

Deliverance From the Flesh

by Watchman Nee

Watchman Nee emphasizes that true deliverance from the flesh comes through the cross and co-crucifixion with Christ.

Scripture: John 3:6, Romans 8:3, Galatians 5:19-21, Galatians 5:24, Colossians 2:11-13

Topics: "Deliverance", "Co-Crucifixion with Christ"

Description

Watchman Nee emphasizes that true deliverance from the flesh comes through the cross of Christ. He explains that while regeneration occurs through belief in Jesus' substitutional death, believers must also experience co-crucifixion with Christ to overcome the flesh's desires. Nee highlights that the flesh cannot be educated or cleansed but must be crucified, allowing believers to walk in the Spirit. He encourages those new in faith to understand the significance of the cross and the necessity of dying to the flesh to live victoriously. Ultimately, the path to freedom from the flesh is through identifying with Christ's death and resurrection.

Transcript

The unique way to be delivered from the flesh is the cross. An unregenerated person is regenerated through believing in the substitutional death of the Lord Jesus on the cross; he need no longer be according to the flesh or mind the things of the flesh. However, sometimes he may still mind the things of the flesh and may still commit the sins listed in Galatians 5:19-21. There is a difference between the unregenerated mind and the regenerated mind. Before regeneration, the mind is generally set on the things of the flesh. After regeneration, the mind may stumble temporarily through sudden temptations, but we do not want this to be our usual experience. If a person will take a step forward to the cross, he becomes victorious.

"For that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). The Son of God has not only borne our sins on the tree and become our sin offering, but has also "condemned sin in the flesh" so that we who are joined to Him may no longer serve sin in the flesh. Because He is the Son of God, He is able to be the sin offering; this is His substitutional death. Because He was in the likeness of the flesh of sin, He was able to condemn sin in the flesh. This is the "co-death"--when He died in the flesh, He crucified His flesh together with sin. On the cross the Lord Jesus not only bore the judgment of sins for the sinner, but He also brought the sinner and sin along with Him to the cross. When He died, these died

with Him.

Those who are infants in Christ should go on one step further to learn the truth of the cross. When one believes in the substitutional death of the Lord Jesus, he is regenerated. But for a believer to be delivered from the flesh, he has to die with the Lord. Paul said, "But they who are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and its lusts" (Gal. 5:24). The flesh must be crucified. One cannot cleanse the flesh or educate it. The only way is to crucify the flesh with the Lord on the cross. The passions of the flesh love many things and are extremely powerful. The lust of the flesh has all kinds of desires and will never be satisfied unless they are all gratified. When the passions and the lusts of the flesh break loose, we see the various sins mentioned in verses 19 through 21. To remove sins, one has to remove the root of sin. Since the believers have known the substitutional death of Christ, they should go on to know the co-crucifixion with Christ. Then they will no longer be bound by the flesh but will walk according to the spirit, becoming spiritual believers.

Colossians 2:11 says, "In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, in the putting off of the body of the flesh, in the circumcision of Christ." This circumcision is our crucifixion with the Lord, of which baptism is a figure. The next verse says, "Buried together with Him in baptism, in which also you were raised together with Him." Formerly, we were "dead in [our] offenses and in the uncircumcision of [our] flesh" (v. 13a). God forgave us through the death of the Lord Jesus and made us alive together with Him (v. 13b). Only the death of Christ can sever us from the lust of our flesh. Some think that the keeping of ordinances will deliver a person from the flesh. Actually, these ordinances merely give men "a reputation of wisdom [which is hypocritical] in self-imposed worship [which is of man's regulation instead of God's way] and lowliness [a kind of false humility] and severe treatment of the body [treating the body harshly in clothing, food, and activity, thinking that in so doing, the lust of the flesh will be subdued], but are not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh" (v. 23). God's way, the effective way, is to die with Christ (v. 20). Man is flesh because he is born of flesh (John 3:6). Man inherited his flesh by being begotten. Hence, in order to be delivered from the flesh, one must look for a way that runs opposite to the way of begetting. The opposite of life is death. Man receives his flesh from birth; he must therefore lose his flesh through death. Man receives his physical flesh by birth; he loses his physical flesh through death. The psychological flesh also came by birth. Hence, deliverance from the psychological flesh must also be through death.

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