

PNEUMANETICS

ORIGINAL

BOOK 4

THE FALL OF MAN

BY
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WORKBOOK

DAY ONE

TOXIC FRUIT

APPENDIX A: INDWELLING SIN AS THE ROOT PROBLEM

Forgiveness is one of the greatest of our God-given gifts, and one that every Christian is to enjoy. But in spite of this, one of the most frustrating things for a committed Christian is the quest for personal holiness. Far too often, little sins (and big ones) crop up and sap the spiritual vitality out of a believer's life.

Every Christian is born anew with a desperate desire to be holy. Yet, as we mature in our Christian life, a holy walk seems all but impossible to achieve. To our dismay, the flesh grows stronger, habitual sins prevail, and try as we might, there seems to be little victory in our lives over sin.

You would think that once we become Christians, the Christian life would become easy to live; however, just the opposite seems to be true. Yet, the Bible makes quite clear that every Christian can be free from the power of sin (John 8:32), ultimately living a life of moment-by-moment victory.

Let's take a new look at an old problem. Sin can be overcome, personal holiness is attainable, and the Christian life can be one of victory. However, even the word "victory" implies battle and, as you shall discover, as you seek a holy life, an intense, personal war with the enemy of your soul will ensue. But if you've read the last chapter in God's great novel, you know we win!

Within his arsenal of destruction, Satan possesses one weapon in particular that overshadows all the rest. Ironically, he does not hold it in his hands—we hold it in ours. While Christians could easily eradicate this weapon, most simply choose not to. This weapon, the one that has done so much for the kingdom of Satan, the most powerful weapon he has, is ignorance: ignorance of God's Word, ignorance of doctrine, and ignorance of how to apply Scripture to everyday living.

INDWELLING SIN

Our lack of knowledge is especially true of sin. We know so little of its nature and its activity. We tend to view sin only from our participation in it, overlooking its participation in us. Far too often, Christians follow a self-imposed ritual of attempting to deal with the guilt of their own sins rather than to discover the truth of Scripture. Most often, we feel the pangs of guilt for a sin we commit, followed by a trite little ritual of confession to alleviate that emotional pain. Strangely, most people never bother to ask what made them sin in the first place!

Is sin something we do on our own? Or might there be more to sin than that? Could it be that there is some power, some force behind our sinful activities, some agent that, once activated, causes us to sin? Paul makes some very pointed remarks about just this in his letter to the Romans:

“For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good. So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.

“For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.”

Romans 7:14–20

Paul is teaching that there is an evil force, which he refers to as indwelling sin, that is the root of his problem. Let's look at verse 21, where he adds emphatically:

“I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good.”

Romans 7:21

Peter points out that there is more to sin than just a person sinning:

“...He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness...”

1 Peter 2:24a

Notice in particular that Peter gives sin two faces. First, he speaks of the sins that we commit (note the use of the plural). Second, he speaks of sin in general (note the use of the singular), which we must die to. Peter is talking about a root problem—sin—and a fruit problem—sins. “Sins” are those which we commit. “Sin” is that condition which causes us to sin.

Most Christians have become hung up on the fruit problem, choosing to remain ignorant of the root problem. There is an evil force that has invaded mankind and produces in man the fruit of its endeavors; that evil force is referred to as indwelling sin. But before we look in detail at sin as a powerful, prevailing force in our lives, let us first explore what the Bible has to say about the fruit problem—sins which we commit.

OUR SINS—THE FRUIT PROBLEM

Two things are clear here. First, God does not require us to feel guilty. Second, sin is no longer an issue with God. Rather, Satan uses guilt to substitute our emotions as our final authority in place of the Word of God. God uses His Word to establish the norm for our Christian living (Hebrews 4:12). Guilt and forgiveness have nothing to do with each other. We are forgiven by faith and faith alone. We create our own irrational guilt; God doesn't do that.

In the same manner, sin is not an issue. Why not? Peter said it all: Christ bore our sins in His own body. God, in the person of Christ, our perfect sacrifice, became sin for us. It is said and done. The Cross is a past event with present effect.

Through His death on the Cross, Christ paid the penalty for our sins, once and for all. He became our substitute, paying God's just demand for our sins. Life rather than death, forgiveness rather than condemnation, and salvation rather than damnation are all part and parcel of our Lord's death on the Cross!

So if this is true—if our sins truly have been covered at the Cross, if our salvation is complete—then why do we still sin? The answer is that we are no longer dealing with our salvation, but with our sanctification. We shouldn't be concerning ourselves with the penalty for our sins; we should instead be attacking the power of sin head-on. The issue is not our sins, but overcoming sin. And if we are to have victory over sin, we must first understand the nature of sin.

