**6-12-22**

**Galatians 2:17-21.**

Last week we looked at Paul confronting Peter regarding his hypocrisy, living and saying one thing, then living in a way that says much more differently than you once did.

Peter was living with all the liberty he had in Christ and then when some false brethren came around, he gave in and put himself back under the Law of Moses. The Law was never meant to, nor can it save anyone. The Law was given to be a teacher, (school master) supervisor, to show us that we need a savior.

The only way that mankind can be saved from its sin nature is through Jesus Christ. Trusting in the work Jesus did on the cross. Jesus not only kept all the Law of Moses, but he also superseded it. Jesus never sinned one time. That is the reason He came to earth, was to do what we couldn’t so that we would be free from the penalty of sin, which is death (spiritual, and literal) eternity in hell.

Trusting and believing in what God did in and through Jesus, He died, buried and three days later, rose from the grave. Victory was won, death no longer has its sting.

**Ephesians 2:8-10, *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.***

Peter knew better, he was the first disciple to call Jesus the Son of God. He was the disciple that God used at Pentecost, to preach in the Synagogue, to heal and bring the gospel to the Gentile nation.

Guess what? We know better too. Those of us that are born-again followers of Jesus Christ. We know better than to give into the very sin that we have been set free from. Then wonder why we are powerless, lethargic, without passion, hopeless, fearful, defeated, and depressed.

We need to follow Paul’s example that he lays out in **Galatians 2:17-21.**

1. ***“I have been crucified with Christ.”* The EXECUTED life.**

* When I surrendered my life to Jesus Christ, my flesh was put to death.
* Paul wrote that in Christ, we died. We didn’t die physically; we died to self and sin.
* We have sanitized the cross into a religious symbol. But it was and always will be a mode of execution.
* Jesus was crucified for our sins, and we were crucified with Him.
* Notice Paul used a past tense verb, “***I have been crucified with Christ.”*** It is something that already happened over 2,000 years ago when Jesus died on the cross.

**Colossians 3:2-3, *Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.*ESV**

* Let’s take a corpse and prop him/her on this stage. Ask him/her if they want a million dollars, and he won’t even give you an answer. Parade an entire column of temptations in front of him: booze, drugs, lying, cheating, stealing, and they won’t even give them the time of day. Why? Because he’s dead to the allure of sin.
* We still have physical life, but when it comes to sin’s power over us, we’re dead. We still live in the world, but we can’t let the world live in us. We’re like a boat in the water. The boat is in the water, but if the water gets in the boat, it may sink.

**Romans 6:8-14,** ***If we died with Christ, we know that we will also live with him.9Christ was raised from death. And we know that he cannot die again. Death has no power over him now. 10Yes, when Christ died, he died to defeat the power of sin one time—enough for all time. He now has a new life, and his new life is with God.11In the same way, you should see yourselves as being dead to the power of sin and alive for God through Christ Jesus.12But don’t let sin control your life here on earth. You must not be ruled by the things your sinful self makes you want to do.13Don’t offer the parts of your body to serve sin. Don’t use your bodies to do evil, but offer yourselves to God, as people who have died and now live. Offer the parts of your body to God to be used for doing good.14Sin will not be your master, because you are not under law. You now live under God’s grace.***

* We have been crucified with Christ, but every day we must renew our death certificate.
* The not so secret, but often ignored truth to living the Christian life is dying to self.
* A sign in the window of a dry-cleaning and dying business said: “We dye to live, we live to dye; the more we dye, the more we live; and the more we live, the more we dye.”
* This should be the motto of the Christian life: “We die (to self) to live (for Christ) we live by dying, the more we die (to self), the more we life (for Christ).

