

The Life That We Live Romans 6:5-14

5For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6knowing 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. 7For he who has died has been freed from sin. 8Now 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. 10For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

12Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. 13And 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.

14For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Pastors are always telling their members how they should be living. It seems that many a message is centered about what ought to be done and what ought not to be. Paul is doing much more than instructing these Roman Christians in how they should live.

He is telling them that as a consequence of their faith in Jesus Christ and their justification before God and their union with Jesus that they will live differently than they did before.

There is a vast difference between the law and grace. Under the law we have a list of commands that we must keep in order to be acceptable to God. Under grace we find what Jesus Christ has done on our behalf to make us acceptable to God. And then we also find how those who are justified do live. Period.

Under law we were never sure we would make it. Under grace we are assured that we will make it and the life that we lead is a confirmation of that fact. God's children will live like their Father.

- I. The certainty of our success in the Christian Life is seen in our death.
 - A. Based on our union with Jesus Christ. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness of His* resurrection.
 - B. Baptists have always held to the preservation and perseverance of the saints.
 1. Even our own church adopted such a confession.
 2. Article 11. Of the Perseverance of Saints: We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special Providence watches over their welfare; and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

- C. It comes from the union of the believer with Christ.
1. In regeneration we receive a new nature that is like God's nature.
 - a. 2 Pe 1:4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.
 - b. Joh 1:12-13 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
 2. From that point on there is a progressive change that guides our lives to a conformity to Jesus Christ.
 - a. Philippians 1:6 being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;
 - b. 2 Cor 3:18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.
 - c. Ro 8:29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.
- D. In regeneration our old man dies, being crucified with Jesus Christ: knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him.
1. This is more than some idealistic concept.
 2. It is real, and gives us power over sin instead of sin having power over us.
 3. That the body of sin might be done away with,
 - a. This is our sinful nature that once ruled over us.
 - b. The strength to overcome sin is now given to the believer.
 - c. That we should no longer be slaves of sin.
- E. A fact of life.
1. When you die, you are free from the influence of sin.
 - a. For he who has died has been freed from sin.
 - b. As a matter of fact, once a person has died, they can no longer sin.
 2. Paul points this obvious fact out to conclude that if we died to sin we can no longer sin.

II. The certainty of our success in the Christian Life is seen in the life of Christ.

- A. Now if we died with Christ we believe that we shall also live with Him,
 - 1. When we died with Him we did not die to be lifeless.
 - 2. But in that Jesus overcame death now He lives.
 - 3. If He now lives, we also shall live with Him.
- B. Knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more.
 - 1. Jesus died and arose again, never to die again.
 - 2. This demonstrates the permanency of our position in Jesus Christ.
- C. Death no longer has dominion over Him.
 - 1. In that He died to sin once, now death now has no more power over Him.
 - 2. Jesus died once as do all, but for our sin instead of His own.
 - 3. But once being subject to death, death now has nothing over Him.
 - 4. Paul's point on this is that if we have died to sin, then sin can have no more power over us.
- D. For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; *But the life* that He lives, He lives to God.
 - 1. So then Paul also contrasts the two.
 - 2. Jesus died for our sins once and for all time.
 - 3. It was a single event that secured for all those in Christ an eternal life.
 - 4. Then Jesus died to sin once but now continually lives unto God.
 - 5. So then our life in sin, being controlled by sin is over for ever.
 - 6. And now for eternity we have only to live unto God.

III. Paul's solid conclusion.

- A. Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
 - 1. Reckon means to account, or consider as a true condition since it is. "Direct middle imperative of *logizomai* and complete proof that Paul does not mean that baptism makes one dead to sin and alive to God. That is a spiritual operation "in Christ Jesus" and only pictured by baptism. This is a plea to live up to the ideal of the baptized life." Robertson
 - 2. The path of faith is always against appearances, --or, if you will, against human consciousness. God says certain things; and we, obeying the "law of faith," say the same things; like Abraham, not regarding our own body, which says the contrary thing. Facts are facts: and these are what God reveals to us. Appearances, or "feelings," are a wholly different thing from facts! God says, "You died to sin: reckon yourself dead!" Obedient souls do so, and enter the path of deliverance in experience. Doubting souls fall

back on their "feelings," and turn back to prayers and struggles, avoiding faith. Newell

B. Sin should not rule as a king over us. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey it in its lusts.

1. The idea of reign here is that of a king ruling over his kingdom.
 - a. Once we were subjects of sin and Satan's kingdom.
 - b. But we have been translated into the kingdom of light.
 - c. Col 1:13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:
2. Our mortal body is our weakness.
 - a. Jesus said that the spirit was willing but the flesh was weak.
 - b. Mt 26:41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.
3. Obeying it in its lusts is our basest fleshly desires.
 - a. The fleshly desires were given to us by God, but He also prescribed the proper satisfaction of them.
 - b. It is when we step beyond God's design that we get into trouble.
 - c. Our world has adopted the view that if it feels good and you supposedly don't hurt anyone, then just do it.
 - d. But that is never the pattern for the Christian.
 - e. If we give into these sinful fleshly lusts then we are ruled by them and not God.

