

Can I live without sin?

“It is the privilege of the child of God in the power of the Holy Spirit to have victory over sin every day and every hour and every minute”

*RA Torrey*

### Recommended Reading

- Dutch Sheets: Becoming who you are
- Andrew Murray: Secrets of Authority
- Andrew Murray: Covenants and Blessings
- R.A. Torrey: The Person & Work of the Holy Spirit

First: A recap on the Old and New Covenants

### Old Covenant

- Example: Giving of the Law at Mount Sinai
- **Exo 19:5** Now therefore, **if** you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth *is* Mine.
- **Exo 19:8** Then all the people answered together and said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do."
- But God already knew that they would be unable to keep it...

### Covenant with Abram

- **Gen 15:9-10** So He said to him, "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two.
- **Gen 15:17** And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces.

## The New Covenant

- **Jer 31:31-32** "I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers ...which they broke..."
- **Jer 31:33** But this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

## The New Covenant

- **Deu 30:6** And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.
- **Jer 24:7** Then I will give them a heart to know Me, that I *am* the LORD; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart.
- **Jer 32:40** And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me.

## The New Covenant

- **Eze 36:26-27** I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do *them*.

## New Covenant

- The promises are
  - Not only for Israel
  - For Now
- **Heb 8:6** But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.
- **Hebrews 8:8-12** then quotes the promises from Jeremiah (incl "I will put my laws in their mind and write them on their hearts")

- **1 Peter 1:13-16** Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest *your* hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, *as* in your ignorance; but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct, because it is written, "BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."

## A Comparison

Old Covenant	New Covenant
• Normal contract; both parties must perform	• Donation / free gift
• Conditional	• Unconditional
• Voluntary	• Voluntary
• Man must sanctify himself	• Sanctification enabled by Holy Spirit
• Man must obey	• Obedience enabled by Holy Spirit

## A Comparison (cont.)

### Old Covenant

- Animals die repeatedly for our sins
- Temporary
- Glorious
- Man broke the covenant

### New Covenant

- Jesus died once for our sins
- Permanent
- Better
- Jesus given as surety; God guarantees our side (Heb 7:22)

## Purpose of the covenants

### Old Covenant

- To show the need for a saviour (Gal 3:24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ)

### New Covenant

- To restore the original relationship between God and Man as before Adam's fall

## Saved, what then?

- Salvation is only the start
- Incredible promises, instructions and descriptions of what life should be like after salvation
- There is a clear expectation that we will live a victorious overcoming life free from sin...

## Saved, what then?

- **1 John 2:3-6** Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

## Saved, what then?

- **2 Cor 2:14** Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ
- **1 Cor 15:57** But thanks *be* to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
- **1 Thess 4:3** For this is the will of God, your sanctification
- **1 John 2:1** My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous

- **1 Thess 5:22** Abstain from every form of evil.
- **1 Thess 5:23-24** Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you *is faithful, who also will do it.*
- **John 8:36** Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.
- **1 John 3:6** Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him.

- **Rom 6:14** For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.
- **Rom 8:37** Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.
- **1 Thess 3:13** so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.
- **John 14:15** If you love Me, keep My commandments.
- **John 14:23** Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word"

- **Php 2:13** for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure
- **Php 4:13** I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
- **Gal 5:16** I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

## Objections

- **Rom 3:23** "...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"
  - But that is in the context of everyone requiring a savior
  - Later Rom 6 specifically says we should no longer be slaves of sin (v6) and that sin shall not have dominion over us (v14)

## Is this your experience?

- We think this is so impossible, that we want to water it down to something more believable
  - "Try your best"
  - No real expectation of total victory
  - Let us rather ask – Is it possible for God to do what he has promised?
- God has much more in mind than we tend to think, so...

What are the reasons why you may not be experiencing the overcoming life?

## #1 Being unsaved

- If you haven't entered into the new covenant you cannot expect God's promises to apply to you
- If you have not accepted Christ yet, the promises are not applicable to you

### #1 Being unsaved

- Here's a scary verse:
- **1 John 3:9** Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God. Also 1 John 5:18
- If you think of yourself as a Christian, but your life is marked by a habitual continuous pattern of sin, there is the possibility that you are still unsaved.

### #2 Not wanting to stop sinning

- God can give victory over any sin and addiction
- But only if you want to overcome it
  - Or at least want to want to...
- Also: Don't see how close to sinning you can get

### #3 An Old Covenant Outlook

- Galatians, Romans and Hebrews show how in the time of the new covenant it is still possible to be held in the bondage of the old covenant. Some Christians are content (?) with the double life of half flesh, half spirit, half self-effort and half grace.

### #3 An Old Covenant Outlook

- "... there is a secret root of evil that must be removed. That root is the spirit of bondage, the legal spirit of self-effort that hinders the humble faith that knows that God will work out all and yields to Him to do it" – *Andrew Murray*

### #3 An Old Covenant Outlook

- Trying in own strength
- Shows pride and a lack of surrender
- Trying harder does not work
- Promising "This time will be different" does not work
- Stops short of the total victory God promises
- Victory only possible when God enables you
- Do you want Him to?

### #4 Unbelief

- Not believing it is possible
- Not trusting that God can and will do it
- Thinking you don't have enough faith
  - But God even supplies that
  - A lot is not necessary
  - Faith is not self-effort
- Jesus is surety
- Like salvation, the promise is for everyone
- Why believe for salvation but not the rest (the law written on the heart and true fellowship with God)?

#### #4 Unbelief (cont.)

- The most common reason for lack of victory
- The one thing that stops God working
- **Matt 13:58** Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.
- **Mark 6:5** Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed *them*. And He marveled because of their unbelief.

