

## By the Body of Christ

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In recent weeks we have had many discussions about being dead to sin and made free from it, and dead to the law. Here are some of the verses:

1. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer in it?
2. The one having died is freed from the sin.
3. Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to the sin. (Rom 6:2, 7, 11)
4. Being made free from sin, you became the servants of righteousness... of God (Ibid 6:18, 22)
5. Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law (Ibid 6:14)

I was reminded by a friend that we have been talking about the concept of 'dead to the law' and 'freedom from sin' since 1995. In reviewing old studies from 1995 through 1998, I found at least 13 on the law, 6 on the covenants and a whole series on the book of Galatians. However, when reading some of the studies, I realized that we were not really dead to the law, even though we quoted these scriptures. It has taken over 10 years for it to become a reality, and there has been much added to our understanding during this time.

Even now, the idea of being made free from sin did not immediately sink in as a reality in my heart. I read the scriptures, and understood what they were saying, and could see that the idea was very plain - I AM FREE FROM SIN! It helps me to go back over how this process happens.

At the beginning of his ministry, Jesus stated clearly his purpose: **Lk 4:18-19**: *18. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19. To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.* The way verse 19 reads from the Hebrew Interlinear: *To proclaim the year (or, time) of acceptance of Yahweh.* (Isa 61:2) Paul also mentions this 'time of acceptance': **Gal 4:4-5**: *3. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements (or, principals) of the world: 4. But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5. To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.*

In our blindness, we were under the law, i.e. governed by the law, and therefore, never free from sin. But now are we delivered from that wherein we were dead, that we should serve in newness of the Spirit of life, and not in oldness of the letter of the law. (Rom 7:6; 8:2) Here is how it is done: **Rom 7:4**: *Wherefore, my brethren, you 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.* It is clear that the Son of God physically died to set me free from the law of sin and death. Now, I have known about Christ's sacrifice all my Christian life. Why am I just now feeling freedom from sin? Because, it is the understanding of his death that brings the freedom. Therefore, there must be more to being made free by his body than simply the fact of his death.

**Body as a figure**: We already understand that body parts are spiritual symbols: tongue (sword), hands (works), ears (spiritual hearing of the heart), nose (perceive, discern), feet (direction of the heart) & eyes (understanding). These parts are also grouped as 'members.' Notice how the 'old man' is paralleled with the 'body of sin', and used interchangeable with 'members': **Rom 6:6, 13**: *6. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin... 13. Neither yield ye your members*

*as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. Unrighteous members are defined in Col 3:5: Mortify (put to death) therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: Jesus said, And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. (Mt 5:29) If some portion of your understanding is a stumbling block, get rid of it!*

So 'old man', 'body of sin', 'body of death', 'mortal body' or 'members' can be used interchangeable for man's way of thinking, **and**, the outward manifestation of the sin that is in us. The noun 'sin' then, is a mind-set opposed to God, and the verb 'sinning' is the outward manifestation. So, my eyes represent the understanding I have, and also what I do with my eyes is a result of what I am thinking - i.e. to look on a woman with lust is spiritual adultery first, to act on the lust is actual adultery or fornication. The first is against God, the second against mankind, which also highlights why the law is summarized in two commandments - love God, love mankind.

**Rom 7:4:** *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ... We become dead to law by Christ's faith & works (hands, fingers), by hearing what he hears from his Father (spiritual ears). And, he put all his body parts to death physically, as a testimony to us, so that we could look at the cross and understand and be delivered from the law and sin, *Because the carnal mind (members of the body) is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh (human way of thinking) cannot please God.* (Rom 8:7-8)*

Summary: When we come to Christ, we are to hear and do his instructions, and he will make an everlasting covenant with us (Isa 55:3) - i.e. he gives us the law (instruction) of the spirit of life. The result is concisely stated in the next verses:

**Rom 8:9-11:** *9. But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. 10. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken (give life to) your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in you.*

Isaiah gives more about the outcome of what we are become and what we are to do: **Isa 61:3b-6a:** *...that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. 4. And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. 5. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vine dressers. 6. But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the Ministers of our God...* Brothers and sisters, these verses are talking about us!

**Rom 6:12-13:** *12. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. AMEN!*