

DEAD TO SIN -- ROMANS 6:2

by BILL PARKER

How can believers say we are "*dead to sin*"? We know we are still subject to the presence, influence, and power of sin in our character and conduct. We know that in this life we will never be free from sin in these areas. We know that we are now just as much in need of the blood of Christ to cleanse us from all sin as we ever were, and we will continue to need His righteousness no matter much we grow in this life.

"Dead to sin" does not refer to a believer's character and conduct. It refers to the believer's state before God in Christ. It refers to a believer's oneness with Christ by whose blood he has been justified from the guilt of sin and cleansed from the legal defilement of sin that barred his way to God. A justified sinner is not guilty and subject to condemnation because of sin. The law of God cannot condemn a justified sinner based on his sins because Christ paid for those sins and satisfied law and justice on his behalf.

The key to it is found in *Romans 6:10-11*. When Christ "*died unto sin*," He died to the guilt and legal defilement of the sins of His sheep that were imputed to Him. He had no sin in His character and conduct. It was strictly a legal death. "*Likewise*," or in the same manner, "*reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin*." As Christ died unto the guilt and legal defilement of sins imputed, all whom He represented died to the guilt and legal defilement of sin in His person (*2 Cor. 5:14*). All of Christ's sheep see this when they are born again, when they believe the Gospel and are united to Christ, in time, by faith.

Although believers have yet to struggle with the remaining presence, influence, and power of sin in their character and conduct, they do not have to struggle with the legal guilt of sin and any possibility of condemnation. "*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*" (*Rom. 8:1*). It is from this truth that God the Holy Spirit by the Apostle Paul seeks to encourage God's people not to let sin reign and control their lives and conduct, to fight sin, to try to avoid sin, to be obedient to God's commands and strive to be like Christ (*Rom. 6:12ff.*). Any other motive is legal and an abomination to God.