

# Being Conformed Into Jesus Image

by Alan Martin

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**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 11:27, Romans 6:10, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Jeremiah 31:31, Galatians 2:20

**Topics:** "Significance of the Lord's Supper", "Transformation through the New Covenant"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Before my beacons come, let's just talk a little bit about what we're going to do in observing the Lord's Supper. Paul gave the Church of Corinth instructions about observing the Lord's Supper in the right spirit, in the right heart, and he encouraged everyone to examine themselves, because he who eats and partakes of the Lord's Supper partakes of the body of the Lord, and to partake of the Lord's Supper without recognizing the Lord properly is to eat or drink judgment to yourself. What does it mean to recognize the Lord properly, especially to recognize the Lord's body? Paul said that every time we partake of the Lord's Supper, we proclaim His death until He comes again.

What death are we proclaiming? Well, most of us know that He died on the cross to forgive us for our sins. But very specifically, the scripture says, the death He died, He died to sin, singular. That law of sin that reigns in the members of everyone born from Adam that causes men to become sinners, that sin, He who knew no sin became sin for us.

And the death He died, He died to sin, and the life He lives, He lives to God, and this is how we are to reckon ourselves. We are to reckon ourselves to be dead to sin, that law of sin that's in our members,

dead to it in this. It no longer controls us.

It does not enslave us. Now, does it bother us? Yes, it does. The law of sin is in the members, but we are not under obligation to obey sin.

We are to present ourselves like the Lord Jesus did. The death He died, He died to sin, the life He lives, He lives to God. In the same way, we are to reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive to God.

We're not only celebrating the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, we're celebrating our own resurrection dead to sin and alive unto God. So we present ourselves to Him as those who've been raised from death to life, and we present our members, our minds, our wills, our emotions, our physical bodies. We present our members as instruments of righteousness to Him so that sin will no longer be our master.

We've died to sin, and he who's died to sin, you can't live in it any longer. Like Peter said, he himself carried our sins in his body on the tree so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness. Now, every one of us has known sin ruling in our life.

Every one of us has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. But wherever sin has abounded, God's will is that grace would superabound. So that even as sin reigned in death because it made us sinners, grace is to now reign in righteousness because we are made righteous by the power of God actually living and indwelling in us.

And this is the whole purpose of the celebration of the Lord's Supper. It's a celebration of the new covenant. Now it's interesting that our Lord's death occurred at Passover, because when we think of making atonement by sacrifice for sin, you would think that Jesus could have died on the day of atonement.

Because that was a feast day in the Jewish year where the high priest would take the blood of the offering and enter behind the Holy of Holies, the inner sanctuary within the temple where God dwelt above the mercy seat on top of the Ark of the Covenant. The Lord said, I will be there in a cloud above the mercy seat and meet with you. But Jesus didn't die on the day of atonement.

Instead, the Lord chose that his death would be on the Passover. It's interesting that John had proclaimed, behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. And Jesus is our Passover Lamb.

Because at Passover, you know what Passover celebrates? Passover celebrates the deliverance of the people of God from the power of slavery. So we should understand the death of Jesus Christ to be our deliverance from slavery to sin. Yes, it's blessed forgiveness.

And it is God atoning us through the blood of Jesus Christ. But it is also we become united with him in the likeness of his death, so that we may also be united with him in the likeness of his resurrection. And this is what we're to understand.

Even as Passover was the time that God delivered the nation of Israel from slavery to the Egyptians, our Passover Lamb, Jesus Christ, is God's covenant with us and delivers us from slavery to sin and sets every man free. In Christ Jesus, the law of the spirit of life in Christ sets us free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, the law is holy, righteous, and good.

And the law was given to the people of Israel because they were like children who didn't know how to live. They didn't know what was good for them. They didn't know the danger of the nations that they were entering, how corrupt they were.

So God gave them the law, like a steward, like a tutor, like a guide, like a custodian to keep them under custody so they would understand how to live. And they were told, follow these laws and it will go well with you. But the people never were able to follow the law.

They continually trespassed, stepped beyond the boundaries that God gave them through the law. Why did they do that? The scripture says the law was weak through the flesh. Well, what dwells in the flesh? If you know your Bible in Romans 7, what dwells in the flesh? Sin dwells in the flesh.

And the reason the law was weak is because sin in the flesh, taking advantage of the law, produced in us, every one of us, all kinds of covetous desires. Sin in the flesh is what was causing the death, not the law. We would not have recognized sin in the flesh had God not given the law.

But when the law came, sin came to life and all we could see, even though we delighted serving God, we agreed with the law, we wanted to do what the law said, we didn't want to do what the law said not to do, but we kept doing what we didn't want to do and we couldn't keep doing what we wanted to do. Why? Because we discovered there was another law in our members, in our flesh, making us prisoners, producing in us all kinds of covetous desires. And when we, with Paul, realized that there is sin dwelling in us, making us prisoners, you know what we say? Oh, wretched men that we are! I mean, if all we have is the ability to agree with God's law, but we can't do it, what a wretched place to be.

