

Romans 6:5-10

¹ *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?*

² *God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*

³ *Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*

⁴ *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

⁵ *For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:*

⁶ *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

⁷ *For he that is dead is freed from sin.*

⁸ *Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:*

⁹ *Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.*

¹⁰ *For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.*

Romans 6:5-6

⁵ *For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:*

⁶ *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

Here in verses 5 and 6 we see that our new life in Christ, freed from sin, is likened to resurrection. This needs to become established in our thinking, because Paul will later refer to “death” and “resurrection,” yet he is speaking of our *functional life* in Christ, not physical death and resurrection.

In verse 6 we see that our old man was crucified with Jesus, that the body of sin “might” be destroyed. If something “might” happen, it has the power and potential to happen, thus we say God, being All Powerful, is “might-y,” because He has potential to do all things.

Thus, there is something more God wants to accomplish by our union with Christ that extends beyond our mere positional justification. There is something more that He has provided for us in Christ, and that He desires to accomplish in us, but it is not automatic. It was provided for us so that the body of sin, our body of sin—the “body” of our thought patterns and behaviors—might be destroyed. It now has the potential to be destroyed. There is might or power to accomplish this.

The consequence of natural death is that our physical body will literally be destroyed, but that is not what Paul is speaking of here in verse 6. One of the ultimate results of our justification is a new and glorified body. But we are no longer dealing with justification, therefore we are not dealing with positional truths and realities such as the literal resurrection from the dead. We are dealing with our sanctification, and thus our functional life in Christ. We are dealing with our body of sin *here and now*.

God then expects us, by utilizing the provision He has made for us in our union and identification with Christ, to essentially go to war with sin itself which is in our members. This warfare is not accomplished by natural means however, nor by our own strength or self-sufficiency, but by faith alone.

Essentially, God already did all the work, but our ignorance of this truth keeps us in bondage to our “old man” by the deceitfulness of sin. Sin rings the bell, and our unrenewed minds, with all their ingrained pathways, jump and come beckoning to its call, because that’s all we’ve ever known. Understanding what God has done, and understanding that it is *more than sufficient*, and having absolute faith that what His word says is true, rewires our thinking and aligns it with the spiritual reality inside of us, so that, when sin calls, we simply acknowledge it for what it is—the echoes of a fallen nature that has been put to death.

In these moments we are then able to “mind the things of the Spirit,” as we will read in Romans 8, and the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ then becomes operational within us.

We were crucified with Christ that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Why? Because he who is dead is freed from sin. Death is the inevitable release for all men from the bondage of their mortal bodies. The difference for the unsaved is that though

their mortal body dies, their unregenerate soul retains sin in its heart, they are by nature still children of wrath. We, though still alive physically, were put to death in a spiritual sense, and then united with the spirit and life of Christ Himself.

We were made a new creation spiritually when we believed the gospel, but the mind was not automatically renewed.

The “Law of sin” in our members is not something that initially originated from the flesh, but from the inner man—from our nature. What is left behind once we receive a new nature in Christ are the ghosts of the old man, the patterns that had become hardwired into us by years of helpless obedience to sin.

The “Law of sin” is not an alien force which resides in us, but is the memory of *who we were*. These memories take shape through neuromuscular processes that are inextricably connected. Thus we have accounts of those who have lost limbs who still feel “phantom pains” of those limbs. What we have in the “body of sin” is the phantom pains of our old man. When I say neuromuscular, this relates to the outer man, the connection of the mind to the body. The mind itself utilizes neuronal processes both in thinking and in recruiting bodily movement, and these nerve pathways are like muscle—the pathways you exercise get stronger, while the ones you don't actually atrophy and grow weaker. And so the memory of sin and the potential for sin is very real in both mind and body. It is a Law.

In this there is something fundamentally wrong with our fallen, physical bodies, because of our prior nature recruiting them for sin and training them in sin, changing them and ingraining the pattern of sin into their very substance. The power of sin itself over our inner man however has been broken.

When we believed the gospel, we partook of a new nature. The idea of “original sin,” that we are all born into the world guilty because of Adam’s sin, is not in the Bible. We are all held *personally accountable for our own sins—our* guilt is based upon *our* actions. This is why Romans 1 through 3 has to conclusively prove both Jew and gentile are all under sin (Rom. 3:9), and that all have sinned (Rom. 3:23). What we inherited from Adam was not his guilt, but his *nature*. In this way “many were made sinners,” (Rom. 5:19).

It is a nature, which is received by inheritance, that is the primary issue here.

