

I. Jesus predicted the fatal persecution of his disciples. John 15:26-16:4.

- A. The Spirit will regenerate you in my name. 15:26-27
- B. The world (religion) will reject you violently because of my name. 16:1-4

II. But Then he called and forgave one of the most violent persecutors! Saul! Acts 9, 22, 26

- A. Jesus forgave Saul of Tarsus for no other reason than sheer grace. **Gal.1:11-17**
- B. Saul was a religious persecutor of Christians, an enemy of Christ in every way.
 - 1. Utterly convinced that he was serving God.

III. This radical grace shown to a violent murderer transformed Saul into Christ's ambassador to the fallen religious world. Acts 26:15-18.

- A. The message of the gospel—God has accomplished rescue and righteousness through the Cross of Christ and all we need to do is repent and trust Him.
 - 1. Radical grace apart from religious legislation. Rom.1:16-17; 3:28

IV. The Response of the Jewish/Religious community:

- A. Blasphemy!! We can't live righteously without the Mosaic Law—it must still shape our lives.
 - 1. Law is what guides us and keeps us in God's righteousness.
 - 2. If you tell people that they are this justified in Christ, without the Mosaic Law, they will be "Lawless" –Un-justified! Declared unrighteous!

V. Paul's Answer: Chapter 6:1-7:6. Three things he expected them to know.

- A. 6:3 -- You have been spiritually joined to Christ's death and resurrection.
 - 1. We have died with him. Col. 3:1-5
- B. 6:16 – You have been transferred to the Lordship of Christ—we are His slaves and obey Him now.
 - 1. You are not your own – 1 Cor. 6:19
- C. 7:1 – The Law only has jurisdiction over people in this life, but you have entered into the next one already. Col.3:1-4
 - 1. In Christ you are not liable to the Law of Moses, but to the Law of Christ. **1 Cor. 9:21** – Note, Paul could not possibly have said 1 Cor. 6:19-21 if the OT Law was in effect over his life

VI. Then he shows how the Law is still true and good, but we are not under it in Christ. Rom. 7:1-12

- A. You have died to the Law so you could be joined to Christ. 1-6
 - 1. It didn't die – you did. You left it on the old shore and crossed over to your new Lord – the Risen Christ. Col.3:1-5
 - 2. Released from the Old Rules so that you can serve in the New Spirit. 6
 - a) Regeneration. Titus 3:5-7
- B. Because the Law only highlighted the sin that dwells within us. 7-12
 - 1. I thought I was alive until I really took seriously the 10th commandment. Coveting!
 - a) It actually made it worse by challenging my inner attitude of autonomy from God.
 - b) Covetousness is a heart thing and can't be just "avoided."
 - c) Covet (LXX) = epithumia = lust, over-desire, passion
 - 2. God's command actually incited the autonomous sin within me.
 - a) I realized I didn't want God to tell me how to live.

VII. What does this mean? Three things.

- A. It means that serving the Lord is still our goal, but in a different dynamic – Spirit of Christ. Gal.2:19-27; Col.3:1-5
1. Not the oldness of the Letter, but the newness of the Spirit. 6
 2. Holy Spirit has replaced Jewish Law – The Christian life is supernatural from the very beginning.
- B. It means that obedience/loyalty is still the mark of a believer, but to a new instruction—the Law of Christ. Matt.28:19-20; 1 Cor. 9:21
1. It is not the Mosaic Law, but the Law of Christ.
 2. The entire OT moral law is repeated in the NT, with the exception of Sabbath Law.
 - a) Plus, Jesus gives a New, overarching Command. Jn.13:34-35. Love
 - b) *This should immunize us to legalistic forms of religion, even legalistic forms of Christianity. (Judaiizers)*
 3. It means that there is freedom to obey, but no neutrality.
 - a) Freedom through death to the Law—so that you can be joined to Christ.
- C. It means that in order to become spiritually alive, we must admit to spiritual death. 9
1. Admitting that we are actually evil inside.
 - a) The opposite of the western myth of basic human goodness.