

# *Redemption Comes By The Cross*

Dave Roberson

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I've been in the ministry a long time and, as the years go by, the Lord continues to amaze me with the love He has for us. As each day goes by, He opens up more from the Word on the incredible wisdom God displayed when He redeemed human beings from a collision course with Hell and I am so grateful for His love. I can almost hear Jesus cry at the moment of His death, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me" as the judgment of the whole world was laid upon Him in a moment of time.

You are worth a lot to God. It cost God more than you can know just for you to be able to choose whether or not you want to go to Heaven or Hell. Satan thought he had the whole human race signed, sealed, and delivered to Hell. There was just one problem he failed to anticipate and that problem was JESUS.

The wisdom God displayed (to deliver all of His creation back to Himself and to place the right of choosing salvation back into the hands of the people who want it) was a masterpiece of genius as He out smarted every move Satan made and unraveled what Satan thought was a done deal.

Let me help you understand how really free we are. At the time of the cross, the whole world was under sin because of the transgression of one man, Adam. Although through Adam, sin and death entered into the world, God made provision for us. Let me go on.

The best God had for an Old Testament believer was to simply cover his sins until the time of the cross at which time the believer would, by virtue of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; become a NEW CREATION. But, up until that point, the whole world was full of unregenerated, spiritually dead men whose sins were not done away with, but simply covered through their trust in God. Paul said in Romans 3:9-10:

*"What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin. As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:"*

When Paul said, "there is none righteous, no not one," he was speaking in respect to the fact that not one person, whether they be Jew or Gentile, had a new nature freeing them from sin. At that time, their sins were simply covered ... not done away with ... but covered.

So, God began to unfold His plan by gently steering the whole human race towards the cross. He chose to give the law to one nation out of the whole world and that was to Abraham's seed who had become a mighty nation while under Egyptian bondage. Later, when they had been delivered from

the bondage of slavery, God gave them the Ten Commandments as the beginning of the law.

What we have failed to understand is that, when God gave Israel the law, He did so knowing full well they could not keep it. In the 7th chapter of Romans, Paul described the conflict caused by the unregenerated sin-nature of a man under the law trying to keep the commandments of God. The question is, if God knew that Israel could not keep the law, then why did He give it to them?

The answer is that, in order for God to judge the world, He had to have a standard to judge it by. So, Israel was given the law as a standard of judgment. In Romans 3:19-20 it says:

*"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and ALL THE WORLD MAY BECOME GUILTY BEFORE GOD. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."*

In other words, God used the law, and the commandments contained within the law, to expose the unregenerated sin-nature of fallen man. By singling out one nation to give the law to, knowing full well they could not keep it, God was able to raise up that one nation (Israel) as a standard before the whole world and declare the whole world guilty of sin because they could not keep the law.

Israel was to be an example to the rest of the world to prove that, if this one nation could not keep the commandments of the law, neither could the rest of the world. As a conclusion, because the whole world was under sin and guilty, the judgment of the whole world could then be laid upon JESUS.

In order for us to understand how totally free from sin we are through the blood of Jesus, we must understand the great conflict that took place in the unregenerated sin-nature of fallen man; the commandments of God against sin; and then, finally, the absolute change of covenants that took place between chapters 7 and 8 of Romans which took fallen man to the rebirth to declare us totally free from sin.

For the longest time, I had questions about the 7th chapter of Romans. I wasn't sure whether Paul was talking about an unregenerated man who had received the law under the Old Testament and could not keep it, or a born-again believer having trouble with his flesh under the New Testament. And one of the reasons I was not sure, was that many of my friends whom I respected as great teachers, tended to believe it was a born-again man having trouble with his flesh under the New Testament.

Because of my indecision, the Holy Spirit was unable to open up certain areas concerning the book of Romans regarding the power of God and being set free from sin. But now I know the Apostle Paul was definitely talking about the spiritual condition of an unregenerated man under the law who, because of his sin-nature, was unable to keep it.

It is not as though he does not want to keep it, he does. However, the problem is that he cannot. Because, when it comes to the unregenerated sin-nature of a spiritually dead man, it is not a matter of choice whether or not he sins, HE IS SIN, and sin cannot do or be anything else but sin.

So, this great conflict described in the 7th chapter of Romans takes place between the unregenerated sin-nature of a man under the law and the commandments of God against sin. This is why Romans 7:7 says *"What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shall not covet."*

Notice here that it says he would not have known lust except the law said "thou shall not covet". In other words, a spiritually dead man has the nature of sin. He does not know anything else but sin so he has no way of knowing whether lust is an acceptable life-style or not unless someone tells him it is sin. This was the purpose of the law ... *"For by the law is the knowledge of sin ..."* (Romans 3:20).

