

SPIRITUAL WISDOM

Practical Guide for Daily Living

Discussion Guide

Vol. 12, No. 7

May 30, 2010

Title

He Died To Make Us Free

by Paul Martin

Galatians 2: 15-21

Introduction: This weekend, as we remember those who gave their lives to keep us free, it would be good for us to remember the One who died to make us truly free. Jesus has set us free from death and hell, free from punishment, free from the Law, and made us free to love Him with all of our being. Let us remember the Death of Deaths that has freed us to live the Life of Christ in Him.

Sermon Outline

- I. **If Righteousness Comes Through the Law, then Christ Died Needlessly**
 - A. The essence of the Gospel message is that righteousness comes by faith alone in the finished work of Jesus Christ and is not a result of anything we have done, can do, or will do.
 1. We can do no preparatory work to merit justification: Titus 3:5
 2. We can do nothing afterward to increase or build up our righteousness: Galatians 3:3, Jude 23
 - B. This message is central to the Gospel, indeed, without it there is no good news: Luther said, *"This doctrine [justification by faith alone] is indeed the article on which the Church stands or falls."*
 - C. Paul explained that if righteousness could in any way come through law...ANY righteousness by ANY law...then Christ died *needlessly!*
- II. **The Grace of God in Justification Creates Profound Consequences in Our Heart**
 - A. It is in seeing the grace of God in the Cross of Christ that our eyes are first opened to the immensity of His love for us and the horror of our sin. It is this *eye-opening* experience that makes true repentance from sin possible.
 - B. It is the revelation of the grace of God, the conviction of the Holy Spirit that Christ died for *ME*, and the grace of true repentance that gives rise to faith, a personal faith, that what Christ has done, and done for others, He has also done for *ME!*
 - C. It is in the awareness of my exceeding sinfulness and the all sufficiency of the finished work of Jesus Christ on the Cross that causes me to glory in Christ and His Cross and rest firmly on the assurance that I am secure with a covenant keeping God. (Deuteronomy 7:9, Daniel 9:4, with Genesis 15:6-21)
- III. **The Grace of God in Justification Makes Genuine Sanctification Possible**
 - A. We must recognize that Paul is addressing believers in Galatians and that he is talking about how righteousness is produced *in the life of the Christian*. (Galatians 2:16, 19, 21a)
 - B. True holiness of life arises from love, not from fear of punishment or fondness of law. This love is born of heartfelt gratitude to God who has justified us and keeps us eternally. (I John 4:18)
 - C. It is by faith that we are justified (based on the atoning death of Christ) and also by faith that we are sanctified (based on the risen life of Christ). (Galatians 2:20)

"We are Jews by nature and not sinners from among the Gentiles; ¹⁶ nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified. ¹⁷ But if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have also been found sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? May it never be! ¹⁸ For if I rebuild what I have once destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor. ¹⁹ For through the Law I died to the Law, so that I might live to God. ²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. ²¹ I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."

Galatians 2: 15-21

