

Deliverance From Our Sinful Nature No. 1

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

Loved ones, I'd love to try to talk a little about deliverance from our sinful nature. Many people who regard themselves as Christians, probably some of us here tonight, blame a lot of things on their sinful nature. If they lose their temper or they express outward resentment to someone, they'll say, it's not me, it's my sinful nature. Or, if they feel lust inside or they feel pride or they feel anger or irritability bubbling up inside them, they'll say, oh, that's my sinful nature. And, they don't regard themselves as accepting that sinful nature as a permanent part of themselves.

But that's what they tend to begin to do simply by giving it a name that sound scriptural and sounds right. And, this Pandora's box of conflicting passions and drives that exists inside them, they feel a little better about it if they can name it their sinful nature because they have a feeling that the Bible and the churches actually teach that there's no way to get rid of your sinful nature.

And, in fairness to you who have thought that, I think many churches do teach that. I think many churches teach that there's no way to get rid of the sinful nature and you're stuck with it for life. And, I think that's one of the reasons why Christendom is so impotent to change the morals of our society. Because so much of Christendom believes that there's no way to get rid of the sinful nature.

Now, what I'd love to do tonight is to ask you to look with me at the scripture that those of us who think the sinful nature is a normal part of our lives depend upon for that interpretation. Now, it's Romans 7. So, we'll spend a little time looking more closely at it tonight than we normally do.

Romans 7 is the chapter from which so many of us Christians derive the idea that the sinful nature is something that you just have to live with. You can't get rid of it. It's part of the normal Christian experience. Romans 7:15, "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now, if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good."

So, most Christians say, "Phew, thank goodness somebody else is like me. That's exactly like me! Right there, not only in black and white but in God's Word. I do not understand my own actions for I do not do what I want but I do the very thing I hate. Oh, thank goodness, I'm not on my own. I'm not quite as bad as I thought I was. In fact, verse 17 seems to describe exactly what I feel. 'So, then it is no longer I that do it.' That's right. That's right. I don't really want to do these things. It's not I that do it, but sin which dwells within me. That's the culprit -- indwelling sin."

And, I think most of us kind of are a little uplifted by the thought that, oh, Paul, St. Paul the apostle, had the same problem. And, it wasn't him that did it, you see. It was indwelling sin and so sometimes we call it the "sinful nature" and sometimes we call it "indwelling sin" or sometimes we call it what Paul calls it in the next verse. "For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh." And, so, many times Christians say, yes, it's my flesh. It's my flesh that is losing its temper and it's my flesh that is feeling lust or envy or pride. It's not me because I don't want to do it.

My situation is Paul's in this next phrase in verse 18, "I can will what is right but I cannot do it." And, so, there's a tendency for us to say, yes, it's not my fault. It's this sinful nature inside me that I just can't control. It's my flesh. I'm okay, I'm good. I really want what is right. I can will what is right and that's it. I will what is right but somehow I can't do it. For, in verse 19, "For I do not do the good I want but the evil I do not want is what I do." So, you see, it's not my fault. I mean the good that I want to do, I can't do. And, I don't want to do the evil that I end up doing. So it isn't my fault. It's the sinful nature that is doing it. Now, if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me. And most of us, loved ones, sink back into our defeated Christian life on the basis of those verses.

We say, now that's Paul, the apostle, describing how his sinful nature prevented him from doing what he knew he should do. And, that's exactly my situation and that's the situation of all of us until we get into Heaven. And, you may say to such a person, "But wait a minute! That's not the end of the story!" And, they'd say, "Well, of course, it's the end of the story." They'll look at verse 24, "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" "Yes, of course, it is. That is the end of the story."

And, then, if you say to them, no, no, verse 25, is the end of the story. "Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord!" Look, Paul is saying, that's not the end. That's not the way it's to be. Thanks be to God. He says, who'll deliver me? And, he says, thanks be to God. God will through Jesus Christ, our Lord. If you say that to them, then they say, no, no, no, look at the deliverance, you see in the rest of that verse. There's what you're delivered into.

"So, then, I, myself, serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin." And, that's what loved ones will say. And, you're probably in the same boat because I think we don't often enough study the chapter carefully. And, so, we tend to say, there it is, the sinful nature preventing a person obeying God, that's the normal Christian life. Who shall deliver me from this body of death? Well, God through Jesus Christ, our Lord. But, not because he stops me sinning. Because there's the kind of deliverance described. "Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, so then, I, myself, serve the law of God with my mind."

