

## We Are Changed Through Christ

Martin Luther wanted to make himself right with God. He tried to do so by relying on his own efforts. By doing penitent acts, he thought he could earn his way to heaven. He always struggled wondering if he had done enough.

As Martin Luther searched the scriptures he came to the book of Romans. As he read he discovered:

1. A loving God
2. That we are under God's righteous judgment and that we can not save ourselves. (Romans 2) No one is righteous through observing the law, all have turned away. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Then he hears the good news of the Gospel:

1. Our righteousness comes from God thru faith, it is a free gift.
2. Through faith in Christ and His death on the cross, we have the promise of eternal life.
3. We are justified freely by God's grace through Christ's sacrifice of atonement on the cross through faith in His blood.
4. We are reconciled to God through Christ's death.

How freeing those words were to Martin Luther and should be to us also. Having been set free from the power of sin through faith in Christ, we are changed. The faith we have should move us, out of love for what God has done for us, to do good works and produce fruit as we strive to live a life that would be pleasing to God. James puts it like this-Faith without works is dead.

Paul in Romans points out:

1. We should avoid purposely sinning. Romans 6 reads, "shall we go on sinning? By no means", we should no longer be a slave to sin.
2. We have been set free from sin and are to be slaves of righteousness.
3. There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. We are set free from sin and death thru faith in Christ.
4. We should try to live in accordance with the Spirit which God gives us.

In the last chapters of Romans, Paul shows us how, out of love for what God has done for us, we are to live as God's redeemed children.

Pray that the good work started in you by God's Spirit would continue to grow. Seek and learn about how God wants us to live our lives and how to produce good fruit and works. We do this by being in God's word and using the means of grace. We receive God's word through regular church attendance, attending a Bible study, reading the Bible at home as part of personal devotion and prayer. May the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit keep your hearts and minds on Christ Jesus, unto life everlasting.

Presented by the Bethany Elders