

And God says we must be born again.

Then it is a sin not to love God and not to obey Him by repenting and becoming born again.

So it's IMPOSSIBLE for a person to be sinless who is not born again.

You could ultimately say then, since being a Christian is being born again and obeying God, that it is a sin in itself not to be a Christian!

Re: - posted by Christisking (), on: 2006/8/24 1:15

The Apostle Paul puts it pretty clearly in Romans 7:25 (NLT) 25 Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God's law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin.

You can't get much clearer than that. ;-)

The grace of God gives us the power to be free from sin. We all have a choice to accept the grace of God or deny it. Those who deny it will go to hell in bondage to sin and their inborn sinful nature unable to stop sinning. Those who accept the grace of God will through the finished work of Christ on the cross and His resurrection have the bondage of sin broken and receive power over sin having been given a new heart and been born again. Dead to sin - alive in Christ.

I think you are twisting Wesley and Fletcher's words to try to prove a point. Are you familiar with "regeneration" and/or Wesley's teaching on "the new birth" Wesley taught pretty clearly as far as I can tell that you can not stop sinning or overcome your sin nature without "regeneration" or "the new birth".

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/8/24 2:40

I wanted to add this thought without derailing the present conversation...

Relevant to this thread investigating whether a lost man can produce the zeal and power to obey God, I think Islam should be mentioned briefly. I do not mean the terrorists, but the devout Muslim. Their Koran has borrowed, albiet distorted, many biblical concepts of morality and law severe enough to please even the angriest religionist in America. Yet Islam strikes me as a form of repentence/conversion preaching without the Gospel. The outcome of preaching repentence sans-Gospel is bondage and death.

(If you are feeling cheeky, check out this (http://larknews.com/march_2004/secondary.php?page5) satirical article about how American Christians are moving to Islamic countries because they prefer Muslim morality to American morality... an interesting delimma.)

MC

Re: - posted by Christisking (), on: 2006/8/24 3:13

Quote:
-----Their Koran has borrowed, albiet distorted, many biblical concepts of morality and law severe enough to please even the angriest religionist in America. Yet Islam strikes me as a form of repentence/conversion preaching without the Gospel. The outcome of preaching repentence sans-Gospel is bondage and death.

You are right. And this is exactly what many street, traveling open-air and so called "holiness" preachers do. They preach a form of Islam in the name of Jesus. All their preaching does is bring bondage and death. That is why you don't hear of people being miraculously freed from the bondage of sin- there is no freedom and life just condemnation and death. They go to rock concert and condemn rock music fans. They go to sporting events and preach against ticket scalpers. They go to beaches and preach against inappropriate dress and go to college campuses and preach against fraternities. I am not kidding they REALLY do this sort of thing and think they are doing a good thing for Jesus, but in reality they know nothing of the Gospel and only bring condemnation and death hardening sinner ever more against Jesus.

Coming home - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/8/24 10:06

Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.
Eze 18:4

~~~~~  
For God so loved the world ... But they would not return.

There is none righteous, no, not one:  
... both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;  
There is none that understandeth,

There is none that seeketh after God.

They are all gone out of the way,  
They are together become unprofitable;  
There is none that doeth good, no, not one.

Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:  
Their feet are swift to shed blood:  
Destruction and misery are in their ways:  
And the way of peace have they not known:

There is no fear of God before their eyes.

Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;  
Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

~~~~~  
O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!

For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it,

What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?

Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his maker?

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust,

That he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man:

For he knew what was in man.

For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

~~~~~  
And now, Israel, what doth the LORD *thy God require of thee*, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?

Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORD'S thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is.

For all this I considered in my heart even to declare all this, that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them.

He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)

For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

~~~~~  
Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore herefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

~~~~~  
Can or cannot

The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

**When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them.**

This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

**Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?**

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

~~~~~  
For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

~~~~~  
That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

~~~~~  
And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

~~~~~  
... that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.



~~~~~  
I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

~~~~~  
For God so loved the world

~~~~~  
Re: Coming home - posted by letsgetbusy (), on: 2006/8/24 23:13

I believe also that a sinner can stop sinning only by being washed in the blood. A non-Christian can't stop sinning because rejecting Christ is a sin.

As far as the question of whether a man is a sinner by choice or nature, I believe we are sinners by choice.

I think about Paris Reidhead's conversation with a college student who was telling Bro Paris that he sinned because he wanted to, and Paris was telling him, (paraphrased) 'No, you sin because it's in your nature.' Years later Bro Paris related how the hot-shot preacher out of Bible school was wrong, and the unbelieving college student was right.

Now, I do believe that we inherit Adam's sin. He chose the penalty of God, and so do we. It was neither in Christ's nature to suffer for sin, but he chose the cross. He chose to be like us so we could choose to be like him. So I believe our choices change our path and change us.

Rom 1:26b their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature

One thing that J Edwin Orr preached about that was new to me is how the conscience can be corrupted...

1 Tim 4:2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron

Titus 1:15 Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

Heb 19:4 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

The corrupt conscience is defiled by our sinful ways, to reject God, Christ, and the Holy Ghost.

In a nutshell, I think it is a man's decision to reject Christ the Holy Ghost that sends him to the lake of fire, not his nature. He does have a sinful nature, but a man also has rejected the offering of the Holy Ghost, he has blasphemed the Holy Spirit, he has limited the Holy One of Israel. It is this that sends him to hell, not just the fact that he can't help sin.

On the flipside, I do agree that it is easy to preach in the flesh so much so that a man falls to the ground just out of emotional fear, and that we must learn the difference between emotional reasoning to accept the doctrine of Christ, and good, old-fashioned Holy Ghost conviction. This I know to be a truth, but I cannot claim to have preached under an anointing that made people weep under conviction just from my words(that's what I covet, though).

This said, if we set down that hammer of God's law, we have set down the ONLY weapon God has ordained to prepare men for the grace of God.

Psalm 19:7b The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul

I do believe that this refers to the 10 Commandments, but also the words of Christ, and Scripture in general. No man is capable of living up to the standard listed in the Beatitudes alone, unless He is born of the Spirit, but that is no reason not to preach it. God's method is to preach the standard that a man cannot attain on his own, and this brokenness he experiences in understanding this drives him to the cross.

Re:, on: 2006/8/24 23:34

I think that the most important part of all of this, is that we simply:

1. Tell sinners they are accountable for their sins.
2. Therefore they must come to Jesus because Jesus is the answer.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2006/8/24 23:39

Quote:

-----1. Tell sinners they are accountable for their sins.

2. Therefore they must come to Jesus because Jesus is the answer.

I think we need to tell the world that Jesus is risen from the dead, that He died on the cross for the sins of mankind and He offers salvation freely, this is surely good news. When the soul realizes it crucified Christ with his own sin then that is saddening, but to know that God showed mercy and love in Christ to overlook that and offer salvation is the **good news** (gospel).

No man can be particularly "accountable" for the actions of adam and the fallen race, we inherit this! so ALL are under judgement, all have sinned and all deserve punishment apart from our "works" (Galatians 5) it is the body and being that does the works that is particularly guilty before God, that "all the world may become guilty before God"

Re: - posted by Christisking (), on: 2006/8/25 0:19

Greg Gordon Wrote:

Quote:

-----Excellent article by Watchman Nee brother!

