

After leaving our discussion I determined to look into the word flesh to discover whether it is an entity unto itself with its own nature and desires or if it is some lingering waft we smell from a corpse long dead but that has no true essence anymore.

It seemed logical to me that there are in fact two real entities which are both contrary to one another in being and action or Paul would (in my opinion) be comparing apples with oranges by taking about the desires of the spirit vs. the desires of the flesh. Only an entity which has a real existence and a real nature can produce such desires...at least this was my thought.

In all honesty I am not certain who is at the greater disadvantage in this discussion. I have believed as I do for nearly 20 years, but that does not make me right. My thinking like this has set me free from identifying myself with sin and therefore I sense no condemnation. Dave was set free from feeling "evil" himself once he heard that he did not have two natures. I would never argue with something that produces freedom but as Tom put it...both cannot be right...though both COULD be wrong, I simply want to know the truth here because if it is truth...it will produce freedom.

What is below was taken from Romans 6 & Galatians 5. The definition is from the Word Study concordance which breaks down Greek words into categories and allows for different meaning based upon grammar, sentence structure and such.

The commentary is Wuest.

## G4561

σάρξ

*sárx*; gen. *sarkós*, fem. noun. Flesh of a living creature in distinction from that of a dead one, which is *kréas* ([G2907](#)), meat.

**(II)** Metonymically meaning flesh as used for the body, the corpus, the material nature as distinguished from the spiritual and intangible (*pneúma* [[G4151](#)], the spirit). This usage of *sárx* is far more frequent in the NT than in classical writers.

**(C)** As implying sinfulness, proneness to sin, the carnal nature, the seat of carnal appetites and desires, of sinful passions and affections whether physical or moral (the epistles of 2 Pet. and 1 John [cf. [Ecc 2:3](#); [Ecc 5:5](#)]). The Gr. ascribed a similar influence to the body (*sóma* [[G4983](#)]).

As opposed to *Pneúma* ([G4151](#)), the Spirit, referring to the Holy Spirit or His influences ([Rom 8:1](#), [Rom 8:4-6](#), [Rom 8:9](#), [Rom 8:13](#); [Gal 5:16-17](#), [Gal 5:19](#), [Gal 5:24](#); [Gal 6:8](#)). Simply ([Rom 7:5](#), [Rom 7:18](#), [Rom 7:25](#); [Rom 8:3](#), [Rom 8:7-8](#), [Rom 8:12](#); [Rom 13:14](#); [Gal 5:13](#); [Eph 2:3](#); [Col 2:1](#), [Col 2:18](#); [2Pe 2:10](#), [2Pe 2:18](#); [1Jn 2:16](#)).

Wuest on Rom. 6:5-7

(6:5-7) In verses 1-4, Paul has brought out two major facts; first, that when God saves a sinner, He separates him from the indwelling sinful nature, which cleavage is so effective, that the believer is not compelled to sin anymore; he has been *permanently* delivered from its power, when at the same time that nature is left in him *permanently*; second, that God at the same time has imparted the divine nature, which gives him both the desire and the power to do God's will. Now, in verses 5-10, he repeats these great truths in the event that some of his readers may not have caught their full implications as presented in verses 2-4.

The "if" is the "if" of a fulfilled condition, the "in view of the fact," or the "since such and such a thing is so." "Have been planted together" is the perfect tense verb of *ginomai*, "to become," speaking of a past complete act and its abiding results, and the noun *sumphuloi*. The verb *phuō* means "to grow," and the prefixed preposition *sun*, "with," thus, the compound word means "to grow up together with." It speaks of a living, vital union of two individuals growing up together. The word could be used of the Siamese twins whose bodies were connected at one point, and whose blood stream flowed through two physical bodies as it does normally through one. Here the word speaks of that Vital union of the believing sinner and the Lord Jesus' mentioned in verses 3 and 4 where God places him into Christ at the Cross, to share His death and resurrection. The word "likeness" is *homoioōma*, referring to a likeness or resemblance which Thayer says in this case amounts almost to an identity. That is, the believing sinner and the Lord Jesus were united in a death at Calvary, His death, a vicarious one that had to do with the salvation of the believing sinner from the guilt, penalty, and power of sin, the sinner's death, one which he in justice should have died as a result of that sin, but which in the grace of God was borne as to its guilt and penalty by His Son. Both deaths had to do with sin, but from different aspects.