DAY TWO

THE ROOT PROBLEM: INDWELLING SIN

Paul knew indwelling sin as few people did, having been stung by its power. It was through his own experience that he was able to articulate God's means of dealing with this insidious enemy. He laid it all out for us from Romans 5:12 to Romans 8:17. Paul knew that if Christians lacked the knowledge of how to overcome sin, we would be doomed to a life of defeat and bondage to sin.

Most Christians' mindset focuses on what we do, rather than why we do it, giving us only a superficial knowledge of what sin really is. A study of the Scriptures reveals that indwelling sin is more than some inanimate principle. What we see is an utterly evil, yet vital, force or agent that is intent on controlling man. We see it as early as Genesis, where God confronts Cain, even going so far as to warn him directly of the danger:

"Then the Lord said to Cain, 'Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door, and its desire is for you but you must master it.'"
Genesis 4:6–7

Indwelling sin is a very real, very powerful, persistently evil force whose desire is to control everything and anything it touches. It was at the Fall that man lost the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, becoming permeated by indwelling sin. Sin created in man a nature prone to sin—as some would call it, "a sin nature."

Indwelling sin seems to be the very antithesis of the Holy Spirit:

Holy Spirit	Indwelling Sin
Indwells	Indwells
Empowers	Enslaves
Holy	Evil
Leads	Controls
Gives life	Brings death
Gives liberty	Brings bondage
Sanctifies	Deceives

Just look at all the things that indwelling sin does:

- Produces death.....Romans 5:12, 6:23
- Controls absolutely.....Romans 6:6, 6:9, and 12:17
- Deceives.....Hebrews 3:13, Revelation 12:9
- Deludes.....Romans 7:11
- Separates from God.....2 Chronicles 29:6, Isaiah 64:6-7
- Perverts.....Mark 7:21-23, Romans 1:21-32
- Enslaves.....John 8:34, Romans 6:16-17
- Brings wickedness.....Proverbs 11:6, Romans 6:19
- Defiles.....Psalm 51:2, Mark 7:23
- Corrupts.....Ephesians 4:18, 2 Peter 1:4
- Ensnares.....Psalm 141:10
- Promotes emotional instability.....Proverbs 28:1, James 4:1
- Causes sickness.....Genesis 3:16, Psalm 38:3
- Insults God.....Matthew 12:31
- Worships self.....1 John 5:17
- Promotes lawlessness.....1 John 3:4

When the Fall unleashed indwelling sin, it at once permeated man's being, creating in him a "new" nature, one prone to sin. Indwelling sin is not the sin nature; indwelling sin is the catalyst that created a sin nature in the first place. Even when a person becomes a Christian and becomes filled with the Spirit, indwelling sin is not eradicated. Rather, it continues its deadly work until the believer discovers the means in the Scriptures to overcome the power of sin in their life.

The crux of sanctification is learning the Biblical truths of defeating this insidious enemy. This battle cannot be won through self-effort or our own determination. We can only obtain victory through God's power and intervention. We are wholly dependent upon Him not only for our salvation, but also for our sanctification. Although our sins are no longer an issue with God, our triumph over sin is!

This is the crux of our Christian walk: experiencing a life of victory over the power of indwelling sin. As we shall see, the secret to victory is not to fight the battles already fought (Christ has done that), but to share the victory He has already gained (John 8:36).

*Personal holiness, not sin,
is God's overriding concern today.*

The Bible reveals that man was created with a nature prone to righteousness. Before the Fall, man was as good as God could make him good. After the Fall, man not only found himself with a nature prone to sin, but he was now as evil as he once had been good.

This is the legacy that fallen man has inherited—a will enslaved to the absolute dominion of indwelling sin. Consequently, man in his fallen state is unable to choose good; he is free only to choose the degree of evil in which he will participate.

Man has never understood the power of indwelling sin (Romans 5:21), nor is he willing to recognize the depths of evil to which he can sink. Man always views himself in the best light, never admitting his sin, never admitting his need for a Savior. Only the Spirit of God can break through this stifling self-exaltation and bring him to Christ.

Even Christians are ignorant of the power of this insidious agent. Far too many attempt to conquer indwelling sin in their own strength, only to find themselves conquered by that which they hoped to overcome. Sin, as a spiritual force, can only be defeated by a greater spiritual force—the Holy Spirit.

While fallen man is without hope (Ephesians 2:12), the Christian is in a far different position. In one indelible moment, Christ on the Cross not only paid our penalty for sin, but He broke forever the power of indwelling sin (1 Peter 2:24). Incredible!

Unfortunately, while the song has ended, as each and every Christian discovers, the melody lingers on. To enjoy victory over sin, we must carefully follow the Biblical truths that Paul laid out for us. In fact, as I already mentioned, Paul gives a great deal of attention to how we can overcome indwelling sin, explaining in detail from Romans 5:12 through Romans 8:17 just how we can overcome this evil force.

