

"Freedom from Sin"

- an unbiblical heresy!

The doctrine of sin of MacArthur can be summarized briefly in three dogmas:

1. Believers or children of God still have the "sin", the sinful flesh, within them, which drives them to sin again and again (see p. 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, German edition). Sin has a "residual dwelling place in our flesh" (p. 12).
2. Believers or children of God are supposedly in a conflict, in a "spiritual battle" and would have to fight sin constantly (p.11).
3. Sin lives (allegedly) "in the body" (p. 12,18) and remains for a lifetime, it only disappears with earthly death (p. 18,19).

After that, being born again did not free us from sin, Christ's sacrifice was in vain. This is wrong, this is terrible blasphemy, which not only the author, but also Hans-Werner Deppe is guilty of, who distributed this writing unchecked and against his better judgment in the Betania publishing house (Germany), thus driving and seducing the faithful astray.

MacArthur bases his teaching on "experience" (p. 11) and Romans 7:14 ff. This is wrong! The "experience" is not the basis of faith. The pivotal point of the argumentation is, as always, the passage Romans 7,14 ff. According to MacArthur, we are dealing here with either a non-Christian or a Christian. In this connection he mixes up Romans 6 and Romans 7,14 ff. in a way contrary to Scripture. In truth they are opposites. Romans 6 lets us know that children of God are completely free from sin, Romans 7,14 ff makes us "slaves of sin". This is a contradiction, either we are slaves of sin or free from sin. Both at the same time is not possible! In truth, these are stages. First of all, we are slaves to sin; after all, Christ has freed us from sin when we accept his work of redemption on the cross in faith, as Romans 7:24 makes clear. Weighing up the two points of view, MacArthur comes to the completely wrong conclusion that Romans 7:14 ff is a "redeemed man" (p: 7).

In truth, we are clearly dealing there with believers in the Law, to whom Paul belonged before his conversion. There Paul illuminates the situation of decision and conflict of a Jewish believer in the Law who wants to fulfill the Law (of Moses) but cannot, because the sinful flesh drives him into sin again and again. There it is a matter of the conflict between "Law and flesh", and not of the opposition of "spirit and flesh", as is repeatedly asserted with reference to Galatians 5,17. As is well known, believers in the Law live "under the Law", not under grace; they actually have the sinful flesh within them, which prevents them from doing God's will and fulfilling the Law. Romans 7:14 ff never shows "the image of a Christian's struggle with the inherent sin", which is a blasphemous heresy that misleads believers. How can a world-famous Bible teacher make such blatant mistakes, and why does no one complain? How can a recognized Bible teacher be so confused? The reference to 1 Corinthians is also wrong (p. 10), in which Paul accuses the church of being carnal (1 Cor 3). The heavily criticized behavior of the Corinthians proves that they were not born again children of God. The address of the congregation (dear brothers) is no counterevidence that all church members here were children of God. On the contrary, Paul eagerly strives to lead them to the saving faith; he fights for them, for their souls, and again and again shows them the nature of genuine children of God, who are led by the Spirit.

Moreover, Scripture teaches the opposite: conversion, baptism in Christ and the new birth have set us free from the "law of sin and death" (Romans 6 and 8:2). MacArthur is without doubt a teacher of the law and denies grace. This is proven by formulations according to which it is a matter of "fulfilling the law"! (p. 12). MacArthur deliberately hides the truth from us. According to Scripture, the nature of sin is dead, destroyed (Rom 6:6). Children of God have "died to sin" (Rom 6:2), those born of God do not sin (1 John 3:9; 5:18), says the Word of God! He who commits sin is of the devil (1 John 3:8). Whoever, like MacArthur, claims to have the sinful flesh within him is not a child of God and is not saved.

Furthermore, MacArthur refers to Romans 7:24, which is misinterpreted. This verse does not mean that "sin dwells in the body", but rather that the body, the material body, is only freed from condemnation (the perishable and mortal) at death, while the soul is freed from sin with the new birth. The "death body" is subject to the judgment of death. This has nothing to do with the sin propensity of a human being. Incidentally: Believers in the law are under the curse (Gal 3,10), they will not see the Lord even after death.

Finally MacArthur refers to Gal 5,17, which supposedly speaks of an "internal battle in the believer" or in children of God. This is wrong. There it is only about the fundamental opposition of spirit and flesh, and not about an intrapersonal conflict. How can spirit and flesh, the good and the evil, dwell at the same time in the temple of God? What nonsense! Moreover, the "spiritual battle" does not refer to the inner battle against sin, but to the battle against unbelief. That is not all.

- MacArthur also doesn't know that "Christ is the end of the law". For children of God, the law of Moses is out of order. In the new covenant, the "law of Christ", the law of faith and love, applies. We must "believe and love." Only he who loves fulfils the new law of Christ. He who does not love is still in darkness.
- Christ has freed us from the "law of sin and death" (Rom 8:2). MacArthur also conceals this.
- Nor does sin dwell "in the body" (p. 12) until earthly death; it dwells "in the heart" until rebirth!
- Also the references to the Psalms are beside the point (p.15). There it is about the age of the law, and not about the new age of grace.
- Completely wrong is also the statement that WE are in a spiritual battle and WE must use "spiritual weapons". Jesus has already fought this battle for us on the cross and, as is well known, he has won!

But MacArthur denies the perfect work of redemption of Christ, the liberation not only from the guilt of sin, but also from the nature of sin in us. True Christians are free from sin, they have "died of sin", they do not sin, Christ lives in them, HE will never lead us into sin!

Conclusion. This brochure also proves: There is not a single publisher who is faithful to the Bible, and there is not a single attentive and Bible-knowing Christian. Everything is sold against our better judgment. This is not about the truth, but solely about profit. Worse still, the Betania Publishing House refuses any dialogue and refuses any admonition or criticism! Anyone who refuses to take note of and spread the unadulterated Word of God is not a Christian! The very title ("Freedom from Sin") is to be reprimanded: According to MacArthur, believers or children of God are never free from sin. Christ did not free us from sin on the cross, WE have to free ourselves through struggle. This is the path of legality and work righteousness, which Scripture strongly condemns.

Prof. Dr. Reinhard Franzke, educational researcher, January 2020, Germany, criticism of John MacArthur "Freedom from Sin".

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