

The Nature of Sin

by David Shelby Corlett

The sermon explores the nature of sin, its origins, implications, and the necessity of Jesus for salvation and sanctification.

Topics: "Original Sin", "Entire Sanctification"

Description

David Shelby Corlett delves into the foundation of the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification, emphasizing the crucial understanding of the nature of sin to grasp the concept of holiness. Sin is twofold, existing as a principle of evil within man's nature and as outward acts of disobedience against God's law. Man is born with a sinful nature inherited from Adam, making him prone to evil and incapable of righteousness without divine intervention.

Transcript

The foundation for the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification is found in the nature of sin. Unless we have a clear understanding of the nature of sin we will never fully comprehend the doctrine of holiness.

1. What is the nature of sin?

Sin is twofold in its nature; namely, sin a principle of evil within the nature of man; and sin an outward act of disobedience or transgression of the law of God.

2. What is the natural state of man as he is born into this world?

Man is born in a state of innocency before God, but with a sinful nature that is prone to evil. "Were by nature the children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3).

3. Is the individual responsible for this sinful nature in the sense that it brings guilt to his heart?

No, the individual is not responsible for this sinful nature, hence it cannot bring guilt to his heart. It is his misfortune as a member of the human race. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalm 51:5).

4. How did this nature of sin enter the human race?

Sin entered the race through Adam and his rebellion against God. Adam because of his transgression was not only made a sinner, but he became sinful in his nature. Through Adam's act sin entered the life stream

of the human race and it was henceforth the misfortune of all born into the race to inherit this nature of sin. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world [race]" (Romans 5:12). To be born human is to be born sinful.

5. How does this inherited sin affect the life of man?

His inner life is disordered with a proneness toward evil and he finds it easier to do wrong than to do right. "The children of men ... are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Psalm 14:2-3). "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies" (Psalm 58:3).

6. Is there not some positive element of righteousness naturally inherent in man which may be cultivated so that the individual may overcome or correct this inner proneness to evil?

There is no positive element of righteousness inherent in man, his whole being is tainted with this sinful nature so that he finds himself helpless to overcome or correct this inner disorder or proneness to evil. "There is none righteous, no not one" (Romans 3:10). "For I know that in me dwelleth no good thing" (Romans 7:18).

7. Is this nature of sin resident in the physical body of man?

No, this sinful nature is in the individual, not in the physical body. The body cannot sin independent of the individual, it is never the agent in committing sin. The individual is the agent and the body may be used as the instrument of sinning. "As ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness" (Romans 6:19). Note it is the individual which yielded the members -- body and powers of soul. As a sinner the individual yielded his members as instruments of his sinning; when he became righteous he yielded those same members as servants or instruments of righteousness.

8. To what extent is a man guilty for the acts of sin in his life?

He is fully responsible for these acts of sin and as a consequence he is guilty of sinning and is brought under the penalty of his sin.

9. Is there any way by which man may free himself from the nature and guilt of sin?

Man is helpless to free himself. He cannot purge his nature of its sin, nor can he atone for his own acts of sin, or free himself from the penalty of the broken law. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight ... A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Romans 3:20, 28).

10. Have some means been provided by which man may be forgiven of his sins and cleansed from the sinful nature?

There have been. It is through the sacrifice and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is evident that if man cannot save himself he must seek some higher source of deliverance. Since sin is twofold; namely, sin in the nature of man and also transgressions or acts of sin; we must have a Saviour who can not only forgive these transgressions but who also can cleanse the nature from inherited sin. Such a Saviour Jesus is.

11. Is this nature of sin progressive in principle?

It is. "It waxeth corrupt after the lusts of deceit" (Eph. 4:22, R.V.) "Sin [i. e., the nature of sin] working death in me" (Romans 7:13). The more a person sins the more sinful or polluted he becomes.

12. Cannot this nature of sin be restricted in its operation?

It can. Through proper training, education and discipline one may keep this sinful nature in check so he may not commit the grosser sins. But, nevertheless, this principle of sin is still active in the nature of man being manifested in selfishness, conceit, pride, and similar perversions of the soul. It is exhibited in some form of sin or perversion in all people.

13. If this nature of sin may be restricted in its operation may not the individual through stricter discipline and more careful training eliminate it from his being, or may he not through processes of sublimation correct this proneness to evil?

No. This nature of sin will not lend itself to this process. In essence it is lawless -- not subject to rulership by law. "The carnal mind [i.e., sinful nature] is enmity against God: for it is not' subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8:7).

14. What is the penalty of sin?

The penalty for sin is death. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. 18:20). "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12).

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