

## WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE NIV? NO 3

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NOTE: If you have not read the previous articles you should read them first.

Another objection that I have made against the NIV is the passages that refer to the “sinful nature” of man (especially in Romans chapter 8). I would say that the words “sinful nature” teach “the false doctrine of original sin”. The KJV uses the word “flesh” instead of “sinful nature” which may, or may not, be better depending on who you listen to. Strong’s Concordance says the word “denotes mere human nature, the earthly nature of man apart from divine influence and, therefore, prone to sin and oppose God.” (Emphasis Supplied). Observe that the “earthly nature of man” is “prone to sin and oppose God”. Who among us would deny that man has a tendency, or is prone to sin, and oppose God? If, therefore, we understand the words “sinful nature” to mean “human nature” that is “prone to sin and oppose God” then there is nothing wrong with saying that man has a “sinful nature”. Why can’t we understand “sinful nature” to mean “a nature that is prone to sin” rather than a nature that is totally depraved of any good at all? Guy N. Woods wrote: “**It is the characteristic of sinful flesh to rebel against law; the existence of law prompts the wicked to rebellion. This stubborn and willful disobedience leads to spiritual death.**” (Questions and Answers, Vol. 2, pg. 208). In commenting on Romans 7:7, B.W. Johnson wrote: The restraints of the law brought to his knowledge his own **sinful nature**. (People’s New Testament).

Furthermore, the KJV clearly indicates that the “flesh” is prone to sin. For example, notice the following quotes from the KJV:

A. “For when we were **in the flesh**, the **motions of sins**, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death” (Rom.7:5). Where did these “motions of sins” or “sinful passions” (ASV), come from? The “flesh” (KJV) or perhaps “sinful nature” (NIV)?

B. “For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin”. What is meant by “I am carnal, **sold under sin**”. Could this mean that we are prone to sin because of our nature or flesh? According to Strong the word “carnal” is the same word that is translated “fleshly” in I Peter 2:11 which reads in the KJV “abstain from **fleshly lusts** which war against the soul”. What are these “fleshly lusts”? Are they sinful?

C. “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing...” (Rom. 7:18). What does he mean “in my flesh dwelleth no good thing”? Sounds like the “flesh” is prone to sin, or is sinful, to me. What then is the difference in saying “sinful flesh” and “sinful nature”? Richard Rodgers made the following comment in his commentary on Romans: “**The flesh, which is the sinful nature of man, cannot be destroyed in this life.**” (Paid In Full, pg. 127).

D. “So then with my mind I myself serve the law of God; but **with the flesh** the law of sin” (Rom. 7:25). Why does the “flesh” serve the “**law of sin**”? Could our nature (NIV) or flesh (KJV) have anything to do with our desire to sin?

E. “For to be carnally minded is death...” (Rom. 8:6). The word translated “carnally” is the word translated “flesh” in the KJV. (See Strong or Vine). Why is the “mind of the flesh” (ASV) death if the “flesh”, as used here, is not sinful or prone to sin?

F. “But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for **the flesh**, to fulfill the lusts thereof” (Rom. 13:14). What are the “**lusts thereof**” that are of the “flesh” that we should not make provision for? Do you suppose they are “sinful”?

G. What are the “sins of **the flesh**” that Paul refers to in Colossians 2:11, KJV?

H. Why do those who “walk after **the flesh**” walk in the “lust of uncleanness” in II Peter 2:10, KJV?

I. What are the “lusts of **the flesh**” in II Peter 2:18 and I John 2:16, KJV?

J. What does Paul mean in Ephesians 2:3 when, according to the KJV, he writes, “Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past **in the lusts of our flesh**, fulfilling the desires of **the flesh** and of the mind, and **were by nature the children of wrath**, even as others” (Ephesians 2:3). What does he mean that we “were by **nature** the children of wrath”? Could it be that it is because we have a “sinful nature” (NIV) or “sinful flesh” (KJV)? By the way, what is the difference between having a “**sinful nature**” and having “**sinful flesh**”? If the words “sinful nature” in the NIV **must mean** we are “totally depraved”, why does not “sinful flesh” in the KJV mean that we are “totally depraved”? Observe the following verse from the KJV that clearly teaches that the “**flesh**” is “**sinful**”:

“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of **sinful flesh**, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3; KJV).

K. Why did Jesus come in the “likeness” of “**sinful flesh**” if the flesh is not sinful (prone to sin) in some sense? Those of us who have opposed the NIV need to admit the following:

If the NIV teaches that a man is “totally depraved” because it refers to the “sinful nature” of man, then the KJV teaches that we are “totally depraved” when it clearly teaches that we have “sinful flesh”.

L. If the NIV teaches that man is totally depraved because it teaches that we have a “sinful nature” in Romans 8:3, why does not the KJV teach that we are totally depraved when it says we have “**sinful flesh**” in the **very same verse**? Perhaps you can criticize one and not the other, but I can’t...at least not any more.

M. The truth is that both the NIV and the KJV teach that men **go astray** when they become accountable and thus commit sin. Observe the following:

1. **KJV**: “All we like sheep have **gone astray**” (Isaiah 53:6).

**NIV**: “We all, like sheep, have **gone astray**” (Isaiah 53:6).

2. **KJV**: “The soul that sinneth, it shall die. **The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father**, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him” (Ezek. 18:20).

**NIV**: “The soul who sins is the one who will die. **The son will not share the guilt of the father**, nor will the father share the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous will be credited to him, and the wickedness of the wicked will be charged against him” (Ezek. 18:20).

3. **KJV**: “For **I was alive** without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and **I died**” (Romans 7:9).

**NIV**: “Once **I was alive** apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and **I died**” (Romans 7:9).

4. Observe that **both translations** clearly teach that we “**go astray**”. Both indicate that the son does not inherit the guilt of sin from his father (and actually the NIV makes this clearer than does the KJV). Both teach clearly that we were “alive” and then “died”.

5. Observe, also, that both the KJV and the NIV teach that man is not “totally depraved”, or incapable of any good at all, because **both translations** teach that man does “**by nature**” some things required by the law of God.

**KJV**: “For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, **do by nature the things contained in the law**, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which shew the work of the law written in their hearts...(Romans 2:14-15).

**NIV**: “(Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, **do by nature things required by the law**, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts...Romans 2:14-15).

6. When I really looked at the facts I had to admit that if the NIV teaches total depravity so does the KJV. None of us like to be wrong, especially when it comes to things we have taught others, but many of us have been mistaken and misled in opposing the NIV while upholding the KJV in this matter. The truth can be learned from either translation when we consider all it says in these verses.

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