IV. It is a matter of control. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin,

- A. The Christian has the responsibility to not allow the members of their bodies to be used as instruments of unrighteousness.
 1. We used to sing that little song, *O Be Careful Little Eyes What You See*
 2. It is true when we have grown up.
 3. We are to guard our lives to make sure that we never give an opportunity for sin to take hold of us and bring us down.
- B. Rather we are to offer our members to God as instruments of righteousness to God. But present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, And your members as instruments of righteousness to God.
 1. Once we served self, sin and this world system.
 2. Now we are to serve God.

3. That is what our lives are to be about.
4. Romans 12:1-2 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. 2 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.
5. This is where Paul is taking us in his teachings, excuse me for jumping the gun so to speak.

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

- A. Run, run, and work, the law commands,
But gives me neither feet nor hands;
But sweeter sounds the gospel brings,
It bids me fly, and gives me wings. (C.H. Spurgeon, I think)
- B. Under law it depended upon us and we were without strength.
- C. Under grace it depends upon Jesus Christ.

From William Newell's Commentary on Romans

Verse 11: Therefore the eleventh verse becomes a necessity: God must say to us: Thus [because of the facts of the preceding verse] do ye also reckon, yourselves dead, indeed, to sin, but living to God, in Christ Jesus! (1) Your relationship to sin is exactly the same as Christ's! Why? Because Christ is now your only Adam: you are in Him! His act of death unto sin involved all who are connected with Him.

Thus, in His death, all Christ's connection with sin was broken, ended, forever. Not only did He no longer bear sin; but He had died unto sin. When He was raised, it was as One who lived unto God, in an endless life with which sin had nothing to do, --resurrection-life, newness of life!

And, because believers were united with Him in His death, they too died to sin in and with Him. And their relationship to sin is now exactly His relationship: they are dead to it. They are also "alive unto God" in Christ Jesus.

This is not a matter of "experience," but of fact. The truth about believers is, that they are dead to sin and alive to God, being in Christ! And they hear it said by God, and are asked to reckon it so! Their path of faith is plain: "Reckon (2) ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God, in Christ Jesus."

John Wesley truly counselled:

"Frames and feelings fluctuate: These can ne'er thy saviour be! Learn thyself in Christ to see: Then, be feelings what they will, Jesus is thy Saviour still!"

Lay to heart the very words of the eleventh verse: Reckon yourselves dead indeed to sin, but living to God, in Christ Jesus. There are two words signifying death in this passage. The word for dead (nekros) here in verse II, does not refer to the act or process of dying, but to the state or effect produced by death. The other word (thnesko) signifies the act, and occurs in verses 3,4,5,7,8,9 and 10; and is used when Christ's dying, or our dying with or in Him, is set forth. It is, there-fore, with the already accomplished death unto sin of our great Substitute and Representative, Christ, that believers--those now in Christ--find themselves connected; and as we said above, the believer is to reckon himself dead (nekros) unto sin, but alive unto God, --because he is in Christ Jesus, who died unto sin once for all; but now, in resurrection life, is living unto God. You will realize anew the meanings of these two words for death, when you notice, in verses 4 and 9, that Christ, having died (thnesko) was raised "from among dead ones" (nekroi). Christ's body lay in Joseph's tomb. He was not now dying; that was over. He was dead. And so we are not told to die to sin: because we are in Christ who did die to it; and therefore we also are dead to it, in His death; and reckon it so.

This should make the believer's task simplicity itself. The only difficulty lies in believing these astounding revelations! That we should be dead to sin, and now alive unto God as risen ones, sharing that newness of life (verse 4) which our Lord began as "the First-born from among the dead," is at first too wonderful for us. We see in ourselves the old self-life, the flesh--and straightway we forget God's way of faith, and turn back to our "feelings." We say, Alas, if I could escape from this body, I would be free. But that is not at present God's plan for you and me. We wait for the redemption of our body. This body is yet unredeemed. Nevertheless, we are to reckon ourselves dead unto sin and alive unto God. Not dead to sin, notice, through prayers and

strugglings, nor dead to sin in our feelings or consciousness; but in that death unto sin which Christ went through on the cross, and which we shared, and in that life which He now lives in glory!