We see the status of our old nature mentioned in Ephesians 2:

Ephesians 2:1-3

1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

It was *by nature* that we were children of wrath. It wasn't by Adam's sin that we were found guilty before God—that occurs because of the actions we personally take in life. It was because of Adam's transgression however that the very nature of man was changed. This is an issue of *identity*.

Look what Peter says to the circumcision in 2 Peter 1:

2 Peter 1:2-4

2 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

We see here that by *divine power* (the power of the Holy Ghost) obtained through the knowledge of Christ, the circumcision might be able to partake of the divine *nature*.

It is the *nature* of man which is the issue.

When we realize that our old man truly *is* crucified with Christ, and that our very nature has fundamentally changed, we are able to fully appreciate what Paul writes in verse 7, that *he that is dead is freed from sin*.

Romans 6:7-8

7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him...

Verse 7 tells us that he who is dead is free from sin, and verse 8 begins with *now*. The word *now* is pointing us forward and directing us onward in this process as Paul continues to explain.

Now, if we be dead with Christ, and in fact we are, we *believe*...

Verse 8 is clear about the stipulation of belief as *essential* to this process. Faith in this truth is the necessary next step to make Christ's resurrection life a reality *personally and experientially*.

We are dead with Christ, and thus we must also believe that we shall live with Him. We have seen how the word *shall* can denote a legal imperative, and I believe that this is the case here also. When we later come across the phrase "the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ" in Romans 8, no explanation is given whatsoever, thus, we should expect this issue has already been addressed. When we go back to find out what the Spirit has done, we are led right back to Romans 6, where we are presently. What is being referenced in Romans 8 is this very issue, and "shall" here indicates that what is being addressed is a Law. It is legal dictate expressing a Law that is contingent upon faith, but that will always work. We *believe* we *shall*.

The precise word choice of "shall" is a necessary delineation from "may," in that "may" cannot connote an imperative, whereas "shall" can. Shall is distinguished from "will," in that "will" can connote personal choice, as it relates to the human will or desire. This process however is independent of our own effort or desire; it's an act and work of God by immutable laws—namely, the Law of faith (Rom. 3:27), by which personal boasting is excluded, and the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ (Rom. 8:2), by which the life of Christ Himself is supplied to us through the Spirit in our inner man. These are how God has chosen to operate in and through His saints by the gospel today.

This resurrection life of Christ in us is the subject of several subsequent passages in Paul's epistles:

Romans 8:10-11

10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

2 Corinthians 4:7-11

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

8 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

11 For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

Ephesians 5

8 *For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:*

9 *(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)*

10 *Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.*

11 *And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.*

12 *For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.*

13 *But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.*

14 *Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.*

Philippians 3:8-12

8 *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,*

9 *And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:*

10 *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*

11 *If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.*

12 *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.*

I include these passages only to demonstrate that what we are learning here in Romans is the backbone of the rest of the Pauline epistles. It is essential doctrine.

Romans 6:8-10

8 *Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:*

9 *Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.*

10 *For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.*

The battle for the Christian is largely one of belief. Believing these things to be so can be a difficult thing to do in the face of the sin which so easily persists.

We must come to the text of scripture as children, with no agenda, with no preconceived notions, and with no doubting, and must trust its every word. It will *only* work *effectually* in those who *believe* (1 Thess. 2:13)

We see in verse 9 the third of the three "*knowing*" statements related to our union and identification with Christ in death, burial, and resurrection:

- Baptized into Christ's death (v3)
- Our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that we should not serve sin (v6)
- Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him (v9)

These three aspects of our union and identification with Christ must first be firmly *known*. Without a proper understanding of these truths, they will not take effect in the heart. There are of course more "know ye not" statements Paul will make, one of them being in verse 16 of this

chapter, but these three particular issues at hand relate specifically to our union and identification with Christ, and thus with our sanctified life.

Romans 6:8-10

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9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

Christ Himself, in being raised from the dead, dieth no more. Death has no more dominion over Him. But He only died *once*; and in relation to what has occurred in us when we believed, we *too died once*. Thus, the battle is over. There is no “old man” and “new man” together in one body. This type of thinking is normal because of the confusion that surrounds our new nature and the fleshly body which remains, but is technically incorrect.

You do not have “two natures.” Your old man was put to death. There is a finality and totality to this singular death. When we trusted the gospel, we died. And we died to the old nature which held us in bondage. This isn't something that can happen again. This isn't something that needs to happen again. And you yourself are a new creature in Christ.

As we are baptized into Christ, the process we are going through is comparable to what He went through in death, burial, and resurrection; it is “like as,” as we have seen in verse 4. It's not identical in regards to our mortal lives, but is comparable. Thus, just as Christ died unto sin *once*, so we also died unto sin *once*. The battle is over. The power lies in assurance of what God has accomplished.