DAY 3

VICTORY

APPENDIX B: IT AIN'T GONNA REIGN NO MORE!

“Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body...”

Romans 6:12a

In spite of its power, indwelling sin has an Achilles heel. Its greatest vulnerability is in the very area of its greatest need. The Scriptures reveal that indwelling sin needs two critical components if it is to grow to fruition. First, it needs a vehicle through which it can express itself, and second, it needs a power source to activate and sustain it.

Whether we want to believe it or not, the instrument that gives indwelling sin its fullest expression is our body. Paul points this out in Romans 6:

“Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourself to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.”

Romans 6:12–13

Just as we saw with Cain in Genesis 4:7, sin desires absolute control over all that it touches. And, as it gains control, it is free to express itself through all sorts of wickedness and evil. Sin actually feeds on itself to grow even more sinful.

When a Christian presents the members of his body to sin, sin will reign in his or her life (John 8:34). Non-Christians have no choice but to obey the lusts of sin, but Christians do have a choice, either to present their bodies to God or to indwelling sin (Romans 6:13).

While most of us can probably accept that sin feeds off of the human body's urges for its strength, it's the second component that indwelling sin needs that we may have difficulty accepting. Sin requires a power source: the Law—and not only God's law, but all law, any law. Isn't it incredible that the Law, that which Paul calls holy and righteous, is the very thing indwelling sin needs to arouse it? In fact, let's look at what he says:

“But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead.”

Romans 7:8

“The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law...”

1 Corinthians 15:56

Paul is telling us that law—every kind of law, religious and otherwise, moral or ceremonial, self-imposed or super-imposed—will arouse indwelling sin. Law is the power source that sin must have to be activated.

So this tremendously powerful evil force is dependent upon two factors: a power source to activate it and a vehicle through which it can express itself. Without both of these components, indwelling sin simply lies dormant within man (Romans 7:8).

In summary, the teaching of Romans is quite clear. Indwelling sin is a viciously powerful, evil force that permeated man at the Fall, bringing death to every person. Yet, just as sin reigned in death, Christ now reigns in life, providing for us a victory already gained, just waiting to be appropriated by the faith of those who believe.

GOD'S MASTER PLAN OF VICTORY—THE CROSS

If indwelling sin is powerless without the members of our bodies and law to energize it, then it must follow that if indwelling sin is denied these two things, it becomes powerless to operate.

However, it is beyond the ability of man to devise a way of his own to overcome indwelling sin. Only one thing in the entire universe is stronger than sin: God Himself. And as we shall see, He provided us with an incredible path to victory: through the Cross.

While the Cross is not mentioned by name in the passage in Romans, it is the central theme throughout. Our victory is not just dependent upon the Cross, it is absolutely guaranteed by it. It is not a victory that we can gain; rather, we must choose to appropriate it. Victory is already ours if we will simply claim it (1 Corinthians 15:57).

The Scriptures contain many fascinating passages, but none impact our walk with Christ as much as Romans 5:12–8:17. It is here that the two faces of the Cross stand out: life... and death.

Two phrases in Scripture are of utmost importance: “in Christ” (1 Corinthians 1:30a), and “Christ in you” (Colossians 1:27b). The first is related to His death, the other to His life. In the first, we are totally identified with Christ, and in the second He is totally identified with us.

DEATH

Death plays a crucial role in the process of our sanctification. Consider for example that we participate in the Lord’s Supper specifically to celebrate His death. Isn’t it strange that the fear of death—which holds the world in such bondage—is the very path of victory for the Christian? Leave it to Jesus to take the last great enemy (1 Corinthians 15:26) and use it to free us from indwelling sin!

Paul confronts us with an incredible statement in Romans:

“How shall we who died to sin still live in it?”

Romans 6:2b

Notice that it's not sin who dies to us; we die to sin! But when did we die? How did we die? Where did we die? Paul answers these questions in Romans 6:3–10. We are united with Christ in the likeness of His death. God graciously placed us “in Christ.” In Christ, we are identified totally with His death and burial—as well as with His resurrection.

The moment a person becomes a Christian, God places them in Christ, and the Holy Spirit unites them with all that the death of Christ means. As Christ died, so the Christian dies in Him. Whether you choose to believe it or not, that doesn't change the fact that in Christ all die.

Because of this death—my death, your death, every Christian's death—we die to indwelling sin. That's why Paul could say, “How can you keep living in something you died to?” Just as the death of Christ is a historical fact beyond dispute, so is the Christian's identification with Christ in His death. Why? Because God says it! And because the Christian's death is a fact, Paul's admonition in Romans 6:11 applies to us:

“Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.”

