

The Second Crisis as Cleansing

by Charles Ewing Brown

Charles Ewing Brown preaches about the doctrine of inbred sin in believers and the need for a second work of grace, entire sanctification, to cleanse believers from the remains of the carnal mind. He emphasizes that this belief, rooted in Wesleyan theology, is supported by the New Testament and has historical significance in Protestant religious faiths. Brown highlights the ongoing struggle between the flesh and the spirit in the hearts of believers, pointing to the scriptural evidence that supports the existence of inbred sin even after regeneration.

Description

Charles Ewing Brown preaches about the doctrine of inbred sin in believers and the need for a second work of grace, entire sanctification, to cleanse believers from the remains of the carnal mind. He emphasizes that this belief, rooted in Wesleyan theology, is supported by the New Testament and has historical significance in Protestant religious faiths. Brown highlights the ongoing struggle between the flesh and the spirit in the hearts of believers, pointing to the scriptural evidence that supports the existence of inbred sin even after regeneration.

Transcript

the-second-crisis-as-cleansing.pdf txtUrl:
 "/pdf-text/text/c/charles-ewing-brown---the-second-crisis-as-cleansing.txt" thumbnailUrl: "" hasTranscript:
 true oneLinerSummary: "The sermon explores the necessity and scriptural basis for the second crisis of
 entire sanctification in the life of a believer, emphasizing cleansing from inbred sin through the Holy Spirit."
 sermonType: "teaching" topics: - name: "Inbred Sin" slug: "inbred-sin" - name: "Entire Sanctification" slug:
 "entire-sanctification" bibleRefs: - text: "Acts 15:9" bookId: "ACT" chapter: "15" verse: "9" - text: "Romans
 7:5" bookId: "ROM" chapter: "7" verse: "5" - text: "1 Corinthians 3:1" bookId: "1CO" chapter: "3" verse: "1"
 - text: "Galatians 5:17" bookId: "GAL" chapter: "5" verse: "17" - text: "1 John 1:7" bookId: "1JN" chapter:
 "1" verse: "7" outline: - heading: "I" points: - "Definition of the second crisis" - "Historical context in
 Wesleyan theology" - "Importance of cleansing from inbred sin" - heading: "II" points: - "Scriptural basis for
 entire sanctification" - "Role of the Holy Spirit in cleansing" - "Evidence from New Testament writings" -
 heading: "III" points: - "Protestant creeds supporting the doctrine" - "Comparison with Catholic teachings" -
 "Universal acceptance among major denominations" - heading: "IV" points: - "Challenges from modernist
 perspectives" - "Historical significance of the doctrine" - "Call to embrace the truth of inbred sin" - heading:
 "V" points: - "Practical implications for believers" - "Encouragement for seeking entire sanctification" -
 "Legacy of the holiness movement" faq: - q: "What is the second crisis in Christian faith?" a: "The second
 crisis refers to the moment of cleansing from the remains of inbred sin, achieved through the baptism of

the Holy Spirit." - q: "How does Wesleyan theology view inbred sin?" a: "Wesleyan theology teaches that justified believers still carry the remains of inbred sin until they experience entire sanctification." - q: "What role does the Holy Spirit play in cleansing?" a: "The Holy Spirit is essential in the process of entire sanctification, purifying the believer's heart from the last remnants of inherited sin." - q: "Why is the doctrine of inbred sin significant?" a: "It underscores the need for a second work of grace, emphasizing that believers must seek complete cleansing for spiritual growth." - q: "What are some historical supports for this doctrine?" a: "Various Protestant creeds, including those from the Church of England and Lutheranism, affirm the existence of inbred sin in believers." quotes: - "The second crisis is the moment of cleansing from the remains of inbred sin." - "This infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated." - "It is possible for them to find deliverance from that carnality in this life." applicationPoints: - "Seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit for complete cleansing from sin." - "Engage with historical teachings to understand the significance of inbred sin." - "Embrace the legacy of the holiness movement as a guide for spiritual growth." keywords: - "second crisis" - "inbred sin" - "entire sanctification" - "Wesleyan theology" - "Holy Spirit" - "Protestant creeds" - "holiness movement" - "spiritual cleansing" ---

First of all, the second crisis is the moment of cleansing from the remains of inbred sin. This is what it has always meant in Wesleyan theology and I believe this is its meaning in the New Testament.

The New Testament clearly teaches that justified believers are still burdened with remains of the carnal mind until they are cleansed therefrom by the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the experience of entire sanctification. This proposition will be developed here in two phases: (1) to show the historical place of this doctrine in Protestant religious faiths; (2) to show its scriptural validity.

The doctrine of the remains of inbred sin in believers is fundamental to the teaching of entire sanctification as a second work of grace; for if believers are fully cleansed from inbred sin in regeneration there is no place for a second work of grace, and all any Christian need do is simply to grow in grace until he finishes this life and passes on to glory.

