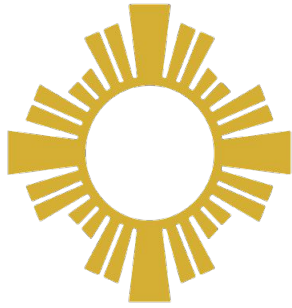


ENCOUNTER



— SCHOOL OF MINISTRY —

Dead to Sin

...

Class 6 - Session 2

Q1. Identity and Transformation

11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in years, and Sarah had stopped having her menstrual periods.

12 So Sarah laughed to herself and said, “Now that I am worn out and my husband is old, am I still to have sexual pleasure?”

13 But the LORD said to Abraham: “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Will I really bear a child, old as I am?’ *(cont.)*”

19 “He will again have compassion upon us; he will tread our iniquities under foot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.” - *Micah 7:19*

“I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins.” -*Isaiah 43:25*

“For I will be merciful toward their inequities and I will remember their sins no more.” *Hebrews 8:12*

21 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ 23 And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you evildoers...’” - *Matthew 7:22-23*

“The grace of the Holy Spirit has the power to justify us, that is, to cleanse us from our sins and to communicate to us ‘the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ’ and through Baptism”

- CCC 1987

“We are not the sum of our weaknesses and failures, we are the sum of the Father's love for us and our real capacity to become the image of His Son Jesus.”

-Pope St John Paul II

1 “What then shall we say? Should we persist in sin that grace may abound? Of course not!
2 How can we who died to sin yet live in it? 3
Or are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. *(cont.)*

5 For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection. 6 We know that our old self was crucified with him, so that our sinful body might be done away with, that we might no longer be in slavery to sin. 7 For a dead person has been absolved from sin. 8 If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.

9 We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him. 10 As to his death, he died to sin once and for all; as to his life, he lives for God. 11 Consequently, you too must think of yourselves as being dead to sin and living for God in Christ Jesus.”

-Romans 6:1-11

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17 “Therefore, **if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.** The old things have passed away; behold, new things have come.”

-2 Corinthians 5:17

7 “For as a man **thinks** within himself, so he is.” -*Proverbs 23:7*

19 “For I do not do the good I want, but I do the evil I do not want. 20 Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.”

-Romans 7:19-20

"This is why Paul went on to say that he was carnal, giving us here the portrait of a man as he was under and before the coming of the law."

- *St. John Chrysostom, Commentary on Romans*

“There is, therefore, now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. [2] For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. [3] For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh”-Romans 8:1-3

12 So then, brothers,⁵ we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. 13 **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.** 14 **For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.** 15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” -Romans 8:12-15

What about concupiscence?

“[Original sin] is a deprivation of original holiness and justice, but human nature has not been totally corrupted: it is wounded in the natural powers proper to it, subject to ignorance, suffering and the dominion of death, and inclined to sin - an inclination to evil that is called "concupiscence". Baptism, by imparting the life of Christ's grace, erases original sin and turns a man back towards God, but the consequences for nature, weakened and inclined to evil, persist in man and summon him to spiritual battle.” (CCC 405)

Just because we've received a new nature does not mean that we're not capable of sinning.

If you believe that you won't be free from sin until you die, then death becomes your savior.

15 “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who was tempted in every way that we are, yet was without sin.” -*Hebrews 4:15*

If you forget who you are, you'll end up acting beneath your dignity through sinning.

“Whoever thinks or considers that he is dead will not sin. For example, if lust for a woman gets hold of me or if greed for silver, gold or riches stirs me and I say in my heart that I have died with Christ ... the lust is immediately quenched and sin disappears.” - *Origen of Alexandria*

5 “For those who live according to the flesh **set their minds** on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit **set their minds** on the things of the Spirit. 6 To **set their mind** on the flesh is death, but to **set their mind** on the Spirit is life and peace.”

-Romans 8:5-6

Identity as Saints

² “Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, To all the **saints** (Gk: holy ones) in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi...” -*Philippians 1:2*

¹ “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to the **saints** (Gk: holy ones) in Ephesus who are faithful in Christ Jesus...”

“To the church of God that is in Corinth, to **those sanctified** (Gk: made holy) in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,” 1 Cor 1:2

If we think of ourselves primarily as “sinners,” then our sins are seen as something rather ordinary and inevitable. If we instead view ourselves as “saints,” then we will begin to see our sin in a whole new light. If we really are “holy ones” then whatever sins we commit are a deeper, more profound, and more serious departure from God’s calling than we ever realized.

Question: How should we best respond to this renewal of the mind of thinking of ourselves as dead to sin when certain traditions in the Church, such as the second part of the Hail Mary, include a "pray for us sinners" line?

Answer: “This is one of those cases where the principle of analogy is very important...Such words can have different senses in different contexts. For example, in one sense Jesus alone is Son of God. But in another sense, all Christians are sons and daughters of God. In yet another sense, Israel is God’s son. And in still another sense, all human beings are sons and daughters of God.

So it is with sinners. In one sense, the Catechism clearly affirms that Christians are still sinners: “All members of the Church, including her ministers, must acknowledge that they are sinners.

In everyone, the weeds of sin will still be mixed with the good wheat of the Gospel until the end of time” (827). But in another sense, we no longer have the status of sinners (see *Rom 5:8*), i.e., those who are alienated from God because of sin. We truly are made holy through faith and baptism (“saints” = “holy ones”)*(cont.)*

When Paul proclaims that we are dead to sin, he is proclaiming an objective fact that we now have to subjectively appropriate by faith. Much of the Christian life consists in appropriating by faith what Christ has already done for us! We are truly no longer under the power of sin, even though the inclination to sin still rises up in us." - *Dr. Mary Healy S.T.D.*

What about repentance and confession?

8 “If we say, “We are without sin,” we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from every wrongdoing.” -1 John 1:8-9

Does the Church really teach that we're supposed to think of ourselves as dead to sin?

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is an incredible gift to us. It is where we're restored to our relationship with our loving Father through the mercy of Jesus and where we're reminded of who we are and given the grace to live accordingly.

“Incorporated into Christ by Baptism, Christians are "dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus" and so participate in the life of the Risen Lord. Following Christ and united with him, Christians can strive to be "imitators of God as beloved children, and walk in love" by conforming their thoughts, words and actions to the "mind... which is yours in Christ Jesus," and by following his example.” - CCC 1694

Homework

Journal: Before you start reading, ask God to show you where you need to be transformed by the renewal of your mind. Now read through *Romans* 6-8. Journal insights and details that God showed you from your reflection on these chapters.

Supplemental Reading: *The Spiritual Gifts Handbook*, Chapter 7

Activation:

Shifting Our Mindset from the Grave to the Garden - Jesus wants to guide the process of renewing our minds and revealing our new nature in him.

13 “For if we are out of our minds (*existēmi*), it is for God; if we are rational, it is for you. 14 For the love of Christ impels us, once we have come to the conviction that one died for all; therefore, all have died.” -2 Corinthians 5:13-14 (NAB)

13 “If we are out of our minds in a blissful, divine ecstasy, it is for God, but if we are in our right minds, it is for your benefit. 14 For it is Christ’s love that fuels our passion and motivates us, because we are absolutely convinced that he has given his life for all of us.” -2 Corinthians 5:13-14 (TPT)