

“Grace & Peace to You”

A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS

Voice of China and Asia

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ROMANS LESSON 37 PART 1: “RENDERED USELESS”

Romans 6:1-11 *What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ² By no means! How can we who **died** to sin still live in it? ³ Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his **death**? ⁴ We **were buried** therefore with him by baptism into **death**, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the **dead** by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.*

⁵ *For if we have been united with him in a **death** like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him **in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing**, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For one who **has died** has been set free from sin.*

⁸ *Now if we **have died** with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the **dead**, **will never die** again; **death** no longer has dominion over him.*

¹⁰ *For the **death** he **died** he **died** to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.*

¹¹ *So you also must consider yourselves **dead** to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

“The DEAD Don’t Walk!”

Contrary to the very popular TV Series, **the DEAD don’t walk**. BUT as disgusting as it seems, they can be carried-around and animated by personal choice. The Apostle Paul even suggests, one could **“be asleep among the dead”** when referring to Believers living AS unbelievers.

Paul’s stern rebuke of the sarcastic question about sin & grace was intended to disarm them. **ROM 6:2** *“How can we who **DIED TO SIN** still live in it?”* Their foolishness was on full display, and it opens an opportunity for him to show that **“justification” of the sinner** results in **“sanctification” of the saved**. Just like we once **“offered ourselves to sin,”** NOW we must **“offer ourselves to righteousness.”** Sinfulness was a choice for every unbeliever, even though they had no power to resist it. As Believers made alive in Christ’s image, we are given the power to **“walk in righteousness”** – BUT we must make the choice to do so.

In our previous LESSONS, we introduced a basic outline for Paul’s response to HIS question and the following presentation of “how” our Justification leads to Sanctification.

ROMANS 6: 3–14 are Paul’s “instructional answers” to the **reasonable questions (posed by Paul in Vs 2)** faced by every Believer, **“How do those who are under this, ‘free gift of grace’ live our lives practically... without being characterized by a life of sin? How are we to live lives of victory?”**

Paul answers these **reasonable questions** in his customary logical manner.

First, by **understanding** the nature of our **identification with CHRIST** (vv. 2–10).

Second, by **accepting** our **identification with CHRIST** as true (v. 11).

Third, by **yielding** to the **CHRIST with whom we are so wonderfully identified** (vv. 12, 13).

UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF OUR IDENTIFICATION WITH CHRIST:

ROM 6:3-4 *Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.*

The **First** thing we need to understand about our Identification with Christ is that IF we were “Baptized in Christ” THEN we were “Baptized into His Death” – we were “buried with Him.” The “one” who we were before our identification with Christ (through believing HIS death was as OUR substitute) is DEAD.

The **Second** thing about this is: *“WHO died... and WHAT does that mean?”*

The **Third** thing is: *“WE have a New Life!”*

This New Life that we have is NOT about what we can't do... BUT what we CAN DO because **“the DEAD have NO power!”**

- The believer has been “buried with [Christ] through baptism into death.”
 - Burial certifies the reality of death.
 - Baptism is the ritual act that portrays this burial.
- But death and burial are not the end of the story.
 - In God's redemptive plan burial is followed by resurrection.
 - As Christ was raised from the dead in a manifestation of the Father's glorious power, so also are we raised to an entirely new way of living.
- The cross has as its ethical purpose a change in conduct. The Greek expression translated “a new life” is better rendered “a new sphere which is life.”
 - Apart from Christ people are dead in their sins (Eph 2:1).
 - But raised from the dead through faith in Christ, they enter an entirely new sphere of existence.
- They are alive in Christ.
 - As Jesus promised, “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10).
 - Although contemporary use has tended to trivialize the expression “born again,” the vibrant reality of new life in Christ is still portrayed most graphically by the metaphor of spiritual birth. The lives of believers are to be as different from their pre-conversion days as life is from death.

ROMANS LESSON 37 PART 2: “RENDERED USELESS”

The OLD Self : The NEW Self

ROM 6:5 *For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.*

- If it is true, that we have been united with Christ in his death—and we have—it then follows that we are also united with him in his resurrection.
 - As he was raised victor over death, so also are we set free from the bondage of sin. Death precedes life in the realm of the Spirit.
 - Since it is true that we are **“one with Him by sharing in His death”** (Weymouth), then certainly we are **one with him by sharing in his resurrection life.**
- New life in Christ follows death to sin as certainly as Christ's resurrection followed his crucifixion.

