

121. The Different Relations of Men to the Law.

When we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the Law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. 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. Rom. 7,5. 6.

The unconverted are always under the dominion of the Law, let them do what they will. Yet we behold this difference among the unconverted, that some live in manifest vices, while others lead a moral and virtuous life. What are we to make of this difference? It comes about in this way: Sin has corrupted man's whole nature, and when he hears the Law, which forbids sin, the evil lust within man becomes alive and wants to break out in deeds. Man can now do two things: he can either set aside the Law and surrender himself to the will of sin, or he can argue: "I must do good works to escape punishment." In the latter case the Law *seems* to bring forth good fruit in one who is still unconverted; and in a worldly sense that which he does is indeed good. Virtue is praiseworthy and has its reward in this life. But when a man avoids evil works for fear of punishment and does good works because he hopes to be rewarded therefor, those are motives which the Law itself condemns. It says to such persons, "Woe unto you!"

But when a man is converted to Christ, his relation to the Law is essentially changed. In conversion man is made a new creature; his heart, mind, and sentiments are wholly changed, so that he looks upon the Law in an altogether different light. In conversion the soul is divorced from this terrible husband, the Law, and is married to another, to Jesus. In Him the soul finds a totally different kind of husband. He takes His bride to His bosom and fondly addresses her thus: "Be not afraid, only believe! Believe in Me, confidently trust in Me. Thou needest labor no more. Behold, I have labored for thee and earned for thee all that thou needest."

Prayer.

O Lord Jesus, Thou exalted and beloved Son of God, I thank Thee with all my heart that Thou didst not only become a true man in my behalf, but didst also place Thyself under the Law for my sake and didst labor unto death, in order that I might be redeemed from the curse of the Law and that my soul might be cleansed from its base impurities. For this I acknowledge myself in duty bound to present myself to Thee as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. To this end, O dearly beloved Savior, lend me Thine aid for the sake of Thy suffering and death with which Thou hast redeemed me. Amen.

Delay not, delay not, O sinner, draw near,
The waters of life are now flowing for thee;
No price is demanded; the Savior is here;
Redemption is purchased, salvation is free.

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