

The Finished Work of Christ

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

GRACE PUBLICATIONS

P.O. BOX 18715

BALTIMORE, MD 21206

Printed in Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A.

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INTRODUCTION

“Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth” (1 Corinthians 8:1*b*). Consider these three points regarding our response to Bible teaching: First, people who are well-taught in the Word of God will either be broken before God or become puffed up.

Next, every person is equally responsible before God for every opportunity He provides to hear the Word being taught. This also produces the equal responsibility of receiving faith from every message.

Finally, we are to have a faith that serves every person at all times—mentally, verbally, emotionally, and physically—by unconditional love (Galatians 5:6).

The message of the Finished Work is fundamental to what Christians profess to believe, yet few ever grasp it. “It is finished” is the most powerful rebuke to whatever demon is plaguing you, but it is also the most uplifting word you

can offer a soul lost in sin. As you study this topic, focus on the importance of internalizing what you *know* of the character of God, who finished the work and bids us to come.

Chapter One
ADAM LIVES

“Why should ye be stricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment” (Isaiah 1:5-6).

Adam is alive, and he is in us. He has never been eradicated, and he never will be (until we go home to be with Christ). In the unconscious, subconscious, and conscious mind of Adam, there is death. We are never healed from what is in Adam. What Adam was yesterday, he is today; what Adam is today, he will be tomorrow. Adam’s problem is incurable, and he is condemned by the Law, which is God’s perfect will according to the ‘letter’.

This is why the struggle in the flesh becomes

extremely difficult. A sincere person may become weary in the way. A person who is striving will begin to faint. Though they experience moments of inspiration and days of victory, within is a diseased man that is incurable. For any of us, it doesn't make a difference whether one is a pastor or a professor at a Christian college. The diseased man is always in us, and there is not a thing we can do to cure him.

It is in this struggle that many sincere believers consistently frustrate the grace of God. They want to give up, but they can't because they believe the truth about Christ's love for them.

Adam is in us, but since we were saved, we *will never again be in Adam*. When we allow Adam to have dominion over us, the letter of the law regarding the character of Christ condemns us. It reinforces our problems, our guilt, our low self-esteem, and our spiritual poverty.

Adam will never change. His head is sick, he is distorted, and he is diseased. He has running sores that will never be closed nor mollified with ointment. And God says, "The ox knows his owner, and the ass knows his master's crib, but My people do not know. They do not understand" (see Isaiah 1:3).

This condition is a problem even for those who believe in the Finished Work. It is not because people are not sincere, but according to 1 Corinthians 8:2, no one knows any subject as he ought.

It's the Law

“Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?” (Romans 7:1). According to Romans 3:19, the law was given that every mouth may be shut. That is our condition. The law *always* condemns Adam; it was given as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ (Galatians 3:24). But in Romans 7, we can see that by the grace of God, we have been delivered from the Law by the body of Jesus Christ. It was His physical body on the cross and the shedding of His blood that paid for our sins and iniquities; He who knew no sin became sin for us, “that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

“Wherefore, my brethren, *ye also are become dead to the law* by the body of Christ; *that ye should be married to another*, even to him who is raised from the dead, *that we should bring forth*

fruit unto God" (Romans 7:4).

We have been delivered from the very thing that condemns our flesh. It condemns Adam, who is always in us and never changes. We were delivered from the Law that condemned Adam, even before we are delivered from the sin that the Law condemns!

And now that we have been delivered from the Law, we are married to another, even Christ. We are married to Resurrection life, a higher law that says if you are angry with your brother without a cause, you have committed murder (Matthew 5:21-22). Moses' law doesn't say that. The higher law says whoever lusts after a woman in his heart is guilty of the act of adultery (Matthew 5:28). Moses' law doesn't say that.

We are under the higher law of the Spirit of life, which overcomes the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2). "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*" (Romans 8:3-4). This doesn't mean that we are always operating in the Spirit, but we are always walking *after* the Spirit.

Romans 7:6 tells us that in the past, being dead, we were held by the Law. But now we can walk in the “newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.” This is where the honest struggle comes in.

Romans 7:15-19 tells us that when we truly, honestly, and earnestly want to do good, we cannot. This was written by Paul, an apostle who held the highest ranking office of that day. He said, “the things I wanted to do, I couldn’t; and the things that I did do, I shouldn’t. That was the strife of my flesh, trying its best to keep the letter of the law, which is holy and good. But remember, though the flesh is in me, by the grace of God, positionally I am never in the flesh.”