Indeed, when we come down to verses 12 and 13, we shall find Paul's definite directions to us to present ourselves unto God "as those that- are alive from among dead ones." (All out of Christ are of course "dead ones," in God's sight.)

This is really the heart of the struggle in the matter of our walk, --of our having our "fruit unto sanctification." It is hard to reckon and keep reckoning that we shared Christ's death to sin, and that we are alive unto God in Him. Yet, there is no establishing of our souls along any other line! To turn back from this sheer faith that we died with Christ and now are alive to God in Him, is to turn back--to what? to the weary, hopeless struggle Paul tells us in Chapter Seven he "once" went through to make the flesh obey God; or else back to groanings before God, begging Him to give us personal deliverance. And all the time God is saying, The word of the cross is the power of God. It is God's word as to what was there done that will establish your heart. God says you died with Christ. Reckon it so. "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established" (#Isa 7:9). (3)

Now if the declaration in verse 2 that we died to sin meant that sin is now absent from our flesh, there could be no exhortation in verse II to "reckon" ourselves dead to sin. If the fact that we died to sin with Christ means that sin is gone from these bodies of ours, there would be no thought of "reckoning." The statement would simply have been, "Sin is absent, --no longer a present thing with you!" The word reckon is a word for faith--in the face of appearances.

The same place for faith is left in the matter of our justification. Christ is "the propitiation for the whole world" (#1Joh 2:2). But in #Ro 3:25 it is said, "God set Him forth as a propitiation through faith in His blood."

So in #Ro 6:2 it is said that we died to sin, while here in the eleventh verse we are told to "reckon ourselves dead to sin." **The reckoning does not make the fact, but is commanded in view of the fact.**

It has pleased God to call for our faith, both in connection with salvation and with deliverance. Therefore, if we would obey and please God, let us follow His method! Let us learn to reckon ourselves dead, --that Christ's death to sin was our death; and is the present relation of us who are in Christ, unto sin.

The path of faith is always against appearances, --or, if you will, against human consciousness. God says certain things; and we, obeying the "law of faith," say the same things; like Abraham, not regarding our own body, which says the contrary thing. Facts are facts: and these are what God reveals to us. Appearances, or "feelings," are a wholly different thing from facts! God says, "You died to sin: reckon yourself dead!" Obedient souls do so, and enter the path of deliverance in experience. Doubting souls fall back on their "feelings," and turn back to prayers and struggles, avoiding faith.

Now note carefully again: the apostle does not tell us to reckon sin dead, but ourselves dead to it. We are now in Christ, and His history becomes ours. He died unto sin (verse 10), and left the whole sphere of sin forever. It is not said even concerning Christ that He reckoned sin dead, but that being made sin, the thing itself. He died unto it, and now liveth unto God. It seems to us most

unfortunate that some very excellent teachers fall into the manner of saying that "sin is to be reckoned dead" and that "our old man is counted dead and gone," and so forth. One of the clearest teachers of Pauline gospel that I know, though generally speaking accurately, in Paul's language, that we ourselves died to sin, and that the old man is to be regarded as having been crucified with Christ, yet sometimes lapses into such expressions as "we are to hold the old man as dead and gone."

Yet the old man, though having been "crucified with Christ," and having been "put off" by the believer, still exists; and believers are commanded to "put away, as concerning your former manner of life, the old man, that waxeth corrupt after the lusts of deceit." We have spoken of this elsewhere. It is of course the intense desire of a saint truly exercised by the Spirit to be quit of the consciousness of the old man. This has been so in all ages. But the temptation is very strong in Christians, in times of great spiritual uplifting, to regard the old man as having disappeared.

But it is the very essence of a holy walk according to Scripture, to receive God's testimony concerning the old man's having been crucified. To reckon ourselves dead to sin while conscious of sin in our members, is faith indeed; and is walking according to God's Word, instead of according to our feelings. "Those that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh and its lusts": because they know that the federal thing, the "old man," has been crucified (#Ga 5:24). It is in the power of the faith that God has dealt with all that we were, that we are able to deal with the manifestations of the self-life.

Nevertheless, this life in this present world, is not the Christian's place of resting. Christ will bring him rest at His second coming (#2Th 1:7).

It is to those who are described in the opening chapters of Romans, --guilty, under Divine judgment; and also in the flesh, under the old man; far from God, without hope, --to such the gospel message has come! These statements that we belong up there, in Christ, are issued by the High Court of Heaven, itself. God says that no matter how things may seem, we died with Christ, and share His newness of life; and we are to present ourselves unto God as those alive from the dead. (4) The glorious promise follows: "Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace." We have not been brought to a Sinai, to a hard, demanding master, but are under the sweet favor in which Christ Himself is, being ourselves in Him, yea, the very righteousness of God in Him!

footnotes

1. The A.V. translation, "through Christ Jesus," is unfortunate, as it does not, as does God's Word, emphasize the place of blessing in which we now are--in (Gr.en) Christ Jesus. It is not, in this verse, what shall be done through Christ for us; nor only what has been done through Him; but the place of federal blessing in which we now are, that is in view: we are lit Him who died to sin, and His death was ours.

