

Series: Galatians
Title: Dead and Alive
Text: Gal 2: 18-20
Date: Oct 29, 2020
Place: SGBC,NJ

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

The whole old covenant law has been done away in Christ. God's saints are not under any old covenant law of Sinai. If I bring that law back in as a necessity to justify or sanctify me, for acceptance with God or for rewards in heaven, or for any aspect of salvation, even as a rule of life (in the sense the world speaks of it) then I make myself a transgressor. If I build again the middle wall of partition—the law of Sinai—for a justifying righteousness or a sanctifying righteousness—then I am the one who transgresses. Then he gives a reason this is so.

Galatians 2: 19: For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God; 20: I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith OF the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Paul declares he through the law is dead to the law. How? "I am crucified with Christ." That is how I, through the law, am dead to the law: I am crucified with Christ. Then how do I live? "Not I, but Christ liveth in me." And how do I live my life as a born-again believer? "The life I now live in the flesh"—that is in this physical body—"I live by the faith of the Son of God"—by Christ living in me and working in me by his faithfulness—"who loved me and gave himself for me."

Proposition: True believers are dead to the law of works given at Sinai because we were crucified with Christ and we now live because Christ lives in us: we live our life by Christ faithfully working in us.

Christ keeps us walking by faith, resting in Christ. He constrains us and motivates us by his love who loved us and gave himself for us. The old covenant given at Sinai saying "Do and live" is the law of sin and death. But by Christ dying under that law I am dead to the law because I was in Christ. All God's elect were in Christ when he was crucified. Believer you can say with Paul, "I am crucified with Christ." Now, the new covenant of grace everlasting is the law we are under. It is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Under this covenant we live by Christ regenerating us to spiritual life. And we live life, walking by faith constrained by love, by Christ working in us faithfully.

DEAD TO THE LAW

How are true believer's dead to the law? *"I through the law am dead to the law...I am crucified with Christ."*

God gave one law in the garden. Adam broke it. Thus all his people became dead in trespasses and in sins. The law that God gave at Mt Sinai was to declare us all guilty, under the curse, destined for death.

Romans 3: 19: Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become

guilty before God. 20: Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

All God's elect sinned in Adam, along with every other child of Adam. The law given at Sinai shows us how greatly we sinned.

Romans 5:20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound.

By that one transgression, we broke every moral, ceremonial and civil law given at Sinai. We never lived in righteousness before God *morally*. We never worshipped God in righteousness as *the ceremonial law* typifies. Nor have we ever obeyed *civil law* in righteousness. And to break one law is to break the whole law. That is what we did by the one transgression in the garden. That is what we do in our sinful thoughts every hour. That is what we do in practice every day.

But the law given at Sinai, not only declares we are guilty and must die, it also declares that Christ is its fulfillment! The law and the prophets bear witness that it is by the faithfulness of Christ living and dying for his people by which Christ makes his people the righteousness of God in him.

Romans 3: 21: But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, BEING WITNESSED BY THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS; 22: Even the righteousness of God *which is* BY FAITH OF JESUS CHRIST unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference

When Paul says "*I through the law am dead to the law*" it is because Christ fulfilled the whole law given by his death. All God's elect were crucified in him. He redeemed us from the curse Adam put us under.

Also, being crucified under the law, Christ fulfilled *the ceremonial law*. Christ is the fulfillment of every type and shadow. He took the ceremony out of the way: we are dead to the old covenant of works. Now, with Christ formed in us, we are alive to God under his everlasting covenant of grace. We live to Christ who is our High Priest, our Lamb, our Mercy Seat, our Tabernacle.

Furthermore, Christ fulfilled *the civil law*. Scripture says, "*the government shall be on Christ's shoulder.*" Christ was made under the law of Israel and fulfilled the civil law. Now with Christ formed in us, we are alive to God under his covenant of grace living unto Christ our King, as his righteous and holy servants, in his kingdom. The government—our government—is on Christ's shoulder and we live unto him.

In addition, Christ fulfilled *the moral law*—the ten commandments. Christ is the Righteousness of the moral law. He is the only Man who is Holy, Just and Good as the moral law of God. When Christ was crucified and we were crucified in him. God's elect died on the cross and now we live by Christ living in us.