Paul describes what takes place in the soul of a unregenerated man trying to keep the law in Romans 7:12-15: *"Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I."*

So we have a problem here. It is not as though a man in this condition does not want to please God and keep the commandments, he does. There is just one problem, his unregenerated sin-nature will not let him. In the 14th verse, when Paul said *"the law is spiritual but I am carnal, sold under sin ..."*, he was talking about the nature of sin inherited from his great, great forefather, when Adam sold the whole human race out to the bondage and slavery of sin. Romans 5:12 says: *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."*

So, when the Apostle Paul said in the 13th verse that *"sin may appear sin by that which was good"*, he was saying that unregenerated man has a nature of sin and, because it is part of his nature, the only way to expose it so that it will APPEAR to be what it really is (SIN), the sin-nature had to be given a commandment it could not keep; such as "thou shalt not covet, lie, bear false witness, etc." In so doing, the law became the schoolmaster that exposed sin and showed the unregenerated man he had need of a Savior, which was the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Romans 3:20 says, *"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."* Paul was talking about the same thing when he wrote to the Galatians. Galatians 3:24 says: *"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."*

Paul taught this to bring us to this point of redemption, to show us how incredibly free we have been made from sin. In fact, Romans 8:1 says, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."*

Every time you see the phrase, "AFTER THE FLESH", Paul is making reference to the unregenerated sin-nature of a man under the law who cannot keep it. "After the flesh" simply means that the motions of sin - lust, rebellion, the sin-nature of a spiritually dead man - declare war on his mind and force him to follow after the flesh whether he wants to or not rather than following after the commandments of the law. Romans 7:23 says, *"But I see another law in my members, warring"*

*against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."*

But, I have good news. Because we have been born-again, we have a new nature! We are neither Jew nor Gentile, but a new creation. Romans 8:1 says *"there is therefore **now** no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus"*. The word "condemnation" refers to "a condemning sentence" such as a judge would give to a man who had been found guilty of a crime.

God told Adam in the day that you eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, **THAT DAY YOU SHALL SURELY DIE**. On that day, the whole world was declared guilty before God and sentenced to death. But, thank God, Jesus, as our substitute, bore the penalty and was condemned to death in our place. And, because we have accepted Him as our Savior, He has freed us from sin and now sin has lost its power to carry out any condemning sentences against us. We cannot be forced to sin or to do anything else we do not want to do.

When Paul said *"there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus"*, he was saying that the flesh has lost its power to declare war against our mind to force us to sin if we do not want to. We have been crucified with Christ, the flesh has lost its power to pass judgment on our mind and CONDEMN us to sin if we refuse to do so. Jesus has made us free. *"For sin shall not have dominion over you; for you are not under the law but under grace"* (Romans 6:14).

We can say whatever we want to ... the devil made me do it ... the temptation was more than I could bear, but, until we are ready to call ourselves to accountability and acknowledge the fact that Jesus Christ has set us free from sin, we are blocking God's power to shore us up in the weak places to set us free and give us peace and confidence in God's power to answer prayer in the time of trouble. The flesh, the devil, or the world cannot make me do what I will not do!

One of the worst things a person can do is to use "grace" as a reason not to be condemned over sin. "Grace" is the inevitable, unearnable favor of God. We cannot free ourselves from sin no matter how hard we try or how long we work for it. We just do not have the capability. God stepped in and did the impossible. He freed us from sin by freeing us from the sin-nature that had us bound. Therefore, "GRACE" frees us FROM sin ... not TO sin.

Some folk like to argue, "I am a poor, frail, weak human being full of problems but God knows my weaknesses; when He is ready to set me free from sin, I am willing to stop sinning. But for now, I am going to continue to party, drink, carouse around, and commit adultery while I use the Name of Jesus as a born-again believer on my way to Heaven ... because His Grace is sufficient."

Adopting this attitude defeats the whole purpose of the Gospel which was to free us from sin by giving us a new nature. In Romans 7, God gave the law to unregenerated man knowing he could not keep it; and in the 8th chapter, that man has been born-again, the righteousness (right-standing) of the law can be carried out in us who walk not after the flesh (under the law) but after the spirit (under grace.) ***If grace did not free us FROM sin but rather provided us with a coverall FOR sin, then why would God bother to take us from Romans 7 to Romans 8?***

In no way, shape, or form am I teaching any of this to bring anyone under bondage but rather to help

to understand what releases the power of God to set us free. God wants us to understand He has already provided everything we need to walk free and, even though most of us understand that in theory, the power comes when we understand it enough to quit excusing ourselves and become accountable for our sins.

I can still hear my "wimpy" little voice trying to make excuses to God for walking away from Him when I was 17 years old. I came back to God when I was 22 years old and, for the years that followed, I justified myself with all the weak excuses we use to justify ourselves when we do not want to take responsibility for our actions. "It was the doctrine I was born-again under; I was only 17; the temptation was more than I could bear; there were hypocrites in the church; people were mean to me, etc."

But the bottom line is that I did not have to walk away from God. The devil did not make me do it. You did not make me do it. The flesh could not make me do it. None of these are greater than God. I did it because I chose to and anyone who goes back out into sin after being born-again and tells you that they did not know any better is lying to you and to themselves.

The whole reason for the rebirth is to free us from our sin nature and the first thing the new nature begins to do is to illuminate to our conscience that we have been made free from sin. So, for a person to say that they did not know any better or to use "grace" as a reason not to be condemned over sin, violates the prime objective of the rebirth which is to free us from sin.

One of the greatest days of fellowship and power I have had with God was when He called me into accountability for the areas of my life that I had been justifying with excuses. He showed me how to call darkness, darkness so He could forgive me and cleanse me from all unrighteousness. My Father God replaced all those weak areas of my life that I used to cover with excuses with His strength and power in my inner man.

God's grace is sufficient for those areas where we fall short of the glory of God but by no means is His grace intended to act as a coverall for premeditated sin, as you yield yourself to the Holy Spirit, be assured that, as He calls you to accountability, it is to strengthen you and to cause the fruits of righteousness to be present in your life.

Your friend and partner,  
Dave Roberson