"In that chapter a sinner is said to be a sinner because he is born a sinner; not because he has committed sins. The distinction is important."

and

Quote:

-----No man can be particularly "accountable" for the actions of adam and the fallen race, we inherit this! so ALL are under judgement, all have sinned and all deserve punishment apart from our "works" (Galatians 5) it is the body and being that does the works that is particularly guilty before God, that "all the world may become guilty before God"

Jesse, this could be life changing for you! When you finally realize this basic fundamental Christian belief I believe your whole outlook of things will completely change. Like when Paris Reidhead realized the message he was preaching was just secular humanism, and he described how his whole outlook was changed and everything was turned around and made right. I believe the same thing could happen to you when you realize this basic Christian doctrine of original sin and the sin nature of man and realize the message you preach is just condemnation and death without the Good News - like the Pharisee's who heaped boulders on peoples shoulders and lifted not a finger to help them. You must understand that sinners sin because they are sinners NOT sinners are sinners because they sin. When you come to this realization, I think you will start to see your preaching change and you will start to hear love and compassion and mercy in your voice as you plead in love with sinners to flee the wrath to come. I believe you will start to see masses of people fall under conviction (being angry for being condemned is NOT always a sign of conviction) and see people miraculously set free from the bondage and slavery of sin and the devil.

I hope you will pray about this and look into what others like Greg Gordon and Watchman Nee and Ernest O'Neil and Finney and Wesley have to say about regeneration, the new birth, the sin nature of man and original sin. I think this realization could change your life.

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Can a lost sinner stop sinning?

Jesse wrote:

Quote:

-----Yes a sinner is capable of stopping his sin. That is why God "commands all men everywhere to repent."

God only commands the possible. He doesn't require apples from peach trees. He doesn't cut down and burn peach trees for not bearing apples.

and

But yes, a sinner does not have to sin.

This type of attitude and way of thinking effects the way one preaches in a very negative way.

Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2006/8/25 0:36

Came across this elsewhere and it struck me quite differently;

"Man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature *inclined* to evil, so that the flesh lusts always contrary to the Spirit. And this infection of nature does remain in those who are regenerated, whereby the lust of the flesh is not subject to the law of God."

Rather than "original sin".

(http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id12040&post_id93450&order0&viewmodethread&pid0&forum34#93450) ON THE SPIRITUAL CONFLICT ~ Thomas Reade

It seems to have much to speak to this question here.

Re: - posted by letsgetbusy (), on: 2006/8/25 13:55

As far as how this effects the gospel presentation, I agree with Laz. As far as what the understanding of the sinner is, in my opinion, should be, the sinner sins because he wants to. That was Bro Paris' point.

I think that Laz is doing more of a work than many of us combined, so our prayers are with you in that regard, Laz.

How we should feel about the lost is, I suppose, debatable. Of course, we should love them, and of course they need the truth, but how we should feel about them personally leaves a lot of room for opinion. We have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but yet we must agree that hell is their just desert if they do not turn.

Our evangelism pastor said this the other day (paraphrased): 'A fanatic is anyone who loves Jesus more than you.' I think that sometimes it is easy to look at the method of preachers and find fault, when they may not be at all preaching the message they want to preach, but the message that God has ordained for the people under their voice.

Re: - posted by Christisking (), on: 2006/8/25 14:22

Quote:

-----As far as what the understanding of the sinner is, in my opinion, should be, the sinner sins because he wants to.

That statement does not follow Scripture. If you read the book of Romans you can get pretty good view and understanding of the sin nature and original sin. The book of Ephesians is also a good place to start. The Scripture I point out previously is a perfect example of what the Scriptures have to say on the subject. What do you do with this Scripture and the rest of the book of Romans?

Quote:

----- The Apostle Paul puts it pretty clearly in Romans 7:25 (NLT) "25Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God's law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin."

You can't get much clearer than that.

The grace of God gives us the power to be free from sin. We all have a choice to accept the grace of God or deny it. Those who deny it will go to hell in bondage to sin and their inborn sinful nature unable to stop sinning. Those who accept the grace of God will through the finished work of Christ on the cross and His resurrection have the bondage of sin broken and receive power over sin having been given a new heart and been born again. Dead to sin - alive in Christ.

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/8/25 15:06

Quote:

-----'A fanatic is anyone who loves Jesus more than you.'

In this context, I'm not sure what this means. I think a fanaticism is not defined by extreme love but by extreme self-will. We shouldn't imply that those who challenge and critique us must not love Jesus as much as we do! (A wee bit divisive and self-aggrandizing...)

The topic of this thread has little to do with style of presentation. That's perhaps the subject of another discussion.

We are talking about substance of preaching, not it's form. It is possible that a preacher can preach 'truth' but never touch on the Gospel. We have all seen, and perhaps admired, bold men who, with righteous indignation to immorality, are zealous and courageous to grab a bull-horn and give homilistical face slaps to indifferent sinners. Yet Paul said that if we are going to preach the law then preach the whole law, including the promise.

So, personally I'm not so concerned about 'harsh' preaching as much as I am concerned about insufficient preaching. Immorality is a symptom of being unregenerate, and exhorting unregenerate people to become moral is missing the heart of the Law itself. Unless we preach the promise of a new heart we don't even understand the very law we claim to represent. We must exhort them to repent of their entire lives, of even their decency which in God's eyes is still filthy rags. Anything else, regardless of how moral it may seem, falls tragically short of true repentance.

Even if we give our bodies to be burned but have not love then we haven't understood a thing. If we aren't preaching a desperate repentant faith in the cross of Christ, and a glorious gravepassing faith in the resurrection of Christ, then we are failing to preach the regenerating hope of the Gospel that says men must be born again. If we fail to make clear the liberating hope of the Gospel, and instead major on morality, we will either convince sinners that they are hopeless sinners, or worse yet...lead them to believe they can please God with enough moral determination. (Talk about fanaticism...)

""Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard?"

MC

Re:, on: 2006/8/25 15:48

Patrick,

I would stick to the King James Version. The New Living Translation and other modern translations have not only updated the language, but have also updated the theology in many verses.

Letsgetbusy,

I agree with your post 100%. And I greatly appreciate your prayers. We are hoping to reach 100 campuses this school year with the simple message of REPENT and BELIEVE in JESUS!

WHY DO SINNERS SIN?

Simply because they want to. And for that reason, God will punish them.

Paris Reidhead said, "God does not send sinners to hell for Adams sin. But God sends sinners to hell for their own sin."

In order to be "accountable" you need to be "responsible". God does not hold us accountable for something we had no control over. God holds us accountable for the things that we are responsible for.

Sinners go to hell for their willful rebellion and treason against God.

Sinners don't sin because they have to. They sin because they want to.

So when we preach, we are not trying to comfort the victims of Adams sin, but we are confronting the criminals that willfully violate God's law.

Bad theology produces bad evangelism. How we view sinners and their sin effects how we talk to sinners about themselves and their sin.

We must make sure that we have a biblical perspective on sin. And when we understand that each individual is personally responsible for their own sin, it will radically change the way we not only view them, but also how we preach to them.

What does the King James Version say about sinners and their sin?

John 3:19 "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light"

As John Fletcher earnestly contended for:

1. "All our salvation is of God in Christ"

and also

2. "All our damnation is of ourselves" because of, what Fletcher called, our "avoidable unfaithfulness" and our "avoidable sin"

Fletcher said, "nothing would be more absurd than to bind us by laws of a civil or spiritual nature; nothing more foolish than to propose to us punishment and rewards; and nothing more capricious than to inflict the one or bestow the other upon us; if we were not moral agents."