You say, “But everyone gets in the flesh.” That reveals our ignorance.

In 1 John 1:7-10, we read that if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another. But if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sin, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. But if we say we have not sinned, we make God a liar, and His Word is not in us.

Yet, back in Romans 7:17 and 20, Paul made one of the most astonishing statements: When I

sin, “it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.” Though Adam lives in me, I am no longer in Adam.

When I try to do good, evil is always present with me. The government of Satan tries to condemn me with the perfection of the Law, and he uses the righteousness of God to condemn my unrighteousness. Paul said in Romans 7:18, “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.” Then in verse 24, he cried out, “*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*”

Paul’s Prayer for Us

Every Christian who reads Romans 7:14-25 needs to understand what it is saying. That is why Paul prayed as he did in Ephesians 1:17-23:

“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding”—that is, the perceptions of your soul—“being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the *riches of the glory* of his inheritance in the saints,

“And what is the *exceeding greatness of his power* [that operates within us] who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places”—as a glorified Man in session at the throne of God where He has seated Himself in a Finished Work for redeemed sinners,

“Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”

Then, in Ephesians 2, Paul begins to reveal something good about “you”: “You hath he quickened, who were dead”—helpless and hopeless—“in trespasses and sins.” Every day that you can, receive the Good News about yourself. In this life, we need to receive the Good News of God’s exceeding greatness.

“Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now

worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

“*But God*, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)” (Ephesians 2:2-5).

Under this new, higher law, under the Spirit of life, we are always under grace (Romans 6:14). We are never taken out of it. We stand in grace (Romans 5:2), even when we fail. Though He lovingly disciplines us, we are still in grace. Even when we sin, it's the sin that dwells in us. Sin works itself out while we are still in Christ. That is a true Finished Work message!

Though we were dead in sins, we have been quickened together with this miracle of grace and raised up together with Christ where we are seated with Him in the heavenlies (Ephesians 2:6). That is where every Christian is today: quickened, raised, and seated at the right hand of God.

It doesn't even matter if you don't understand it. *God* says you are! At this moment, you are seated in heavenly places in a union with

Christ through the baptism of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:12-13), the *one* baptism into which we have been called (Ephesians 4:4-6).

Ephesians 2:7 explains why we have been seated with Christ: “That in the *ages to come*”—speaking of eternity—“he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through *Christ Jesus*.”

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works,”—divine good—“which God hath before ordained *that we should walk in them*” (Ephesians 2:8-10). In the Greek, that last phrase (verse 10) is an unusual form of the aorist tense, represented by a dot, then a space, then a dot, then a space. It implies that there are interruptions in our walk where we will need to use rebound because we do not understand that we are in Christ—both in our position and in our condition, in our union and our communion.

Kept by a Wall of Fire

“For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a *wall of fire round about*, and will be the *glory in the*

midst of her” (Zechariah 2:5).

The people of Israel always had a wall of fire about them (Isaiah 4:5), and it protected them from everything that demons and the flesh could do. This wall was indestructible, regardless of their inconsistency and murmuring. And, “...the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory [within]” (Isaiah 60:19). The glory of God speaks of the manifestation of His presence.

God is saying to us, “I have placed a wall of fire around you, a wall of categorical doctrines joined together with the fire of the Spirit, and it is because of what I accomplished. I have quickened you, raised you up, and seated you in heavenly places. That is the fire and glory. I will never take you out of that place.”

Chapter Two

WE ARE DEAD, AND SIN HAS NO DOMINION

“*If* ye then be risen with Christ,”—and the first-class condition of “if” says you are—“then seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your [mind] on things above,”—on the Finished Work of Jesus Christ—“not on things on the earth.” Why? Because, “ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God,” and you can now live as someone who has been raised from the dead—because you are!

Obviously, a man who has been raised from the dead would know it. Similarly, a person who has been quickened should know it. A person who has been raised up to heaven should know it. A person who is seated with Christ at the right hand of God, positionally, should know it. A person who has Resurrection power should know it. These things are written that you may

know what benefits you have in eternal life *now* (see 1 John 5:13).