That is, I am still in the same boat. I want to do what is right but with my flesh I serve the law of sin so actually in my life and my behavior, I am still doing the wrong thing. But, if you say to them, well, in what sense then are you delivered? In what sense does he say thanks be to God through our Lord, Jesus Christ? Oh, you are saved from the guilt of your sins. You are given forgiveness for the things that you are doing wrong. But you still do them, obviously. He says, I am serving the law of God with my mind, and with my flesh I am serving the law of sin, but thanks be to God through Jesus Christ, who forgives me for the expressing of the sinful nature that I take part in.

Loved ones, that is the great lie and deception and the great "slough of despond" [from Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan] in which most of Christendom wallows. And, in which most of Christendom finds its excuse for not being what God wants it to be.

Do you see there are some real problems in that interpretation? Let me show you just some of them. You see that last verse in Romans 7 there, the last part of it. "So, then, I of myself serve the law of God with my mind but with my flesh, I serve the law of sin." Now, if that is the normal Christian life, serving the law of sin with my flesh, then, according to what Paul says a few verses later, all such normal Christians die. That's right.

All such normal Christians die. If serving the law of sin with your flesh is the normal Christian life, then, according to what he says a few verses later, all such normal Christians die. I pointed out to you Romans 8:13, "For if you live according to the flesh, you will die." So, there's a problem there. Do you see that? If you see that Romans 7:25 describes the normal Christian life or the best that Christians can expect -- that is where with their mind they serve the law of God, but with their flesh, they serve the law of sin -- then in Romans 8:13, Paul says such people will die. If you live according to the flesh, that surely means if you serve the law of sin with your flesh, you will die. That's a logic problem. That is an illogicality that you are faced with.

If you say that the last verse of Romans 7, the last part of it, is the normal Christian life, then you're in real trouble with what Paul says a few verses later about such people. He says such people who serve the law of sin with their flesh, such people will die. If you live according to the flesh, you'll die. So, that's one problem, if that's the normal Christian life.

But, there is another even more obvious problem. You look at Romans 7:23, "but I see in my members another law at work with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members." And, you see what Paul is saying, he says, I want to do good but I see in my members -- that's my body, my personality, my mind, my emotions -- I see another law at war with the law of my mind which wants to do good and this other law inside my personality makes me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members.

That describes a life of slavery to sin. That's not right. I mean, being a captive to sin is being a slave to sin. Now, that is a direct contradiction to what Paul has just outlined as the freedom that we're brought into by Jesus' death in the previous chapter. And, look at it. It's Romans 6. Here's the freedom that he talks about. Romans 6:15, "What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Do you not know that if you yield yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey -- either of sin which leads to death or of obedience which leads to righteousness. But, thanks be to God that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed. And, having been set free from sin have become slaves of righteousness."

Now, loved ones, that's a direct contradiction to what Paul has just outlined in Romans 7:23. Romans 7:23 says, I find myself a captive to sin. And, Romans 6:15-18, he says, you're freed from sin. You're freed from being a captive. He says the same thing a few verses earlier in Romans 6:12-14 there, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies to make you obey their passions. Do not yield your members to sin as instruments of wickedness but yield yourselves to God as men who have been brought from death to life. And, your members to God as instruments of righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you since you are not under law, but under grace." But, in Romans 7:23, he says, sin has dominion over me and my members. Now, loved ones, do you see there's a problem here?

In Romans 6, Paul describes a life of freedom from sin, of deliverance from the sinful nature. And, in Romans 7, he describes a slavery to sin and a slavery to the sinful nature. Now, how do you describe or how do you explain those things? Romans 6, he talks about the sinful nature as being absolutely washed out. Look, Romans 6:1-5, "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death

like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him.”