HOW ARE WE TO PREACH?

And as far as our preaching goes, the Apostle Paul set for us a good example:

Ac 17:17 - "Therefore **disputed** he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him."

Ac 17:2 - And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days **reasoned** with them out of the scriptures,

Ac 18:4 - And he **reasoned** in the synagogue every sabbath, and **persuaded** the Jews and the Greeks.

Ac 18:19 - And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.

Ac 24:25 - And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way

We are not to just scream and yell randomly at sinners things about Jesus and things about the bible.

But we are to **dispute, reason, and persuade**, in an open air setting, as the Apostle Paul did.

WHAT ARE WE TO PREACH?

Our overall message must simply be:

1. Mans Sin
2. Mans Savior

Regarding mans sin, we must preach not only that man has sinned, but that man must repent from sinning. Because unless they repent, they will perish.

A good description of repentance is turning. Or a even more easily understood description of repentance means stopping.

When I repented of selling drugs, I stopped selling drugs.

When I repented of street fighting, I stopped fist fighting.

When I repented of robbing houses, I stopped robbing houses.

That is true repentance. Anything else is a false repentance.

So our message to the world must be the same as the disciples "Stop your sinning!"

Because it says of the disciples that "they went out, and preached that men should **repent**" Mr 6:12

But our message is not merely that man must stop sinning against God, but also that man must put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ!

Jesus did both:

Mr 1:15 - And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: **repent** ye, and **believe** the gospel.

So to sum up my points:

1. Man is accountable because he is responsible. "Our damnation is of ourselves".
2. We are to confront criminals in our preaching not merely comfort victims.(though some people are victims of circumstances, in which case as Christians we should comfort)
3. We must dispute, persuade, and reason with sinners, about "sin, righteousness, and judgment to come."
4. We are to preach a two fold message: REPENT and BELIEVE. Another way of saying it would be, "turn from sin and trust in Jesus."

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/8/25 17:44

I feel we are tangling a number of issues here together. I think we have consensus that

- 1) Man is responsible for his sin
- 2) That repentance is irrefutably part of the Gospel
- 2) That Jesus saves sinners

It also occurs to me that this thread could vector off into a discussion about Jesse, as well as out-door preaching methods. I think that would be abit unproductive. Frankly Open-Air preaching can tend to be too glorified, or much of an issue by some people, who are awed by the courage and devotion displayed. I also admire and want to learn from the Open-Air preachers, remembering my first encounters in college with fearless campus preachers. However, whenever Open-Air becomes the topic of conversation people polarize on style more then content.

Perhaps to boil it down, another issue we are discussing is the order of salvation, which I realize is a bit tedious. I suppose it matters more to scholars then it does to the poor sinner who believes and repents, or to the poor sinner who repents and believes... the order gets accomplished as somehow the Spirit puts both into a truly regenerate heart.

In the end I think it helps to know the audience we are speaking in. God knows the audiences, even churches, that need to hear a serious repentance message, and He knows places where we need a larger portion of hope in our fuel mixture. Fixed formulas regarding style of preaching are utterly useless.

An example of audience and context...

Quote:

-----When I repented of selling drugs, I stopped selling drugs.

When I repented of street fighting, I stopped fist fighting.

When I repented of robbing houses, I stopped robbing houses.

That is true repentance. Anything else is a false repentance.

What if you are talking to a pretty "decent" guy like me? I never acted out any of those things...if this is true repentance I guess I could feel pretty good about myself. In fact, I might even look down on you for admitting you did these things! Af terall, I grew up in the church, and went to a Christian High School so what more repentance do I need? (choke)(edit: I hope it's obvious that I do not actually feel this way! I am trying to make a point that simply telling people to stop doing sinful acts is not the same as preaching the Gospel)

At this point you might follow Paul's example, just as you quoted...

Quote:

-----Ac 17:17 - "Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him."

If the Gospel is simply "Stop your sinning!" then why do devout people need to repent? Why did Charles and John Wesley need to be born again? By the time they were experiencing the saving grace of God firsthand, they had already been Anglican missionaries to the colonies. According to the standards of their day...and certainly ours, they were already Godly-acting men. Yet Wesley himself admitted he was but 'almost a Christian' when he had sailed to Georgia.

I don't think it can be stressed enough...being Born Again is a crucial element of the Gospel. If our first-born nature is capable of entering Heaven then why would Jesus teach Nicodemus, a teacher of Israel that even he needed to be born again? If our first-born natures could satisfy God there would be no reason distinguish Christianity from Judiasm. Indeed, t

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here are some who say we shouldn't have.

But praise God, there is this new message...

Quote:

.....not merely that man must stop sinning against God, but also that man must put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ!
.....

Amen Jesse!

MC

Re: - posted by Christisking (), on: 2006/8/25 19:06

Quote:

.....So, personally I'm not so concerned about 'harsh' preaching as much as I am concerned about insufficient preaching. Immorality is a symptom of being unregenerate, and exhorting unregenerate people to become moral is missing the heart of the Law itself. Unless we preach the promise of a new heart we don't even understand the very law we claim to represent. We must exhort them to repent of their entire lives, of even their deficiency which in God's eyes is still filthy rags. Anything else, regardless of how moral it may seem, falls tragically short of true repentance.
.....

Get post MC I also am not concerned with style or method from Wilkerson to Katz to Ernest O'Neil who are all distinctively different. Also, harshness is not of concern - I myself preach as harsh as anyone I have heard. But as MC said it is preaching the full council of God in life and truth instead of preaching half truths that bring condemnation and death. It really doesn't matter how you do it, but rather what you say. When you cut out original sin and the sin nature from your preaching all you do is bring condemnation and death. I think MC put it very well. Thank you!

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/8/25 19:28

Romans 7:23-25 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

7:25 (NLT) "25Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God's law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin."

Our old sinful nature has been renewed in Christ Jesus, by the birth of Christ in us. We don't have the old sinful nature in Spirit, our spirit is the Spirit of Christ, our Mind is being changed from the old sinful nature to the new mind which is in Christ Jesus. We also have the Holy Spirit in us and is teaching us this Christ that has been born again in us. The only thing of our old nature that remains is our memory of what our old father the devil programmed into it. Our Body has been taught to get what it wants and our mind is the controller of how we got it.

The NLT should at least put old in front of "sinful nature". Our New nature is Christ. If we renew our minds to this truth, our bodies will follow, our mind is what controls this body, even to the beating of the heart, we can even control our blood pressure by our mind, and can stop bleeding in surgery with the mind, we just don't know or have the consciousness of how powerful our mind is. If we take what God says about Christ in us the Hope of Glory, even while we are still in this flesh we can place ourselves in heavenly places in spirit and soul already. That is why we have been given a corn of wheat with the blessing of dying, that it might bring forth much fruit. Jhn 12:24 Verily, verily, I say unto

you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

Our old man is dead. The new man in Christ Jesus is alive unto God. We are saved in Spirit and being saved in Soul and will be saved in body on resurrection morning. 2Cr 1:10 Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver ; Our old sin nature was crucified on the Cross with Christ, we were on that Cross and we are dead to sin as He is our deliverer in our Spirit and Soul. The only thing we have left that Needs to be Changed is this corn of wheat and keep renewing our mind to the Mind of Christ which is being save and taught by the Holy Spirit of God which Christ baptized us into when we were birthed with the Incorruptable Seed of the Father and born again , so we can now see the Kingdom of God. Jhn 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Jhn 3:7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

1Pe 1:23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

If we believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God we are born again and in being born again we are no longer sinners. We still sin because of our old nature, not because we are not perfect in Christ, because we are, there is only One that is Perfect and Him being born again in us is making the new son's of God perfect by His Nature in us. If we do sin because of our old nature that is dead and still have the body pulls that were programmed in us by our old father and his nature, we have an advocate with the Father that is birthed in us, Jesus Christ and if we confess that sin God is faithful to forgive us that sin because of the Son and Advocate Jesus Christ and on top of forgiveness He will cleans us from all unrighteousness.