1. ***“It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.”* The EXCHANGED life.**

* In **Galatians 2:20** Paul used the personal pronouns “I” and “me” seven times. He had an “I” problem, and it had nothing to do with his vision. We all struggle with the same “I” problem. The big “I,” our ego always wants to be in control.
* What’s the middle letter in the word “sin?” “I” What’s the middle letter of the word “pride?” “I.” What’s the middle letter in the word “guilt?”
* The central problem of sin, pride, and guilt is the big “I.” The big “I” is constantly trying to climb back onto the throne in our hearts and displace Jesus. So, several times a day, we must renounce self and surrender our will to Jesus.
* Adrian Rogers once said, “that in every person’s heart there is a throne and there is a cross. When we are on the cross, then Christ is on the throne, but when we are on the throne, then Christ is alone on the cross.”
* Our glorious profession of faith should be “Christ lives in me!” Christ with you is good, and Christ for you is fine, and Christ beside you is comforting, but Christ **IN** you, changes everything.
* Christ in you changes your life.
* Illustration of tea and coffee. The hot water is just water, no taste, but the minute you drop a tea bag, or coffee into the water, it changes. If the water could talk it would say, “It is no longer I (water) but tea/coffee lives in me.” Not too many people drink hot water, but millions of people drink tea or coffee.
* Even so, in the Christian life, Christ in you changes your nature. He changes your life from being bland and boring to be exciting and thrilling.
* Sometimes we try to keep “I” alive and we say, “I am going to do the very best I can for Jesus today!” No, the big I need to die.
* Let me ask a simple question: Who can live the Christian life better—you or Jesus? Obviously, Jesus can. So then, why are you still trying to let “I” do it?
* Oh, by the way, let me mention some things you get to exchange. I exchange my weakness for His strength; my ignorance for His wisdom; my prejudice for His love; my anger for His gentleness; my bitterness and hatred for His forgiveness; my inability for His ability.

1. ***“The life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God.”* The ENERGIZED life.**

* There is a massive difference between a person trying to live a good life, and a person who has surrendered to the goodness of Jesus. The truth is that I don’t possess enough power, or energy, to live a good moral life.
* We can NEVER achieve more perfection ourselves. There is only one person who ever lived a perfect life—His name is Jesus.
* Each day as I execute my flesh, I pray that the Spirit of God pours out of me any of the nine-character qualities of the Christian life. These nine simple words describe the personality of Jesus. As I allow Jesus to live in me, He energizes those qualities in my life.

**Galatians 5:22-23, *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.***

* Every day we (believers) must crucify, put to death, execute our fleshly desires (**Gal.5:17-21**), so that we can ooze Christ’s character.
* Let’s use another illustration to explain this truth. Imagine this glove is my life. It was empty, and thus powerless. I could preach to this glove and say, “Glove, pick up that cup! The Bible says, ‘Thou shalt pick up the cup,’ so do it! Come on, try a little harder!” All the glove could say is, “I’m sorry, Lord, I tried my best to pick up the cup. That’s all you expect of me, right? For me to try my best for you?”
* Jesus says, “There’s a better way. I came to live inside you. And what you can never do, I can and will do it through you.” We say, “Lord, I’m trying to love that mean person, but it’s hard!” And Jesus says, “Let me love that person through you, it’s not hard for me to love them.” “Lord, I’m trying to forgive that person who hurt me, but I just can’t!” Jesus says, “I can forgive that person through you if you’ll just allow me.”

**Conclusion**

The last part of **Galatians 2:20, *“I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”***

A seminary class once interviewed a famous theologian. One of the students asked him what the most profound theological thought he had ever encountered was. As he thought for a moment, the students poised with their pens to take down his answer. He said, “The most profound theological truth I’ve ever encountered is: ‘Jesus loves me; this I know; for the Bible tells me so.’”

Adrian Rogers was asked, what his secret to being used by God was. He said that every morning, during his quiet time he considered the chair he was sitting in to be an electric chair. Every morning he pushed the 220 button and 220 volts surged through his selfish nature. He said, “I’m a dead man, but Christ lives in me.”

It was a reminder to me about the importance of reckoning ourselves dead to sin.

We all must come to a place of deciding if we are going to live the executed life, the exchanged and energized life. The only way this happens is by surrendering your life Jesus, giving Him the throne of your life.

Have you trusted in Jesus as Lord and Savior? If not, what is stopping you?

Christians, we cannot fake the executed, exchange and energized life. God sees through it, heck many of your believer friends see it too, they just haven’t stepped up and told you.

Too many of us are living **Galatians 5:17-21,** and wondering why there is no power, no change, no taste, just plain, bland ole you. Jesus told us that we cannot serve two masters. The master that we are faithful to will be the one that rules us.