

Review: Believers have been quickened together with Christ.

Deadness is manifested in two ways: in their sins: Both nature and actions: Does not say that they were dead because their nature was corrupt and their actions evil; but their nature was corrupt and their actions were evil because of their deadness. The cause of deadness: alienation from God: this was because of Adam's sin. No life. Cut off from the vine; alienated from the life of God.

Eph. 4:17, 18. "Alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts...." Paul keeps saying the same thing over and over to the churches!!!

But that condition had changed: they were united to Christ by the work of the Spirit and the operation of God. They had believed the gospel and were baptized into Christ: into union with Him, and they were therefore no longer dead in trespasses and in sins.

Their union with Christ brings several tremendous results: God is doing great things: He is the one who is doing these things.

1. Forgiveness of sins. "Grace" is the word here, flowing out of God's goodness. To bestow without merit. Free forgiveness of sins. All sins: past, present, future. All sins, period. They were all future when Christ died for me. God will not impute sins to me, or to any Christian forever, because of the Death of Jesus Christ.
2. Handwriting: statement of debt. A deed of trust is cancelled. The law, as a covenant is cancelled for those who believe.

Ordinances: The ceremonies were evidences of the debt: washings; sacrifices; meats/drinks; sabbaths; etc.

Consider a man laboring under a huge debt. He cannot pay the debt. His creditors call every few days. He cannot sleep at night. He cannot get rest. His mind is constantly occupied with the debt. He knows that the debt is legal; he knows that the debt is just; he know that the debt is moral. He has no doubt about any of these things. He knows that he owes the money and that he is obligated to pay. He had signed the notes. His signature in on the instruments. If he is dragged into court, he will have to acknowledge that the instruments are legal, valid, and binding upon him. He also knows certainly that he cannot pay the debt.

Though, legal, binding, moral, and binding, those instruments are his enemies. The law is on the side of his creditors.

But these debts have been cancelled and removed by the blood of Jesus Christ. The papers are cancelled; the debts are taken away. Two figures here reinforce this idea: they are erased, and taken away. vs. 14. The tense is perfect: something done once and for all. Not something that is

being done, or will be done; but cancelled, finished, done. "Nailed once and for all" aorist tense: Once for all to the cross of Christ.

This is not the ceremonial law only. Ceremonies condemn only because of the moral force which lies under them. It is the moral and spiritual law which condemns me. The entire law: everything is nailed to the cross of Christ. Not the law of Moses, for that would leave me yet under the law of sacrifice and circumcision which was before the law of Moses. The whole requirement of God as a means of life, is what is nailed to the cross of Christ.

The law no longer has any power to condemn the Christian: this is the sense. The law as an instrument of death has been removed.

3. Conquest of all the powers of evil. vs. 15. Satan derives his power as the executioner of the wrath of God's law. No uglier executioner and slave master has ever been seen upon this earth. Those who are condemned by the law of God are under the power of the devil, and do his will. See Hebrews 2:14,15. "Power of death" means all the evil results of sin. Satan is God's executioner and slave master to hold in bondage all those who are alienated from the life of God. 2Tim. 2:25,26. Only God can deliver from the power of the devil. He does this through the Gospel of Christ, through faith in Christ.

"Spoiled" means stripping off, as stripping off the garments of the slain in battle. He repulsed all the powers of the devil. It makes no difference if you see this as God doing this in Christ, or Christ doing it himself. Christ threw off all the powers of evil that would have destroyed him: for when he was made sin for us, all the powers of hell converged upon him as upon their lawful spoil; but he made a spoil of them, throwing them off and gaining the victory over them.

Spiritual warfare is accomplished and completely in Jesus Christ. We need not exorcism, anointings, or other spells and ceremonies: Christ has overcome the power of the devil, and has triumphed over him. The less we know about such things, the better we are. We are to live in faith and in trust, for Christ has taken all authority, and dominion, and power to Himself. We have no fear, for Christ is all in all.

What is the pomp and favor of the world when seen in the light of the cross of Jesus Christ. Come to the foot of the cross and lay down all your vain-glory, your pride of intellect; your pride of your humility; your arrogance by which you criticize and condemn others. In the light of the horror of the death of Jesus Christ, try to explain by what right you set aside your fellow Christian, and act as if they were disqualified.

Let no man glory in the flesh. This brings us to the text for today: vs. 15-19.

- I. Let no man judge you. "separate you." The word means to select, choose; to determine so as to pass judgment. "meat, drink, holyday, new moon, sabbath days." They went beyond the law. Ascetic practices that were supposed to "pierce the veil," to open the soul to the spiritual world, when interpreted by Greek philosophy. Even in their best form, they were simply shadows of the things of Christ, and not the substance of anything. The substance is Christ. You are complete in Him. You do not come to Christ in order to learn better how to keep the ceremonies.

"Shadow" The outline caused by something getting in the way of the light; it is only a dim outline, and has its meaning from the object.

"body" The human body: the instrument of life. The physical substance. Christ is the living body, of which the Old Testament ceremonies and laws were but shadows.

- He is the last Adam; to which the first is a shadow
- He is the Husband of the Church; Adam was a shadow
- He is the Head of the race: Adam was a shadow
- He is the Father of the faithful; Abraham is a shadow
- He is the High Priest: Aaron was a shadow
- He is the true lawgiver: Moses was a shadow
- He is the Lamb of God: all sacrifices were but shadows
- He is the ark of safety; etc.

- II. Don't be "beguiled of your reward." "Disqualified." as an umpire would disqualify a racer. You will be cheated of your reward; you who watch athletic contests know of the tricks and the devices that contestants use to gain an edge over their opponents. Don't allow the devil to cheat you of your reward. The question is whether or not you will cling to Christ.
- A. Voluntary humility: To gain an advantage by putting on humility. Humility which is of the will; not o of the heart.
 - B. Worship of Angels: This is connected to false humility. The reality: Angels have been put under Christ: Col. 1:16,17. If you have Christ, then you have all things. Under this is messages from Angels pretended by the Roman Church; all such trifles and superstitions.
 - C. Intruding. He hasn't seen them; but pretends that he has seen them; or he is deceived into thinking that he has seem something, but he hasn't seen what he thinks he has seen. The head and the end is Christ; to pretend other is to draw men off from Christ, and to be deceived. Visions of the hereafter; the occult, both black and white. They all denigrate from Christ and will rob you of your reward. This is Paul's message.
 - D. "Vainly puffed up by the fleshly mind." The flesh is opposed to the spiritual wisdom: "Flesh and flood hath not revealed..." The wisdom and glory of the world. The pride of the flesh is contrary to the mind of the spirit: that is why Paul said, "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all tings, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith ofg Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith...." Phil. 3:7-9
- III. Not holding the head. Modern science scoffs at this. But growth hormones come from the pituitary gland which is in the head. The centers of the nervous system are in the head. If we are disconnected from the head, the body will not grow. Increases with the increase of God. Shall the body be disconnected from the head?

The sum is this. We must cling to Christ. He is the end of our study. He is the end of our morality and our virtues. He is the end of every figure and every illustration in the Bible.

There is no fullness apart from Him; but we are but dead branches, fit only to be gathered up and burned. There is no "more perfect" Christianity: those who have gone beyond Christ. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness will find their meat and their drink in Christ alone.

May God bless you.