

Deliverance From Law And Self



Atonement
By Derek Prince

In other words, if you want to experience deliverance from this present evil age, you've got to follow through with the other four deliverances that Paul mentions. So we'll turn now to Galatians 2:19–20. We'll read them both. There's two deliverances or a double deliverance spoken of in these verses.

> "For I through the Law died to the Law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

The first deliverance there is from the law, the second is from self. And they go very closely together. Now, multitudes of Christians really have never understood that we need to be delivered from the Law. And I have to keep a rein on myself at this point because if I got into this I'd be on it for the rest of the day. It is, I think, the most neglected major theme of New Testament theology, is the relationship of the Christian to the Law. I personally believe that multitudes of Christians who talk about being under grace are living in a kind of twilight, halfway between grace and law, and they're not getting the benefits of either. I have observed—this is a dangerous thing to say—but the churches which call themselves with the name "grace" very often contain the people who know least about grace. What has happened in many cases is we declared we're no longer under the Law of Moses and we've made our own silly little religious laws and substitutes. Paul said the Law of Moses was perfect, it was given by God. If that law couldn't do it, no other law can. It's silly to expect it.

All right, let's take the first deliverance now. "I through the Law died to the Law." You see, the last thing that law can do is execute you. Once you've been executed, the Law has no more claims on you. And the fact of the matter is that I was executed in Christ. My old man was crucified with Him. So I am no longer subject to the Law. I've moved out of that whole area where the Law operates. I'm in a new area.

Because of that, Paul says, and notice this carefully, I through the Law died to the Law, that I might live to God. In

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other words, in order to live to God, I have to get free from the Law. As long as I'm under the Law I cannot live for God. That's a breathtaking statement, but it's exactly what the New Testament says.

Let's look for a moment—we'll be going backwards between Romans and Galatians which really essentially deal with the same theme. Romans 6:6 which we've looked at already.

> "Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him [Jesus], that the body of sin might be done away with [the old carnal, Adamic nature might be put out of action] that we should no longer be slaves of sin."

As I said before, there's no other escape from the slavery of sin but to escape from that nature. Then Paul says:

> "For he who has died has been freed from sin."

That's the translation I use. I think most of you find the same. But it's not the literal meaning. What Paul says is very specific. "He who has died has been justified from sin." Okay? Some of you may have it in your margin. In other words, once I've paid that penalty, the Law has no more demands on me. I'm justified, I'm acquitted, I'm clear. I'm out of the territory where the Law has demands on me.

Now, let's go back to Galatians. A little lower down in chapter 3. I say lower down because in my Bible it happens to be lower on the page. It might be higher up on yours. Verse 10–12. Paul is writing to people who have experienced grace, been saved, been baptized in the Holy Spirit, witnessed miracles and now decided that in order to get perfect they've got to start keeping the Law. Paul calls them fools. Then he points this out, verse 10 and following:

> "For as many as are of the works of the Law are under the curse; for it is written, [and he's quoting from the Torah, the Pentateuch:] 'CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT CONTINUE IN ALL THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO DO THEM.'"

Once you commit yourself to keep the Law as a means of achieving righteousness, you've got to keep the whole Law all the time. And if you break any point at any time, you come under a curse. "Cursed is everyone who does not continue all the time to do all the things that are written in the Law." That's what the Law itself says. Then Paul goes on, verse 11:

> "But no one is justified by the Law in the sight of God and it's evident because, [and he quotes the scripture Habakkuk 2:4:] 'THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.' [Verse 12:] Yet the Law is not of faith, but 'THE MAN WHO DOES THEM [that's the man who keeps all the commandments all the time] SHALL LIVE BY THEM.'"

We've got two options. We can live by the Law and if we break it, we're under a curse. Or we can live by faith which is not living by the Law. They are mutually exclusive alternatives. You can't have the best of both worlds. Actually, what you'll have is the worst of both worlds. You have to make your mind up, I have to make my mind up. Am I relying on keeping the Law in order to be righteous with God or am I simply relying on the fact that I believe in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ on my behalf?

Let's turn back to Romans again for a moment. You see, Romans is the theory, Galatians is the application to people who haven't absorbed the theory. That's why they go so closely together. Romans 6:14:

> "For sin shall not have dominion over you..."

Praise the Lord! I didn't hear you. That's good news, isn't it? Sin shall not have dominion over you. Why not?

> "...because you are not under Law, but under grace."

The implications of that are startling. If you're under Law, sin will have dominion over you. The reason why sin doesn't need to have dominion over you is because you're not under the Law but under grace. And again, they're exclusive alternatives. Either under Law or under grace, but not under both. If you're under Law, sin will have dominion over you. If you're under grace, you're not under Law and sin will not have dominion over you.

Then in Romans 7—and I could multiply this ten times, these scriptures—Romans 7:6:

> "But now we have been delivered from the Law..."

Delivered from what? It doesn't say from sin, it doesn't say delivered from Satan. All that's true but here he says we've been delivered from the Law. Dear Lord, if I could photograph your faces now, it would be worthwhile keeping a record. Now we have been delivered from the Law. Can you say that? "We have been delivered from the Law." Take a deep breath, sigh. You don't have to do it.