And, the “old self” is another term that people use for the sinful nature. They’ll talk about their sinful nature or their old self or their old man or indwelling sin. And, here, Paul is saying, “We know that our old man was crucified with Christ so that the sinful body might be destroyed and we might no longer be a slave to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin. But, if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again. Death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died to sin, he died to sin once for all but the life he lives, he lives to God. So, you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. [Romans 6:6-11]

And, then, in Romans 7, he says, “I cannot do what I want to do, I find a law of sin in my members that prevents me and has dominion over me.” Now, loved ones, you’ve got a problem. If Romans 7 describes the normal Christian life, and you’re faced with that problem, let’s agree to that, if Romans is an autobiographical account of Paul’s own spiritual experience. Isn’t that right? There’s no answer. If Romans is an autobiographical account of Paul’s own experience of God, you’ve got a problem that’s insoluble. Because obviously in Romans 6 he talks about freedom from sin and then in Romans 7 he seems to back right around on himself.

So, if this is a chronological account of his experience, boy, he must have backslidden by the time he gets to Romans 7. Or, in Romans 6, he doesn’t mean what he seems to be meaning. And, I think that’s actually what most of Christendom believes. I think they do. I think they say, well, now listen, Paul’s obviously giving us a chronological account of his own experience with God and, in Romans 6, he appears to tell us that we’re free from our sinful nature but obviously he doesn’t mean that because Romans 7 is obviously further on in his own experience and he points out that he’s not free.

So, loved ones, if Romans is an autobiographical, chronological account of Paul’s experience with God, we have no answer. It’s just one of those contradictions in the Bible that destroys the salvation that God has wrought for us. Except that no theologian in any church and no scholarly exegete in any denomination will tell you for one moment that that’s what Romans is about. Not one of them will say Romans is an autobiographical account of Paul’s own experience. They won’t. Nobody will say that. They’ll all say the same thing. Romans is the most detailed theological explanation of our fall out of God’s fellowship and our redemption. And, they’ll say if there’s anything of Paul’s own experience in Romans, it’s an incidental comment.

In fact, loved ones, it isn’t an autobiographical account of Paul’s own experience. It isn’t at all. Romans 6 is where he describes how Jesus has died for us and our sinful nature has been crucified with him. And, how we are therefore free from our sinful nature. And, then, in Romans 7, he simply goes on and he tells us another freedom that we have. And, you look at the first verse of Romans 7, “Do you not know, brethren, for I am speaking to those who know the law, that the law is binding on a person only during his life?” So, Paul says in Romans 6, Christ has died and we have died with him and our old sinful nature was destroyed with him.

And, then, I want to tell you in Romans 7, you’re also free from the law as the primary guide of your life. You’re also free from the law because you know that the law is only binding on a person as long as they are alive. And I’ve just said that we’ve died with Christ. So, I want you to see that you’re now free from the law as the primary guide of your life. And, then, in Romans 8, he goes

on to explain the successor of the law, the Holy Spirit. So, he says in Romans 6, we're being delivered from our sinful nature; Romans 7, you're freed from the law as the primary guide of your life because the real guide of your life, now that you have been crucified with Christ, is in Romans 8. It's the Spirit, the Holy Spirit. And, all of Romans 8 is the outline of that new master that we have.

And, then in Romans 7 he says, but now don't say the law is useless. The law isn't any use in delivering us from our sinful nature but don't say the law is useless. And, so, he puts brackets around this, a parenthesis. And, he says, now, I want to remind you what the law did for us before we were ever Christians. And, here's what he says, the parentheses begins in verse 7 of Romans 7. Romans 7:7, "What then shall we say? That the law is sin?" Because he said, you see, you are freed from it as the primary guide of your life because the Spirit will now guide you. But, then, "What shall we say? That the law was sin? By no means! Yet, if it had not been for the law, I should not have known sin." In those old days, when I was a Jew, I wouldn't have known sin if it hadn't been for the law. I should not have known what it is to covet.

And, notice, he says, I should not have known. He doesn't say I do not know, now, in this present moment. He says, looking back to what it was for us, I should not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said you shall not covet. Verse 8, "But, sin finding opportunity in the commandment wrought in me all kinds of covetousness. Apart from the law, sin lies dead." In other words, the natural man really has very little awareness of sin until the law comes to him. Verse 9, "I was once alive apart from the law [before I knew what Judaism was about], but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died; the very commandment which promised life proved to be death to me. For sin finding opportunity in the commandment, deceived me and by it killed me. So, the law is holy and the commandment is holy and just and good."

But, the state of us Jews, he says, who suddenly began to realize what the sin was when we came under the law, our state was the state that he describes then in those next verses. [Romans 7:15-20] You remember what it was like and I don't understand my own actions. I don't do what I want but I do the very thing that I hate. Now, if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good and, as a Jew, I believed that. So, then, it is no longer I that do it but sin that dwells within me. And, so the law made sin exceedingly sinful to me. It exposed my sinful nature to me but it could not deliver me from it.