The old mind set that we are no good and will be sinners all our life is a lie from our old father and liar teacher, Satan himself. If he can keep us from our new Nature which is Christ, then he has won while all along the believer is missing what God has made us to be in the Son.

2Cr 5:17 Therefore if any man in Christ, a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Gal 6:15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

Are you perfect? In Christ you are. How do we know this? By the Holy Spirit Teacher and our New live Nature Jesus Christ.

Mat 5:48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Rom 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Phl 3:15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

Jam 1:4 But let patience have perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

This is Paul's Gospel. Most people will not accept it. That is why the Church is sick and dying. We are the Body of Christ let us know it now and bring Christ to the sinner and the believer.

In Christ: Phillip

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Can a lost sinner stop sinning?

Re:, on: 2006/8/26 1:02

Just a few points:

Patrick said,

Quote:

-----When you cut out original sin and the sin nature from your preaching all you do is bring condemnation and death.

I'm a bit confused Patrick. Did you know that Charles Finney denied original sin? Which is why people call Finney a heretic.

Whether we agree or disagree with Finney, I'm just pointing out that Finney did not believe in original sin but preached against it.

But I do not believe Finney was a heretic, neither do I believe His preaching brought condemnation and death, but rather it brought repentance, renewal, and revival!

I only bring that up Patrick because I know you often talk about Finney. You don't think Finney was a heretic do you? Or that his preaching only brought about condemnation and death??

God has worked through men of many different theologies. Edwards who was Calvinist. Whitefield who was Calvinist. S. P. M. who was Calvinist. Wesley who was Arminian. Fletcher who was Arminian. Booth who was Arminian. Duncan Campbell who was Arminian. Finney who denied original sin and started the Moral Government movement.

God has used men of many different theologies, so I am very slow to make personal attacks against a preacher just because I disagree with his theology.

As Christians, we should be able to disagree a little bit without each other making terrible personal attacks and without accusing each other of being devils.

Sometimes, as Christians, we simply disagree on either theology or practice. It doesn't mean we don't love God. It doesn't mean we don't love people. It simply means that we disagree.

2. I don't want this thread to be hijacked. It's not about me or open air preaching. Let's stick to the issue and doctrine at hand, and not make personal attacks.

Re: - posted by letsgetbusy (), on: 2006/8/27 20:57

Compton,

Let me apologize in that I did not explain myself in full. I did not mean that anyone who disagrees with anyone else on doctrine or whatever loves Jesus less. The spirit of what I was trying to say was that often times we view another Christian's zeal in a certain area as overzealous, when in fact God may be doing a mighty work through what they are doing and saying in the area of ministry they are in. But if the same individual was put into a different setting (or time period, etc) with the same focus in his message or doctrine, there would not be cohesiveness, the pieces would not fit.

So, no brother, I am not calling condemnation on anyone, but I think sometimes we think that what others are doing should change a little, when God calls each of us to focus on different areas, ie: what is important to me in evangelism might not be important to someone else. So I am with Paul that 'whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein will rejoice, yes, and I will rejoice.'

Now to the latter part of your post, I agree that there is nothing wrong with preaching the transformed life through Christ (Rom 12:1-2, etc), however, read through the Sermon on the Mount, and you will see promise, but also much law and future punishment:

3-16: promise to the children of God

17-21: law

22-48: law, future punishment, moral code

So I would agree to preach the promises of God, but also the law and future punishment of God. The law of God shows a man his unclean nature. It is not the promise that converts the man, it is the law:

Psalm 19:7a,8b,9a "The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul...the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean..."

I would agree that a well rounded message should include changing grace, but also the law and future punishment of God. The problem today is not messages lacking balance, the problem is messages of grace and the transformed life, without law and future punishment.

To address your latter post:

That is the whole reason we must present the law to a man who may not have been into drugs, theft, street-fighting. He thinks he is pretty good until you hold him to God's standard: perfection (shown by the law). Then that young, self-righteous, church-going man will realize he needs to repent, or he, like the drug dealers, thieves, and thugs, will face future punishment, as well.

Re: - posted by letsgetbusy (), on: 2006/8/27 21:16

I would like to kindly disagree with some of you concerning Paul's point in Romans. While he did say his mind served God but his flesh served sin, and then cried out "Who shall deliver me?" he was not saying 'the flesh made me do it.' He was just stating that in the inner war of his (and ours) he served God and the flesh, and the things that he knows are sin, he said, "I do."

So I agree with you that a man, of himself, cannot help but sin, but he rejects (blasphemes) the Holy Ghost by rejecting the saving grace of God, who can bring a man to stop sinning (not lifetime sinless perfection, of course). So he continues in sin by his own choice in rejecting the correcting power of the Holy Spirit, because he knows what God wants when He claims a man. The sinner knows when he gives in to God that his filthy habits will have to go. So his choice, if he is to remain unregenerate, is he would rather choose his own sinful way, that deal with God.

In other words, he sins because he wants to.

Also: we do still carry around the sinful nature with us after our salvation. That is why Paul still had the war inside him, and talked about dying "daily." The old nature is not eradicated, we carry it around with us, along with the new nature, probably so we don't get arrogant and proud.

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/8/28 0:30

I think this explains it pretty much without hypocrisy.

Gal 5:16-26

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

Our flesh wars against the Spirit and wants its own way, but praise God the Spirit wars against our flesh, and by the Spirit of God in us, I know Who will win or else the destruction of the flesh to the saving of the spirit.

Where is the war? What controls the flesh? Of Course the Mind controls the flesh. Who's Mind do the birthed children of God possess?

1Cr 2:16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that He may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.

Christ lived Christianity by the Mind of His Father, just like we live Christianity by the Mind of Christ.

So, how does our mind serve the Law of God? Only one answer, by the Mind of Christ in us being the renewing capacity to the application of the Teaching of the Holy Spirit.

John 15:26-27 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

What beginning? Ephesians 1:3-14 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. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/8/28 0:32

Thanks Letsgetbusy. Your post is much appreciated. It goes without saying that even as we try to achieve fuller understanding of one another, that respect of one another is already realized.

You bring up an interesting scripture. I would benefit from someone having a look at it in relation to New Testament salvation...at least as this evangelical thinks of New testament salvation!;-)

Psalms 19:7a,8b,9a "The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul...the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean..."

I wonder if the word "converting" in that Psalm does not hold the evangelical meaning we might pour into it. The King James uses the word convert, but other translations use words like 'restore, revive, or refresh'. The reason I ask is because of scriptures like this...

Gal 3:23-25 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor...

Even more than David's verse, I think Paul's verse more aptly describes how street preachers are using the law to convince the man on the street of their guilt and need for Christ.