> "...having died to what we were held by..."

Where did we die? On the cross. When Jesus died, He died for us.

> "...so that [listen] we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter."

Again, they're mutually exclusive alternatives. If you haven't been delivered from the Law you cannot serve in the newness of the Spirit. You cannot mix them.

You see, I pointed out to people scores of times it's like finding your way from a certain place to a destination. You're given two options. You can have a map, you can have a personal guide. The map is perfect, there's nothing wrong with the map. But the fact of the matter is no one has ever yet made the journey by the map and arrived. Statistics are against you. Millions have tried. The map is the Law. Who's the guide? Not Jesus but the Holy Spirit, that's right. That's not setting Jesus aside. So, which are you going to choose? Are you going to take the map, stumble on, end up in a precipice? Or, are you going to say, "Holy Spirit, you lead me." Then you say to the Holy Spirit, "Well, I'm glad you're leading but you know, I've got a map here, can I show you my map?" The Holy Spirit says, "Thanks, I know the way, I don't need the map. Besides which, I was the one who made the map." So that's the choice, you see?

If you're going to be led by the Holy Spirit, you have to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. You have to cultivate a relationship with Him.

Let's look at just two scriptures which speak about this. Romans 8:14:

> "For as many as are regularly led by the Spirit of God..."

I put in the "regularly" because that's the continuing present tense.

> "As many as are regularly led by the Spirit of God, they are sons of God."

The Greek word is a mature son, not a little baby but a mature son. When you are born again of the Holy Spirit, you're a little spiritual infant. To grow from infancy to maturity there's only one pathway, being led by the Holy Spirit. As many as are regularly led by the Holy Spirit, they are mature sons of God. So, if you want to be a mature son of God, what do you have to do? Tell me. Be led by the Holy Spirit. There is no other way. It's a limiting clause. As many as and only as many as.

Now turn to Galatians 5:18:

> "But if you are regularly led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law."

Did you read that? If you are regularly led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. But the only way to spiritual maturity is to be led by the Spirit. So, if you want to be mature, you cannot be under the Law. You cannot mix them. You've got to make a breathtaking decision—and it's frightening. If I stop keeping rules, what will happen? I'll do the wrong thing. Let me reassure you, you can be sure of one thing, the Holy Spirit will never lead you to do anything wrong. Can you believe that? That's your security. He will never lead you to do anything wrong.

Now we've got to move on because we've got to deal with another deliverance. But let me just try and help you a little bit. See, there are only two ways of achieving righteousness. One is works, the other is grace. One is Law, the other is faith. One is keeping rules, the other is being led by the Holy Spirit. And, you say, "This is awfully risky. You mean I've got to let go of those 53 rules which I've been keeping?" You know, orthodox Judaism has 613 commandments, did you know that? The most orthodox Jews will confess privately they only keep 32! They won't say that in public.

Well, now I've go to try and wrap this up. See, God's way of righteousness is not struggling, it's yielding. Yielding to who? To Jesus. Jesus in me. Jesus is our righteousness, our wisdom, our holiness, our redemption. I always think of the story of a little lady somewhere who was greatly admired for her personal holiness. Somebody said to her one day, "Sister so and so, what do you do when you're tempted?" She said, "When the devil knocks at the door, I

let Jesus answer." You see, it's not meeting the devil in my own strength, it's letting Jesus move in and take charge of the situation. It's not struggling, it's yielding. It's not effort, it's union. Jesus said, "I am the vine, you are the branches." Do branches bear grapes by keeping rules? You can hang all the rules for bringing fruit in front of a vine, it won't even both with them. Why does a vine branch bring forth grapes? Because the life of the vine is flowing into the branch. Jesus said, "As long as you abide in me, you're all right. If you get severed from me, then you're in trouble."

All right, we've got to go on with the next deliverance which is very, very important. We're going back to Galatians 2:20:

> "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me."

What's the deliverance from? Just one single word, one single letter, "I," that's right. Not I but Christ.

Let me show you this little thing. I'm not good at doing drawings but here we have it, I, big me. I'm important, look at me, help me, pray for me, heal me, I need help now. You see, the more self-centered you are, the less it works. People with problems are the slaves of their own problems, did you know that? They focus on their problems, they focus on themselves, and the more they do the more they are enslaved to self.

The alternative is Christ—which has got a little "i" in the middle with a dot on it to keep it in place. See what I'm saying? Not I but Christ. That's a decision, you have to make up your mind. It's not going to be me, I abdicate. In my place Jesus moves in and takes over. See, that's the first step in following the Lord. A lot of people are trying to follow the Lord but they've never taken the first step. Matthew 16:24:

> "Then Jesus said to his disciples, If anyone desires to come after me [follow me, live like me], let him deny himself..."

What's the first step? Denying yourself. Then:

> "...take up his cross and follow me."

You cannot follow Jesus until you've done those two things. Denied yourself and taken up your cross. What does it mean to deny yourself? Well, the word deny means to say no, doesn't it? So, to deny yourself is to say no to yourself. Yourself says, "I want," you say, "No." Self says, "I think," you say, "That's not important." Your self says, "I feel," you say, "What you feel isn't what matters, it's what God says." You have to turn against that self in you.