The modern holiness movement took its rise most directly from the teachings of John Wesley, who believed that justified believers still have the remains of inbred sin and that they may be cleansed from these remains in a second experience of the grace of God called entire sanctification. John Wesley wrote:

QUESTION: When may a person judge himself to have attained this?

ANSWER: When, after having been convinced of inbred sin, by a far deeper and clearer conviction than that which he experienced before justification, and after having experienced a gradual mortification of it, he experiences a total death to sin, and an entire renewal in the love and image of God, so as to "rejoice evermore," to "pray without ceasing," and in everything to give thanks. [24]

Scholars need no proof that to Wesley entire sanctification meant principally the destruction of the remains of inbred sin in the heart of the justified believer, but those who feel doubtful may satisfy their minds by the numerous passages on the subject in his writings, of which an example has been given.

In this connection it is interesting to ascertain the evidences which led Wesley to this conclusion. To many Christians of our day, living in a world infected by liberalism and modernism, the idea of a sinful, depraved human nature existing even in the unsaved seems improbable, perhaps. To the men of Wesley's time, however, it was, in conformity with scriptural teaching, regarded as perfectly reasonable. But there was a further reason for his belief. Wesley was a priest of the Church of England, sworn to uphold its Thirty-Nine

Articles of Faith. One of these Articles reads in part as follows:

Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam ... but it is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam; whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit; and therefore in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation. And this infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated; whereby the lust of the flesh . . . is not subject to the Law of God." [25]

While it is true that many times ministers vow to support creeds which they do not believe, it is certain that this was not the case with Wesley. He believed that this infection of nature remains in those that are regenerated. We may add that this article still stands in the law of the Church of England and its sister communion, the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States.

The Church of England was not alone in holding this view, however. Luther's Small Catechism says regarding baptism: "It signifies that the old Adam in us [baptized Christians] is to be drowned by daily sorrow and repentance." This doctrine is made a part of the creed of Lutheranism in the Formula of Concord (1576), which speaks of the merely formal obedience of the worldly, and adds: "As also the regenerate do, so far as they are yet carnal." [26]

The French Confession of Faith (1559) says concerning original sin: "We believe, also, that this evil is truly sin, sufficient for the condemnation of the whole human race . . . even after baptism it is still of the nature of sin, but the condemnation of it is abolished for the children of God, out of his mere free grace and love." [27]

The Synod of Dort, representative of the Reformed Church of Holland, decreed in 1619, "Whom God calls, according to his purpose, to the communion of his Son our Lord Jesus Christ, and regenerates by the Holy Spirit, he delivers also from the dominion and slavery of sin in this life; though not altogether from the body of sin." [28]

The Westminster Confession of Faith (1647), the historic confession of English-speaking Presbyterianism, said, "This corruption of nature, during this life, doth remain in those that are regenerated." [29] On sanctification, the Confession says: "This sanctification is throughout in the whole man, yet imperfect in this life; there abideth still some remnants of corruption in every part, whence ariseth a continual and irreconcilable war, the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh." [30]

These references have not been given to prove that the doctrine of inbred sin is scriptural, but merely to clarify the point that it is a universal doctrine of orthodox Protestantism. Here we have traced the very words of Lutheran, Reformed, Presbyterian, and Church of England creeds -all distinctly and separately expressing in plain language the belief that there are remains of carnality left in the regenerated.

And even the Roman Catholic Church, although it condemns the language of the Protestant creeds regarding original sin in believers, does teach the principle in effect, as may be seen by the following language of the Council of Trent:

This holy Synod confesses and is sensible, that in the baptized there remains concupiscence, or an incentive (to sin); which, whereas it is left for our exercise, cannot injure those who consent not, but resist manfully by the grace of Jesus Christ. . . This concupiscence, which the Apostle sometimes calls sin [here

the reference is to Romans 6:12 and 7:8], the holy Synod declares that the Catholic church has never understood it to be called sin, as being truly and properly sin in those born again, but because it is of sin, and inclines to sin." [31]

We feel inclined to agree with the Council in a certain hesitation to call this nature "sin" for fear of misapprehension. In the same decree the Council says: "In those who are born again there is nothing that God hates." This is, however, a matter of terminology; for the Council admits that even Paul himself called this element in believers by the name of sin. And it is sin in the sense that it is prone to rebel against God.

Thus it has been proved by incontestable testimony that both the Roman Catholic Church and all the great churches of Protestantism have taught officially in their fundamental creeds that there is a nature of sin remaining in the regenerated. As has been before conceded, this does not prove the doctrine to be scriptural, but it does lay a burden of proof upon the objector. Surely there must be some reason why every great creed of the Western Christian world has definitely taught the continuing existence of the remains of carnality in the regenerated. What makes all Western Christendom hold this view? Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, Presbyterian, and Church of England theologians -- men as far apart as the poles in other phases of religious thinking -- have agreed upon this principle. John Wesley simply went a step further when he said that although there is such a thing as carnality in believers, it is possible for them to find deliverance from that carnality in this life.

