

The Old Nature

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that henceforth we should not serve sin." Romans 6:6

Romans 7 takes that understanding and explains how we are no longer under sin's dominion and the Old Testament laws that identified the sins. Paul likens the new arrangement of being saved to a new marriage (Romans 7:2-3).

In a marriage, one is bound to one spouse as long as they are alive. Before we were saved, we were bound to sin until that nature died. It led us where we allowed it to take us: into bars, adulterous relationships, bitterness, hatefulness, blasphemy, and a host of other regrettable places and feelings. Our sinful nature was in control.

A saved person, however, is "... dead to the law by the body of Christ..." (Romans 7:6). Our first "spouse" "died" when we got saved. That "husband" contained over 600 Old Testament laws.

The law is important, however. It shows us what God likes and dislikes. From it, we learned that lying is wrong, as are adultery, deceitfulness, disobedience, rebellion, hatred, and on and on the list



**"If you are saved,
you sin by choice,
not by chance."**

— Barbara Brinkworth

goes (Romans 7:7). Without the law of God, we would not have known the whole mind of God concerning sin.

The law is very hard, however. It curses and condemns us for the sins we have committed. When accepted, Jesus' sacrifice on the cross pays for our sins, and now one can have grace and mercy. As Matthew Henry put it, "The sentence of the law against us is vacated and reversed by the death of Christ, to all true believers."

For the believer, the "old man" is dead. We can be "married" to another. The second spouse is Christ. We are not bound to the "old man" and His laws. Yes, the old and new nature will still battle for control (Romans 7:18-19), but with the altered mind a Christian has, one can be free from the power of sin (Romans 6:7).

"For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." I Corinthians 2:16

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Hatred and Love

Bill Brinkworth

As biblical principles have been ignored or not taught, personal and social standards have changed drastically. For millennia, God's standards have been ingrained in most behaviors and have permeated society. Those norms, however,



are no longer at the forefront of social behavior, and harmful attitudes and ways have become the new standard.

Restraint over emotions and feelings is uncommon today. Opinions rule the roost, and strong feelings against those who disagree are rampant. Many are so vehemently opposed to any opposition that hatred is expressed.

Angry parents demand special treatment for their children, and their red-faced shouting shows their anger. Screaming and sometimes cursing are unleashed against a politician who

does not agree with what another believes. Fistfights have broken out in government chambers over disagreements.

News anchors are no longer polite and even honest when they attack those with whom they disagree. For much of mankind's existence, hatred was viewed as a negative character trait, and it was most often kept private, but not now!

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In Romans 6, Paul let us know that when one trusts Christ as Saviour, the sin-desiring "old man" should be dead (Romans 6:6). That part of us was removed when one is saved. Also, the believer's new nature does not want to do what is against God's desires. On the right side of salvation, one no longer must serve the flesh's desires.

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed,

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Hatred and Love

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Kindness and understanding are now replaced by hatred in so many walks of life. The Bible, however, teaches and warns much about such feelings:

- ◆ Hatred is not of God.

“He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.”

I John 4:8

- ◆ Hatred is forbidden by God!

Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.”

Leviticus 19:17

- ◆ Hatred is wicked!

“Whose hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be shewed before the whole congregation.” Proverb 26:26

- ◆ Hatred is unwise.

“He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool.”

Proverbs 10:18

- ◆ Hatred is damaging and hurtful!

“Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.”

Proverbs 10:12

- ◆ Hatred’s root cause against Christianity can be deceptive.

“The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.” John 7:7 Also: John 15:18, I John 3:13.

- ◆ “Hatred will be more prevalent as we approach the end days.

“And then shall many be offend-

ed, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.”

Matthew 24:10

However, love should be experienced, not hatred, especially for Christians:

- ◆ Love should be the prevalent emotion for all! A godly attribute is love.

“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.” I John 4:7

“This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you;” John 15:12

- ◆ Love everyone, even those who hate you!

“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;” Matthew 5:44 Also: Romans 12:14.

- ◆ Love is commanded by God!
“Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.” Lev. 19:18 Also: I John 3:11.

- ◆ Love for the Lord should be great!

“And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.” Deutonomy 6:5 Also: I John 4:20.

Hatred can lead to alienation from others, even those doing

right. The separation between people and nations should help those involved understand who is often behind the spewing of hatred and anger — Satan.

Hatred, no matter the reason or circumstances, is not of God. It is unacceptable and destructive to people and nations. It certainly is not the emotion our God of love desires for any of us!

A Life Long Battle

Bill Brinkworth

A Christian may be saved on the inside, but he will still fight the temptations of the flesh until the day he dies. Paul gives the only solution for keeping the sin-seeking human nature we were born with at bay. That temptation-resisting advice is “... Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh” (Galatians 5:16).

To avoid life-controlling temptations and often the life-ruining consequences they bring, be wary of where suggestions to do something arise. Recognize if the enticement comes from the indwelling Holy Spirit or what feels good to the flesh.

Paul explained some “works of the flesh” so one can avoid them. They are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness (“lustfulness and indulgences of animal desires”¹), idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance (“disputing that causes disagreement, discord, and dissensions”¹), emulations (“contentions”¹),

wrath, strife, seditions (“causing commotion”), heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like...¹ (Galatians 5:19-21). His checklist should make it easy to evaluate whether a behavior or feeling one is having is the old sin-nature controlling a person.

The preacher also listed some things that, if one were doing them, could indicate that the Holy Spirit was involved. An old nature would have nothing to do with committing these activities, so one could know that God’s Spirit was probably engaged in them. The “fruit of the Spirit” included: “love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance” (Galatians 5:22-23).

If we can detect what we are involved in or are feeling is of God, we may avoid temptation’s grasp (Galatians 5:25). If one keeps far from sin, they will rarely be in danger of falling for iniquity’s commission! Obey the Spirit, and one will not give the sin-desiring flesh any control.

¹ Noah Webster, *American Dictionary of the English Language, Facsimile First Edition, Foundation for American Christian Education, 1828*

“We may fight against what is wrong, but if we allow ourselves to hate, that is to insure our spiritual defeat and our likeness to what we hate.”

— George William Russell