Romans 6:11

In one fatal stroke, Christ dealt indwelling sin a fatal blow. Through His death on the Cross, He denied to sin the members of my body—that is, all the faculties of the mind and all the desires of the flesh. (Read Galatians 5:19–23). By faith, once I recognize that I am in Christ, that I died with Him, I can consider myself dead to sin. My body is no longer at sin's disposal, so it can't reign supreme in my life.

In my moment-by-moment faith walk, I can count it as fact that I am indeed dead to sin, dead to sin because of that gracious act of God that united me once and for all with Christ in His death. In His death I die (Galatians 2:20), and in dying I discover freedom—freedom from the bondage of indwelling sin.

Just as the Cross provided the means for dying to sin, it also provides the means to deny sin its power source. This second component that sin needs is extremely

subtle, for sin draws its power from that which God intended for a far different purpose.

In Romans 7, Paul details his agony in attempting to live a holy life. Paul, a man who could claim that he had kept all of the law, found that the Law he had lived by so judiciously had failed him. You can imagine his chagrin to discover that the Law, which is holy and good, was the very thing that indwelling sin needs to be activated.

Here, too, death plays the crucial role, for the only escape from law is to die to it.

“Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.”

Romans 7:4

How do we die to law? By the same manner that we die to sin. Through a gracious act, God placed us in Christ, and in Christ I die to sin and to law. Indwelling sin is denied not only the members of my body, which it needs to express itself, but also its power source, so that it cannot be activated. Apart from law, sin is dead.

And there you have it. God used death, the last great enemy to be destroyed, as the means to disarm and make powerless the very force that Satan had used to keep mankind in bondage.

LIFE

“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me...”

Galatians 2:20

The Christian life is not one of death, but of LIFE! While the world lives to die, the Christian dies to live. Although death plays a crucial role, it is life—real life—that counts. Jesus said:

“...I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”

John 10:10b

“...I am the way, and the truth, and the life...”

John 14:6a

“...I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies...”

John 11:25

Do you realize that no one ever died in the presence of Jesus? Why? Because He is life! (John 14:6.) Jesus has life in and of Himself. It is the Lord Jesus who takes us out of merely existing and gives us life—life as only God has it. Life with a capital L! As Romans 6:4 promises, we are to “walk in newness of life.”

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is the third point in our Roman trilogy, following sin and law. While it takes death to escape the first two, it is the life of Christ made real in us through the Holy Spirit that really counts.

Paul, in the depths of his agony, cried out:

“Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?”

Romans 7:24

The phrase Paul uses, “the body of this death,” gives us keen insight into his state of mind. In Paul’s day, if a person was convicted of murder, one possible sentence was for the body of the victim to be tied to the murderer’s back. As the body decayed, its putrefying flesh would infect the killer’s body, ultimately killing him as well. Paul was pleading to be set free from a metaphorical rotting dead body!

Just as quickly, Paul points out that God has already set him free—in Christ (Romans 7:24–25). Paul was fighting a battle already fought, and finding himself defeated and destroyed in the process. It took God to make Paul realize that he didn't have to fight; he simply had to share in the victory already gained.

Romans 8 spells this out. Incredibly, the law that we die to is fulfilled in us through the Holy Spirit (v. 4). It is the Spirit that gives LIFE to this mortal body of ours (v. 11). Through the Spirit we can put to death the deeds of the body (compare v. 13 to Galatians 5:19–20). The Holy Spirit allows us to claim by faith the victory already won by Christ.

What can we say to these things? Just this:

“But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.”

Romans 8:37

DAY FOUR

THE GENESIS STORY

1. Read Genesis 3.
2. Who did the serpent represent? _____
3. We are told that Satan is very crafty. How did he approach Eve in verses 2-4? Had God warned Adam and Eve of the consequences of eating the forbidden fruit? (Verses 1-2)

4. Did Adam have any excuse for disobeying God? _____
5. Read Genesis 4:6-7. What did this disobedience open man up to?

6. In Romans 5:12, what does Paul say were the consequences?

7. Read Romans 3:23 and 6:23. Would you say the consequences have affected everyone since? _____
8. Many believe that Genesis 3:21 introduces God's master plan of salvation, with the use of animal skins indicating the beginning of sacrificial worship.
9. Read Genesis 3:22-24. Why do you think God drove Adam and Eve from the Garden? Was it for their punishment or for their protection? Explain your answer.

DAY FIVE

SUMMARY

1. List the three great epochs of man:

2. What was the relationship that was lost at the Fall?

3. The Fall made man incapable of being godly. Man has neither the faculty nor the capacity to be “good” in the sense of being godly. Is man depraved? Explain your answer.

4. Explain what is meant in the text by the root problem.

5. Explain what is meant in the text by the fruit problem.

6. Who are the overcomers?

RECOMMENDED READING

Breaking Free: From the Bondage of Sin by Henry R. Brandt and Kerry L. Skinner, from Harvest House Publishers (Feb 1994).