Rom 6: 6: 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. 7: For he that is dead is freed from sin. 8: Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: 9: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. 10: For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. 11: Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed

unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 12: Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

As Paul says in our text, by building up again the law as a requirement for some aspect of salvation, that is the lust of the flesh which Paul is dealing with. Now with Christ formed in us, we are delivered from the law, we are alive to God—*"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."*

Brethren, the only way we can be alive to God is to be dead unto the law—*"I am crucified with Christ."* The only way we can be alive to God is to be the righteousness of God: Christ is our Life, our Righteousness—*"I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."* Christ has delivered us from the law of sin and death by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8: 1: There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2: For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Christ has taken us out of the realm of flesh into the realm of the Spirit.

Romans 8:9: But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.

Christ is our Life, our Righteousness, by whom we live unto God: Righteousness is life; Life is righteousness. You cannot have one without the other.

Romans 8:10: And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

When we are made righteousness in Christ it means there is no law against us. It means before God's judgment seat, we cannot break the law. We are eternally righteous. We are eternally alive by Christ's death and life.

Romans 8: 33: Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth. 34: 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.

Now when we go to the old covenant law, we behold Christ who is our Life, our Righteousness, by whom we live. We delight in the law after the inward man because we behold Christ our Righteousness who established it for us. The law declares to us how righteous Christ is. Christ has given the law perfect obedience for us and his righteousness really is our righteousness. God declares we have kept every precept and since Christ put away our sin we cannot break one law; this is our eternal standing before God.

Therefore, to bring a believer back under obligation to the law is to call Christ the minister of sin and to make myself a transgressor because Christ yielded perfect obedience to it and gave me life by it.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF BEING DEAD TO THE LAW AND ALIVE TO GOD

A dead man has no relationships. So the man who is dead to the law has no relationship between himself and the old covenant law. The relationship is dissolved (Rom. 7:1-4). The

law is like a first husband who died. Now we are lawfully married to Christ. Our relationship is with Christ our Husband. We look to him for everything.

In death there is no care, no concern, no doing—*Ecclesiastes 9:10: There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest.* The man that is dead to the law has no more care or concern about the works of the law like we had while trying to live and be just and holy by the law. Now we live unto Christ who justified us. We mind the things of the Spirit, rather than carnal things. We walk after the Spirit, we are led of the Spirit, and the Spirit keeps our mind and affection set on things above not on things on the earth. We have a sin-nature that minds only earthly, carnal things. But the Spirit makes us look to Christ our Life. He makes us wait on him by faith. Our mind is no longer set on us, no longer set on touch not, taste not, handle not. We are alive unto God eternally now. We get our law directly from Christ—the law of faith and love.

In death there is no hope; “*To all the living there is hope...*” (*Eccl. 9:4*). Being dead to the law we have no hope or expectation from the law by our obedience to it. We have no hope that God will pardon us or pity us because of our works under the law. We have no hope that because we have been good to our neighbor or just in our dealings with our neighbor God will do something for us. Now, being alive to God, *our hope is Christ.* In Christ we have kept the law so we hope for righteousness by faith. Our hope of eternal life enters into the veil where Christ sits at God’s right hand as our forerunner (*Gal 5:5; Heb 6: 19-20*).

In death there is no works to weary us and nothing to terrify us—*Job 3:17: There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest.* Those who are yet alive to the law work in weariness trying to obtain life by their works. They weary themselves in the greatness of their way (*Isa. 57:10*). They try to make brick without straw. Now, we are dead to the law so that the weary are at rest. Christ is our rest; “*Come to me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*” Christ is rest to our conscience from our legal fears. He is rest from legal slavish works. Christ is our Sabbath in whom all the works are finished! Sweet, sweet rest!

In death there are no senses. Being dead to the law we do not see the lightnings of Sinai on fire. We do not hear the thunders of Sinai roaring in our ears. We do not feel the terror of the law in our bones. We do not taste the bitter dregs of God’s wrath threatened in the law. Now, being alive to Christ we behold how Christ drank the dregs for us so we “*have not come to the mount that might not be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of the trumpet, and the voice of words, but they are come to mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God,*” (*Heb. 12:18-24*).

HOW DO WE LIVE?

Galatians 2: 20:...I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Christ is our Life by whom we live. Christ is our life at God’s right hand and Christ is formed in us. We live by Christ our Life.