And, in that parenthesis, he describes what the situation was before he was even a Christian. And, the proof of that, well, you see it in verse 1. Romans 7:1, "Do you not know, brethren -- for I am speaking to those who know the law." I am speaking to Jews and don't you know what our experience was together of the law before we were ever born of God. In other words, loved ones, when you look at Romans 7, particularly from verse 7 to verse 25, you're looking at a parenthesis that Paul sets in there. On the way from his description of the deliverance that we have in Jesus from our sinful nature to the new master that we have in the Spirit. Because you are also freed from the law as your master.

And, yet, the law was not useless because it did this for us in the old days when we were Jews. So, brothers and sisters, when you and I look at Romans 7:7-25 and we take that as the description of a defeated Christian or of a normal Christian, we are way far from truth. That isn't even a description of a defeated Christian. Do you see that? Because it says, "The good that I would, I do not, and the evil that I hate is the very thing that I do." Now, even a normal born-again Christian has enough of the grace of the Holy Spirit to enable him not to commit sin. So, what Paul is

describing there is the situation of a dear Jew struggling under the commandments of the law with no power of the Holy Spirit to obey. He's not describing a defeated Christian. And, he's certainly not describing a normal Christian.

And, so, when you or I look upon that as a description of the normal Christian life, do you realize what we're doing? We're not only failing to make a clear distinction between the New Testament and the Old Testament, we are reducing the New Testament to the Old Testament. We're reducing the New Covenant to the level of the Old Covenant. The Old Covenant was God's agreement to forgive sin and not to count our transgressions against us. The New Covenant is the removal of the sinful nature which prevents us obeying God. That's it.

And, it might be good for those of us who have tended, and I would count myself among those, who have tended to try to hide behind these verses. It might be good to look at them a little more closely. Look at Romans 7:16, "Now if I do what I do not want" and, we have a way of saying, oh, that's me, I really want to do the good. And, we ought to be pretty clear that that's the truth. I know we all like to say, boy, look, Pastor, my will is right. Well, is that right? I mean that was the problem with this righteous Jew but is it our problem? Because the reason he couldn't obey was not his will. Do you see that? The problem, the reason he couldn't obey was not his will. And, we have a tendency to say, oh, look, Jesus is within me but the reason I can't obey is my will. That's the same problem, you remember, as Paul had in Romans.

No, it's not. Because he was quite definite. Look at verse 18, "For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh." I can will what is right but I cannot do it. And, you and I have a tendency to say, that's us. We are willing what is right and, yet most of us contradict ourselves again because we say, well, we're willing what is right but, my problem is my will. Well, now, I'd like to point out that wasn't Paul's problem as a Jew. See, verse 23 was his problem. "But, I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members." His problem was the equipment that he had to express the obedient will that he possessed. His problem was the sinful nature that he had inherited. His will was set but his sinful nature was a burden that prevented him expressing his will.

Now, that's where you and I have to be pretty clear. We have to really settle, do we really will what God wants for us? That's why for most of us who have needed to come into deliverance from our sinful nature, the first step for most of us has been to settle, did we really will what is right and are we really willing what God wants us to will? And, I would confess to you my experience that when I began to examine my own heart before God, I began to see that I didn't really will what he wanted me to will.

You see, the fact is that once you clear that up and once you are willing to do and to be whatever God wants you to be and to do, the magnificent fact is that your sinful nature has been crucified with Christ and that's the thing that prevented Paul obeying. And, the moment you believe that is the moment you are able to obey. And, I'll just make you suffer in my old diagram. Because some of us think, well, the sinful nature, well, could you clarify that? What do you mean? Our sinful nature prevents us expressing what our will wants to do? Well, I'll just do it briefly because so many of you know it and have seen it so often.

But, loved ones, without justifying every step here, I just point out that the Bible outlines our personality as consisting of our spirit and our soul and our body. And, if you follow out those references in the Bible, you find that the spirit consists of the ability to commune with God, the

ability through our intuition to know what God wants us to do and our conscience which judges us on the basis of that. And, then, our will which governs our body, our mind and emotions, and our personality so that we do those things in our life.

