

The Life of a Christian

Part 3

We have seen in the first two parts of our study into the real life of a Christian how the Blood of Christ's sacrifice deals with the past sins, the sins we have and will in future commit because of our weakness and Adamic nature.

We have also seen in scripture the other blessings that the Blood of Jesus Christ can bring to our lives.

At the beginning of this study we saw that the problem we have as humans is dual, sins and sin.

The sins we commit are dealt with by the Blood of Christ, but how does God deal with the sinful and sin generating nature we have inherited from Adam?

Our Adamic nature is **not** dealt with directly by the Blood of Jesus Christ but by the second part of the triune plan for reconciliation offered by our Creator God.

This power for reconciliation is the power of the cross, the very crucifixion of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

After the Blood of Christ has atoned for our past, present and any future sins, what is the state of our nature?

We still remain a sinner because we have sinned.

Romans 6:12 [New Jerusalem Bible] *"... it was through one man [Adam] that sin came into the world, and through sin death, and thus death has spread through the whole human race because everyone has sinned."*

When we sin, which we have to admit we do every day, what are we?

Sinners, and no sinner can enter into the Holy presence of God.

Revelation 21:1-5 [New Jerusalem Bible] *"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, the first heaven and the first earth had disappeared now, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride dressed for her husband. Then I heard a loud voice call from the throne, 'Look, here God lives among human beings. He will make His home among them, they will be His people, and He will be their God, God with them. [This is the classic formula for a covenant]. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes; there will be no more death, and no more mourning or sadness or pain. The world of the past has gone.' Then the One sitting on the throne spoke, 'Look, I am making the whole of creation new. Write this, what I am saying is trustworthy and will come true.'"*

Here we have described the yet future but eternal dwelling place [presence] of the Creator God.

Who will be dwelling with Him in this new world?

Revelation 21:27 [New Jerusalem Bible] *"Nothing unclean [profane or unholy] may come into it [the new Holy City, the presence of God]. No one who does what is loathsome [idolatrous – physical or spiritual] or false [liars], but only those who are listed in the Lamb's Book of Life."*

Revelation 22:14-15 [New Jerusalem Bible] *"Blessed are those who will have washed their robes clean, so they will have the right to feed on the Tree of Life and can come through the gates into the city. Others must stay outside, dogs [term for male prostitute or religiously a person not clean of*

heart] *fortune-tellers* [the occult, the attempt to use evil supernatural means to influence people or events], *and sexually immoral* [all sex outside of marriage], *murderers, idolaters* [any worship other than towards the Creator God of The Bible] *and everyone of false speech* [liars] *and false life* [living a lie, not inside what they show to be on the outside].”

Here we have an extensive and direct list of sinful people, no such person will be acceptable in the presence of a Holy God nor find their name in Christ’s Book of Eternal Life.

Revelation 20:14-15 [New Jerusalem Bible] “... *this burning lake is the second [final] death, and anybody whose name could not be found written in the Book of Life was hurled into the burning lake.*”

As we are sinners this is our ultimate fate.

Romans 6:23 [New Jerusalem Bible] “*The wage paid by sin is death...*”

If we remain with our sinning Adamic nature this is all we can expect as our “wages”.

How do we then get into this essential Book of Life?

Philippians 4:3 [New Jerusalem Bible] “*These women have struggled hard for the gospel with me [apostle Paul] along with Clement and all my other fellow-workers whose names are written in the Book of Life.*”

Being a co-worker with Jesus Christ whom Paul served as a servant, resulted in their names being written in the Book of Life.

Philippians 1:1 [NIV] “*Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons:*”

The Greek refers to a bond slave, one who was a slave for life.

How did Paul and these other Christians become bond slaves of Jesus Christ?

This process all starts at the cross.

Romans 6:1-2 [New Jerusalem Bible] “*What should we say then? Should we remain in sin [our Adamic nature that causes us to continue to sin] so that grace may be given the more fully? Out of the question! We have died to sin; how could we go on living in it?*”

We are **not** to continue to live according to the dictates of our sinning Adamic nature, this nature has to die.

How is this to be accomplished?

Romans 6:3-7 [New Jerusalem Bible] “*You cannot have forgotten that all of us, when we were baptised [by total immersion] into Christ Jesus, were baptised into His death. So by our baptism into His death [Christ died on the cross] we were buried [by total immersion at baptism] with Him. So that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father’s glorious power, [the Holy Spirit who does the Creating Work for the Godhead] we too should begin a new life. If we have been joined to Him [Christ] by dying a death like His, so we shall be by a resurrection like His, realising that our former life [our Adamic nature] was crucified with Him, so that the self [our selfish Adamic, human nature] which belonged to sin should be destroyed and we should be freed from the slavery of sin. Someone who has died, of course, no longer has to answer for sin.*”

The only time we cannot sin is when we are dead, for we have no chance to commit sins.