But you have to come to that place first, before you can see the real answer. Because the answer isn't just trying to tighten your belt knot and just suck it up and try to do the law even harder, no. The answer is, you must look outside of yourself for power and a savior to deliver you from the law of sin.

And that's why Paul said, Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ, for the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ has set me free from the law of sin and death. Just like the law of aerodynamics and the law of power allows a jet to overcome the law of gravity, it overpowers the law of gravity. It doesn't cancel gravity, it overcomes it.

And the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ, the very divine nature of God, the Spirit of God dwelling within us, gives us an ability that we do not have within ourselves and the power of God in us enables us to overcome the power of the law of sin that dwells in us. And that's how we're free. We are free through the Spirit, so that if we walk in the Spirit, and if we're led by the Spirit, we don't fulfill those lusts of the flesh.

Now, they bother us. The flesh lusts against the Spirit, wars against the Spirit, and the Spirit wars against the flesh, so we don't do what we want. But, for those who are children of God, we are not under any way an obligation to obey the flesh.

We are to be led by the Spirit, and actually through the Spirit, we are to put to death the old practices of our body. Let me encourage you, we properly recognize the grace of the Lord in the Lord's Supper. Part of reckoning yourselves dead to sin would be stop giving your mouth to sin.

Never murmur or complain again, ever. Do everything without murmuring and complaining, that ye may become blameless and pure children of God, without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse

generation, in whom ye shine forth like stars in the universe, holding forth the Word of Life, because no ungracious words come out of your mouth. No unwholesome words come out of your mouth.

Only that which is good for building others up according to their needs, and benefits those ministers grace to those who hear. That's the believer. Living by the power of the Holy Spirit, yielding his mouth, yielding his mind, yielding his will, yielding his life to God.

And what does that believer become? That believer becomes a saint to everyone who knows him. You're the saint in everyone's life. You're to show them the character of the Father.

And more than anything, I've come to understand, this is the purpose of the New Covenant. Through Jeremiah, through the Prophet Ezekiel, both of them said that the reason God is going to make a New Covenant, is because His intention for the people for the First Covenant, where He was to be their God and they were to be His people, and He wanted to display to the world how special it was to be the people of God, and have God in your midst. But they kept stepping out.

They didn't live within the Covenant. And so He said, the days are coming, I'm going to make a New Covenant. And it's not going to be like the Covenant I made with them.

There's some basic differences in that Covenant. In that First Covenant, there was many laws, and they were to learn those laws and memorize them. They were to put those laws in their hearts, and they were to get them in their minds, and they were to teach those laws to their children from the time they were in diapers on.

And they were to pass on and keep the awareness and the knowledge of the law fresh and active. And this is what they failed to do again and again. So God says the New Covenant is going to be different.

I myself am going to write my laws on their hearts. I'm going to write my laws on their minds. And not only that, I'm going to put my spirit inside of them.

And I'm going to inspire them to walk in my ways. So it's not a covenant of instructions, it's a covenant of life. The life of God, we partake of the divine nature by the Holy Spirit, and His life, His wisdom, His strength, His goodness, His character is activated in us through the Holy Spirit, energizing an ability that we did not have on our own, enabling us to walk in a way that the people of the First Covenant never walked.

And through that, what God does is He recovers the honor and glory of His name to the world. And that's the main purpose of this New Covenant. Ezekiel said it.

The people of the First Covenant profaned His name by their continual disobedience. The people of the New Covenant are to live such noble lives before the people of the world that the name of God is honored. Isn't that what our Lord said when He taught us to pray, Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

That's why we are to be holy as God is holy. Set apart as He has set apart. May it never be that our lives bring shame and disgrace to the name of our Heavenly Father.

Even as Jesus, you know, we are to walk as our Lord Jesus walked. And in this way especially, we are to walk. Jesus could look at His disciples and say, When you've seen me, you've seen the Father.

And when the people in your life look at you, they should see Jesus. They should see His kindness. They should see His lowliness.

They should see His meekness. They should see His compassion, His wisdom, His understanding, His righteousness. Not because you're simply trying harder and harder on your own.

No. You've been made partakers of the divine nature. And God is now at work in you.

Both to will and to do of His own good pleasure. That's what we're celebrating. The fact that our covenant is our God is now come and sharing His very life with us.

Paul said this in his letter to the Galatians. He said, If a law had been given that could somehow impart life, righteousness would have come by the law. But laws are just the basic principles.

They can't impart life. So what he was saying that it takes the life of God to produce the righteousness of God in us. And the scripture says wonderfully, In Him was life.

And that life was the life of the world. And that's what Jesus came, and it's through our receiving His life, we become the righteousness of God in Him. Isn't that sweet? Such good news.

And the good news is it does not matter how bad you are or how bad you have been. God's power is great enough to change the worst of us into His own image. We have such good news.

And if you haven't experienced it already, it's not too late. It's not too late. Let the power of the Lord Jesus work in your life.

So as we celebrate today, I'm going to ask my deacons to come and prepare to take this message.

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