“But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter” (Romans 7:6). Paul said, “I delight in the law of God after the inward man. *But I see another law* in my members, warring against the law of my mind,”—working in the motion of my physical body—“and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members” (Romans 7:22-23). The “other” law is the law of sin and of death.

Then, Paul comes to a revolutionary conclusion: “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” And, in Romans 8:1, he cries out two words, “No condemnation!”

There is no condemnation. “How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?...What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid” (Romans 6:2,15). The principle is true when you have the good news that though Adam is in you, you are never in Adam again. We are *in Christ*. We have been accepted in Christ (Ephesians 1:6). Colossians 3:3 says we have been hid with Christ in God. Old things have passed away, and all

things have become new.

Start at the Right Place

People go on with the same struggles. They are good people, and they love God. But they can't grasp this message spiritually, though they know it intellectually. They cannot experience it because they don't start at the right place. We need to fix our eyes on Jesus, the crucified and glorified Lamb. This is the Christian life.

God forbid that I sin, but if I do, it is not I. It is my flesh working out the Adam nature that is in me. God forbid that I do sin and then reap the trials and testings and consequences of experiential sin and possibly bring reproach to the precious Master.

Always start with the fact that you are in Christ. Never use that fact to continue in sin, but use it to be like Him, to be conformed to His image, to be renewed in His mind (Ephesians 4:23), and to be transformed by His Word.

We are protected by the "wall of fire" (Zechariah 2:5). As we avail ourselves to the teaching of God's Word, categories of doctrine are woven together to become a strong wall. Through those doctrines, God's glory reflects His nature within. That wall of fire is a Finished Work provision

that can never change—even when a believer is taken home early.

A woman came to me recently and said, “I don’t understand why I can’t do better.” Her problem was that she was letting Adam have dominion—and Adam is *not* going to change. “I speak to them that know the law” (Romans 7:1). If you know the Law, you must remember this: The Law has dominion. And what does the Law do? It is perfect; therefore, it condemns imperfect people.

A Truth that Brings Deliverance

If there is any legalism in you, any self-righteousness or religious pride, you will end up condemned, living in guilt, trying to live the Christian life. But according to the apostle Paul, that is not how you do it.

Do you want to know what to do? You simply thank God. Thank Him, though you know the warfare, the battles, and that Adam is in every one of us. But always remember that we are accepted in Christ, hid with Christ, and seated with Christ. Every born-again believer is a new creature in Christ, and as He is in heaven, so are we in this world (1 John 4:17).

The Father wants us to have a revelation of

the wisdom and knowledge that is in Christ. He desires that our eyes would be opened, that our understanding would come into the light, and that we would realize the exceeding greatness of His power that goes beyond everything—a power that is toward us who simply let it work in us because we have faith.

What release we would experience if we ever got a hold of this truth! It is so humbling, yet it is so magnificent. It is a higher law, therefore it requires a higher response. Still, it is always under grace, and this law never withholds grace when we break it.

“The strength of sin is in the law” (1 Corinthians 15:56). That is because when we sin we say, “I did it again seven times in two days” instead of going to Christ to rebound. Then the Law strengthens that sin because we are powerless. The motions of sin begin to work out in Adam because we feel guilty. But God said, “There is now no condemnation.”

We have been delivered from the law that condemns us because it has been fulfilled by Christ (Romans 10:4), *forever* (Matthew 5:17). That is why Matthew 5:20 says that our righteousness exceeds the religious self-righteousness of the Pharisees. Because we received it as a

gift through the abundance of grace, we can reign in life by one Christ Jesus (Romans 5:17).

We do not say that we cannot or have not sinned. We have. But we will continue to apply the Ephesians 2:10 principle of rebound (a dot, a space, a dot . . .) because of a magnificent Christ. Paul said in Philippians 1:20, "According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death."

Paul said in Philippians 1:21, "Don't you understand that for me to live is Christ? It is not my sin, though I went through some terrible times in Romans 7. It is not the Law, though it is precious. The Law has been fulfilled, and I am no longer under it."

We need to be motivated by Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. The love of Christ constrains us. We judge that if One died, all were dead, that we should not henceforth live unto self (which causes all the problems), but unto God who raised Jesus from the dead (see 2 Corinthians 5:14-15). Because we are now married to Another, we can bear the fruit of that union in our lives.

