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## The Triumph of Christ by Bill Lockwood

A powerful passage in Colossians highlights *The Triumph of Jesus Christ* – particularly speaking of His death on the cross. Those verses are in chapter 2, verses 13-17.

The leading thought or main idea is the fact, as stated by the apostle Paul, that as Christians the Colossian brethren (Those living in Colossae of Asia Minor, to whom Paul was writing) are *made alive in Jesus Christ* (13). He insists that without Christ both Jews and Gentiles are morally bankrupt; morally dead. In becoming Christians, they have been “made alive.”

The apostle then introduces three items that explains this. How have Christians Been Made Alive? One, He “forgave us our trespasses.” Two, He “blotted out the bond written in ordinances” [Mosaic Law]. Three, He “despoiled” or “stripped” the powers of life and death. Let us explore these in order.

*First, He Forgave Us Our Trespasses.* The word “trespass” means “false step.” All men are in sin (Romans 3:23) having violated the law of God. As the book of Romans demonstrates clearly, this is the case with both Gentiles (chapter 1) and Jews (chapter 2). This is true because the Jews violated the Law of Moses and the Gentiles have violated the “law written in their hearts” (Romans 2:15). For Christians, Paul says, these trespasses our Lord has forgiven.

*Two, Christ Blotted Out the ‘Bond Written in Ordinances.’* The phrase “blotted out” means “wiped clean” or “cancel.” It refers to a debt owed that has been canceled. For this reason, Paul refers to the Old Testament Law of Moses as a “bond, written in ordinances.” The Law of Moses had no capacity in and of itself to forgive sins. Instead, it simply highlighted that man is in sin. “By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight” (Romans 3:20). Why then was the law given? Simply to bring “a knowledge of sin” (3:20). This is why Paul says the law was “against us.” The Law of Moses was a “hostile writing,” a perpetual witness against the people. Christ “cancelled” it.

How did Christ cancel it? By “nailing it to the cross.” To the Jewish mind, and apparently to many minds today, this is a most startling statement. For this reason, many wish to confine Paul’s statement to the “ceremonial law” as opposed to the “moral law” – a distinction which is nowhere found in the Bible. Paul shows that he has in mind the *entire Old Testament law*; for he mentions “the Sabbath day” in v. 16 as being one of those ordinances. The entire Mosaic system has been replaced.

*Third, He Despoiled the Principalities and Powers, Triumphant Over Them in It [the Cross].* In the Colossian belief system was the idea of theosophy – unseen powers that controlled life and death. Paul shows that Christ defeated these as well! Only the Lord Jesus has power over life and death. The cross was truly a triumph of Jesus Christ!