In comparing the two scriptures I feel that Paul has the chronological perspective of something that David didn't have...the historical realization of this promise recorded by Jeremiah: I Will Write My Laws on Their Hearts and Minds

I cannot help but conclude that the fullest realization of the conversion pointed at in David's verse is achieved only in that promise contained in Jeremiah's verse. The law written on a stony tablet does indeed restore the heart, but only after it has been written in the heart. Personally I think David, even as a young shepherd, understood this more than the Pharisees of Jesus' time. They seem to insist on a willful outward adherence to the law, but if this was righteousness Jesus would have never needed to say "You must be born again" to a 'master of Israel.' I think David had heart dealings with the Holy Spirit that anticipated the Gospel, which is perhaps one reason why he was singled out as a man after God's own heart.

Jeremiah talked about the writing of God's law on men's hearts and minds as if it were a future spiritual happening from his vantage point. He was implying that men of his day were not born with the laws inscription in their hearts. Many years later, (contrary to universalism's claims) the New Testament's sweeping condemnation of all natural men implies that they continued to be born without this inscription in their hearts. So, unless something has happened in the last two thousand years since the Gospels and Apostolic letters we can assume that natural men to this day are also born without this inscription. All that is left to decide when reading Jeremiah's promise is either that it was fulfilled in the Gospel...namely the receiving of the indwelling residing abiding Holy Spirit, or that this inscription promise is yet to be realized in some future dispensation.

My belief is that Jeremiah was talking about the Gospel. This (promise of the law being written inwardly_ is why I hold the position that a lost man must be converted, restored, and saved before he can obey God.

For me the key principle we seem to agree on is that the law, having revealed to the common man a need to be righteous, leads him to the cross of Christ who is the fulfillment of the Law. Only then, and not before, can a person hope to have God's law inscribed in the flesh of their hearts. Is this a fair statement?

So, we may be able to convert men from pride to fear before a holy God with the law, but only the Holy Spirit can enable true righteous conversion in a man. I think some preachers believe similarly, and I think some don't. Perhaps therein lies any differences!:-)

Blessings,

MC

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/8/28 5:48

This is the pureness of God and His Law without Christ:

Ezekiel 18:20-23 The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?

There is no Grace in this except if you in your own righteousness do this, God will save you.

This is pure Grace in Christ Jesus:

Ephesians 2:4-10 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

And you say Israel is saved the same way by the Law as those that are in Grace by His Faith?

1 Corinthians 1:28-31 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

This is pure Grace; "But of Him (God) are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God (Him) is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

No Law Here except the Law of Christ in Salvation or the Law of Salvation in Christ.

1Jo 5:2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments.

How do we keep His commandments?

Jhn 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, to them that believe on His name:

Rom 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Rom 8:19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

Phl 2:15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

Which Nation?

1Jo 3:1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: there fore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not.

1Jo 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by letsgetbusy (), on: 2006/8/29 0:41

Compton,

I appreciate your kindness and respect and I hope you feel that I am offering the same. I am here to sharpen iron with the brethren. Some I have disagreed with have assumed I think of them as small or unintelligent, I would not discuss these things if I didn't respect you guys. I have changed my mind after debating and conversating here more than once from someone opposing me, after time changing to favor what they stood up for, so I hope that when we do agree to disagree, it is in a spirit of searching for truth.

We do agree that the law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. I believe it has always been that way, not sure how you feel about that. It seems where we differ is rather the condition of a man prior to conversion. I believe that the unconverted man has the God's law written on his heart, what Finney (as quoted by Reidhead) called the "lower millstone of the law."

Reidhead spoke how natives in the jungles of Africa would tell Bro Paris how God made everything, but yet the natives still sacrificed to Satan. The natives also understood they would stand before the Creator after they died, and be in trouble for lying, stealing, adultery, etc, etc, but yet sacrificed to Satan out of fear of loss of crops, etc.

So I believe that the quote about writing the law upon our hearts, is one in the same as when Paul said that we would not need teachers, but be taught by the Spirit that now resides in us. I do also believe the Spirit leads, teaches, calls, and gives to men prior to conversion (Old and New Testament, by the way). Much like Samuel Morris, who was also a native in the jungle, who was converted after having a heavenly visitation very much like Paul's, and then sought God's teachings, with no one but the Spirit telling him what to do. He was led to a mission where he heard Paul's story and was born again.

Website on Samuel Morris: <http://www.taylor.edu/about/morris/>

So I believe also that the Spirit leads a man to conversion, and I also believe this happened OT/NT. I don't believe they had the indwelling prior to the cross, but I do believe the Spirit still did all of the other things He does to us today.

Ciy,

I believe that "all Israel shall be saved." We are Jews "inwardly" if we are born again. We are circumcised "inwardly" also

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. I don't believe there was any separate plan outside of the blood of Christ. The animal's blood only COVERED sin, until Jesus' blood CLEANSED of sin. Hebrews 11 states all those OT giants did everything by faith.

As far as Paul preaching straight grace, he might have been in those passages, but the same man also said:

"I did not know sin but by the law."

"The law was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ."

"By the law is the knowledge of sin."

I will stand with the recent greats as well:

Luther: The first duty of the gospel preacher is to declare God's law and show the nature of sin...

Wesley: Preach 90% law and 10% grace.

Spurgeon: I do not believe that any man can preach the gospel, who does not preach the law. For the law is the needle, and you cannot draw the silken thread of the gospel through a man's heart until you first send the law to make a way for it.

Jesus, when asked, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" answered, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?"

Stephen told his unjust accusers, in the sermon that led to Saul's conversion, "(You) have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it."

Paul said in Acts 13, "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

No, the law doesn't save, it prepares the heart for grace. I agree that after conversion, if we walk in the Spirit, we are free from the law. But when we stray, the Holy Spirit will turn us again to the written letter or the one written on our heart, regardless, though, toward God's law, to correct us. Seeing that the law leaves us helpless, we, again, cast ourselves again at the feet of Christ.

I am assuming you are a dispensationalist. If so, I would like to ask you some things not to beat you up, but to get clarification on what you believe. (we can start another thread, if necessary)

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/8/29 2:41

Hey there Letsgetbusy,

Quote:
-----We do agree that the law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. I believe it has always been that way, not sure how you feel about that.

Yes and yes. First a hearty amen to the law being a teacher. To bypass this, is to imagine walking to Heaven on the broad road. Second I agree with you regarding those from the Old Testament. I feel that those that lived under the "Old Covenant", prior to Jesus' ministry were still saved according to the promise of His coming. I like how Ron B. explains it by using the analogy of a dad standing in line with his 6 children at the amusement park. The four children in front of him get past the ticket booth thought they didn't actually carry any money...why? Because the ticket master can see that the father is coming with the payment.

Quote:
-----I believe that the unconverted man has the God's law written on his heart, what Finney (as quoted by Reidhead) called the "lower millstone of the law."

My controversy with this 'millstone' is not over its existence, but the limitations of its saving 'power.'

First I thank you for challenging me with this, and I affirm it's existence, as proven in Romans 1.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth... in unrighteousness;

So here I believe Paul is saying ungodly men 'hold the truth'...but they do not live the truth. (Hence their much deserved wrath...)

Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

So man, being given a sufficient moral and spiritual light from God to know right from wrong, has a just responsibility to obey that light. So far brother I think you and I are seeing eye to eye!

Here is where I might veer off slightly...

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Now when I read that our hearts have been darkened, I'm not at all saying that this excuses us from our sin, or the rejection of light we are guilty of. We were given a nature capable of obeying God, and for neglecting the light of that nature, God would be just and fair to condemn us. That our foolish hearts became darkened is our own fault entirely. (I will not find comfort in 'original sin' on this point!) Damnation is a fair and just reward for my own foul rebellion.