Grace Is the Only Teacher

We bear the fruit of not being condemned but accepted in the Beloved, the fruit of not being under the Law but under grace, and the fruit of rebounding in the process of growing in grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18). We have the fruit of letting grace teach us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live quietly with doctrine in this present evil world.

Grace accepts us when we rebound. *Grace* will teach us—not the Law or guilt. Grace is our only teacher, but it is not given for lasciviousness (a lifestyle without restraint). It is given so we will come through as winners, weak as we are, because God sees us in His Son forever—quickenened, raised up, and seated above. We are members of His body, flesh, and bones (Ephesians 5:30). We are joined to Him in one Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:17). He sees us on earth as He is in heaven (1 John 4:17).

Some people who are weary in the battle will hear these remarkable truths and say, “I don’t understand it, Lord!” Then just accept the truth and let it liberate you.

I thank God for every pulpit that preaches

Christ. But some will preach about King Saul and end with his failure—and well they should. But we also need to show God's provision of grace for his life. Those same pulpits will give repeated warnings about the dangers of apostasy, but they don't give equal time to the grace and mercy available to men in their lowest estate. They do not represent the living Christ but the letter of the Law. That is *not* what Jesus Christ came to give us. The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

One of the greatest verses in the Bible is found in John 1:16, "And of his *fulness* have all we received, and grace for grace." The Greek word *pleroma* speaks of fullness that goes beyond completeness to abundance.

As believers, we already have the fullness of grace. We may not be using it for the glory of God, but we received it when Christ said, "It is finished" (John 19:30). That was His message when He said to Mary, "I ascend unto my Father, and *your* Father" (John 20:17). It was Jesus' message when He said, "If you continue in My words, you will be my disciples indeed, and you will know the truth"—the system of truth about the Finished Work—"and it will set you free." That message will lead us to know the Son, and

He will make us free indeed (see John 8:31-32,36).
This is the Glorious Gospel of Grace!

A Message of Hope

This message does not bring condemnation to the weak. It brings hope. It does not bring the letter of the law to the guilty. It brings hope that they can, indeed, be set free. This message doesn't take advantage of people who are going through a process, to manipulate their lives, to control them, or to hammer them with a righteousness that even the pastor can't live up to.

In this Finished Work message of the Glorious Gospel, the Lord says, "You can have a *blessed* hope right now; because, everything I am, you are. And everything you are is because of what I have imputed to you." And that imputation never stops in the process of our development.

David said in Psalm 18:35, "Thy gentleness hath made me great." Try that one. "Your gentleness, Lord, has made me great." Only gentleness can bring out God's greatness in a man's frailty so that a man, to the glory of God, becomes great. "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Ephesians 1:6).

Chapter Three

WE HAVE BEEN RAISED

We have already established the fact that Adam will always be in us. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and make God a liar (1 John 1:10). But if we rebound the moment we fail—confess our sin, name it, and isolate it—He forgives us and cleanses us from all known sin, as well as the sins of ignorance (Leviticus 4; 1 John 1:9).

Today, we are quickened, raised, and seated with Christ before God the Father. Billions of years ago in His predeterminate counsel, the Father knew everything we would ever do in our lifetime (Isaiah 46:10; Acts 2:23). Still, His love is eternal toward those whom He foreknew would accept His Son.

“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace” (Romans 6:14). Sin will never have dominion, because we are under grace, and of His fullness (*pleroma*) we

have received grace for grace. It is important to know that when I sin, it is no longer “I” but sin that dwells in me (Romans 7:17, 20). Yet, will I continue in sin so grace can abound? God forbid. Grace teaches me to deny sin and to live through doctrine (Titus 2:12).

Here is the key. God the Father *never* sees us in our sin. He has accepted us in His Son, Jesus, “...in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins” (Ephesians 1:7a). The Holy Spirit who dwells within us convicts, and the love of God disciplines. But the Father never sees us in our sin because we are hid with Christ in God. It is no longer “I” that sin, because *I* am crucified and buried, and my sin and iniquity cannot be imputed (Romans 4:7-8).

