

## ALTERNATE UNIVERSE

Sometimes I look at people, politicians with whom I disagree, in particular, and think, "What universe do you live in that you think that could possibly work?" I think they are either deceived in their thinking, trying to deceive others or they're completely divorced from reality. This world is what it is; human nature is and always has been (at least since the fall) what it is. And the laws that govern the physical universe are immutable.

There is only one alternate universe to the one we live in, and that is the spiritual realm where God dwells and reigns. There, from what the Scripture tells us, all is peace, worship, and brilliant with God's glory. There is no disease or death, no crying or pain, and no sin to hinder perfect fellowship with God.

It is amazing to me that at a point in history, God chose to cause His realm to intersect with ours. At the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, the real alternate universe converged with this physical, created one. And the result is that those who belong to God get to live in the governance of God's realm. Of course, this is not always easy, as the principles that govern each are at odds with the other. And we are caught in the tension.

What is normal for every human since the fall is that we live under the dominion of sin. We have a sinful nature and it controls our actions in large measure. Moving into this alternate universe, while exhilarating and freeing, presents us with challenges. We sometimes find it nigh unto impossible to accommodate ourselves to the new reality, especially considering that the old sinful nature is still present in us, warring continually against our new-found freedom.

In this alternate universe, everything is fundamentally different. We are not required to behave under penalty of punishment, but are motivated to love and good deeds out of gratitude for all God's grace has granted to us. Our responsibility is not to fulfill the letter of the law in every detail but to believe what God says is true and trust that acting upon it will bless God, others, and ourselves.

What spurred these thoughts was Romans 6:14. "For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace." This is not a command that we win every battle with sin. Sadly, experience tells us we lose more often than we like to admit. Rather, it is a statement of fact, a principle of the alternate universe. Sin has been made powerless (Rom. 6:6). We now live in an alternate universe, one characterized by grace. In fact, we can view it as a promise that sin will not ultimately triumph in our lives. Victory is assured. "Thanks be to God who always causes us to walk in triumph in Christ" (2 Cor. 2:14).

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