

SINNER OR SAINT?

I'd like to share with you a few thoughts and a lot of scriptures about two groups of people.

Let me start with a definition. The Greek word for sin means "missing the mark". It's the brand of sin that emphasizes man's self-originated, self-empowered nature apart from God.

And the word sinner, means, to lose by being wide of the mark and falling short of what God approves, thus a sinner.

This group of people called sinners is a very large group. No one volunteered for it, they were all born into it. Let me explain.

Adam and Eve were created in the image of God and dwelt in the presence of God. Satan deceived Eve to think that disobeying God would make them wise and that independence from God would give them absolute freedom and make them like God.

But as God said, in the day that you eat of this fruit you will die. But Adam and Eve lived many, many years after their disobedience. What died was their spirit. The part of them that had unbroken oneness with God.

This allowed Satan to usurp Adam and Eve's God given authority over this Earth.

God knew that in their spiritually dead state, if they ate the fruit of the tree of life in the garden, they would stay spiritually dead and separated from Him forever.

He sent them out of the garden so that He could redeem them back into fellowship with Him.

This is verified in Genesis chapter 3.

So, everyone born after Adam and Eve was born into this spiritually dead, and separated from God life in this world ruled by Satan. They actually inherited this life from Adam and Eve.

Let's look at the scriptures which are statements of reality from God to confirm this.

Ephesians 2.1-3

And you were dead in your offenses and sins, in which you previously walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

Among them we too all previously lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the rest.

Romans 5.12 amp

Therefore, as sin came into the world through one man, and death, as the result of sin, so death spread to all men, no one being able to stop it or to escape its power because all men sinned.

There is none that does good, no not one. Psalm 14.3

Let's take a minute and look at another group of people called saints.

The definition of saint is holy one; meaning "likeness of nature with the Lord" because they are "different from the world."

This group is quite a bit smaller than the other group, yet they were all born into it as well.

Let's look to the scriptures to explain.

John 1.12

But to as many as did receive *and* welcome Him, He gave the authority, the power, the privilege, and the right to become the children of God, that is, to those who believe in, adhere to, trust in, and rely on His name.

Who owe their birth neither to bloods nor to the will of the flesh, that of physical impulse nor to the will of man, that of a natural father, but to God. They are born of God!

They were separated from the group called sinners by God's incredible work on their behalf.

Here's how. Romans 8.1-4

For the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, the law of our new being has freed me from the law of sin and of death.

For God has done what the Law could not do, its power being weakened by the flesh, which is the entire nature of man without the Holy Spirit. Sending His own Son in the guise of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, God condemned sin in the flesh. He subdued it, He overcame it, and He deprived it of its power over all who accept that sacrifice.

God's incredible plan of redemption created an entirely new reality for them.

Colossians 1.21-24

And although you were previously alienated and hostile in attitude, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His body of flesh through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach.

The Apostle Paul explained how this happened in Romans chapter 6. It reads,

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? Far from it! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore, we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in newness of His life.

For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for the one who has died is freed from sin.

And because God did this for us, we can consider ourselves also dead to sin *and* our relation to it broken, but alive to God living in unbroken fellowship with Him in Christ Jesus. That's verse 11 amp.

He declares in verses 12-14

Therefore, sin shall not reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the parts of your body to sin *as* instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead, and your body's parts *as* instruments of righteousness for God.

For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under the Law but under grace.

He goes on in verses 17+18.

Thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were entrusted, and after being freed from sin, you became slaves to righteousness.

Paul concludes in verses 22+23.

But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gracious gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Both of these groups are actually the same people. The first group is before God's love was received.

Ephesians 2 declared that we were all children of wrath under Satan's control, and 1 Corinthians 6.9-11 confirms that.

Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor verbal abusers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were.

Their condition changed drastically when they received God's amazing love and Christ's incredible sacrifice.

Paul continues and says, but you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Jesus's sacrifice on the cross redeemed us back into God's family and restored our complete oneness with God.

By repenting of our old nature inherited from Adam and Eve, and accepting His sacrifice, we become God's children, God's heirs, and joint heirs with Christ of God's eternal life.

Our inheritance as God's children that He made available to us because of His great love is beyond all natural comprehension.

It made us completely new creations of God's doing, and because He made us one with Christ we can now

"BE HOLY BECAUSE HE IS HOLY"

God bless you.

Jim Fuller

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