2. This word "reckon" is a favorite word of Paul's in Romans, where he uses it 19 times, and only 16 times in all his other epistles. The Greek word (logidzomai) might be called both a court word and a counting-room word. Paul uses it as a court word as to God's action in accounting the believer righteous. In this sense it is used 11 times in Romans Four alone--where it should be studied: see verses 3, 4,5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24.

Again, this word *logidsornai* is used to express man's belief and consequent attitude as illustrated in #Ro 14:14: "To him that reckoneth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean." Here, we repeat, an expression of belief, and of an attitude in view of that belief, is included in this word. This is its meaning in chapter 6.11: "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin." The belief of the fact and the attitude in view of the belief, are both involved in the word "reckon" in this verse. (See Newell on "Rom 4:2".)

3. On our way to the Far East, out in the Indian Ocean, our ship entered on what has always seemed to me the blackest night I have ever known. It was the dark of the moon, and the clouds had hung heavy all day, and now the very pall of darkness! One of the ship's officers invited me to the bridge. Answering the captain's greeting, I said to him, "Do you know where you are?"

"Yes," he said. "We have sailed by 'dead reckoning all day, and now I will show you where we are." And he took me into the chart room. Bending over the chart, he said, "We are within several miles of where my finger points. We have a watch aloft, of course; but the sea is very deep here; there are no obstacles. We shall sail on through by 'dead reckoning.' "

I laid the lesson to heart. It is difficult to accustom ourselves to "dead-reckoning," --right through the darkness, in what seems so untrue to the facts of our consciousness. But, obeying God, we reckon ourselves dead to sin, and alive unto Him in Christ Jesus. And God will bring us through!

4. A solemn question:

To those who refuse or neglect to reckon themselves dead to sin as God commands, we press the question. How are you able to believe that Christ really bore the guilt of your sins and that you will not meet them at the judgment day? It is only God's Word that tells you Christ bore your sins in His own body on the tree. And it is that same Word that tells you that you, as connected with Adam, died with Christ, that your old man was crucified, that since you are in Christ you shared His death unto sin, and are thus to reckon your present relation to sin in Christ--as one who is dead to it, and alive unto God.

If we claim that this is too difficult, because we feel the consciousness of sin dwelling in us, then reflect that it is only by faith that we know that our sin's guilt was borne by Christ. And it is by faith alone that we are to reckon ourselves dead to sin.

Let us beware, then, lest we be found making a secret truce with indwelling sin, while yet hoping to be saved from the guilt of the sins we have committed by Christ's shed blood.

Again, we repeat, if we are in Christ, we are in a Christ who was made to be sin on the cross and died unto it. This, therefore, is our relationship to sin; and God expects all of us to assert by simple obedient faith this revealed fact, --to reckon ourselves dead unto sin and alive unto God, in Christ Jesus. A danger to be avoided:

It is not as having died with Christ that we are justified from the guilt of sin; but it is after we have been justified by His blood, as ungodly, that we are told this second great truth, --that our old man was crucified with Christ--that we died with Him. I have seen professing Christians begin to be exercised in conscience regarding the guilt of sin, who, when they heard that those in Christ were dead to sin, immediately seized hold of this latter truth, and that with great relief. This false peace lasted, in some cases, a good while, and gave its possessors much complacency and

sweetness of spirit, for they went on in secure Christian profession. But, not having been previously really convinced of their personal guilt before God, and consequently not having fled for refuge to the shed blood of Christ, they became finally the very chiefest targets of the devil, and were sometimes driven back into black despair itself.

God had announced, long before, their common guilt with the worst wretches: None righteous, --no, not one"; "All under sin." But these had somehow slipped in past that message; and had taken hold of this, that they were "dead unto sin." For a true believer, this is a blessed word of deliverance. But for one who is Christianly religious, who has not really rested, as a guilty ungodly one, in Christ's shed blood, this is a truth dangerous above all. And when Satan attacks such souls, what shall they do? They cannot plead "I am dead to sin," against the devil! Saints overcome him only by the blood of the Lamb. Only the blood of Christ will avail against Satan, or as a real ground of peace, in your own conscience (#Heb 9:14). Christ made peace by the blood of His cross. If you have not yet learned to rest in that only, for eternal peace with God, and as the answer to all Satan's power, let all else alone until you have learned this: if it be at the cost, even, of confessing openly that you have never known true peace before!