And, so, actually God's plan for us was to operate like that. To operate depending on his love for our own security and our own safety. And, then, to allow that love to come through our spirits in our communion with him so that we knew what he wanted us to do. Then, our conscience constrained our will so that our will obeyed our conscience on the basis of that and directed our mind and emotions to do those things and to express them through our bodies. That was God's will for us. That is a spiritual nature.

Now, what Adam and our forefathers did, at the beginning of the world's creation, was they determined we will not be dependent on God alone. We will use this world that we see around us to get the safety and the security that his love intended to give us.

And, so, they turned their whole way of life around and they began to ignore God. They then began to use the material things in the world and the circumstances of the world and even began to use other people to get the satisfaction that God meant them to have from him. And, so, their whole personalities began to operate the other way.

You can see that everything became contorted. The mind, instead of concentrating on understanding what God wanted a person to do, the mind began to be used to manipulate other people to provide you with the security that you would have got from God. The emotions which were meant to express the delight and joy that you had in your Father's friendship turned around and, instead of expressing joy, they began to concentrate on getting joy from other people. And, so, the whole nature became perverted. That's what a sinful nature is. And, it's that sinful nature that prevents us obeying God.

So, our wills can be set to obey him and they can be starting to move down this way [through the spirit to the soul] but there's this whole nature that is operating the other way. If you would like an example of it, so many of us come in to certain times of financial difficulty or we come in to times of real personal conflicts with other people and God says to us, now, I want you to rest in me and to trust me. And, I want you to use your mind to understand what I am doing with you in this situation. And, I want you to remain under it long enough until I achieve what I want to achieve in you. So, I want you to concentrate on that.

And, we know we should do that but the little mind is such a manipulator by habit that before we know it, our mind is working out ways in which we can deliver ourselves from the financial trouble or ways in which we can do without the personal relationship that has become messed up. That's part of it.

Or, you know fine well that God is your only final, reliable friend. And, his opinion of you is the only thing that really matters. But, for years, you've lived and practiced what your inherited sinful nature has taught you to do. That is, you've learned to depend on what other people think of you. And, you're another slave to other people's opinion of you. And, there comes a situation when you know I should stand up like Martin Luther and say, here I stand. I care for no other. I don't care what they think of me. I am going to do what is right before God because his opinion alone counts.

This old sinful nature lies like a heavy weight upon us and before we know it our little eye is going out to see if somebody approves of us. That's what the sinful nature does. And, that eternally lies on top of you and prevents you doing what you know you should. And, there's no way to fix that sinful nature up yourself. And, that's why Romans 6:6 is God's answer. Our old self, our old man, our old sinful nature, was crucified with Christ.

And, that actually is the truth. That there isn't one of us here that has a sinful nature that has not already been destroyed with our Savior. And, that deliverance can be made real in your life tonight in a moment by faith because that's what Paul said. So, you also, in the light of this fact, that your sinful nature has been crucified, you also must consider yourselves dead indeed unto sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus -- and considering is believing, and believing can be done in a moment.

There are lots of men who experienced it. William Bramwell was a minister, a Methodist minister in the old days in England. After suffering under conviction of sin for many months, he was converted to Christ and became an earnest worker for the salvation of souls. So, he was a converted man. He was full of zeal and many souls were led to Christ. Yet, he yearned for a still deeper Christian experience. In other words, he found a sinful nature was still there. And, when he obeyed God, he obeyed against a weight that was upon him all the time. "I was for some time deeply convinced of my need of purity and sought carefully with tears and entreaties and sacrifice, thinking nothing too much to give up, nothing too much to do or suffer, if I might but obtain this pearl of great price. This deliverance from a sinful nature. Yet, I found it not. Nor knew the reason why until the Lord showed me I had erred in the way of seeking it. I did not seek it by faith alone but, as it were, by the works of the law."

And, in case you don't recognize what that means in our contemporary life situation, for most of us it means we tinker with our personality. We decide to ourselves, yeah, my problem is my mind. It won't concentrate. So, we read a book that helps you to concentrate in your mind. Or, somebody tells you your emotions are all twisted up because of the way your mom treated you, so you ought to get that sorted out, untwist your emotions and you'll be able to do what God wants you to do. That's seeking it by works of the law, you see. It's our version, our modern version, of that. We think we can tinker with the sinful nature. We think we can somehow put it right. "I did not seek it by faith alone but as it were by works of the law."

