

## As Believers, We Are No Longer Part of This World

### Colossians 2:20-23

This article is “good news” to some, and “troublesome to others.” We all know that when the Lord Jesus comes into our lives, He does not come to take sides, but rather He comes to take over our lives. The more we understand that “the life we now live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God”. It is He living His life in and through our lives.

In the same manner that the Heavenly Father lived His life in and through the Man Christ Jesus, so too, the Holy Spirit lives His life in and through our lives today.

In Romans chapter 8 verse 2 we have a very interesting scripture. It says “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.”

We understand that He is not talking about the 10 commandments, but rather a process taking place. So thinking people might ask the question, “how is it that the law (or process) operating in Him, ends up liberating you and me.?”

The answer to that question is, it is “His life” that operates in you and me. The Lord living His life in and through every born again believer.

Now I ask you a simple question. Why is the believer referred to in scripture as a “branch, or a vessel? Looking at 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 4:7 & following we find Paul writing; “but we have this treasure (The Holy Spirit) in earthen vessels (the believer), that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.”

Did you get that? As vessels, we contain. What do we contain? God Himself in human form. Notice the next verses, “hard pressed on every side” – yet not crushed. “perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken, struck down, but not destroyed. In other words, things are continually coming against the vessel, yet the vessel remains strong. Why? The answer is because of the treasure (The Holy Spirit of the Living God) within. He is now our lives, and He changes not.

It is His life within each of us that actually sets us free from “sin and death.” You say, well Tom, we still die, and this is true. However death in scripture does not mean annihilation. Annihilation means that something is being *brought to nothing*, or to *destroy entirely*. Death in scripture means “separation.”

That is the reason that the believer will never “taste death”, because he will never be separated from the Lord Jesus, 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:8. Interesting note here beloved, the

unbeliever is never annihilated either, but he is forever separated from the Lord Jesus. Read Luke 16: verse 22 following.

Now to my main point. As vessels, we contain, as branches, we remain attached to the vine. The vessels do not improve, they contain. There is no “sweat” on the part of the branch to bring forth fruit, it merely remains attached to the vine. Do we get it?

As vessels of the Lord Jesus, some of us are fat, some skinny, some tall, some short, some black, some white, some brown etc. But none of us improve. We contain. Some of us are cracked, some of us are beautiful, some not so, but the condition of the vessel is not in view.

What we are looking at is the “excellency within each vessel.” He is in view. He is what is important in each of our lives.

Now let’s look at the scripture mentioned above. **Colossians 2: 20** and following; “Therefore if (since) you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations – do not touch, do not taste, do not handle, which all “**concern things** which **perish** with the **using** – according to the commandments and doctrines of **MEN?**

Men are the ones who come up with these things. This was not the desire of the Lord for our lives. Men come up with these things. So why do we subject ourselves to these silly regulations?

In other words, why spend any energy subjecting yourself to regulations that are meant to improve, or change the condition of the vessel.

Now it is imperative that we read the next verse. Verse 23 says “these things” – what things? Those things mentioned in verses 20-22. “These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of **NO VALUE** against the indulgence of the flesh.”

Did you get that? Self-imposed religion – In other words they have nothing to do with spirituality, or godliness, but are forms of self-imposed religion. False humility – wow, what a stench this in the nostrils of the Living God. Then he mentions those things that we need to do in order somehow neglect of the body. Again much could be said about this, but let me just quote a scripture. 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:12 – “all things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful” – to say this another way, all things are lawful for me to get into, but not all things I get into are necessarily good for me.

He goes on to say, “all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.” To further translate, I can do pretty much as I please, however I must remember that there can be certain behaviors that if I am not careful will end up

controlling me. Nothing is to control me, accept the Lord Jesus Christ. Further I am reminded in the next verses that my body is the temple of the Lord Jesus, and no one of any character at all would join His body to a harlot. I am therefore encouraged to flee sexual immorality, because I have been bought with a price (His blood) and I should now set about to “glorify God in my body.”

So in conclusion, recognize that it is His life within me that now lives my life. And His life within me is setting me free from sin and death. This same life within me is what will “keep me from stumbling, present me faultless before the presence of His glory, with exceeding joy.” Jude verse 24.