

Some well meaning Christians teach that since we are “not under law” but “under grace” that we have nothing much to do with the law and the law has very little to do with us. This is called ***antinomianism***: against law.

Want to have a good marriage? Don't ignore the Old Testament: Deuteronomy 24:5; Proverbs 5:15-20.

Discussion question:

Judy Garland, star actor in the Wizard of Oz, said after being married for the 3rd or 4th time, “I have finally found happiness.” About two weeks later she committed suicide. How do you account for that?

"Died to sin" does not mean:

How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? KJV
How shall we who died to sin still live in it? NASB

1. *The Christian is no longer responsive to sin.* This is an argument based on the expression "dead". This argues from analogy: as "dead men tell no tales" -- so, a dead person's senses cease to respond. They can't respond to sin anymore. When temptations come, the true believer neither feels, nor responds to the temptation.

J.B. Phillips, translator of a popular paraphrase of the New Testament, renders Romans 6:7, "A dead man can safely be said to be immune to the power of sin"; verse 11 he translates, "dead to the appeal and power of sin". **This is surely false.** There is no one like this. This interpretation can lead to severe mental and moral catastrophes. It makes nonsense out of the Spirit's appeal in Romans 6:11-13.

2. *The Christian should die to sin.* The starting point is wrong since it begins with man instead of God. The image is wrong. We cannot crucify ourselves. This view completely ignores the grammar of the verse which says *we have died*. All true Christians have died.

3. *Christians cannot continue in sin because they have renounced it.* This view includes some factual insights. Repentance is a "supernatural change of mind." Charles Hodge held a view along these lines. Boice says, "But I cannot help but think that Martyn-Lloyd Jones is correct in rejecting this. Because in Hodge's view "dying to sin" is something the WE DO. In the text however, it is not something we do or have done.

4. *Christians died to sin's guilt.* True we are no longer under condemnation, but if that is all it means it fails to answer the question at all--shall we continue in sin?

Reconstructing a Prison House Made Out of Legal Allegiance:

“...if I build again the things which I destroyed,
I make myself a transgressor.” Galatians 2:18

Proposition: Since true children of God can make themselves very spiritually ill, we must desire the Holy Spirit's teaching especially as to what “dead to the law” and what “under grace” mean.

"Finally, I could bear it no longer, so I asked to be relieved from all active service (in the *Salvation Army*), and at my own request was sent to the Beulah Home of Rest, near Oakland.... The language of my troubled soul, after all those years of preaching to others, was, "Oh that I knew where I might find Him!" Finding Him not, I saw only the blackness of despair before me; but yet I knew too well His love and care to be completely cast down."

"And now I began to see what a string of derelicts this holiness teaching left in its train. I could count scores of persons who had gone into utter infidelity because of it. They always gave the same reason: 'I tried it all. I found it a failure. So I concluded the Bible teaching was all a delusion, and religion was a mere matter of the emotions.' Many more, I knew several very well, lapsed into insanity after floundering in the morass of this emotional religion for years--and people said that studying the Bible had driven them crazy. **How little they knew that it was lack of Bible knowledge that was accountable for their wretched mental state....!**"¹

“Justification is a legal declaration by God; it is God acting as a judge, declaring that an individual is righteous in His sight.”²

1. Justification makes no changes in your character at all.
2. Justification is entirely a judicial matter. It is a declaration, a permanent verdict issued by God: Romans 8:33 states, “it is God that justifies.” *Your record in heaven changes to perfection.*
3. Works of any kind, ceremonies of any kind, rituals of any kind have no part at all in justification.

1 H.A. Ir onside *HOLINESS: The False and the True* p. 24,25

2 Wayne Grudem

vs. 17a Paul asks this question. If the Christian practice of looking to Christ alone for justification makes such believers no better than *sinner of the Gentiles*, then is Christ the minister of sin [inasmuch as following Christ is what causes Christians to forsake the law]? Paul's answer: God forbid—absolutely not!

'*While seeking to be justified by Christ*' is not limited to the act of conversion, but describes the continued experience of Christians. Christians are believers who continue to believe.

The remainder of 2:17b has often been interpreted as Paul's answer to charges that trusting Christ alone without the requirements of the law leads to lawless conduct. This is not really the point of the context.

Another explanation sees *sinner* and *sin* in their usual sense as unrighteous conduct, and interprets the passage as meaning both Jews and Gentiles are unmasked by Christ as being on a common plane as sinners. But this explanation finds difficulty with the next statement, **for having one's guilt as a sinner laid bare by Christ hardly lays Christ open to the charge of being a promoter of sin as the words imply.**

His question in 2:17 means this: If Jews who believe in Christ for their justification then proceed to forsake their traditional adherence to all the rules of the Mosaic Law and begin living apart from it as did the Gentiles [and Jewish Christians in Antioch, including Peter, had been doing this], was this actually a sin against God, and one which Christ had prompted them to commit? Answer: NO! It is just the opposite.³

vs. 18 Paul uses himself as an illustration: 'If I build again these things which I tore down'; but he really had Peter in mind, for this is what Peter was doing. The old distinctions between Jewish kosher eating and Gentile practices had been broken down by Peter, not only in the original experiences with Cornelius [Acts 10:10-15,28] but more recently in Antioch: Galatians 2:12. Now he and Barnabas and other Christian Jews at Antioch were reconstructing the old fences. They were saying by their actions [2;12,13] that it did make a difference at whose table they ate. By so doing, says Paul, they were

clearly acknowledging that their former practice was wrong. It was the same as saying that their earlier relaxing of the Jewish food laws was a transgression of the Mosaic Law for which God was holding them accountable, and now they were attempting to correct the situation.

Peter is now, by his actions, building up again Mosaic dietary requirements for walking pleasingly before God, and thereby constructing a prison-house for himself. Returning to legal allegiance, he returns to legal condemnation....⁴

2:19 This is a summary statement regarding how we stand before the law today. "As our representative in whom we were chosen, and in whom we suffered, He yielded Himself to the law, WHICH SEIZED HIM AND NAILED HIM TO THE CROSS. When that law seized Him, it seized at the same time all His people. In Him, and through the law they suffered **and died to it.**" G. Wilson p. 45,46

When you die to something, something in that relationship ended, and in this case something new began--living unto God *by faithfully dispensed enabling grace.*

What *ended* and what *new thing* began? At least two things ended:

1. The rigor of the law whereby it demands most perfect obedience for justification: 3:10.
2. The cursing power of the law: the curse of the law cannot touch a justified person: 3:13.

Something new began "living unto God": **This referring to regeneration, the new birth**—which always accompanies justification. Justification changes your record, but makes no changes in you. **Regeneration, the new birth, does change you.** Now we "hunger and thirst after righteousness—and are filled with righteousness." Matthew 5:6.

Want to have good days? Obey the law: Ephesians 6:1-3.

³ The first five paragraphs of this page are taken from *THE FREEDOM OF GOD'S SONS: Studies in Galatians* p.73,74 by Homer Kent

⁴ Galatians p. 849 G. Findley