Yet as James, who had no fear of good works, points out, "Mercy triumphs over justice."

This mercy is the offense of the cross to the Jews...the law they were entrusted with is just and fair, and we have no excuse for failing to obey it. Yet, Jesus is the second chance if you will. This is why it's called grace! We preach the Gospel as grace and not law; not because helpless pitiful men deserve Jesus's pity but precisely because willful men deserve hell! The cross's atonement really is a scandalous offense when we consider that the law that accuses us is faultless and righteous in doing so. If the law had any feelings at this point, it might 'feel' cheated. It gave its light faithfully and we spat on it and our hearts grew darkened.

Because our hearts are darkened we have only something more than a dim awareness of the law that condemns our darkened heart. If we would progress in God, we will need a new heart. Now some fear that such generous grace is not a new heart at all, but is a really just a license for the old heart to sin. If so, such hateful abuse of God's grace is the final expression of man's foul wickedness before a holy and loving Father. The light of the Gospel reveals sin in not only repentant men, but also unrepentant.

God's grace through Jesus Christ, is so unimaginably precious that we must preach against sin with all the sobriety we can muster in this drunken whorish age...because to sin against such extended holy grace would only double the wrath we deserved in the first place.

Yet, when it comes to those who truly have repented and love God, a new heart is better than the darkened one. I believe this is a key element of the gospel. Even if our lower millstones began grinding away with righteousness, we could not serve God with our former guilty conscience, and we cannot dismiss our guilt ourselves or paint over it with new works. If God would call us to Heaven he will have to take away our richly deserved guilt.

Now just to be clear again, if a man stood before God with only the merits of his darkened heart, this man certainly could not hide behind aggrieved victim status via Adam's sin...the former heart, as sin-sick as it is, is still sufficient to know that there is a God who judges right from wrong. Such dim remaining light is quite sufficient to lead a man to repentance; and to cry for forgiveness and fuller light in Jesus. Yet today many run from a God they say they do not believe in...The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."

I think Letsgetbusy we are not that far apart at all. In fact we might be a lot like James and Paul, each concerned about preserving the same message. Vernon McGee pictured James and Paul not facing off against one another, but facing wa

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y from each other, watching each others' back, defending the Gospel from different foes. One was withstanding cheap and blasphemous notions of 'grace' that try to steal or defame the Gospel, while the other was defending the way for truly broken and repentant souls to find holy grace and perfect peace in the lamb that was slain.

I also think sometimes James and Paul switched roles! :-)

Blessings dear brother! It's a pleasure to share in this discussion with you...I am learning (and unlearning) many things.

MC

Re: - posted by letsgetbusy (), on: 2006/8/29 9:13

Yes, brother, I am enjoying this also. I think we agree on a lot more than I first thought.

I also agree that God's law, a man's conscience, and his understanding can be defiled and covered (or seared):

1 Tim 4:1b-2 in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron

Titus 1:15 Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

I used to think that the conscience could be covered over a bit (seared only) but the Scripture is clear that it can be defiled, and no longer be pure (1 Tim 3:9, 2 Tim 1:3) or good (1 Tim 1:5 and 19). J Edwin Orr straightened me out on this out with his sermon on conscience:

J Edwin Orr, What Is Conscience? : <http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/singlefile.php?commentView=itemComments&lid=170>

So I do believe the unregenerate man still has the lower millstone of the law within him. But through his thoughts, words, and deeds, he keeps covering it, ignoring it, and rejecting it, until it no longer bothers him. I also believe that the law, by God's grace, is still capable of cutting through his seared and defiled conscience, and piercing (or pricking) his coated heart.

I would invite you to listen to Paris Reidhead's sermon, The Right Use of the Law:
<http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/singlefile.php?lid=40&commentView=itemComments>

I would be interested to find out what you thought about this message.

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/8/29 12:21

Thanks LGB,

Quote:
-----I used to think that the conscience could be covered over a bit (seared only) but the Scripture is clear that it can be defiled, and no longer be pure

I think that is well stated, better in fact than my long-winded attempt.

Quote:
-----So I do believe the unregenerate man still has the lower millstone of the law within him. But through his thoughts, words, and deeds, he keeps covering it, ignoring it, and rejecting it, until it no longer bothers him. I also believe that the law, by God's grace, is still capable of cutting through his seared and defiled conscience, and piercing (or pricking) his coated heart.

Amen on these points. I keenly appreciate your insertion of 'by God's grace'. The law itself was grace to a tribe of unruly

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men in the desert; and additionally we have been sent the Holy Spirit to convict sinful hearts numb to that law, and comfort repentant hearts sensitive to that law. Grace upon grace!

This conversation has sharpened my understanding and expression of this important issue. (thank you) To acknowledge that man may act like a brute beast, is not the same as saying he is in fact only a poor brute beast who has no accountability before God. In this way I think the popular usage of 'total depravity' has migrated from its once intended purpose to the point that I am wary of its usage. Suffice it to say that a man stands under 'total condemnation' for his own willful depravity, which is quite different than portraying mankind as a cosmic tragedy, or an innocent bystander hurt by Adam's depravity. Christians have long discussed how mankind shares in Adam's depravity, whether it is cosmic, or cultural, or genetic or willful, or all of the above. We only know for certain that men chose sin's darkness over God's light...yet even so God, in his unfailing love, chose to save us.

In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

I think it's interesting to note that "gives light to men" precedes "coming into the world", as if to say that the light Jesus embodied is really the same light that was already provided to men...that is to say a restoration of the 'true light' that mankind had abandoned and has all but forgotten. The very Creator who had placed what became the 'lower millstone' in men was now walking among men!

He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.

There is an understood astonishment in those verses, as if man should've recognized who Jesus was. Again I see this as a confirmation of the original, but worn down 'millstone' you were pointing out.

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

And this is the promise of the Gospel, our opportunity to regain what was lost and become God's children.

I realize you know all this, but it is so wonderful to recount!

Quote:

-----I would invite you to listen to Paris Reidhead's sermon, The Right Use of the Law:

I will brother. I'll have an opportunity while I'm working today!

Blessings,

MC

Re: - posted by letsgetbusy (), on: 2006/8/30 0:05

"man should've recognized who Jesus was"

Some of the other things you said I have thought about, as well as the above, but I have never heard it put that plainly. It seemed to sink in a little better. They should have recognized Him, He expected to be recognized, just as I believe all men should do today. Men are punished for not recognizing Christ for who He is and what He did.

Re: - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/9/6 18:33

"A sinner can stop sinning, by coming to Jesus." And, "God only expects from us what is possible, and what is possible, is obedience towards God." This is wrong, just give me a chance to explain...

In Faith alone in Christ alone by grace ALONE! You John 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."

Matthew 19:17

So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments(which is impossible!)."

He came to bring SINNERS TO REPENTANCE, not the self-righteous. Yes, he says to choose between life and death but he also says it is impossible one your own! You need Christ to give you a new heart so that you will choose life! If there were two ways into heaven Jesus would've said so. Therefore sinners are totally incapable of Choosing not to sin. Yes, it is impossible for a depraved mind to love God without the GRACE OF GOD. GOD COMMANDS THE IMPOSSIBLE (WITHOUT HIS HELP) TO BE DONE!

Matthew 19:26

But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Only Christ was righteous. The only reason you can be declared righteous is by the justification of Christ's blood! The cross! The working of God in a fallen heart! This my friend's is the good news! That which we are incapable of doing, God has done!

