

There is Hope for Dead Sinners

1 Timothy 1:15 – Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

According to the Bible, the Apostle Paul was the chief sinner. He was a great sinner in the sight of the Lord. What were some of the things the Apostle Paul committed? Blasphemy, being a persecutor, and injurious (1 Timothy 1:13). Paul killed Christians, desired to do many things contrary to Jesus Christ, put Christians in prison, and spoke against them while they were being executed (Acts 9:-2, 22:4-5, 26:9-11).

*injurious means to cause harm or likely to cause harm; maliciously insulting

Then one day he met Jesus (Acts 9:3-22). In verse 13, the scripture said Saul did much evil. What did the Lord say in response to Ananias? Go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto me! It doesn't matter how great of a sinner you were, God can still do something with you! There is hope for the sinner!

After Paul was saved and received the Holy Ghost, he rejected the will of the Lord for his life three times because what God told him to do didn't line up with what he wanted to do (Acts 20:22-23; 21:4, 8-15). It is also written that Paul cursed the high priest after he was saved (Acts 23:1-5).

Paul said this about himself after he was saved: I know that in me, that is in my flesh dwelleth no good thing (Romans 7:18-19). He said he was a wretched man (Romans 7:24).

This same man, who is the chief sinner according to the Holy Ghost, who according to his own words did the evil that he didn't want to do, also said this: "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard; and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you." (Philippians 4:9). Wow! What a statement!

Paul says do what I do, and God shall be with you! But Paul you were a great sinner, and you sinned even after you were saved! You said yourself that even when you were doing good, evil was still present with you.

So how could Paul say, be ye followers of me (1 Corinthians 4:16, 1 Thessalonians 1:6). There must have been something about Paul, that in spite of his sins, God was with him.

What was it about Paul? I'll tell you what Paul had going for him that caused the Lord's Spirit to rest mightily upon him; that caused the power of God to be made manifest through him. **Paul was dead.**

Jesus Christ said there is none greater of those that are born of women than John the Baptist. John the Baptist was the messenger that prepared the way of the LORD as Isaiah prophesied. He was a public preacher crying out loud in the wilderness. He preached repentance; he preached that the people should believe on him that would come after him, Jesus Christ (Acts 19:4). So one day Jesus Christ shows up and is baptized of John and starts

his public ministry. As time goes by, more and more people start following Jesus and less people start following John. And then John said something that every Christian should have memorized (John 3:30). **He must increase, but I must decrease.** That is the key to the Christian life, that is the key to having the God of peace with you. You need to become less, and Jesus needs to become more.

You say, Brother Brian, what do I need to do in order for God to be with me? Jesus MUST increase and you MUST decrease.

*Talk about vessels

Paul was a great sinner, and did and said some stupid things after his conversion, but Paul died daily (1 Corinthians 15:31). Paul not only preached Romans 12:1-3, he lived it. And there is the difference. It is not good enough to know better, you must do better.

The power of God shows up when you are weak.

God wants you to die. He wants you to crucify yourself with him (Galatians 2:20). If you want to be with the Lord, you need to go where God is. The Bible says he is without the camp and we must meet him outside of the camp (Hebrews 13:12-13). When you crucify yourself, you will find yourself hanging next to the Son of God himself! Death is required.

Paul said to mortify (subdue, control) the deeds of the flesh (Romans 8:13, Colossians 3:5-15). See 1 Corinthians 9:27

The Bible says because iniquity abounds the love of many shall wax cold (Matthew 24:12). Sin causes you to stop loving. It hinders love. Someone that doesn't love is someone that is in sin.

The Bible says the corruption that is in the world today came by lust (2 Peter 1:3-4). Eve ate of that forbidden tree because she lusted after that fruit, she desired that fruit. The reason why you sin today is because of the lusts of your flesh.

The lusts of your body are not of God. I'll say that again, the lusts of your body are not of God. Look at 1 John 2:15-17. When someone says, well it makes me feel good, or I enjoy doing it, etc, that is not the litmus test on whether something is holy or not or acceptable with God or not. Why is that? Because sin brings temporal pleasure (Hebrews 11:24-25).

People do what they love. The problem is people love the wrong things. Why do people do drugs, drink beer? Because it brings them pleasure. Why do people lie and gossip? Because it brings them pleasure. Why do people commit adultery? Because it brings them pleasure. Why do people disrespect authority? Because it brings them pleasure. Why do people sin? Because it brings them pleasure. There is temporary pleasure and satisfaction in sin, but it doesn't last. And just like a drug, over time you have to do more and more of it to reach the same level of high you got when you first started. But when our sin finds us out, none of us are willing to pay that price.

People say, I can't believe someone would commit this sin. The reason why you can't believe it is because it doesn't bring you pleasure but it does bring them pleasure. And that person will look back at you and say, I can't believe you would commit that sin. The reason why you do it is because you find pleasure in that particular sin and the other person doesn't. That's what it is every time. God forbid we should take pleasure in sin! But we still have the old man to deal with. That is why God commands us to die.

When we were saved God destroyed to power of sin and darkness over our lives (Acts 26:18, Colossians 1:13, John 8:34-36, Galatians 5:24).

God has set you free from the power of sin (Romans 6:14, 6, 18). You now by God's grace can lay aside that old man and put on the new spiritual man inside us.

The Bible says the flesh and the Spirit have lusts. They are contrary to one another (Galatians 5:16-17). **What you feed the most is what you'll be the most.**

Look at Romans 6:11

We are supposed to count ourselves as dead.

Facts about a dead man:

1. A dead man is not affected by his senses (touch, sight, hearing, tasting, smelling)
2. A dead man is not concerned about his reputation.
3. A dead man doesn't care what his family, friends, and the world thinks of him
4. A dead man doesn't respond when reviled.
5. A dead man doesn't get offended.
6. A dead man doesn't care what goes on in the world around him.
7. A dead man has no worries.
8. A dead man is at peace.
9. A dead man doesn't move unless someone else moves him (Galatians 5:16, 25)