

GALATIANS 2:17

A. T. Jones

(October 10, 1899)

"But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid." Galatians 2:17.

Having abandoned all law *as a means of justification*, have we abandoned all law *altogether*?—God forbid. For while seeking to be justified by Christ, it is possible that we might be found sinners. And what is a sinner?—"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also *the law*: for *sin is* THE TRANSGRESSION OF THE LAW." 1 John 3:4.

And what law is it, the transgression of which is sin?—"I had not known sin, *but by the law*: for I had not known lust, except *the law* had said, Thou shalt not covet." Rom. 7:7. That word then—"Thou shalt not covet"—belongs in a law: it is a part of a law. It is not simply the *commandment*, but THE LAW, that says, "Thou shalt not covet." It is not, I had not known sin but by *the commandment*; it is not, I had known lust except the *commandment* had said, Thou shalt not covet. But *it is*, "I had not known sin, but by THE LAW." *It is*, "I had not known lust, except THE LAW had said, Thou shalt not covet."

Now *that law* which says, "Thou shalt not covet," says also, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt have no other gods before me, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. It is the Ten Commandment law: It is the law of God, which he spake from heaven, and wrote *twice* with his own hand on tables of stone, and which he writes with his own Spirit on the tables of the heart of the believer in Jesus.

That is *the law* by which is the knowledge of sin. That is "THE LAW," the transgression of which is "*sin*." And that is the law, and the only law, by which, while seeking "to be justified by Christ," we *could* be "found sinners." And as this word in Galatians recognizes the possibility that, while seeking to be justified by Christ, we might be found sinners; and as there is no knowledge of sin without the law of Ten Commandments, this is therefore conclusive evidence that, while it is true that all law must be abandoned *as a means of justification*, all law is *not* abandoned *altogether*. It is conclusive evidence that THAT LAW by which is the knowledge of sin, the law of Ten Commandments is NOT abandoned *as the means of the* KNOWLEDGE OF SIN.

That law, the law of Ten Commandments, while it, with all other law, *must* never be used *as a means of justification* is NOT abandoned altogether; because *that* would make *Christ* THE MINISTER OF SIN. And against any such suggestion as that the Lord plunges his emphatic "God forbid." Thus the Lord has set his everlasting "God forbid" against all idea that the law of Ten Commandments is abolished or in any sense "loosed down" or done away.

The Lord Jesus did not come into the world to minister to sin, but altogether to save from sin. Sin is the transgression of the law of Ten Commandments; and as the Lord Jesus came to save men from sin, in the nature of the case he came to save men from the transgression of that law. By that law is the knowledge of sin; and as Jesus came to save men from sin, his mission would be completely nullified and altogether vain if the law were taken away: for to take away the law would take away the knowledge of sin and the very means of the knowledge of sin; and this in itself would make it impossible to save

men from sin. And to make the coming of the Lord Jesus create a condition of things in which it would be impossible to save men from sin, would be nothing else than to make Jesus the minister of sin. It would make Christ confirm sin upon the world forever; and that is precisely what would satisfy Satan forever. And why should not God cry out against it forever, "God forbid"? And to this everlasting "God forbid," who that would not play directly into the hands of Satan can ever say anything but Amen?

Therefore "if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners," transgressors of the law of Ten Commandments, does Christ sanction that?—"God forbid." Does he justify men in order that they may be free to transgress the law?—"God forbid." Does he save men from sin in order that they may continue in sin?—"God forbid." Do we believe in Jesus in order that we may continue to be sinners?—"God forbid." Do we "seek to be justified [made righteous] by Christ" in order that we may continue to sin?—"God forbid." And let all the people forever say Amen.

Let it be borne in mind and upon the heart forever by every soul, that justification (being made righteous) by faith of Jesus Christ, means, in itself, in every sentiment of it, the total abandonment of sins, and the destruction of the body of sin in order that henceforth we should not serve sin. Otherwise I build again in works what I destroyed by faith: and "if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a *transgressor*." Faith will never justify sin. The two are eternal opposites; for "*whatsoever* is NOT of faith *is sin*." And in Christ Jesus nothing avails but faith, which worketh by love that keeps the commandments of God.