“I” Am the Object of Eternal Love

Certainly God deals with us on a personal level of love when He has to discipline us (Hebrews 12:6-11). But the greatest news about the glorious Gospel is this: There is no other way to approach sin, iniquity, and the governmental evil of Satan but from the standpoint of the Finished Work. From this point of view, God reveals to us the authority, power, and fathomless scope of His grace. It teaches us what eternal love has

done, is doing, and will continue to do. *We are the objects of that eternal love*—if only we could grasp it.

If you ponder this love through the Holy Spirit, you will begin to be overwhelmed as the weeping prophet Jeremiah was. The apostle Paul wept day and night for three years as he considered it (Acts 20:29-31). He was so broken because he understood the power of God's love, which has made it impossible for Satan, or circumstances, or anything that happens in our lives to separate us from God. Like the closest of friends, we are inseparable (Romans 8:38, 39).

Through the Finished Work, God has imputed His righteousness apart from works (Romans 4:6). And because God is for us, no one can ever come against us. Every Christian must understand that, then receive it, believe it, and walk by faith in it.

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace *with* God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1). That is *objective* peace. “Being justified” is an aorist participle, a past fact that can never be changed. We experience the peace *of* God when we keep on receiving the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness to reign in life by One, Jesus Christ. But the positional, ob-

jective peace *with* God is ours through justification by faith. It's the Finished Work.

“Rejoice in the Lord...” —Relax! —“Let your *moderation* be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand” (Philippians 4:4-5). “Moderation” comes from the Greek word *epieikes*. It refers to the judicial system of God in the Finished Work, whereby He gives grace and mercy with a love that goes beyond the justice we deserve because of our sin. In this courtroom where mercy rejoices against judgment, the Father is fully satisfied with what Jesus Christ has done *as* us and *for* us on the cross.

“Be careful [(anxious)] for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God” (Philippians 4:6). Prayer is the breath of love responding to God's promises. “And the [(subjective)] peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall [guard] your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7). In Romans 5:1, I have objective peace, but here I have *subjective* peace. That means that instead of Adam (who lives in me) controlling my mind, subjective peace controls my conscious mind and guards my unconscious and subconscious mind when I rejoice, pray, and show mercy that

goes beyond justice.

Overpower the Problem: Three to One

Where do our problems come from? We know that Adam is in us, but we are not in Adam. We are in Christ. The Holy Spirit dwells in us. The Father indwells us (John 14:23). One will prevail, and two will withstand, but “a threefold cord is not quickly broken” (Ecclesiastes 4:12). A threefold cord speaks of the communion of the Holy Spirit, the love of the Son, and the power of the Father working in us through the Word.

When a problem keeps coming up, it means we have gone back into something that we are not. We transgress what we know to be true, for “sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4*b*). We go back to defend Adam. But Adam has been judged in Christ: he was found guilty, he was crucified with Christ, and he was buried. Now we are accountable to a higher law, the royal law of love (James 2:8). We can operate in it since we have peace deep within because of our justification by faith.

“We have access by faith”—which comes by hearing the Word of God—“into this grace wherein we *stand*, and we rejoice in hope of the

glory of God” (Romans 5:2). “Stand” is a perfect active indicative, which means we keep receiving the action of standing in grace forever. We stand in the grace that justified us. It is the “God of all grace” who has called us, and “to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever” (1 Peter 5:10-11).

The Reason We Rejoice in Tribulations

“Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations” (Psalms 145:13). The King rules with His righteousness from sea to sea, so we can “rejoice in hope of the glory of God...” —not just in the future, but moment by moment in the succeeding minutes that lead to eternity. “...And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also....” How is that possible? We know that “...tribulation worketh patience” (Romans 5:3). Furthermore, Jesus said in John 16:33b, “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

In other words, we begin to receive attributes of God that we never experienced until the tribulations came. I never knew the anointing until God put me in the furnace. I never understood the power and victory of deliverance until

I was totally delivered unto death to my self. I never knew what it was to have a mental attitude of love toward my enemy until God gave it to me in a trial.

Tribulation works patience, and patience, experience (Romans 5:3-4). If only we understood how much we need experience with God. The reason tribulations come is so we can have divine patience through the fruit of the Holy Spirit. And when God's patience is worked in us, we will be able to experience Christ as all and in all (Colossians 3:11).

Then, experience works hope. It is a lively hope (1 Peter 1:3), and because we know He is there, we can trust Him with our whole heart. This hope "maketh not ashamed," because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. It is not wishful thinking. It's something we experience throughout our entire being. This hope influences our motivations, thought processes, and understanding of God's precepts.