God has no intention of patching up our human [Adamic] nature, He desires it crucified, put to a painful death.

We will find it is a painful death when we face the crucifixion of our normal selfish nature, it will **not** happen overnight.

Romans 6:8-11 [New Jerusalem Bible] *“But we believe that if we died with Christ [symbolically crucified and buried in baptism], then we shall live with too. We know that Christ has been raised from the dead and will never die again. Death has no power over Him any more. For by dying, He is dead to sin once and for all, and now the life He lives is life with God. In the same way, you must see yourselves as being dead to sin **but alive for God in Christ Jesus.**”*

The Adamic sin generating nature has to die. This selfish, self-centred nature must be crucified.

Paul likens this human [Adamic] nature as being a slave to sin.

When we submit to the desires of our human nature we will end up sinning.

What Paul is leading us towards is our becoming a slave to a different master, Christ instead of our human nature.

Romans 6:12-13 [New Jerusalem Bible] *“That is why you must not allow sin [our Adamic sin generating nature] to reign over our mortal bodies [how we react to situations, the way we respond to a temptation to sin] and make you obey their desires [the natural way we react to a situation is selfishly] or give any parts of our bodies over to sin to be used as instruments of evil.”*

The different parts of our body sin in various ways. For example:

Our eyes can lust after something without touching or owning that object.

Matthew 8:27-28 [New Jerusalem Bible] *“You have heard how it was said, you shall not commit adultery, but I [Jesus Christ] say this to you, if a man looks at a woman lustfully, he has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”*

The change that has to take place has to be in our mind or heart.

Romans 12:2 [New Jerusalem Bible] *“Do not model your behaviour on the contemporary world, but let **the renewing** [making new] **of your mind transform you**, so that you may discern for yourselves what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and mature.”*

How then can this transformation take place?

Some of us have tried very hard to get rid of this sinful nature but have found it impossible.

We always seem to revert to our Adamic, sin generating nature.

We were born sinners, how can we be cut off from our sinful Adamic heredity?

The answer is **not** found in ourselves and our struggle to die to sin, we will always fail.

Paul understood this problem.

Romans 7:15-20 [New Jerusalem Bible] *“I do not understand my own behaviour, I do not act as I mean to, but I do things I hate ... it is not myself acting, but the sin which lives in me. And really, I know of nothing good living in me, in my natural self that is. For though the will to do what is good is in me, the power to do it is not. The good thing I want to do, I never do. The evil thing which I do not want, that is what I do. Every time I do what I do not want to do, then it is not myself acting, but the sin that lives in me.”*

Paul realised he was in a hopeless condition as far as his human strength and willpower was concerned.

Doesn't this describe us all?

Romans 7:24- [New Jerusalem Bible] *“What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body doomed to death?”*

Paul then shows us the only way out of the slavery to our sin generating nature.

Romans 7:25 – 8:3 [New Jerusalem Bible] *“God, thanks be to Him, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So it is that I myself with my mind obey the law of God, but in my disordered nature I obey the law of sin. Thus, condemnation will never come to those who are **able** [empowered] in Christ Jesus, because the Law of the Spirit which gives life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death. What the Law [obedience to 10 Commandments of God and the other laws of the Old Testament] could not do because of the weakness of human nature, God did by sending His own Son in the same human nature as a sinner to be a sacrifice for sin, and condemning sin in that human nature. This was so that the Law's requirements might be fully satisfied in us as we direct our lives not by our natural [Adamic] inclinations but **by the Spirit.**”*

The sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross, His sacrifice of His human life completely satisfied the demand of the Law for all of human kind.

Our sinful Adamic nature, the sin in us, was crucified when Christ was crucified.

God the Father accepted the sacrifice on the cross of His perfect Son as if it were our human nature being crucified.

Humanity with its Adamic, rebellious nature, who in Adam were cast out of the Garden of Eden, the presence of God are **not** able to move back into God's presence but by the cross of Christ.

This is the new life we are to live *“in Christ”*.

Humanity now once again has access to the *“Tree of Life”*.

How is this new life to be conducted?

Romans 8:4-5 [New Jerusalem Bible] *“... as we direct our lives not by our natural [Adamic] inclinations [the Adamic nature now dead by crucifixion with Jesus Christ] but **by the Spirit**, those who are living by their natural inclinations [our past lifestyle] have their minds on the things human nature desires, **those who live in the Spirit** have their minds on spiritual things.”*

In the next part of this study we will see how the resurrection of Jesus Christ allows us to *“live in the Spirit”* that is *“Christ in us”*.