The future aspect of the words "we shall be" is not that of a predictive future so far as time is concerned, but that of a logical future. Paul says in his Greek, "For, in view of the fact that we have become those permanently united with Him with respect to the likeness of His death, certainly also (as a logical result) we shall become those who have become permanently united with him with respect to the likeness of His resurrection." The latter expression is defined by its context. The physical aspect of the resurrection, namely, the glorification of our bodies, is not in the apostle's mind here, for he is writing in a context of sanctification, not glorification. The aspect of our Lord's resurrection spoken of here is that of the new type of life He lives as the Man Christ Jesus since His resurrection, not now a life in which the soul life has prominence, since He as the Man Christ Jesus was surrounded with and had to take cognizance of the human life and limitations He possessed and which surrounded Him, but a life in which the human spirit is in prominence. So, the saint in his new condition orders his behavior in the power of a new life imparted, namely, the resurrection life of his Lord. The little word "also" (v. 4) tells us all this. Our Lord's resurrection life is being lived in a new sphere, and so is the Christian's.

Then Paul develops his thesis. As a result of the believer having become united with Christ in His death, the power of the sinful nature is broken, and this Paul treats in verses 6 and 7. In view of the fact that he has become united with Him in His resurrection, the divine nature has been imparted. And this Paul speaks of in verses 8-10.

In verse 6, three problems face us. Who is the old man, what is the body of sin, and what is involved in the word translated "destroyed"?

There are two words in Greek which mean "man," *anthrōpos*, the generic, racial term which is used for a male individual at times, which also has the idea in it of mankind, and when speaking of the human race as a collection of individuals, can include men and women. The other word is *anēr*, which refers to a male person. The word *anthrōpos* is used here, referring to the individual man or woman. There are two words in Greek which mean "old," *archaios*, which means "old in point of time," and *palaios*, which means "old in point of use." The second is used here. Trench defines the word as follows; "old in the sense that it is more or less worn out." It describes something that is worn out, useless, fit to be put on the scrap pile, to be discarded. Thus, the old man here refers to that person the believer was before he was saved, totally depraved, unregenerate, lacking the life of God.

The word "body" is *sōma*, the human body. The word "sin" is in the genitive case, here, the genitive of possession. The reference is therefore to the believer's physical body before salvation, possessed by or dominated and controlled by the sinful nature. The person the believer was before he was saved was crucified with Christ in order that his physical body which before salvation was dominated by the evil nature, might be destroyed, Paul says. The word "destroyed" is *katargeō*, "to render idle, inactive, inoperative, to cause to cease." Thus, the entire idea is, "knowing this, that our old man, that person we were before we were saved, was crucified with Him, in order that our physical body which at that time was dominated by the sinful nature, might be rendered inoperative in that respect, namely, that of being controlled by the sinful nature, in order that no longer are we rendering a slave's habitual obedience to the sinful nature." The words "that henceforth we should not serve sin" (A.V.) imply an obligation on our part. There is such, but Paul is not discussing that in this chapter. He argues that point in 12:1, 2. Here the fact is stated, that this disengagement of the believer from the evil nature has been brought about by God with the result that the believer no longer renders a slave's obedience to the evil nature habitually as he did before God saved him.

Let us use a rather simple illustration to make this clear. It is that of a machine shop in which there is a turning lathe operated by means of a belt which is attached to a revolving wheel in the ceiling of the room. When the workman wishes to render the lathe inoperative, in other words, wishes to stop it, he takes a pole and slides the belt off from the wheel, thus disengaging the turning lathe from the revolving wheel which heretofore had driven it. That turning lathe is like the human body of the sinner, and the revolving wheel in the ceiling, like the evil nature. As the wheel in the ceiling makes the turning lathe go round, so the sinful nature controls the body of the sinner. And as the machinist renders the lathe inoperative by slipping off the belt which connected it with the wheel, so God in salvation slips the belt, so to speak, off from the sinful nature which connected it with, the physical body of the believer, thus rendering that body inoperative so far as any control which that nature might have over the believer, is concerned.

