

# GRACE GAZETTE

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*Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.*

*Hebrews 12:12-13*

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## DEAD TO SIN

*God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*

*Romans 6:2*

This is an odd verse indeed to those believers who are acquainted with their own innate sinfulness. It is extremely difficult to understand when it is taken out of its context and made to stand alone. But there is much light shed upon it (if illumined by the HOLY GHOST) when one reads it as it follows the chapter before it where Paul writes "*That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.*" (Rom 5:21) and then with what follows after it, "*Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*" (Rom 6:6-11)

The primary purpose of preaching the gospel of the glory of the blessed GOD is to magnify the glory of HIS grace and to exalt the name of JESUS CHRIST as the ONE REDEEMER of HIS chosen people. The secondary result of the proclamation of this glorious truth is to make those for whom HE died (whom HE is pleased to quicken by HIS SPIRIT in HIS own time,) aware of the standing which they have in HIM as HIS purchased possession.

CHRIST purchased the salvation of HIS people with HIS own blood, justifying them forever when HE paid their sin debt on Calvary's cross and then rose again from the dead for their justification (i.e.; or as proof of it). HE did this according to that which HE had carried out in HIS purpose before the foundation of the world.

The sons of GOD can in no wise participate in their own justification because it is carried out for them, completely, by HIM, in HIS decree before the world began and then demonstrated for men to see on a Judean hillside approximately two thousand years ago. Should any of the enemies of GOD's people ever raise an objection, they have but one overwhelming standard upon which they can stand and yes even boast, (see Gal.6:14) "*Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us*" (Rom 8:33-34)

Yet as Paul says, "*The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all.*" (Gal 4:1) He is teaching that even though a man might be one of the elect of GOD, appointed to be a joint heir with CHRIST yet until such time as he is made aware of his standing he is no different than any other man as far as he knows. This is what Paul told the Ephesians concerning what they were before the mercy of GOD was revealed to them by the quickening work of the SPIRIT, "*Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh*

*in the children of disobedience: 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." (Eph 2:2-3) Yet because they were not appointed unto wrath they were the recipients of GOD's mercy and HE raised them out of this darkness.*

Therefore the preaching of the cross is to them which perish (i.e.; ordained to this condemnation) a very foolish and useless babbling, but to those who are appointed to hear it, it is the revelation of the power of GOD displayed in removing all of their condemnation and guilt, and ultimately freeing them from the body of this death in the day of the resurrection.

So Paul says that we are "dead to sin". Any honest believer must confess that he could not possibly be saying that we do not still commit sin. John said, "*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*" (1John 1:8) So how are we "dead to sin"?

**In its power to condemn us before GOD.** "*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath 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 sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:"* (Rom 8:1-3) Our account is forever settled in the heavens as the LORD has imputed HIS righteousness to us. "*But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.*" (1Cor 1:30)

**In its power to condemn us in our conscience.** The writer of Hebrews contrasts the inability of the offerings under the law to deal with the power of sin. "*For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshipers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.*" (Heb 10:2) These continual offerings could never give a guilty conscience peace. He goes on to say however that "*by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.*" (Heb 10:14) Now "*having a high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.*" (Heb 10:21-22) Free from the law oh happy condition JESUS hath died and there is remission.

**In its power to enslave us to a love of sin and an unchecked enjoyment of the lusts of the flesh.** Paul said, "*For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after 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 shall deliver me from the body of this 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." (Rom 7:19-25)*

Notice that Paul does not say that the principle of sin is not still in his flesh. Our flesh is in no wise changed at the new birth but he clearly says that he loves the law of GOD. Yet he says that his flesh wars against the "law (i.e.; principle) of his mind" and it is in this mind, given to him by the power of GOD that he triumphs over sin. This is exactly that which the prophet spoke of when he said, "*I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.*" (Heb 8:10-11)

The children of GOD are greatly benefited by the preaching of the gospel which serves as a constant reminder to them of the great blessings that are theirs in CHRIST. It is the purpose of Paul to "*stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance.*" (2Pet 3:1) when he exhorts them to "*reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*" (Rom 6:11) "*If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*" (Col 3:1-3)