

The Power of the Gospel Over the Power of Sin

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction:

- A. Rom. 1:16
- B. The Gospel's greatest power is seen in its effective operation against sin.
 - 1. The Gospel has the power to remove every sin from the sinner.
 - 2. The Gospel has the power to keep the saved from sin.
- C. The Gospel requires that the sinner and the saved effectively operate it.
 - 1. It has no power to remove sin from the sinner if he does not deploy the Gospel against his sins.
 - 2. It has no power to keep Christians from falling back into sin if they do not use the Gospel against temptation.

I. THE POWER OF SIN

- A. Paul describes the condition of one outside of Christ under the power of sin - Rom. 7:14-15, 18-25
 - 1. The Law of Moses was inadequate to deal with sin's power
 - a. Rom. 7:7-14, 8:1-4
 - 2. Notice that the person in this text is described as:
 - a. "Sold under sin" - Rom. 7:14
 - b. Having "sin that dwells in me" - 7:17, 20
 - c. In "captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" - 7:23
 - d. "Wretched man that I am" - 7:24
 - e. In a "body of death" - 7:24
 - 3. This is the power of sin and the condition of all who do not have the help of God
- B. Sin has power over everyone
 - 1. All have sinned - Rom. 3:23
 - 2. Even Christians must confess that they sin occasionally - 1John 1:8-10
 - 3. It continues to play a strong role in our lives
 - a. It prompts the flesh to wage war against the soul - 1Peter 2:11
 - b. It tries to take advantage of our desires and can lead to spiritual death - James 1:13-15
 - 4. If it is not controlled, sin will enslave us - John 8:34

II. THE PROMISE OF THE GIFT OF POWER

- A. Acts 2:37-41
 - 1. Note the response to the power of the Gospel
- B. The gift was promised
 - 1. To those who believe in Jesus - John 7:38-39
 - 2. To those who obey God - Acts 5:27-32
 - a. Note the different response to the power of the Gospel
 - b. The Pentecost hearers applied the Gospel; the council hearers denied the Gospel.

- D. The Christian has real power to deal with sin and temptation
 - 1. Paul wanted the Ephesians to appreciate this power - Eph. 1:17-20
 - a. Notice that it is according to the same power that raised Jesus from the dead
 - b. If we believe Jesus rose from the dead, then we may certainly believe that the same power that brought Him from the grave will utterly and completely protect us from sin, IF we apply it.
 - c. Rom. 1:4, 8:11
 - 2. Paul prayed that the Ephesians would be strengthened inwardly through this power - Eph. 3:16
 - 3. How great is this power? - Eph. 3:20, 6:10

III. IMPLICATIONS OF THE GIFT OF POWER

- A. For the Christian
 - 1. This promise serves as motivation not to sin
 - a. Positive - We are the temple of God
 - 1) 1Cor. 3:16-17, 6:18-20
 - b. Negative - When we sin, we offend God who dwells with us
 - 1) Eph. 4:30; Heb. 10:26-31
 - 2. This promise provides encouragement in our fight against sin
 - a. We are not alone in our efforts - Phil. 2:12-13
 - b. We have whatever power we need to overcome sin
 - 1) Phil. 4:13; 1John 4:4; 1Cor. 10:13
 - 2) This does not mean that we become incapable of falling prey to sin - 1John 1:8
 - 3) We do not have perfect knowledge of God's will, and can therefore be guilty of sins of ignorance or inadvertence
 - 4) But it does mean we can overcome those sins of which we are aware
 - 3. This promise means we have no excuse for our sins
 - a. We cannot say, "I can't help myself" or "The devil made me do it"
 - b. If we sin, it is because we have chosen to lay aside the power of the Gospel