This is the Christian life. Adam is in me; I am not in Adam. I have been accepted. I am a new creation, and that will never change. Old things have passed away, and everything is continuously new. That will be my experience if I will accept what the precious Word of God says.

Chapter Four

NOW TAKE DOMINION

“For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:6-8).

While we were in our wicked and sinful state, Christ saw beyond our iniquity and died not only for us but *as us*. Every sin was blotted out at Calvary. With that understanding, we hear Jesus say, “As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: *continue ye in my love*” (John 15:9).

Jesus was saying, “Do you understand how much the Father has loved Me? His love is perfect. There is not a flaw in it. And that’s how much I love you. I *am* love (1 John 4:10). And now, I will ask you to do something—but don’t

try to perform it. Just fellowship with Me, and I will do it. This is my commandment: that you love one another just exactly as I have loved you! Though that seems impossible, you will be able to do it through the love of God that is shed abroad in your heart.”

He will perform what He asks us to do (Job 23:14). “Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it” (1 Thessalonians 5:24).

When you become bitter toward one another or get off into moods, it is Adam relating to sin; it’s Adam relating to iniquity in the emotions; Adam relating to self-preservation. That is not how to solve the problem.

It is possible for me to receive the same love God has for His only begotten Son. It is entirely possible for me to receive the love of the Son through the Holy Spirit, then to love myself as much as God loves me. Through grace upon grace, I can love every person just as much as God loves me. Loving through God’s love does away with pettiness, anger, resentment, and discord. The love of God in me does away with all of the ugliness that comes out of the abundance of the heart (Mark 7:20-21).

“We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that

loveth not his brother abideth in death....Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1 John 3:14-16).

The greatest thing in the world is to be standing forever in the grace of God—grace that depends upon Him and not me. The second greatest thing is that we have access into this grace by faith. I can have hope every time I go to the Father through Christ, in the glory of God, reflecting God’s nature as I make my request.

We Have Authority

Our God, the Lord Jesus Christ, who has dominion and authority from sea to sea, is the King. He gave His servant authority and dominion to be a watchman (Mark 13:34). And the same authority He gave to the Twelve over the devil and unclean spirits (Luke 9:1; 10:19), He has given to us.

Christians must understand that we have that authority through the power of love, the power of prayer, and the power of *epieikes*—mercy that excels any judgment that God could legitimately give us, because of our substitute, Christ.

In Nehemiah 9:37-38, because the nation of Israel kept sinning, their enemies were able to

take authority over their bodies. But God's people have authority over the works of the enemy; everything is under our feet (Hebrews 2:5-8, Psalm 8:5). Still, so many of God's children don't realize who they are. We often don't understand the life we have and the protection of that wall of doctrine and God's glory in our midst.

We have this indescribable authority, and each of us has the opportunity to fellowship without a root of bitterness or any other distraction from the enemy. Because Jesus said, "My little children, sin not," it is possible for a child of God not to sin. This is accomplished by choices, moment by moment.

But if any man does sin, thank God we have an advocate with the Father. Jesus Christ is pleading our case day and night before the throne of God. We can love ourselves without striving and struggling. We can love every person through the love of God, without negativity or reaction. We don't need to let Satan pierce us with his accusations and lies.

The enemy wants to bind up believers so they are not free. If a believer is not focused but becomes distracted by the details of life and takes his eyes off of Jesus, the enemy will take advantage. In 2 Timothy 4:10, he made Demas

leave a wonderful missionary journey and forsake Paul to go back to the world's system.

Don't go back! Don't even think about it. Don't allow the reflection of a projection to get in. Diotrophes usurped authority in the Church and conspired against John (3 John 9). Diotrophes exalted himself above the Word of God, above the table of organization, and he entered into an arrogant complex.

But thanks be to God that Romans 5 speaks of five "*much mores*":

"*Much more* then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Romans 5:9).

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, *much more*, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Romans 5:10).

"But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, *much more* the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many" (Romans 5:15).

"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; *much more* they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:17).

“Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did *much more* abound:” (Romans 5:20).

Four times it mentions “free gifts.” Sin can only reign unto the death of the Cross, for grace reigns through God’s righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ (Romans 5:21).