Re: - posted by letsgetbusy (), on: 2006/9/6 23:22

ga,

I would say that it is not a matter of one being right and the other wrong, both of you are actually correct.

1 John 3:9 "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

In the words of Alan Redpath on the Holy Spirit, "HE CANNOT POSSIBLY SIN!"

However the old man, that is our old sin nature, will continue on with us, he is burned away at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

So we have flesh, which has 'no good thing,' and the new nature, that has no bad thing. And they are at war.

Now, of course we all still sin, we make God a liar if we say that we don't. But it is also possible to live a life victorious over sin. This is the Spirit-filled life. Not a baptism of the Holy Spirit, but a continuously Spirit-filled LIFE. An outpouring that continues, not a one-shot experience. Walking in the Spirit, victorious over sin.

All this, of course is granted by God, but the Scriptures specifically say that we do not sin when we are born again, as far as receiving or being dismissed of God's wrath.

Lots of details to this concept, but I hope you understand the spirit of what I am saying.

Re:, on: 2006/9/7 6:09

Quote:

sermonindex wrote:

Quote:

-----But was the sinner capable of not choosing sin?

No because he is depraved and born into sin, that is clear teaching of scripture. "Or did they simply do what they had no choice but to do?" **yes** we all have gone astray and he has laid on HIM the transgressions of us all. People could choose holiness and righteousness but that would not suffice at the judgement seat that is why Jesus died and shed His blood.

His dying was not a "help" for us to add our righteousness and good choices to it, but it is EVERYTHING! without it we are lost and in darkness. In the old testament blood sacrifice and men trying to live as best as they could sufficed but after the death of Christ all are given the free gift of eternal life, the tree of life opened freely. The flaming swords of the Law being put away and free access through faith and repentance to this new and living way.

If I read you correctly you are overlooking many who weren't depraved. The first being Abel who comes quickly to mind.

The word "depraved" with the connotation being "reprobate" is from reform teaching designed to lead one's thinking about God along certain lines of interpretation. No where can the word "depraved" be found in the KJV. Is it implied? Perhaps, but certainly because of **willful** ignorance, i.e., man's freewill to choose with results that follow.

Respectfully,

Re: - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/9/7 12:38

Part 1

Ormyl: Quote:"If I read you correctly you are overlooking many who weren't depraved. The first being Abel who comes quickly to mind. The word "depraved" with the connotation being "reprobate" is from reform teaching designed to lead one's thinking about God along certain lines of interpretation. No where can the word "depraved" be found in the KJV. Is it implied? Perhaps, but certainly because of willful ignorance, i.e., man's freewill to choose with results that follow."End Quote.

All men are depraved even Abel was depraved. Depraved meaning: being utterly incapable of doing good.

"Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—"

Men are inherently sinners. You are utterly incapable of choosing to do good without God bearing fruit in you.

Romans 5:19 "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

Eph 2:1 "And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins"

Col 1:21 "And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled "

Is 64:6 "But we are all like an unclean thing,

And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags;

We all fade as a leaf,

And our iniquities, like the wind,

Have taken us away."

Part 2

Well, here we have an issue on the correct interpretation of 1 John...

First, "If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us."

"1 John 3:6 Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.

1 John 3:7-8 He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning.

1 John 3:9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

1 John 3:10 In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother."

Practicing Sin:

Based off of the context the passage is clearly talking about a practice of sin being a manifestation of being lost. John is

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talking about making sin a practice. Otherwise, if this is saying if we sin we're all be Children of the devil according to 1 John 3:6. And obviously that's not the right interpretation.

Practicing Righteousness:

Being born again does not give us the miraculous ability to live a sinless perfect life. We have a new heart which desires righteousness and loves God but yet God alone brings about sanctification. John 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."

letsgetbusy: Quote "All this, of course is granted by God, but the Scriptures specifically say that we do not sin when we are born again, as far as receiving or being dismissed of God's wrath." End Quote

Be careful! We are saved by the justification of the cross alone by faith alone! We do not earn salvation! Eph 2:8! Nothing in my hands I bring, but solely to the cross I cling! John 15.

Re:, on: 2006/9/7 13:01

Quote:

-----All men are depraved even Abel was depraved. Depraved meaning: being utterly incapable of doing good

But Abel did do good. God said so.

:-o

Re: can sinners stop sinning - posted by brentbarnett (), on: 2006/9/7 15:07

The issue is not quantifying the number of sins. The issue is that the quality of the person through and through, most fundamentally in their heart, is corrupt. This is why we need to be reborn. The unbeliever is dead in sin (Ephesians 2:1). He cannot stop sinning. He may be "moral." But he cannot change his heart. He may give to charity, but that does not mean that he loves those in the charity or God. The issue is that all men who are without Christ suppress the truth that they need to worship God. Only the grace of God can get them to stop their evil ways by changing their fallen heart.

Brent Barnett
www.relevantbibleteaching.com

Re: - posted by letsgetbusy (), on: 2006/9/8 1:22

bro ga,

I want to hash this out so that I understand where you are coming from.

"Be careful! We are saved by the justification of the cross alone by faith alone! We do not earn salvation!"

To be specific, bro ga, we are not saved by faith, we are saved by grace through faith. Grace saves us, faith just allows God's grace to do the work. Faith is the gate of our heart opening up, so to speak.

I don't understand why you would say that I am leaning toward salvation by works when I say that all of our sins are erased when we are born of God. He draws us, He saves us, He sustains us. He makes us pure of all sins. Not some, ALL sins. He said

'As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.'

'thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.'

'Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out'

The Holy Spirit in every born again believer cannot sin at all. If He can, it is not the Holy Spirit. Of course, we still carry th

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e sin nature around until the fire takes it away at the Judgment Seat of Christ, but Christ in us, cannot sin.

But I am still failing to see where I am leaning toward works salvation. Please enlighten me.

Re:, on: 2006/9/8 9:50

Quote:

letsgetbusy wrote:
bro ga,

I want to hash this out so that I understand where you are coming from.

"Be careful! We are saved by the justification of the cross alone by faith alone! We do not earn salvation!"

To be specific, bro ga, we are not saved by faith, we are saved by grace through faith. Grace saves us, faith just allows God's grace to do the work. Faith is the gate of our heart opening up, so to speak.

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The Holy Spirit in every born again believer cannot sin at all. If He can, it is not the Holy Spirit. Of course, we still carry the sin nature around until the fire takes it away at the Judgment Seat of Christ, but Christ in us, cannot sin.

But I am still failing to see where I am leaning toward works salvation. Please enlighten me.

Quote:
-----To be specific, bro ga, we are not saved by faith, we are saved by grace through faith. Grace saves us, faith just allows God's grace to do the work. Faith is the gate of our heart opening up, so to speak.

Amen!! And when that is properly understood by the Calvinist, their Bible just might come alive to them.

:-(

Re: - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/9/10 17:11

I agree with everything you're saying.
Salvation is by grace through faith in Christ.

I wasn't saying that salvation wasn't by grace.

"that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified."

If I say that salvation is by faith alone you shouldn't rebuke me. It is through faith alone (apart from works) just as it is in Christ alone AND by Grace alone.

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God"

It is by grace AND through faith AND through Christ.

Still you gotten off topic.

