

# **The Walking Dead**

## **(Do We or Do We Not Have a Sin Nature?)**

**Bible Study, 6/20/23**

### **I. Introduction**

- A. Frank's Question: What if you could wake up tomorrow and suddenly realize that, in God's eyes, you had never, never, ever sinned; that you were as innocent and as totally righteous as His Son Jesus Christ? What difference would that make in your day? How would it change what you see when you look in the mirror? How would it change the way you act toward your family members, your friends and colleagues? How would you live your life differently?**

**If you have received Christ into your being and surrendered yourself to His Lordship, that is exactly what Christ has done for you. He has not only forgiven and erased from His record the sum total of your sins — past, present and future; He has also put to death the old person that you once were — that old sin-laden, failure-prone slave-to-sin that you used to be, and He has breathed into your body a new nature, created in glory and destined to mature into a being just like the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**What I want to show you tonight is that, if you have accepted Christ, you have more in common with Jesus of Nazareth now than you have in common with the old man that you once were. You have a new divine nature, and the old nature that you once had — your sin nature — is entirely gone. You are, as Rom. 6:7 says — “free from sin.”**

**We're going to talk about four things tonight: (1) how and when that became possible, (2) what difference that truth should make in our lives, (3) how we come into the fullness of that blessing, (3) why receiving that blessing seems so darn hard.**

### **II. How and when did this freedom from sin even become possible?**

- A. Most seminaries teach and, therefore, most churches teach that God heaped all of the sins of the world upon Jesus' shoulders when Jesus was hanging on the cross, moments from death. They teach that God thrust upon His Son, in those agonizing moments, ALL of the sins of the world so that Jesus cried out, “Lord, Lord, why have you forsaken me?” and then died, carrying all of our sins into death.**

**I believe that, by the time Jesus reached the cross, He had already carried all of our sins for three years. I believe He took all of our sins upon His shoulders in the single moment when He let John the Baptist dip him under the waters of**

**the Jordan River in the sacrament of Baptism. Jesus took all of our sins — and the curse of our sin nature — upon His own shoulders at His baptism, and, rising up out of the River Jordan, He carried those for three years until He could put them to death upon the cross.**

**There is an abundance of evidence in the Scripture that this is true, and I've laid that out in my book, *The Sin Myth*. I will share just two verses with you here.**

**Matt. 3:15 — *“Jesus replied, ‘Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill (to render complete, to cause to abound, to carry into effect) all righteousness.’”***

**John 1:29 — *“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, ‘Look, the Lamb of God, who takes (“is taking,” singular active present participle) away the sin (singular) of the world!’”***

**Because Jesus had already taken the sin of the world upon His own shoulders at His baptism, He was then able to tell the paralytic in Matt. 9, “Your sins are forgiven” and tell the woman caught in adultery (John 8), “Neither do I condemn you: go, and sin no more.” (Also Luke 7:48)**

### **III. What difference does this make in our day-to-day lives?**

**No consciousness of sins**

**No eternal penalty for sins**

**No more striving for acceptance or intimacy with God**

**No more writhing in condemnation, shame and guilt**

**No more tearful, remorseful confession. Confession becomes an act of gratitude.**

**No more endless spiritual warfare.**

**No more addiction to sin — we can live day-to-day without sin**

**Heb. 10:1-2 — *“For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the form of those things itself, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually every year, make those who approach perfect. 2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins?” (No more consciousness of sin)***

**Rom. 6:5-7, 11-14 — *For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. (eternal security) 6 For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin (our sin nature) might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— 7 because anyone who has died has been set free from sin. ... 11 In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. 12 Therefore do not let sin reign (in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. (power NOT to sin) 13 Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of your-***

*self to him as an instrument of righteousness. (we can do righteousness)<sup>14</sup> For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.*

*2 Peter 1:4 — “He has bestowed on us His precious and magnificent promises [of inexpressible value], so that by them you may escape from the immoral freedom that is in the world because of disreputable desire, and become sharers of the divine nature.”*

*2 Cor. 6:17 — “He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit.”*

#### **IV. How do we come into the fullness of that blessing?**

**We receive it by faith. You can't earn it by fasting or other spiritual exercises. God is not going to provide it on the foundation of our behavior or our earning it. We simply receive this blessing by believing in the goodness of our Father and counting His promises as already fulfilled. Peter Lewis says, “We cannot earn the divine nature through righteous living; it is *from* the divine nature that we live righteously.”**

*Rom. 5:17 — “For if by the offense of the one, death reigned through the one, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.”*

#### **V. Why does receiving that blessing seem so darn hard?**

**“The reason that many Christians are still struggling with sin is because they have heard the promise of freedom from sin in their spirit (justification and eternal life) but not freedom from sin in their souls. We have rightly and truly said that, if you put your faith in Jesus you will be reconciled to God and have eternal life. This is the righteousness of God being imputed to our spirits by grace through faith. BUT without promising complete freedom from sin in our souls (our minds, will and emotions), we have made sanctification a process of our own human effort, striving against a sinful nature that we no longer possess. We believe that the harder we try to obey God, the more sanctified we become. The more we read the Bible and go to church and behave selflessly, the more freedom we will experience in our souls. We have concluded that we must still have a sin nature if we still have a capacity to sin. We have made the mistake that, since we are still tempted with carnal, sinful desires, those desires come from our true selves. But these carnal desires are only the remnants in our souls,...the byproducts of our having been raised or tutored by the defeated mindset inherited from Adam.” Peter Lewis, *Back to the Gospel***

**Once we recognize and choose to believe that that defeated mindset is no longer a part of our identity, that we are in fact possessed by the Holy Spirit of God and have been set free from the power of sin in our lives as a function of our true identity, then we find that old sin-patterns, old patterns of response to temptation or provocation, even old addictions — all that was once but no longer is a part of our identity**

**begins to fall away like grave clothes. What shines through then, what manifests as the old grave-clothes fall away is the righteousness, indeed the glory of our new identity, re-created in the image of God.**

**VI. If you belong to a church or Bible study where this truth is not understood, you'll recognize that by some of these things:**

- constant reference to believers as “sinners” and not “saints”**
- calls to constantly confess your sins in order to gain God’s forgiveness**
- constant requests of God for forgiveness, usually at the beginning of prayers.**
- an emphasis on The Ten Commandments as the means of obtaining God’s favor**
- pressure to so center your life upon church and church activities that church limits your life as a family**

**VII. Closing**

**Yeonmi Park (to Jordan Peterson) — “Freedom for us was incomprehensible. We had no concept of what freedom was at all. Even when I escaped North Korea, I thought freedom was blue jeans.”**