

Lesson # 5 -- Deliverance from the Principle of Sin.

Introduction

- A. The Christian needs more than the imputation of righteousness and the forgiveness of sins. He also needs an enablement to love and obey God.
- B. It is imperative that the Christian understand how profoundly and in what way the Fall of man and his own sinful deeds have affected him. If he does not understand this, his repentance, renunciation, restitution, resistance of the enemy and the world, as well as his appropriation of the provision in Jesus Christ will be limited and hindered.
- C. It is not the will of God that we live the Christian life in our own strength. God has made an adequate provision for the daily life. We must honestly admit our failures, seek to understand our problems, learn the provision that we have in Christ, and finally, apprehend and utilize the Biblical method of faith, love and hope that is so necessary for the successful Christian life.
- D. The believer's sinful "flesh" (old nature) is the source of a great deal of our spiritual trouble. We must learn what the Bible has to say about this "principle of sin" and how to live in the freedom promised to us in the Scripture.
- E. The theme of this lesson is found in Romans 7:24,25.

O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord

I. The Biblical Explanation of the Principle of Sin.

- A. The principle of sin is described as the "flesh", Romans 7:13,22,23.

For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not . . . For I delight in the law of God after the inward man, but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind (desire) and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

Observation: Paul is here talking about his attitudes and actions - not his body. He states he can choose to do what is right but is often unable to practice his desire. It is the "flesh" that hinders him. This "flesh" is described as a "law" (pattern of action) in his members (thoughts, emotions, bodily desires, etc.).

- B. The believer is to renounce all forms of "fleshly" living, Romans 8:12,13.

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

Observation: The manifestation of the "flesh" in the life of the believer is similar to the pattern of action as described above. This must be broken by choosing to trust the Holy Spirit for His help and by refusing to practice or commit sin.

- C. The "flesh" is a contradictory element in the life of a believer and the source of sinful actions, Galatians 5:16-21.

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 . . . 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

Observation: From this passage we now more clearly understand what Paul meant when he described the "flesh" as a "law in my members . . . bringing me into captivity"

- D. The believer may live so unsuccessfully that he is described as "fleshly", I Corinthians 3:1-4.

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal (fleshly), even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk and not with meat, for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal (fleshly) for whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal (fleshly) and walk (live) as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal (men)?

Observation: When one will choose to live in harmony with the "flesh" (old nature or principle of sin) the control of the "flesh" will manifest itself in that person's life. Paul contrasts these saints in Corinth with what they should be as "spiritual" in 2:13-16. These believers were called "holy" because of the new birth (I Cor. 1:2; 3:16,17) but they were living according to a "fleshly pattern of action".

Summary:

1. From these verses it would appear that the term "flesh" is not to be identified with the believer's nature. The new birth has made the Christian to be holy (I Cor. 1:2; 3:16,17; Hebrews 10:10,14; I Peter 2:9). Our sinful nature (the old man), was dealt with by the Lord Jesus in His Crucifixion (Romans 6:6) and we were delivered from that "nature" in the new birth (Romans 6:1-13; Eph. 4:22,23; Col. 3:9,10).
2. What we popularly call the "old nature" is really the "flesh". This is manifested in our lives as a "law in our members" (pattern of action) (Romans 7:21-25). Due to the presence of the "old man" (a totally depraved nature) before regeneration, the Christian is programmed to respond sinfully in all the areas of life. The "flesh" (principle of sin or old nature) is the manifestation in our daily life of this "programming".

3. Due to the new birth, the Christian is a totally holy person in his inner being. There is no "part" of him that is intrinsically unholy. He does have, however, a sinful "pattern of action" which is the "flesh" and this pervades his entire being and life. Due to the work of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Crucifixion and Resurrection, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the believer may live a life free from the "flesh". However, due to poor training in the home, being inadequately taught as a Christian, the impact of a worldly culture, the attack of the enemy, the influence of carnal (fleshly) people, the weakening effect of a lukewarm church, and in particular our own lazy, passive, irresponsible response to God, all of us have a constant battle with the "flesh". We do not have to live this way.

II. The Need for Deliverance from the Principle of Sin.

- A. The "flesh" defiles the believer - when its pattern of action is followed, Mark 7:21-23; I Peter 2:11.
- B. The "flesh" hinders, weakens, and enslaves the believer, Romans 7:15-24.
- C. The "flesh" is a contradictory element in the believer, Galatians 5:17.
- D. The "flesh" is a source of sinful actions in the believer, Galatians 5:19-21.
- E. The "flesh" is always a potential ally for Satan, Ephesians 4:21-31.