#### #4 Unbelief (cont.)

- We like to dress up unbelief as humility
- I am just a sinner
  - That's what you were, not what you should be now
- I am no saint
  - Why not?

#### Unbelief (cont.)

- For you to say, "Oh, I am no saint," is acceptable by human standards of pride, but it is unconscious blasphemy against God. You defy God to make you a saint, as if to say, "I am too weak and hopeless and outside the reach of the atonement by the cross of Christ." Why aren't you a saint? It is either that you do not want to be a saint or that you do not believe that God can make you into one.   
- **Oswald Chambers**

#### Unbelief (cont.)

- Get into the habit of examining from God's perspective those things that sound so humble to men. You will be amazed at how unbelievably inappropriate and disrespectful they are to him. We say things such as, "Oh I shouldn't claim to be sanctified; I'm not a saint." But to say that before God means, "No, Lord, it is impossible for you to save and sanctify me." That may sound wonderfully humble to others but before God it is an attitude of defiance. Conversely, the things that sound humble before God may sound exactly the opposite to people. To say, "Thank God, I know I am saved and sanctified," is in God's eyes the purest expression of humility.   
- **Oswald Chambers**

#### #4 Unbelief (cont.)

- Stop limiting God!
- Stop reducing the promises to a level we find easier to believe
- God is not saying try your best
  - He wants more than your best
- Is it possible for God to do what he promised?

So what is the solution?

## #1 Believe God!

- We understand that salvation is a free gift, why not sanctification?
- The Holy Spirit will give the will and power to obey
- Accept this like a child
- It is by faith, just like salvation
- Salvation is just the start!

“Believe that every blessing of the covenant of grace is yours. By the death of the testator you are entitled to it all. Act on that faith knowing that all is yours. The new heart is yours, the law written in the heart is yours...  
- Andrew Murray

Act on the faith and count on God as faithful, able, and so loving to reveal and make true in you all the power and glory of His everlasting covenant”

- Andrew Murray

## #2 Surrender

- Let us admit fully and heartily what failure has taught us – the absolute impossibility of even a regenerated saved man walking in God’s law in his own strength *(Andrew Murray)*
- Failure is due to secretly trusting in yourself
- Stop making promises you cannot keep
  - This time I will...
  - Let God keep you

## #2 Surrender

- Accept Jesus as Lord (not only as savior)
- Surrender is not less of self; it is nothing of self
- Self must die
  - This is what makes surrender difficult
- Total surrender; total dependence
  - Just like Jesus
  - **Joh 5:30** I can of Myself do nothing.

## #2 Surrender

- Confess and Renounce all known sin and anything keeping you from full surrender
- Is there anything you are not willing to lay down or give up?
- The real issue is whether you trust God
  - To want what is best for you
  - Do you really believe He loves you totally?

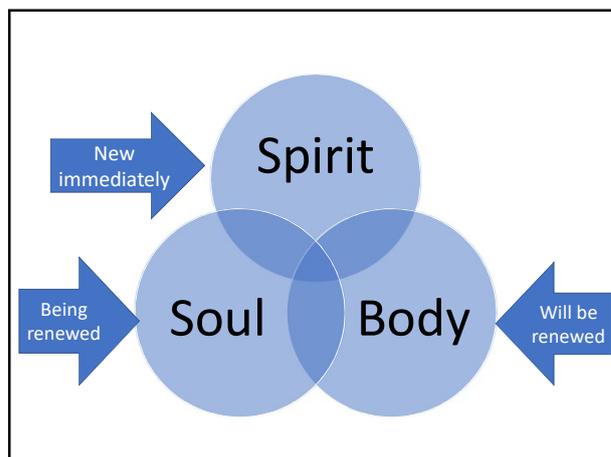
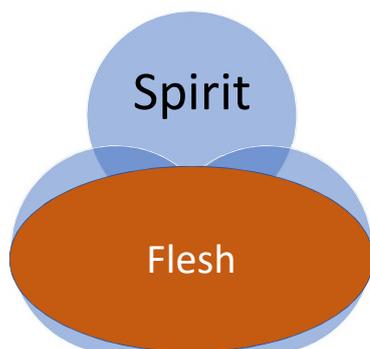
### #3 Abide

- **John 8:31-32** Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
- **Eph 4:23-24** ...and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

### #3 Abide

- **Isaiah 55:11** So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper *in the thing* for which I sent it.
- Pray for revelation and understanding
- Give it time – allow the seeds of the Word to grow – abide!

### Flesh still present after salvation!



### Paul's experience

- **Rom 7:15-20** For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that *it is* good. But now, *it is* no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but *how* to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will *to do*, I do not do; but the evil I will not *to do*, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not *to do*, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

### Paul's experience

**Rom 7:21-25** I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.

But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

### Paul's experience

• **Rom 8:1-7** *There is* therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh...

### Paul's experience

• **Rom 8:8-13** So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

### An exhortation

Let us turn our hearts away from all past experience of failure, caused by nothing but unbelief. Then let us turn our hearts quietly and trust fully to our covenant God. Let us hear what he says he will do for us and believe him. Let us rest on his unchangeable faithfulness, the surety of the covenant, and on his almighty power and the Holy Spirit working in us. Let us give ourselves to him as our God. He will prove that what he has done for us in Christ is no more wonderful than what he will do in us every day by the spirit of Christ.

- Andrew Murray

### A warning

“[The flesh] is only kept in the place of death by the Holy Spirit's power. If for one moment we were to take our eyes off Jesus Christ, if we were to neglect the daily study of the Word and prayer, down we would go.”

RA Torrey

Now you have choices to make...