No Peace? Give Up

The most precious thing is to have subjective peace, meaning, it’s all settled. “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee” (Isaiah 26:3). In Luke 15:17, the prodigal son recognized his need. “And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father’s have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!” When he came to the end of himself, the issue was settled. He got up and went to his father.

Perhaps you would say, “But I’m a basket case!” Well, so is everyone. There are just different sizes of baskets. Maybe you are saying, “But so often I have wanted to give up!” Many of us in Adam *have* given up. And when we gave up, we finally trusted Christ to take our place. Not that any man can have sufficiency of himself, for

our sufficiency is of God (2 Corinthians 3:5). Therefore, we place no confidence in 'self' (Philippians 3:3).

Most of our problems come when we become brats in the flesh. And God says that every time we get that way, our flesh has an odor. So, don't you think the people around us can smell what's coming out of our mouths? We have an odor! There is only one answer: Die to your self and seek those things which are above.

Remember, Adam is incurable. Set your mind on things above, and not on things below. For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God (Colossians 3:1-3). Learn to praise Him in everything and for everything. Let Him love you through everything. Never reject who you are, just reject Adam's operation in you and let the love of God have dominion.

Unclean spirits have no dominion. That dominion was given to God's servants (Mark 13:34). We have authority. Some will reign with God in eternity. Start reigning with Him now. Sin can only reign as far as the Cross. But grace reigns forever and ever through righteousness by Jesus Christ who has given us dominion (Romans 5:17).

When a Christian begins to grasp what it is

to walk in the Spirit, he will begin to experience that dominion. Walking is just taking one step at a time. All I am concerned with is being filled with the Spirit in my next step. I give thanks as I go, and then I take my next step. That's all I care about. Why should we care about anything else? We are kept moment by moment.

Step by Step, Moment by Moment

Some people follow a motto that says, "One Day at a Time." But in Isaiah 27:3, we need to go for one moment at a time, because one day can present too many unforeseen problems. Just take your next breath with God. Take the next step with Him. Speak your next word through Him. Receive your next thought from God. That's all! It is just a series of moments. And as we take each breath, He gives the inspiration of the manifestation of His presence (Isaiah 60:19).

Psalm 49 speaks of those who receive honor from their fellow men and who trust in their riches. But their end is destruction: "Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and *the upright shall have dominion over them* in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling" (Psalm 49:14).

God's people have been given dominion for

all of eternity over those who are trusting in temporal honor and riches. We don't covet what others have, but God wants to take away from the devil and give to God's people so we will use it for God's Kingdom. As far as I go, it is not so that I as a pastor can prosper excessively, but the church needs finances to reach the lost. Then a ministry can grow and go into all the world, preach the Gospel to every creature, and make disciples of men.

So often Christians hear wonderful truth like this, and they acknowledge it in passing but do not drink it in. But God says the upright—those believers who live in the upper righteousness of God, who think, walk, and talk with God, who love through God—will have dominion.

“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Galatians 5:13-14). God says that one word summarizes everything. One word takes care of all the commandments: Love.

When love isn't there, bearing all things, believing all things, hoping and enduring all things (1 Corinthians 13:7), then my life will be con-

trolled by the influence of demons, and I will have taken Satan's hand. Though he can't possess me, I can agree to cooperate with him. If it is because I have been "hurt," it is my flesh that is hurting because Adam refuses to experience his death *with* Christ (though Adam has experienced death *by* Christ).

Tribulations are for our sake. They work in patience that only comes from God. And that patience works experience so we can have a lively hope that maketh not ashamed. Let's take up our dominion and live in the abundance of the work that Jesus Christ has finished!

CONCLUSION

“A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon” (Song of Solomon 4:15). God desires to have in us an abundance of fresh gardens fed by living waters. That is what He will produce in us as we give over Adam’s reign to experience life in the One who has done it all.

This is the real Christ. Through a message like this, we can get to know Him better. Instead of a message that criticizes, condemns, and brings the letter of the law only, the Gospel of grace through the Finished Work makes a person want to embrace Him and to receive His embrace. This message does not produce a desire to go out in sin. It produces purity.

Heavenly Father, allow this message to produce holiness as it reveals Christ in our lives, but always with a guaranteed hope that we are loved and never left forsaken. In Christ’s name, Amen.