

II Corinthians 5:14-15

We do not live for ourselves

“For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.”

Dear Friends in Christ,

Grace and Peace be yours through Christ Jesus:

There are a great many dreadful sufferings, trials and tribulations that one may become subject to here on earth. One may lose all earthly goods, as so many did in the recent floods in the eastern states. Yes, in one single day a person may, as Job, lose their entire wealth as well as sons and daughters. A person may be taken sick with a dreadful disease or lose a good name and reputation. Friends, even those who are nearest and dearest, may turn against you as well.

These are some of the great sufferings that may come upon a person here on earth. But as great and dreadful as they are, they are nothing and must fade into insignificance when compared with the burden of sin that rests upon each individual. By the grace of God many have learned to admit that they are a sinner and that the wage for sin is death.

Many souls have been led to recognize that they are sinners and that the great and Holy God in heaven (*he who has the keys of heaven and hell*) has said, and it can not be changed: **“The soul who sins is the one who will die.” Ezekiel 18:4** These people know that they must meet that almighty God and appear before the Judgment seat of Christ and that could happen at any time. Every sinner knows from God’s own words that: **“It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” Hebrews 10:31** The unbelieving world may scoff and ridicule the doctrine of eternal death and eternal damnation for the ungodly. Scoffers may have even read in the Bible that God himself has spoken these words: **“I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.” Matthew 5:18** No matter what a person believes, the truth still stands: God’s Word will not remain unfulfilled.

One may not be a thief or a robber, or a drunkard. One may not be guilty of any other gross sin and yet know that God’s Holy Word has not been kept and that transgressions will happen again and again. Scripture says: **“Surely you desire truth in the inner parts.” Psalm 51:6** **“The lamp of the Lord searches the spirit of a man; it searches out his inmost being.” Proverbs 20:27** In other words, one may know that he or she is a sinner - for sin is the transgression of the law and God demands truth in the

"inmost parts". The eternal truth still stands - that the wage of sin is death and eternal damnation.

Oh what a burden! What should a person do? Try as one will, not a single dark blot can be removed or even a single sin cleansed. One remains a sinner in spite of all efforts. **"For the wages of sin is death ..."** Romans 6:23 **"The soul who sins is the one who will die."** Ezekiel 18:20 This truth is even more sure to anyone who is sick and may be on the death-bed, certain that they must die. Then, after death comes the judgment and: **"It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."** Hebrews 10:31

Friends, there is only one message that can remove that terrible burden of sin. There is only one message that can give such a person joy and hope and salvation. That message is the blessed gospel message of free and full forgiveness of sins in the Blood of Jesus that was shed for all people. It is the message of our text: **"...we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again."** II Corinthians 5:14 If anyone believes it, they have it. All sins are forgiven; they are all blotted out in the Blood of the Lamb. At the cross of Christ the entire dreadful burden of sin is removed. The sinner will not die but live, for God himself has said: **"Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever**

rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."

John 3:36

The law of God: **"The soul who sins is the one who will die."** (*Ezekiel 18:20*) still stands. That can not be changed. But listen to what God, the Holy Spirit says: **"...if one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all..."** **II Corinthians 5:14** In his wonderful grace and mercy, God took the sins of the whole world, therefore also your sins and my sins, and placed them upon his own Son. **"God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."** **II Corinthians 5:21** The innocent one, the eternal Son of the eternal God, suffered and bled and died for the sins of every human being. You and I and every other human being are now dead for: **"one died for all, and therefore all died."** **II Corinthians 5:14** We died for our sins when Christ died. We had atoned for all our sins and for all our transgressions when Christ upon the cross said: **"It is finished."** **John 19:30** Oh blessed hour: **"one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all..."** **II Corinthians 5:14** Now there is no condemnation for those who in faith have accepted this wonderful gift. They shall not die but live and reign with Christ throughout all eternity. It is only those who do not believe, but instead reject Christ and his promises, that still have condemnation for their sins.

Dear friends, by the grace of God I have brought this blessed Gospel message to many troubled individuals on their death-bed.

And it is the only message that can give a troubled sinner peace and hope. It is the only message that can save one from certain and eternal death. **“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12** The blessed name of Jesus Christ (*who died for all*) is the one certain salvation for all those who wish to obtain eternal life in heaven.

This is also the message I brought to the departed one. He was troubled because of his sins. He longed for forgiveness, for comfort and hope. He rejoiced when I, as an ambassador for Christ, could say to him: **“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you – even Jesus.” Acts 3:19-20** For: **“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.” I John 1:9** The departed believed this and it gave sweet comfort, life and salvation.

And, friends, this is the only message that can give us true comfort. It is the only message that can give us life and salvation for we are all sinners. God give us grace to confess our sins as it is certain: **“The soul who sins is the one who will die.” Ezekiel 18:20** If we do not believe the Gospel message, if we reject it (*as many do*), our sins will be retained, and we must die. But if

we believe it, we are saved through the Blood of Christ. How can we then help but love Jesus who suffered, bled and died for us that we might have life!

Must we not then dedicate our whole life and everything we have to his service? Must we not then say with the Apostle Paul: **“For Christ’s love compels us...” II Corinthians 5:14** Our new priorities are changed from our former way of life: **“...that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.” II Corinthians 5:15**

Oh may God give us such grace. Amen