*The Christian is exhorted to maintain that relationship of disconnection which God has brought about between him and the indwelling sinful nature.* God has not taken away the Christian's free will, and does not treat him as a machine. It is possible for the Christian by an act of his will to slip the belt back on, connecting himself with the evil nature, thus bringing sin into his life. But, he is not able to do this habitually, and for various reasons. In the first place, it is not the Christian's nature to sin. He has been made a partaker of the divine nature which impels him to hate sin and to love holiness. In the second place, the minute a Christian sins, the Holy Spirit is grieved, and that makes the believer decidedly uncomfortable, spiritually. God also sends

suffering and chastening into his life as a curb to sin. All these things taken together, preclude any possibility of the Christian taking advantage of divine grace.

Paul now reinforces his previous declaration to the effect that the believer is so disengaged from the evil nature that he no longer lives a life of habitual sin, by the statement, "For he that is dead is freed from sin." "Is dead" is aorist tense in the Greek text, namely, "he who died," referring to the historic fact of a believing sinner being identified with Christ in His death on the Cross. The prefixed preposition *apo* means "off, away from" and the aorist tense refers to a once for all action. Thus we have, "the one who died off once for all," that is, off from the evil nature, this being a separation from that nature. "Is freed" is the word *dikaioō* and in the perfect tense.

*Dikaioō* means "to justify, to declare righteous, to render or make righteous, acquit of a charge, to absolve." It is a term having to do with the law and the courts of law. In this sense Paul uses it in the section in Romans (3:21-5:11) where he deals with the doctrine of justification. But in Romans 6 he is presenting the doctrine of sanctification. Therefore, the idea of being "set free," growing out of the idea that a justified person is set free from the penalty of the law, is used. The one, Paul says, who died off once for all from the sinful nature, has been set free completely from it, with the present result that he is in a state of permanent freedom from it, permanent in the sense that God has set him free permanently from it, *and it is his responsibility to maintain that freedom from it moment by moment.*

Translation: *For in view of the fact that we are those who have become permanently united with Him with respect to the likeness of His death, certainly also we shall be those who have become permanently united with Him with respect to the likeness of His resurrection; knowing this experientially, that our old self was crucified once for all with Him, in order that the physical body dominated by the sinful nature might be rendered inoperative, with the result that no longer are we rendering a slave's habitual obedience to the sinful nature, for the one who died off once for all stands in the position of a permanent relationship of freedom from the sinful nature.*

Wuest on Gal. 5:16

## **Verse 16.**

The words "I say then," throw emphasis upon the statement which they introduce. Paul now introduces a statement intended to counteract the erroneous impression held by the Galatians, possibly at the suggestion of the Judaizers, that without the restraining influence of the law, they would fall into sin. Instead of an attempted law obedience in their own strength motivated by the terrors of the law, Paul admonishes them to continue to govern their lives by the inward impulses of the Holy Spirit. The type of life and the method of living that life which he here speaks of, Paul had already commended to them in 5:5, in the words "For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness." Thus, the secret of victory over sin is found, not in attempted obedience to a law that has been abrogated, but in subjection to a divine Person, the Holy Spirit, who at the moment the sinner places his faith in the Lord Jesus, takes up His permanent residence in his being for the purpose of ministering to his spiritual needs.

The word *walk* is from *peripateo* which means literally "to walk about," but when used in a connection like this, refers to the act of conducting one's self, or ordering one's manner of life or behavior. The word *lust* is from *epithumia* which refers to a strong desire, impulse, or passion, the context indicating whether it is a good or an evil one. The word *flesh* refers here to the totally depraved nature of the person, the power of which is broken when the believer is saved. Therefore, the lusts of the flesh refer to the evil desires, impulses, and passions that are constantly arising from the evil nature as smoke rises from a chimney. The evil nature is not eradicated. Its power over the believer is broken, and the believer need not obey it. But it is there, constantly attempting to control the believer as it did before salvation wrought its work in his being.

