**Dead to Sin; Alive to God**

*Romans 6:1-23*

3 truths on how we effectively move from

positional to practical gospel truth

**I. Apply our understanding of who we are in Christ (indicatives) to how we act in Christ (imperatives)**

1. A logical question to ask from understanding chapters 1-5

**Romans 6:1**—*What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?*

Paul knows from experience that a question immediately comes up in any discussion of this gospel: *if our good deeds are worthless for earning salvation, then why be good at all? If the gospel says: You are saved by grace, not by a good life, won’t that message leave the door open to immoral living?[[1]](#footnote-1)*

1. We are united to Christ in His death

Grace and assurance will get you further down the sanctification trail than fear and uncertainty ever will.[[2]](#footnote-2)

**v. 2**—*we who died to sin*

**v. 3**—*baptized into His death*

**v. 4**—*buried with Him through baptism into death*

**v. 5**—*united with Him in the likeness of His death*

**v. 6**—*our old self was crucified with Him*

**v. 3**—*Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?*

**Spirit Baptism: 1 Corinthians 12:13**—*For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.*

**Water Baptism: Acts 2:41**—*So then, those who had received his word were baptized and that day there were added about three thousand souls.*

**Position or Practice?**

**1 Peter 1:15**—*but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior*

**1 Peter 2:9**—*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light*

This truth is far too wondrous for us to understand fully, but the basic and obvious reality of it is that we died with Christ in order that we might have life through Him and live like Him…By trusting in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, we were, by an unfathomable divine miracle, taken back 2,000 years, as it were, and made to participate in our Savior’s death and to be buried with Him, burial being the proof of death. The purpose of that divine act of bringing us through death (which paid the penalty for our sin) and resurrection with Christ was to enable us henceforth to walk in newness of life.[[3]](#footnote-3)

1. We are united to Christ in His resurrection

**v. 4**—*Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.*

Since Christ’s death led to his resurrection and a new life, so in the same way our union with Christ will, and must, lead to a new life. If we believe in Christ, a change of life will happen. We will not live in sin anymore.[[4]](#footnote-4)

**v. 5**—*For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection*

**v. 8**—*Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him*

**Galatians 2:20**—*I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.*

There can be no participation in Christ’s life without a participation in his death, and we cannot enjoy the benefits of his death unless we are partakers of the power of his life. We must be reconciled to God in order to be holy, and we cannot be reconciled without thereby becoming holy.[[5]](#footnote-5)

1. As a result, we are no longer slaves to sin

**v. 6**—*knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin*

(done away with—literally means ‘to render inoperative or invalid’, to make something ineffective by removing its power of control”[[6]](#footnote-6)

1. As a result, we are alive to God in Christ Jesus

**v. 11**—*Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

Paul is not saying that Christians cannot commit individual acts of sin, nor even that they cannot struggle with habitual sins. He is saying that they cannot go on abiding in the realm of sin. They cannot continue in it deliberately, without distaste or diminishment. They do not live in sin anymore; instead, they are “alive to God.”[[7]](#footnote-7)

**II. Do not let sin reign in your life**

**v. 12**—*Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts*

1. Put off the old self

**Ephesians 4:22**—*that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit*

1. You are no longer a slave to sin to obey its lusts in your heart

**James 1:14-15**—*But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.*

1. You no longer have to present your body to sin

**v. 13**—*and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.*

1. Sin always brings forth death

**v. 16c**—*…either of sin, resulting in death…*

**v. 21**—*Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death.*

**v. 23a**—*For the wages of sin is death…*

**III. Gladly serve your new master**

1. Present yourself to God

**v. 13b**—*…present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.*

**Romans 12:1-2**—*Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

1. Grace would reign through righteousness

**Romans 5:21**—*so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

1. Obedience to either God or sin because we are all slaves of something

**v. 17b**—*you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed*

**v. 18**—*and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.*

1. In so doing, there are tremendous benefits

**v. 22**—*But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.*

1. Romans 1-7 for You, Timothy Keller, p. 137 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The MacArthur Commentary on Romans [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid, p. 322 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Keller, p. 140 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Charles Hodge, Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, p. 195 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. MacArthur, p. 325 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Keller, p. 145 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)