Summary: All Christians find the presence of thoughts, feelings, desires, and aspirations that are out of harmony with spiritual goals. We may not allow the "flesh" to set the pattern for our life and thereby limit the freedom, power, enjoyment, obedience, and service which God has given to us.

III. The Provision of God Regarding the Principle of Sin.

- A. The provision of God in the Crucifixion.

Knowing this, that our old man (the totally depraved nature we once had as non-Christians) is Crucified with Him, that the body of sin (the "flesh" with its pattern of action - 7:24) might be destroyed (paralyzed), that henceforth we should not serve sin. Romans 6:6

Observation: The "old man" has been crucified and when one becomes a believer he becomes dead to the "old man". This makes it possible for the Christian to break the dominance of the "flesh". The source of strength for the "flesh" is gone. While we will have this until glorification we now no longer need to live according to its "pattern". God has provided a cleansing, a deliverance, a freedom from the "flesh" with all its serious effects.

B. The provision of God in the Resurrection.

Therefore we are buried with Him by Baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Romans 6:4

Observation: The believer has the resurrection life of Jesus Christ within as the motivating enablement to live free from sin and in harmony with the will of God. This is the source of the power which flows into our life when we choose to break the old patterns of sin and live according to truth, love and holiness.

C. The provision of God in the new nature.

1. II Cor. 5:17 -- The new nature has its source in the work of Jesus Christ and results in a transformation of character and life.
2. Galatians 6:14 -- The new nature is the key for personal assurance of salvation and a successful Christian life.
3. Ephesians 4:24 -- The new nature is the source of righteousness and holiness. The Christian, therefore, has the ability to live in righteousness and holiness.
4. Colossians 3:10 -- The new nature is the source of knowledge. The Christian, therefore, has the ability to know God and the world.
5. II Peter 1:4 -- The new nature is the inner source of freedom from lust and its resultant corruption. The Christian, therefore, has the ability to make correct decisions and live a holy life.

Observations: The ability we possess through the new nature is not always manifested in a spontaneous manner. In most areas of the daily life it is necessary to make clear-cut Biblical choices of faith and love to refuse sin and to do the will of God. When we do the power of the new nature will find expression in our life.

D. The provision of God in the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. Romans 8:12,13

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against such there is no law. Galatians 5:22,23

Observation: The Holy Spirit has been sent to apply the work of the Lord Jesus in the life of the believer and to enable him to live a spiritually "fruitful" life. We are not in this alone - we have a "Helper" in the blessed Holy Spirit.

E. The provision of the Word of God.

Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy Word is truth. John 17:17

Observation: When we follow the blueprint of the Bible and choose to live that way - then we open the door for the provision of God to be manifested in our daily life. We do not have to guess as to how we should live - we have been told.

IV. The Biblical Exhortations Regarding the Principle of Sin.

That ye put off concerning the former conversation (life) the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore putting away lying . . . anger . . . giving place to the Devil . . . stealing . . . corrupt communication . . . grieve not the Holy Spirit . . . bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, evil speaking and malice. Ephesians 4:22-31

Observation: A better translation may be "having put off . . . the old man" which reminds us that the work was accomplished when we became born again and is to be practiced each day of our life. We are to constantly maintain the attitude that the "old man" has been crucified and the "new man" is ours. This sets the stage whereby we can reject the pattern of the "flesh" and choose to live in harmony with the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

V. The Biblical Instructions Regarding the Principle of Sin.

A. Daily count on the provision of God, Romans 6:11.

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

B. Daily choose to say "No" to the "flesh" and its sin, Romans 6:12.

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

C. Daily choose to obey God and trust Him for deliverance, Romans 6:13.

. . . Yield yourselves to God as those that are alive from the dead.

Conclusion: God's promise is that when we obey Him - He will work in us.
Romans 6:16-18; Philippians 2:12,13; I Peter 1:22

<u>Reject the pattern of the flesh</u>		<u>Choose the pattern of the Spirit</u>	
<u>Result</u>	Selfishness	Love	
	Despair	Joy	<u>Result</u>
	Anxiety	Peace	
Bitterness	Hopelessness	Hope	Freedom
Tension	Lust	Purity	Power
Bondage	Pretense	Honesty	Fruitfulness
Passivity	Pride	Humility	Purpose