The word *fulfill* is from *teleo* which here means "to bring to fulfillment in action." The verb is future, and is preceded by two negatives. Two negatives in Greek do not, as in English, make a positive assertion. They strengthen the negation. We have here an emphatic promissory future. It does not express a command, but gives a strong assurance that if the believer depends upon the Spirit to give him both the desire and the power to do the will of God, he will not bring to fulfillment in action, the evil impulses of the fallen nature, but will be able to resist and conquer them.

We must be careful to notice that Paul puts upon the *believer*, the responsibility of refusing to obey the behests of the evil nature by conducting himself in the power of the Holy Spirit, and under His control. The will of the person has been liberated from the enslavement to sin which it experienced before salvation, and is free now to choose the right and refuse the wrong. The Holy Spirit has been given him as the Agent to counteract the evil nature, *but He does that for the saint when that saint puts himself under His control, and by an act of his free will, says a point-blank positive NO to sin. In other words, there must be a cooperation of the saint with the Holy Spirit in His work of sanctifying the life. The Holy Spirit is not a perpetual motion machine which operates automatically in the life of the believer. He is a divine Person waiting to be depended upon for His ministry, and expecting the saint to cooperate with Him in it. Thus the choice lies with the believer as to whether he is going to yield to the Holy Spirit or obey the evil nature. The Spirit is always there to give him victory over that nature as the saint says a point-blank NO to sin and at the same time trusts the Spirit to give him victory over it.*

Translation: *But I say, Through the instrumentality of the Spirit habitually order your manner of life, and you will in no wise execute the passionate desire of the flesh.*

## Verse 17.

The word *against* is from *Kata*, the root meaning of which is *down*, and which thus has the idea of suppression. The words "are contrary" are from *antikeimai* which means "to lie opposite to," hence "to oppose, withstand." The words "the one to the other" are from *allellos*, a reciprocal pronoun in Greek. Thus, there is a reciprocity on the part of the flesh and Spirit. Each reciprocates the antagonism which the one holds for the other. The translation is as follows: *For the flesh constantly has a strong desire to suppress the Spirit, and the Spirit constantly has a strong desire to suppress the flesh. And these are entrenched in an attitude of mutual opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you desire to do.*

When the flesh presses hard upon the believer with its evil behests, the Holy Spirit is there to oppose the flesh and give the believer victory over it, in order that the believer will not obey the flesh, and thus sin. When the Holy Spirit places a course of conduct upon the heart of the believer, the flesh opposes the Spirit in an effort to prevent the believer from obeying the Spirit. The purpose of each is to prevent the believer from doing what the other moves him to do. The choice lies with the saint. He must develop the habit of keeping his eyes fixed on the Lord Jesus and his trust in the Holy Spirit. The more he says NO to sin, the easier it is to say NO, until it becomes a habit. The more he says YES to the Lord Jesus, the easier it is to say YES, until that becomes a habit.

The will of the believer is absolutely free from the compelling power of the evil nature. If he obeys the latter, it is because he chooses to do so. But the Holy Spirit has given the believer a new nature, the divine nature. And the sweet influences of that nature are constantly permeating the activities of the believer's will as the believer keeps himself yielded to the Spirit. In that way, the Spirit keeps on suppressing the activities of the evil nature and any control which it might attempt to exert over the saint.

Assuming that Wuest is right, it appears that the sinful nature of the flesh still exists and has an entity of its own, but has been stripped of its power to dominate our wills any longer. It still exerts an influence upon the soul by the working of Satan to tempt us toward conformity to the flesh even as our spirit exerts an influence upon our souls by the Holy Spirit towards conformity to the spirit.

The "old man" is our old spirit...who we were as opposed to who we now are. Since we are new inwardly, the power of the flesh has been broken so that it can no longer have dominion over us, though we can freely choose to surrender to its desires at will, only with the consequence of grieving God and our own hearts.

What do you think about this?