Then you have to take up your cross. This is not actually part of this study but it's no extra charge for it. What is your cross? I've heard two definitions. One is the place where your will and God's will cross. The other is it's the place where you die. So you see, God's not going to put the cross on you. I have met more than one man who thought his wife was his cross! No. If you could take up your wife and put her down by your choice, then she could be your cross. Your cross is something you can choose, you can decide if you're going to take it.

Jesus said when He was going to the cross, "No one takes my life from me. I lay it down by my own choice." And that's true of you when you follow Jesus. No one can take your life from you. Relax. The preacher can't do it, the church can't do it. Only you can do it. Only you can decide I'm going to take up this thing and die on it. After that you can follow Jesus. Let's read those words again.

> "If anyone desires to come after me, let him [what's the first step?] deny himself [and the second step?] and take up his cross..."

That's right. So, here's the truth in Galatians. "I am crucified with Christ." When Christ died, I died. That's the end of my ego.

Let's look in Philippians 2, a picture of what is practically involved in this exchange. Philippians 2, you know, contains that tremendous passage where it speaks about the self humbling of Jesus, the seven steps that He took downwards to the death at the cross. After all, we're not under Law, why don't we read it? Philippians 2:5:

> "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus..."

Learn to think the way Jesus thought.

> "...who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal to God..."

Did not consider equality with God something to be grasped at. There was another person who did consider equality with God something to be grasped at. What was his name? Well, it wasn't then, it was Lucifer, that's right. Lucifer reached up, slipped and fell. Jesus stooped down and was raised up. I've got a series of tapes that's called

"The Way Up is Down." If you want to go up, go down. I think it was Moody who said, "As a young preacher I used to think that God kept His gifts on shelves. And the best gifts were on the highest shelves and I had to reach up for them." But he said, "Later I discovered the best gifts were on the lowest shelves and I had to stoop down for them." Let's just for a moment look at this. Here he is, equal with God.

> "He made himself of no reputation."

Step number one. The Greek says he emptied Himself. I think it's Charles Wesley who said, "He emptied Himself of all but love."

Number two, "He took the form of a servant." But He could still have been an angel and been a servant.

Number three, "He came in the likeness of men." He took on humanity.

Number four, "He found in appearance as a man." I understand that to mean that when He appeared on the streets of Nazareth, there was nothing to distinguish him from the other men and women round about Him. There was nothing to mark Him out.

Number five, "He humbled Himself." Not merely was He a man, He was a humble man. He wasn't a priest, He wasn't a ruler, what was He? A carpenter, that's all.

Number six, "He became obedient to death." He not merely lived as a man, He died as a man.

And number seven, the ultimate, the death at the cross. Then you get the sevenfold exaltation of Jesus, beginning in verse 9:

> "Therefore God also has highly exalted Him..."

Notice the therefore. Why did God exalt Jesus? Because He humbled Himself. Jesus said everyone that humbles himself shall be exalted. Look, I can offer you a guaranteed way to exaltation. Humble yourself. God has taken responsibility for the consequences. The lower down you go the higher up you'll end. Your part of the bargain is going down, God's part is taking you up.

We're nearly at the end of our time, we've got to go quickly.

"God highly exalted him," number one.

Number two, "gave Him the name which is above every name."

Number three, "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow."

Number four, "things in heaven."

Number five, "things on earth."

Number six, "things under the earth."

And number seven, "every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

See the perfect structure of those verses? Do you think Paul sat in his cell and tried to work out how he could do it? He was inspired by the Holy Spirit.

But the lesson for us is the way up is down. The way to life is death. Not I but Christ. It's a decision. God has made the decision possible, you have to make the decision personally.

Let's go back to Philippians now, the previous verses. Because, this is the outworking. Philippians 2:3–4:

> "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit..."

Do we have a problem with selfish ambition in the church? Or conceit? Dear Lord. I personally believe that most of the problems in the church, and particularly in the ministry, are traceable to one cause—pride, that's right. Pride is what releases the other problems.

See, I spoke about taking the root and you remember I said it was rebellion. Really, there's a root to the root. The root to the root is pride. If you trace the history of sin in the universe, it didn't begin on earth, it began in heaven. The first sin was what? Pride, that's right. Which led to rebellion. And anyone who is proud will end up a rebel.

Let's go on.

> "...let each esteem others better than himself; let each of you look out not only for his own interests but also for the interests of others."

That's the end of self-centeredness. Really, you know, your biggest problem is yourself. I meet people who are running away from their problems. They'll go right around the earth to get away from their problems. It's usually their wife or it's alcohol or something like that. The truth of the matter is

wherever you go you take your biggest problem with you. Because, your biggest problem is self. The only solution is the cross.

There's one beautiful scripture which we won't turn to because we don't have time. The wonderful secret which Paul was commissioned to preach, Colossians 1:27, how many of you know what it is in three words? Christ in you. Christ in me. When does that come? When I say, "Not I but Christ."

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