

DEAD TO SIN, ALIVE IN CHRIST

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Romans 6:1-13

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

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Psalm 32:9, which is a Psalm of David, says, "Do not be like the horse or like the mule, which have no understanding, which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, else they will not come near you." We are, of course, higher up on the food chain than the animals of this world, although I am not suggesting that we should be eating horses or mules. God has given us His Word so that we can have understanding, to know His ways and to know what He expects of His children.

Initially, at the onset of God's creation, "God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." (**Genesis 1:26**) Everything changed in that moment that Eve ate of the forbidden fruit and then gave Adam to also eat of it. Not only did they and us, after that moment bring sin and a sinful nature upon all of mankind from henceforth, their dominion over the

animals became limited and their being created in God's image became altered, and yes, they did become dead (spiritually) in their sin. (**Ephesians 2:1**) Their limited dominion over animals can be seen by anyone who would dare to enter into a lions den unless of course your goal is to be their food. Likewise then, Adam and Eve had no longer dominion over sin. From that time forward sin had dominion over them.

From that time forward also, Adam and Eve no longer had the same sweet fellowship with God as they had in the garden. It was apparent from that time onward, that mankind was in need of a Savior to reconcile man back to God. God speaks of that future promise, saying to the serpent, "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel." Satan knew of Whom God was referring. God was speaking of the future coming and reign of His Son. We find evidence of this first as Cain slew Abel. You can pretty much count on the fact that Satan was behind the killing of the potential promised Seed. Yet we know that the promised seed came through Seth then and not Cain. Praise be to our Heavenly Father and Creator of all things who sent His Son Jesus to die on a cross for our sins.

Paul begins the sixth chapter of Romans saying, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." What is Paul talking about there? It is exactly what Jesus told Nicodemus must take place to all who will believe on Him. "Jesus answered and said to him, **Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**" Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, **"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."** (**John 3:3-8**) Jesus continued by saying, **"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to**

condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."

(John 3:14-17) Jesus mentions two things that are essential in believing on Jesus, that He is to be raised up, as Moses raised up the serpent in the wilderness, so that all who would look on the serpent, who had been bitten by a serpent (or snake) would then live. Then the second thing that Jesus mentions is that God sent His only begotten Son into the world so that the world through Him might be saved. 1. God sent His only begotten Son Jesus to come to this earth 2. to to be raised up, that is, to die on a cross for our sins. Jesus was begotten as a Son of man, He was & is the Son of God, when the Holy Spirit came to Mary to conceive. We also know from Scripture He was always with God and was God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it." (John 1:1-5) "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

A third element to our faith that we must believe on and take hold of is brought forth later in the book of John. It is though where Paul says in our passage of Scripture for today, "Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as **Christ was raised from the dead** by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin." That third thing then is that Jesus conquered death by raising from the dead on the third day. But wait, there's more! The good news of Jesus raising from the dead is where we can have that newness of life and also overcome the sting of death. As Paul said to the Corinthian church, "So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory". O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law." (1 Corinthians 15:54-56)

We get the full understanding of what John was intending to get across to his readers by stating, "these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name." (John 20:31) That is what Paul is saying in his opening to Romans 6. Believing on Christ and receiving Him is then where we no longer living for sin but we have a newness of life in Christ Jesus. Paul says, "Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord." That word reckon is not meant to be like how we say, "I

reckon so", meaning I guess so or I suppose so. It is from the Greek word *logizomai* which is the root of the English terms logic or logical.¹ It is the same word Paul used in **Philippians 4:8** where He says, "whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—**meditate** [there it is, *logizesthe*] on these things." Meditate or think on the good things of God. As James tells us, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning." (**James 1:17**) Father of lights. You are one of God's lights in Christ Jesus! Jesus said, "**Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.**" (**Matthew 5:16**) I'd say chief among the things to meditate on is the gift of grace and salvation through the sacrifice of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ, the Son of God! "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!" (**1 John 3:1**)

So for us then, we are to reckon or consider or meditate on the fact that we are dead to sin and alive in Christ! At first I thought, "oh, thinking on being dead to sin sounds like a negative thing to think on." I suppose it is a negative thing if one is still practicing the sin of which we are no longer suppose to be doing. "Death is swallowed up in victory". O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" Jesus addresses the Jews in John 8 saying, "**If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.**" They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, 'You will be made free'?" Jesus answered them, "**Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.**" (**John 8:31-36**) Isn't that exactly what Paul is saying in our passage of Scripture? We aren't forsaking sin to be saved, we are no longer slaves of sin in Christ Jesus, and therefore live according to His Righteousness. We therefore stop living in sin because we are saved. The Holy Spirit works in us to live according to His Righteousness. As His Word tells us in **1 Corinthians 1:30-31**, "But of Him [God] you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption— that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the Lord."

A summation of how we are then led by the Spirit to no longer live according to the sins of the flesh is a couple chapters later in Romans 8. If Romans 8 had never been written and a professor in seminary asked you to summarize the topic of living according to the Spirit as opposed to living according to the desires of the flesh, if

1 Biblehub.com, <https://biblehub.com/greek/3049.htm>, accessed 3/9/2023.

you were to write word for word what is in Romans 8 you would without a doubt get an A+. "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." (Romans 8:1-14) Those words should bring joy to one's soul. Why? It is saying just what Jesus said, "if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed!"

"Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but **present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.**" What we are then saying to God is just what Jesus said to His and our Heavenly Father, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." (Luke 22:42) God is presently building His eternal kingdom, seeking out those who will heed His call into His kingdom, to be a child of God. He is looking for His lost sheep to come back into His fold for He desires for none of His sheep to be lost. Is He calling you into His eternal kingdom into the family of God. It is not too late. Tomorrow perhaps may be too late as we aren't even guaranteed tomorrow. Is He calling you back into His ways. Perhaps you've strayed and gotten lost. Jesus promises us this, "All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke

upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." (Matthew 11:27-29)

Our message today is what God is telling in His Word as being His perfect will for our lives. We are to believe and know that we are dead to sin and alive in Christ and that He is making us into the very image of Christ. You and I as well may realize that we have a ways to go but Jesus is going to get us to the finish line. We have to continue to follow Him and trust that He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. (John 14:6) Once again, in speaking of the perfect will of God, Paul emphasizes that later in Romans chapter 12 saying, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Romans 12:1-2) It is only by the grace of God through our Lord and Savior Christ Jesus that we saved, sanctified and set free from the bondage of sin! Jesus is the vine and we are the connected branches, to Him, and then as Jesus tells us, "without me you can do nothing." (John 15:5)

We're going to close saying the Lord's prayer as it is called. It was just a sample prayer that Jesus gave His disciples with the elements that are important for us to consider. In that prayer though is Jesus telling us to say, "Your kingdom come, your will be done." God is doing all He can to get us on His plan, not that we should be trying to bend the will of God towards our plan. Amen?

"Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen." (Matthew 6:8-13 NKJV)