"Being now convinced of my error, I sought the blessing by faith only. Faith that Christ had crucified this with himself. Still, it tarried a little, but I waited for it in the way of faith when, in the house of a friend in Liverpool, where I had gone to settle some temporal affairs, previously to my going out to travel, while I was sitting as it might be on this chair with my mind engaged in various meditations concerning my present affairs and future prospects, my heart now and then lifted up to God but not particularly about this blessing, heaven came down to earth. It came to my soul. The Lord for whom I had waited came suddenly to the temple of my heart and I had immediate evidence that this was the blessing I had for some time been seeking. My soul was then all wonder, love and praise."

After receiving the above experience, a great power was given him. Thousands were converted to Christ in his meetings. Many sick were healed in answer to his prayers and remarkable discernment was given him to see and know the spiritual condition of others. [Taken from Memoir of the Life and Ministry of Mr William Bramwell by J. Sigston (1846)]

That's it, brothers and sisters. It can happen as instantaneously as the New Birth did. And, it's for all of us because the glory that Paul outlines in Romans 6, 7 and 8 is that our old sinful nature was crucified with Christ and all you have to do is believe that. But, these are big things because it's believing that all that you have been up to this present moment in your life has been crucified with Christ. All that you are and all that you have been, and all your past and all your little habits, and all of that has been crucified with Christ. So, it is a launching out. It is a becoming a new creation. But, it can be yours and it can be yours in a moment. How to be delivered from our sinful nature -- by faith, by faith that that has been crucified with Christ and done away with completely. That's it.

You see, if you say to me, well, what's the importance of that? Well, if you don't believe that, you're walking around continually with this kind of rationalizing, complaining persistent thought. Oh, I can't be what I'm supposed to be because I'm filled with all kinds of resentments that I've had for years and I have bad habits of thinking and feeling that I can't get rid of. There's no way I can obey. And, so, we destroy ourselves and defeat ourselves before we begin.

The fact is all that you have been up to this present moment has already, right at this moment, been crucified with Christ, right up to date at this moment. The moment you believe that, the moment the Holy Spirit fills you with himself and makes you the new creation, the completely new creation, that you already are in Christ Jesus. The fact is that so many of us at the New Birth have received only part of that new creation and not all of it and what God has done with us over these years has been to show us the parts that we haven't allowed to be renewed. But, the only way to renew them is by faith in your crucifixion and resurrection with Jesus.

So, loved ones, the glory of it is that it is possible to live above sin. It is possible to be delivered from that sinful nature. It is possible not to have resentment, it is. It is possible not to be depressed. It is possible not to be envious or jealous. It is possible not to gossip. It is possible not to be sad or cast down by the difficult situations and events that you are experiencing. It's possible to live like an angel. Yes. Because Jesus came to save his people FROM their sins. So, loved ones, don't make do with anything less. Even if all of Christendom should live in the Old Covenant, don't you make do with anything less than the full salvation that Jesus died to bring us. I pray that it will come to somebody this very night. No reason why it can't. For such a night as this, certainly that it can do and it can come to you the same way.

Let's pray.

Dear Lord, we would have to admit that we are sick, sore and tired of our manifold failures and our wickedness and our repeated fallings, and our making resolutions at certain campsites, just like the old Israelites coming back around again in the wilderness. They came round to the same old campsites. The same places where we put up stones as altars and put stakes in the ground and made resolutions. Lord, we are sick and sore and tired of such a life of resolutions and failures and new resolutions and new failures.

Lord, we do believe your Word that you, Lord Jesus, came to save your people from their sins and we are your people. Lord, we need to be saved from our sins. So, Lord, we know that you've forgiven us and, dear Father, we know that we're your children. But, oh, Lord, we want to act like your children. We want to live like your children and think like your children. We want to put the evil thing far from us. We want to be clean inside and out.

So, Lord Jesus, we want to tell you that we do believe the Word of God. We believe that our old self was crucified with you. Lord, we believe that now in our heads intellectually and, Lord, we will not be satisfied until you make that real and actual in our lives through the cleansing power and the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves solemnly to you, asking you to lead us into this blessing and into this full salvation that we may be delivered from our sinful nature. We ask this in Jesus' name and for his sake. The grace of our Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with each of us, now and ever more. Amen.