ROM 6:6-7 *We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.*

⁷ *For one who has died has been set free from sin.*

- Our confidence in a resurrected life rests upon the fact that our old self was nailed to the cross with Jesus. We were *“crucified with him”* (v. 6).
 - Believers, by definition, are those who by their union with Christ died with him on the cross. That death had a definite purpose in the spiritual life history of the believer.
 - We were crucified in order that our sinful nature might be stripped of its power.

Fun With Latin... Bishop Augustine of Hippo (BC 354-430)

- Before he fell Adam was posse peccare (“able TO sin”) – Although Adam had NOT yet sinned yet, but he WAS able to.
- After his fall, Adam (And ALL who were descended from him) became non posse non peccare (“NOT able NOT to sin”). By himself he was unable to break free from sin’s power.
- The State of Believers, *those who have been saved through Identity with Christ*, is now one of posse non peccare (“able NOT to sin”). That is the state Paul is writing about in ROMANS 6. For them, the tyranny of sin has been broken. Because the “Body of Sin” still exists (our “flesh”) it NO LONGER has dominion OVER us... We are ABLE TO NOT sin... – This is the “walk of sanctification” (vss 12-23)
- The Glorified State, for which we wait, is non posse peccare (“NOT ABLE to sin”). In our glorified state we will not be tempted by sin or be able to fall into it again.
 - *“Might be done away with”* translates a form of the Greek verb Katargeo, which speaks of being “reduced to a condition of absolute impotence and inaction, as if it were dead.”
Katargeo – *To CAUSE to NOT Work... – to take what WAS working / operational and CAUSE IT to work NO LONGER...*
 - Death fulfills the demands of sin. But death opens the way for resurrection.
 - Resurrection lies beyond the control of death. It is the victor over death. With the old self rendered powerless (by death and burial), it is no longer necessary for a person to continue in bondage to sin. In Christ we are set free.
 - Since sin accomplished its purpose in bringing about death, once the “Old Self is DEAD, SIN is powerless to overcome new life.

ROM 6:8 *Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.*

- Notice how often Paul repeated himself in this section... truth once stated is not necessarily absorbed.
 - Remember this Book is first of all a letter written by the Apostle to Christian believers in Rome. Paul has stressed over and over again certain truths basic to an understanding of what it means to be united with Christ and living the new life of the Spirit.
 - So, in v. 8 he again states the basic proposition - those who *“have died with Christ”* will also *“live with him.”*
 - This is NOT a promise of life after death with Christ in heaven BUT of a life to be lived here and now.
 - DEATH, far from being simply a negative concept, HAS in fact BECOME the Gateway to Life.

- Elsewhere Paul had stated, “I have been crucified with Christ ... but ... I live... by faith” (Gal 2:20).
- **To Live One Must Die.**

ROM 6:9-10 We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ For the death he died he died to sin, **once for all**, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

- Paul now appealed to a point of common knowledge among God’s people. Having been raised from the dead, **Christ CANNOT die again.**
 - **His resurrection was unlike that of Lazarus, who had to meet death once again.**
 - BUT Christ’s resurrection broke forever the tyranny of death. That cruel master can no longer exercise any power over him.

HEB 2:14-15 Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

- The CROSS was **sin’s final move**; the RESURRECTION was God’s checkmate. **THE GAME IS OVER.** **A Checkmate cannot be “undone” it cannot be superseded by another play... IT IS FINAL!**
- Sin is forever in defeat.
- Christ the victor died to sin “**once for all**” and lives now in unbroken fellowship with God.
- Many of the ancient cathedrals portray in their statuary a dead or dying Christ. (*Guatemala*).
- But “**Christ Crucified...**” (if nothing more were said) is NOT the Gospel. **It is ONLY a PART of The Gospel...**
 - The **Church** needs a renewed awareness of Christ as **Victorious** over **Death** and the **Grave**.
 - It is the **Resurrection** that makes the news... “**GOOD NEWS**” - Rising triumphant over Satan’s ultimate show of force, Jesus Christ is forever crowned King of kings and Lord of lords.

So... NOW, What Do WE do about it...
HOW do we put these truths into operation in our lives??