CARNALITY IN BELIEVERS

We know well enough how this historic faith of the church will be scoffed at and ridiculed by modernists and liberals. They will say that this belief is a product of the superstition and ignorance of the Dark Ages. When we hear such a reply we ought to remember that this belief was held by the heroic and martyr-like churches of the Sixteenth Century Reformation, as well as by the older church. Moreover, we might as well say that the doctrine of inbred sin in believers has been so completely woven into the very heart and fabric of the church's thought and life that it has been impossible to get rid of it, even though other doctrines might be discarded. The fact is that many, if not most, of those who scoff so loudly at the doctrine of sin in believers, actually do not believe in any doctrine of an inherited nature of sin, and they reject this doctrine of hereditary sinfulness because they are infected with modernism and naturalism to a point where they deride this historic doctrine of the church and of the Scriptures. It stands to reason that the doctrine which maintains the existence of inbred sin in believers must rest upon the general doctrine of original sin in all mankind; and this is the doctrine so completely taught in the Scriptures that no one can reject it without proclaiming himself a modernist, lacking reverence for the Word of God.

Since it is not of primary importance for unsaved people to understand the doctrine of sin in believers, it is not imperative that that truth should be revealed to them. Consequently, we find that it lies partly hidden in the Scriptures, to be discovered only by the pious thought of earnest seekers for the truth. Many intimations of this truth exist for those who are willing to see them in the Scriptures.

The Apostle Paul points out in Romans 7:5-24 the struggle of an awakened sinner striving to justify himself by the works of the law. This passage is cited to show the way this law of sin works in the hearts of earnest men who are awakened and have begun to seek God, although this does not describe the condition of a converted man. The whole question is, Does this conflict continue in any measure after the experience of regeneration? It is fundamental to the doctrine of entire sanctification to answer that it does; for if this is not true, then the whole doctrine of entire sanctification is nothing less than a delusion. In I

Corinthians 3:1-4 the Apostle teaches plainly, for those who are willing to believe, that the babes in Christ are still afflicted with the mind of carnality: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. . . . For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" It would not do to say that this carnality simply refers to normal human nature. Prof. W. H. Howard says that the Greek term here translated "carnal" "is more distinctly ethical, 'having the characteristics of flesh,' 'carnally minded.' " [32] "It is a moral perversion." [33]

The Epistle to the Hebrews likewise addresses babes in Christ who are "become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat" (5:12). The same writer warns "lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you and thereby many be defiled" (12:15). This "root of bitterness" is the carnal nature. But the Apostle is very plain in writing to the Galatian church. Here he describes the conflicts in the heart of unsanctified believers as follows: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot [may not] do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law" (Gal. 5:17-18). This is clearly a description of the conflict which goes on in the heart of regenerated men before they are entirely sanctified.

Regeneration is an experience in which the soul is forgiven and cleansed from all past sins. Likewise it is cleansed from the acquired depravity of a sinful life, and the power of the law of sin is broken in the heart. Nevertheless, this inherited depravity, which was in the heart of the infant, continues to abide in the heart of the believer until he receives the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of power, which fully purifies the heart from the last remains of the inherited, sinful nature, as Peter reported to the church at Jerusalem concerning the occasion of the baptism of the Holy Ghost upon the household of Cornelius. God, he explained, had sanctified the Gentile believers just as he had blessed the Jewish believers on the Day of Pentecost. "And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:9). In the First Epistle of John there is a blessed promise to the obedient believers: "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1:7).

Once a man discerns this fundamental truth of holiness, he can see a vast array of scriptures contributing confirmatory evidence to this view of truth.

Before a Christian proudly rejects this light he ought to remember that for many generations this truth has been the avenue of countless blessings for those who accepted and acted upon it. It has been the continual inspiration for an age-long revival; it is the reason of the existence of the holiness movement. In this light our fathers and grandfathers and the earnest and heroic pioneers of the holiness movement labored with sacrificial diligence and ascended triumphantly to their glorious rest in heaven.

Let us now proceed to a more detailed study of the nature of this inbred sin from which the believer is delivered in entire sanctification.

24 John Wesley, Plain Account of Christian Perfection, p. 50

25 The Thirty--Nine Articles of the Church of England (1562), Art. IX

26 The Formula of Concord (1576), Art. VI

27 The French Confession of Faith (1559), Art. XI

28 The Canons of the Synod of Dort, Fifth Head of Doctrine. Art I

29 The Westminster Confession of Faith (1647), chap. 6, sec. 5

30 Ibid., chap. 13, sec. 2

31 The Council of Trent, decree concerning original sin

32 Prof. W. H. Howard, The Abingdon Commentary, p. 1175

33 George Barker Stevens, The Theology of the New Testament, p. 345

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/charles-ewing-brown-/the-second-crisis-as-cleansing/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net