IV. THE POWER TO REMOVE SINS

- A. Consider the implications of the statement!
 - 1. Once we sin, there is no power apart from the Gospel that can remove it. Sin is spiritually and eternally attached to the sinner
 - 2. Things that cannot remove sins:
 - a. Time - sins of ones youth remain in old age and beyond death
 - 1) Lot's wife still bears her sin 4000 years later
 - b. Forgetfulness of self or others - God remembers
 - c. Changing cultural attitudes toward sin
 - 1) Aristides and the abomination of the Greeks
 - d. Patriarchal offerings
 - e. The Law of Moses

- f. Money, personal strength or appearance, military might, influence
 - g. Good deeds - Cornelius
 - h. Faithful family and friends
 - i. The end of the world
- 3. There exists no force with the power to remove a single sin except the Gospel of Jesus Christ
- B. The importance of remission of sins in the Gospel
 - 1. The blood of Jesus was shed for the remission of our sins - Matt. 26:28
 - 2. Remission of sins is to be preached to all nations - Luke 24:45-47
 - 3. Remission of sins is acquired by:
 - a. Believing in Jesus - Acts 10:42-43
 - b. Repenting and being baptized - Acts 2:38
- C. Remission of sins involves
 - 1. The word remission means to remit, and involves a dismissal or release
 - 2. A key synonym often used in some translations is forgiveness
 - 3. Other terms in the Bible used to describe remission of sins:
 - a. "Taken away" - John 1:29; Rom. 11:27
 - b. "Blotted out" - Acts 3:19
 - c. "Washed away" - Acts 22:16
 - d. "Covered" - Rom. 4:7
 - e. "Not imputed" - Rom. 4:8
 - f. "Set free" - Rom. 6:17-18
 - g. "Purged" - Heb. 1:3; 2Peter 1:9
 - h. "Remembered no more" - Heb. 8:12
 - i. "Justified" - 1Cor. 6:11
 - 4. All signifying the removal of sin from the sinner
 - a. A legal term used to describe a sinner whose sins have been forgiven is "justified," which means "not guilty" - 1Cor. 6:11
- D. Not just the removal of legal guilt, but also emotional guilt
 - 1. For many there is also emotional guilt
 - a. This a side effect of the legal guilt of sin
 - b. This is the distinction that trips and traps so many people in sin; they believe that if they have no feelings of guilt, then they have no legal guilt
 - c. Some feel emotional guilt even after their legal guilt has been removed by the Gospel
 - 2. Emotional guilt does include some terrible consequences: anxiety, depression, fear, and doubt
 - a. "There is no peace, says the LORD, for the wicked." - Isa. 48:22
 - 3. Some may not experience the emotional consequence of legal guilt
 - a. 1Tim. 1:19-20, 4:1-2
 - b. They have legal guilt, even though they do not feel it
 - 4. The Gospel of Christ declares that when we obey its commands, then we receive the remission of sins, which empowers us deal with the emotional guilt of sin

E. We can now have a perfect conscience

1. Something the Old Law could not do - Heb. 9:8-10, 10:1-4
2. By the blood of Christ, it is possible to have this perfect conscience
 - a. Heb. 9:14, 10:22
3. A perfect conscience in the sense that we have real reasons not to feel guilty for our sins; they are completely and eternally removed by the blood of Christ
 - a. Therefore, there is no need to have fear, doubt, anxiety, or despair over our spiritual condition
 - b. Instead, we can have peace and joy through the justification that comes by grace - Rom. 5:1-2

F. For the non-Christian

1. Don't put off obeying the Gospel until you have reformed yourself
 - a. Many people mistakenly think that they cannot become a Christian until they overcome all their bad habits
 - b. Romans chapter seven demonstrates the futility of trying to do this without Christ
2. God will take you as you are provided you will:
 - a. Believe in the power of the Gospel to save you - 1Cor. 15:1-3
 - b. Repent of your sins - Acts 17:30-31
 - c. Be baptized into Christ for the remission of your sins
 - 1) Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 10:48
3. Then God by His grace and through the power of the Gospel will forgive you of your sins, releasing you from the guilt, legal and emotional, of sin