

## THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH

The apostle Paul speaks of a law called the law of sin and death. He stated, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2). Just what is the law of sin and death? Many have offered complex and lengthy explanations of what the law of sin and death is. However, it is really very simple and very short. The law of sin and death states, "if you sin you die".

The death spoken of in the term "law of sin and death" is not the death of the physical body. One must understand that the word death refers to a separation. James, in his teaching concerning the need for faith to produce work, said "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (James 2:26). Physical death occurs when there is a separation of the body and the spirit. As Jacob's beloved Rachel gave birth to Benjamin, the Bible says, And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni..." (Gen. 35:18).

God told Adam, "...Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:16-17). Here is the law of sin and death. If Adam eats after having been commanded by God to not do so, he will have sinned and will die. He did of course eat of that tree and yet he did not die physically that day. He died spiritually that day. He was separated from God by his sin. The prophet Isaiah told Judah, "...your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isa. 59:2).

Paul had told the Roman brethren, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). We find again that law of sin and death presented. However, the life of that verse is not physical life, but eternal life in heaven. The death of that verse is not physical death, but eternal damnation and separation from God (II Thess. 1:9).

As long as Paul was under the old law of Moses, there was no salvation from his sins, for the blood of bulls and goats fell short. He asked "who shall deliver me" (Rom. 7:24) and then answers, Jesus Christ (verse 25). Finally, there is a way to escape the old law of sin and death. There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ and walk after the Spirit (Rom. 8:1).

*Robert*

## THE UPCOMING HOLIDAYS

We are past Thanksgiving Day, but there are more holidays to come. As Christians, there are a few things we need to keep in mind as we make plans for these holidays and then execute those plans.

First, keep in mind that though most will have time off from their jobs, there is no time off from being a Christian. Holidays are not a time for one to set aside the commands of God. Sin is sin, no matter what day of the year it is.

From the above first point, we need to consider a few specific applications. Many will be traveling during their time off from work. Two important points to be made here. First, just because you are not near your home congregation, you still must not forsake the assembling of the saints (Heb. 10:25). Find a sound congregation close to where you are going and attend there. This involves premeditation. During that planning phase is the time to do this. Secondly, just because you are going to be out of town on the first day of the week, does not mean that you are released from God's command to give upon the first day of the week (I Cor. 16:2). The local congregation of which you are a member will need just as much contribution to carry on the work of the Lord as if you had not gone out of town. Either leave it for someone else to put in or be sure and make it up upon your return.

While we are considering our contribution, keep in mind that we are commanded to give as we have prospered (I Cor. 16:2) AND as we have purposed (II Cor. 9:7). Let us make sure we do not dip into the Lord's money to finance our feasts, our traveling cost, our gift giving or our celebrations. What we have purposed to give upon the first day of the week is not to be used for our own enjoyment. I once wrote an article with the title, "Don't Rob God to Pay Santa". That title makes the point pretty well.

Holidays can be a great time. We often have opportunities to see friends and family that we seldom see. We have many opportunities to have fellowship and to encourage love, joy, kindness and compassion. Needless to say, there will probably be opportunities to partake of plenty of good food as well. There may also come opportunities to encourage some that you love to turn to God's word and learn how to live in a manner that will assure you will be reunited for eternity after this life is over. Holidays can be a great time. But, it is usually up to us whether we make them great or abuse them. Think about it. *RCO*