Re: - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/9/10 17:15

Able didn't do anything of his own righteousness. It was God who worked through him. John 15 and Romans 3:10-21

Re:, on: 2006/9/10 19:47

Quote:

GraceAlone wrote:

Able didn't do anything of his own righteousness. It was God who worked through him. John 15 and Romans 3:10-21

He sure did do by his own righteousness just as much as Cain did his act by his own rebelliousness. Was God in him also?

Clue: God was in no one.

;-)

Re: - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/9/13 19:09

Ormlly; "God was in no one." What do you say to the Word of God? What do you say to these verses?

1 Corinthians 3:16 "Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?"

John 15:4-5; "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."

Romans 3:10-12; "There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one."

Re: - posted by letsgetbusy (), on: 2006/9/16 21:10

He is trying to say that God the Holy Ghost was not yet indwelling His people prior to the cross.

Re:, on: 2006/9/16 21:54

I would say, that there hasn't been a single sinner, in either scripture or history, that has repented who hasn't:

1. Had the Holy Spirit convict him. **John 16:8, 2Corinthians 7:10**
(Convict does not mean caused)

2. Had the Father draw Him. **John 6:44**
(Draw does not mean forced)

3. Had the ability, or enabling, given to him entirely by God's grace. **John 15:5**

But likewise, neither has there been a single sinner, in all of scripture or history, that was saved, that did not:

1. "obeyed the gospel" "from the heart." **2Th 1:8, 1Pe 4:17, Ro 6:17**

And I concur with Fletcher, that "forced obedience is a contradiction in terms". True obedience, as **Romans 6:17** says, is from the persons own heart.

Can you show me, in either history or scripture, where a sinner was saved without "obeying from the heart" the gospel??

?

And can you show me, in either history or scripture, where a sinner was condemned, without "choosing" or without "obeying" sin?

And again, a choice requires the possibility for as well as the possibility not. In order to have a "choice" to sin, there must be the "choice" not to sin, or else it's not a choice at all.

A sinner has the option of either his sin or the Savior. It's entirely his own option. He can either obey "sin unto death" or he can follow "obedience unto righteousness" **Ro 6:16**.

Jesus Christ did the work of a Savior, but never did the work of a sinner. God has done His part, by laying down His life. And if a sinner be damned, it's because he did not do his own part! It will be because he first chooses to sin, and then he chooses not to repent.

Man cannot save himself, but man can refuse to allow Jesus to save him. As Jerusalem who refused to be gathered unto Jesus. **Mt 23:37, Lu 13:34**

Men sin, not because God hasn't given them the ability to obey Him, but because they *want* to. Men don't come to Jesus, not because they can't come to Jesus, but because they don't want to.

Jesus pointed out that the reason people didn't come to Him, wasn't because of **lack of ability**, but because of **lack of will**.

Joh 5:40 - "But you are not **willing** to come to Me that you may have life"

Mt 22:3 - "and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not **willing** to come."

It would be completely foolish to rebuke a person who didn't have ability. Would you rebuke a blind man for not seeing? Or would you punish a mute man for not speaking? And yet you would say a preacher should rebuke the unable, and propose that God punishes the incapable!

I'm saying that God calls sinners to repent, and preachers must call sinners to repent, because sinners are capable of repenting! And that God punishes sinners, because they are guilty and deserving because they have actually *chosen* sin rather than Him.

Our message in preaching, is "whosoever will"

Re 22:17 - "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And **whosoever will**, let him take the water of life freely."

Re: - posted by letsgetbusy (), on: 2006/9/19 21:38

Preach it!

Re: - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/9/19 23:39

Just to make a few points: :)

Phil 2:12-13: "Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure." IT IS GOD WHO WORKS.

Ezekiel 36:26

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."

Depravity: By definition is the unmeritoriousness of man before God because of the corruption of original sin. None of

our actions can gain favor with God for salvation.

By (our depraved) nature mankind is subject to wrath Eph 2:3...

Like it says in Romans 1:28-29 "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 being filled with all unrighteousness..."

Eccles 7:20

"There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and does not sin"

Ephesians 2:1

"And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins"

Romans 5:10

For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

1 Cor 1:21; Heb 11:6; 1 Cor 2:14; Rom 14:23; John 1:13

2 Peter 2:14

"having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart trained in covetous practices, and are accursed children."

Romans 5:12-19

"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned— 13 (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. 15 But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. 16 And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification. 17 For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)

18 Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous."

Original Sin:

We all sinned and were all condemned in Adam. If we say we don't have imputed condemnation, then we consequently say we don't have imputed justification. If we say only our individual works of sin condemn us then you consequently say our individual works of righteousness save us.

Psalm 58:3

"The wicked are estranged from the womb; They go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies."

Gen 5:3; Job 15:14; 25:4; Ps 51:5; Gen 3:6,7; Rom 5:12

Original sin is intended to show our spiritual infection transmitted through reproduction. Sin is inherent in the human condition.

Augustina and Luther agree, sin incapacitates humans from doing good, and because we are born sinners we lack the power to do good. Yet because we willfully choose the bad over good, we are held accountable for our sin.

As Lazarus could not rise from the dead without grace, neither can we choose life when we are dead in our sins.

Quote:
-----Lazarus1719: Jesus pointed out that the reason people didn't come to Him, wasn't because of lack of ability, but because of lack of

will.

They are not willing and UNABLE to WILL unless Christ does a work in them.
A lost man can not will to choose good and is not pleasing to God apart from salvation. We do not will to follow God until we are saved and Christ changes our wills. While sin effaces God's image in humankind and general revelation, it does not erase them.

Quote:
-----Lazarus1719:

"I would say, that there hasn't been a single sinner, in either scripture or history, that has repented who hasn't:"

3. Had the ability, or enabling, given to him entirely by God's grace. John 15:5

This is exactly what I'm saying. Lost sinners are unable to choose good without God's grace. Or DEPRAVED.

Just think about these verses...

Baptist Confession of 1689:

"As the consequence of his fall into a state of sin, man has lost all ability to will the performance of any of those works, spiritually good, that accompany salvation. As a natural man he is dead in sin and altogether opposed to that which is good. Hence he is not able, by any strength of his own, to turn himself to God, or even prepare to turn himself to God.

(John 6:44; Romans 5:6; 8:7; Eph 2:1,5; Titus 3:3-5.)

When God converts a sinner, and brings him out of sin into the state of grace, He frees him from his natural bondage to sin, and, by His grace alone, He enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good.

(John 8:36; Romans 7:15,18,19,21,23; Phil 2:13; Col 1:13.)"

www.cornerstoneorlando.org

Re:, on: 2006/9/20 0:08

The way we answer these theological questions shapes our Christian "World-view". They determine how we view God, how we view sinners, and how we believe we should preach.

It's very important that we have a BIBLICAL perspective on these matters.

Re: - posted by GraceAlone (), on: 2006/9/20 15:13

If we want a biblical perspective let's take some more bible into account. Personally I don't want my own worldview, I want God's.

Read below. If you want to hear more on the subject listen to John Piper on "Adam, Christ, and Justification" parts 1-5. Go to this site... <http://www.desiringgod.org/ResourceLibrary/Sermons/ByScripture/10/?pageSize=25&pageNumber=4>

Opposing Original sin and Depravity is a giant leap into the world of heresy. Think about these verses. When it comes to "depravity" you're debating John Calvin, Luther, Spurgeon, Edwards, Warfield, Gerstner, Sproul, Piper, MacArthur, Bruner and LOTS MORE!

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Read those verses below, if Christians debate God's word shall judge.

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