

June 24, 2018

Be Transformed

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your reasonable act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."

Romans 12:1-2

"What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

Romans 7:24-25

"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death."

Romans 8:1-2

"If you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God."

Romans 8:13-14

Can you imagine jumping off the top of this building and soaring out over Anaconda? If you were to be set free from the law of gravity that would be exactly what you could do. So, when the Apostle Paul writes that we have been set free from the "***Law of Sin and Death***" he literally means that those of us who are in Christ Jesus, who have put to death our sin-filled natures, and buried them with Jesus in baptism, have been raised to a new life. And in that new life the "***Law of Sin and Death***" no longer applies to us.

Understand that this grace is not something we must earn through our own perfection. It means that in Jesus we no longer face condemnation because he has already paid the price for our sins. Salvation is not a maybe, maybe not, proposition. In Christ Jesus there "***...is now no condemnation...***" So, believers who are not confident in their salvation are denying the grace that God has given them. Our salvation is completely dependent on the grace of God in Jesus Christ, and, because grace has already been done, we can count on it.

We have been set free from the "***Law of Sin and Death***", and the Apostle will add, we who are led by the Spirit are sons of God. He is our Father and through him we are "***...more than conquerors...***" Paul will go on to assure us, "***For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.***"

So, it comes down to this. Within each of us is a sinful nature driven by our need to survive which constantly influences us to selfishly gratify our own needs and desires. That life of "***selfish ambition and vain conceit***" will condemn us eternally if we continue to live in it. However, if we put that sinful nature to death by surrendering our very survival to the God of heaven than that same loving God will raise us to new life through the grace of his Son's death purchasing our salvation on the cross.

In that grace we can be "***...set free from the law of sin and death...***" and through that grace-based salvation we become those for whom there "***...is now no condemnation...***" Through that

grace we are "*...more than conquerors...*" and there is no power in all of creation that can separate us God's love.

If we understand the nature of salvation in grace I am convinced that we would live our lives very differently. Instead of living as those who constantly doubt our salvation, and try constantly to somehow merit that salvation by the careful adherence to rules and regulations, we would live as conquerors; as those who know they have been saved through grace.