It is impossible to make ourselves godly. We are made godly when born of the Spirit of Christ when a new spirit is put within when we are created in a sanctified state in union to Christ by the faith of God’s operation.

Then we are married to Christ our Husband and it is he who produces fruit in us unto God. The tree of Adam cannot bear good fruit—our flesh is sin. It is only the true Vine that bears good fruit (John 15:4,5)—Christ makes the tree good. Thus being united to Christ he produces fruit in us.

Only when the Spirit of God's Son in us are we born into a state of adoption; only then are made followers of God as dear children.

The life we now live we live by Christ faithfully working in us making us do his good pleasure. Instead of going to the letter of the law, we go to Christ, we behold his pattern and we follow him. Christ is the giver, the maintainer, the sustainer of our life. He makes us walk in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Christ is the bread of our life. We would die if he did not feed us with his flesh which is living bread and water

Christ is the medicine of our life—the Balm of Gilead. When we seek to be healed spiritually from our sin we do not go to the law, we touch the hem of his garment. Our soul is healed under the wings of the Sun of righteousness.

It is called a living in the Spirit: *"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit,"* (Gal. 5:25). We cry,

Psalm 143:10: Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness.

Christ our Husband produces fruits of the Spirit: fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ. (Gal. 5:22) The Spirit subdues our old nature so that we do not fulfill the lusts of the flesh: the power of the Spirit restrains the power of sin in our flesh. Oh, we sin. But God only permits our flesh to arise for a season. And he only does it to teach us that it is the Spirit of Christ, not us, by whom we live. We are comforted by the Spirit our Comforter. We live in constant dependence upon Christ, upon the Spirit of our Redeemer, and his grace is sufficient. By him we can do all things. Without him we can do nothing. It is living under the influence of the grace of God which effectually works in us—God *"working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure."*

Christ is the Head—we are the body—members in particular. Christ is our Redeemer—we are bought with a price; our bodies are not our own, therefore his love constrains us to glorify the Lord in our souls and bodies, which are his. It is a living to God as our heavenly Father, depending on him as children on their father. It is a living to Christ as our King and our Law-giver—we sit at his feet receiving the word from his mouth, yielding praise, obedience, and subjection to our loving, righteous King!

It is from Christ that we are given grace to live. He enlightens us in the knowledge of himself making us children of light so that we walk as children of light. It is by his grace to us that we are made gracious to others. Being forgiven by God for the sake of Christ, makes us forgive those who trespass against us. Christ is our Peace with God and he makes us peacemakers with our brethren and with all.

Only by him renewing and sanctifying us inwardly do we mortify the lust of our flesh. Beholding our Life at God's right hand—he makes us set our affection on things above and live as citizens of heaven, as pilgrims and strangers passing through this world. By

communion with him beholding him high and lifted up that we sanctify the Lord in our hearts, His love shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost and that makes us love.

Only by Christ living in us do we believe we are dead to the law. Only by Christ living in us do we live unto God. A man that is under the law can perform no holy act: he may do good things but nothing is done in holiness. *“To the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled, and unbelieving, is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled,”* (Titus 1:5).

A man’s living to the law, or being alive to the law, makes him live in sin. He lives unto himself. Israel missed righteousness, because they sought it by the works of the law rather than by faith.

Colossians 2: 14: Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 20: Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ [dead to the law] from the rudiments of the world, [the law is only for those who live in the world, not for a righteous man; not for heaven, therefore] why, as though living in the world, [why as though you have life by the law] are ye subject to ordinances, 21: (Touch not; taste not; handle not; 22: Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? 23: Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh. 3: 1: If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2: Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. 5: Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth;

Brethren, Paul is declaring that by bringing the law back in we are making ourselves transgressors. We are treating our body as though it is alive and can give us life. Mortify that lust! Do not be a debtor to the flesh to live after the flesh. If we build again the law—all the things he lists in verse 5 on are the lusts we are committing by attempting to live under law. It is all living after the flesh. So treat this body as dead because ye are dead, crucified with Christ.

By Christ living in us we live to God because our Life has the Spirit of God for the power of it, the word of God for the rule of it, the love of God for the motive of it and the glory of God for the ultimate end of it. We say *“Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none in all the earth that I desire besides thee.”*

Amen!