

ROMANS 6

Dead To Sin, Alive in Christ

God's Wrath on Unrighteousness

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹ For what is known about God is plain to them, because what God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because what God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because what God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because what God has shown it to them.

... called to be
... the gospel of God,
... beforehand through his
... Scriptures,³ concerning his
... descended from David² according
... and was declared to be the Son of
... power according to the Spirit of holiness

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Last time in Chapter 5, Paul the Apostle laid out the benefits of justification, how God uses suffering in building character, and the superiority of the Second Adam—Jesus Christ, as opposed to the first Adam.

Now in chapter 6, Paul begins explaining how those who have been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ are to walk out their new relationship with God. The subject of growth into spiritual maturity is the subject of chapters 6-8.

This process of spiritual growth is called *sanctification*.

- Sanctification is the lifelong process of transformation into the likeness of Christ.

Every believer’s testimony begins with *justification*, proceeds with *sanctification*, and ends in *glorification*.

Justification is the *gift* that happens at the moment of our conversion to Christ. Sanctification is the process that takes place during our life on earth. Glorification is the *result* of the return of Christ and the glorification of our earthly bodies to be like His.

With Chapter 6, we have the beginning of practical “*how-to-live-it-out*” Christianity.

Dead To Sin, Alive To Christ

In verse 1, Paul again deals with false teachers who claimed we should keep on sinning that God’s grace may abound.

Romans 6:1

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?

Of course, this is absurd. Paul next strikes a death blow to such an argument

with a **HUGE TRUTH:**

Romans 6:2

By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?

The same Greek word translated into “died” is found in John 11:21. “*Therefore Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you would have been here, my brother wouldn’t have died.”*”

So this is not figurative speech. Paul is saying, “You as a Christian have died totally to sin.”

Nothing can be more unresponsive than a dead person. A corpse can’t be commanded, kicked, or made to respond in any way. Likewise, God reckons the believer to be just that dead to the promptings of sin.

Paul compares the Christian’s “death to sin” to water baptism.

Romans 6:3-4

Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were therefore buried with him through baptism into His death...

The word *baptism* is used elsewhere in the Greek language of a blacksmith who dips a piece of hot iron in water to temper it; also of Greek soldiers placing the points of their swords in a bowl of blood before a battle. It means “total immersion.”

The Greek word for baptism, “baptizo,” is the act of placing a person or thing into a new environment or into union with someone else so as to *alter* its *relationship* to its previous environment or condition.

Hence, the believer has been placed into a living, vital union with Christ and into a totally new environment—the Kingdom of God.

In fact, every born again child of God has experienced three baptisms.

- **WATER BAPTISM:**

Water baptism is that act of obedience that baptizes us into Christ—His death, burial and resurrection:

Gal 3:27 *“...for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.”*

Romans 6:4-5

We were buried therefore with Him by the baptism into death, so that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious [power] of the Father, so we too might [habitually] live and behave in newness of life.

When baptized in water, we are:

- Identifying with Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection.
- Proclaiming that we have died to sin.
- Testifying to the world that, just as God raised Jesus from the dead—never to die again—so we are being raised from the waters of baptism “to walk in newness of life.”

Water baptism conveys to the world a change within the believer that is as radical as Jesus’ death and resurrection!

The second baptism is:

- **BAPTISM INTO THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Speaking of Jesus, John the Baptist said:

John 1:33

The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.

And Jesus told His disciples:

Acts 1:4-5

Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. ⁵ For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

On the Day of Pentecost, the 120 believers in the upper room were totally immersed in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit!

The third baptism for every child of God is:

- **BAPTISM INTO THE BODY OF CHRIST, THE CHURCH.**

1 Corinthians 12:13

For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free--and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

Through our identification with Christ in water baptism, God has broken sin's stronghold in our lives. Paul says:

Romans 6:6-7

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.

In every unsaved person there is but one nature, his fallen nature; but in every

Christian there are two natures—his fallen nature which was judicially put to death when Christ died, and his new regenerate nature which was secured for him by Jesus’ resurrection.

The fallen nature is called “the old man” and occurs elsewhere in Eph. 4:22 and Col. 3:9. It means “the man of the old, corrupt human nature, the inborn tendency toward evil in all men.”

Positionally, in the reckoning of God, the old man is crucified with Christ, and the believer is exhorted to make this good in experience, reckoning it to be so by “putting off” the old man and “putting on” the new.

Two Kinds of Truth in Scripture

The Bible presents two levels of truth to every believer—Positional and Experiential.

- Positional truth is that which God has accomplished for us once for all in Christ. In God’s mind it is done.
- Experiential truth is that truth which is worked out experientially in our life while alive on earth. It is what we actually experience living in time and space.

For instance, the Bible declares in Eph. 2: 6 that we are “seated in heavenly places with Christ Jesus.” We’re not there yet experientially, yet positionally God already reckons it done.

Another example is found in Romans 8:30, “Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.”

The first three—*predestined*, *called*, and *justified* have actually happened to every believer experientially. But the fourth one—*glorified*—is still future. Yet God positionally reckons it already done.

Paul is instructing us by the Holy Spirit to lay hold of the positional truth that our old man was “crucified with Christ” and is dead! Death by crucifixion could never be self-inflicted. Someone else has to do the crucifying. At Calvary, God as dealt with the question of self as well as the question of sin by putting us to death with Christ.

But it gets better! God has also broken sin’s stranglehold on our life.

“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that we should no longer serve sin.”

“The body of sin” refers to “the instrument for carrying out sin’s orders.” The “old man” says Do it! And the “body of sin” carries it out.

Now obviously, the body does not feel dead to sin. But that is where “positional truth” comes in. God says it is dead. We are to reckon it so. As salvation does not depend on how we “feel”, neither does our day to day walk. We are to “walk by faith, not by sight.” In the Christian life, feelings are secondary to truth. If God says it’s true positionally, then by faith we are to walk in it experientially.

Romans 6:7

For he who has died has been freed from sin.

Next, Paul comes to the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

Romans 6:8-9

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer

has dominion over Him.

HUGE TRUTH: The fact that death has no more dominion over Christ Jesus is the cornerstone for Paul’s argument that sin has no more dominion over us.

- If we are to enjoy victory over sin we must first fully embrace the victory of Christ over the grave. In defeating sin, we are to appropriate the victory of Jesus over the grave.

Romans 6:11

Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

It is one thing to “know” something, yet quite another to “reckon” something. The word “reckon” is an accounting term meaning “to count, to take into account, to compute.” Just as God considers something done, we also are to “count it done”, to reckon it to be a fact of life.

Now we come to a “therefore.”

Romans 6:12-13

Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³ 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.

In light of the positional fact that our old man was crucified with Christ, and we have reckoned that to be a done deal, therefore don’t allow the various members of your body to obey sin’s promptings.

The three magnificent words of Chapter 6 are *know*, *reckon*, *yield*. Once we *know* what God has done for us on the cross, we must *reckon* it to be so. Once we reckon it to be so, we must *yield* our bodies and lives to Him as those alive from the dead.

Romans 6:14

For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Continued victory does not depend on self-effort, but on drawing from God's grace.

Slaves to Righteousness

For the rest of the chapter, Paul focuses on the reality that everyone is a slave—either of sin unto death, or of righteousness unto life:

Romans 6:15-22

What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! ¹⁶ Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? ¹⁷ But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. ¹⁸ And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. ¹⁹ I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.

²⁰ For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.

²¹ What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. ²² But now having been set free from sin,

and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

He closes with the universal, undeniable fact of life:

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

