

The Believer's Sinful Pattern of Action and the Successful Christian Life

Introduction

- A. 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 and appropriation of the provision in Jesus Christ will be limited.
- B. The believer's sinful "flesh" or pattern of action is the source of a great deal of his spiritual trouble. Biblical clarity in this area and a knowledge of the provision God has made for us will result in freedom – if the Biblical admonitions are obeyed.

I. The Biblical Description of the Flesh and its Sinful Effects.

- A. The flesh defiles the believer and is a source of evil thoughts, Mark 7:21-23.

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.

Observation: What a cesspool the human heart is. Note, however, that the presence of the "flesh" is not necessarily defiling – it is when this pattern of action is followed that the believer is defiled.

- B. The flesh hinders, weakens and enslaves the believer, Romans 7:15,19,23,24.

For that which I do I allow not, for what I would, that do I not, but what I hate, that do I . . . For the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do . . . 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

Observation: The old fleshly pattern of action, unless Biblically dealt with, will continue to limit the freedom and power of the Christian.

- C. The flesh is a contradictory element in the believer, Galatians 5:17.

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.

Observation: All Christians recognize this "contrary" element within. We find the presence of thoughts, feelings and bodily desires that are out of harmony with our spiritual goals*

- D. The flesh is a source of sinful actions in the believer, Galatians 5:19-21.

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: The believer may not allow the flesh to set the pattern for life.

II. The Provision of God Concerning the Flesh.

A. The fleshly pattern of action has been stripped of its power, Romans 6:6.

Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin (fleshly pattern of action) might be destroyed (paralyzed), that henceforth we should not serve sin.

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 be also free from the dominance of the flesh.

B. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ makes a new life possible, Romans 6:4.

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.

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 and the Fruit of the Spirit.

III. The Exhortation of God Concerning the Old Man and the New Man, Ephesians 4:22-24.

That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Observation: A better translation may be "having put off" or "put off once for all". This reminds us that the work was really accomplished when we became believers. We are to constantly maintain the attitude that the Old Man has been crucified and that 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.

IV. The Instruction of God Concerning the Old Nature.

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 sin and refuse temptation, 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 unto God as those that are alive from the dead . . .

Reject the pattern of the flesh

	Selfishness	
Result:	Despair	
Bitterness	Anxiety	
Tension	Hopelessness	
Bondage	Lust	
Passivity	Pretense	
	Pride	

Choose the pattern of the Spirit

Love	
Joy	Result:
Peace	Freedom
Hope	Power
Purity	
Honesty	
Humility	

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