

16. Learning What Happens to Our Old Man

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children understand why justification is necessary. We saw that the sin of Adam brought death upon all people. In contrast, the righteous act of Christ made it possible for God to show His grace to many people. Today, we are going to begin a study of the lessons that we want to teach our children so that they can understand how to develop godly righteousness in their daily lives once they place their faith in Christ. They will also equip them to help others learn these same important principles for spiritual growth.

Romans 6:1-2 asks some very important questions when those verses say, “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?” We have seen in several topics that Christ placed His righteousness on us at the moment we placed our faith in Christ. As a result, Paul knew that some people might say that they should continue to sin so that God can show His grace in even greater ways. Paul answered that question with the strongest possible statement. In fact, he used the phrase “Certainly not!” ten times in the book of Romans and a total of 14 times in the books that he wrote to make it clear that the things mentioned were certainly not the things that he was teaching. This helps us to understand that many false teachers were trying to twist the words of Paul to fit their own teachings.

This leads to his next question, how shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? When our sins were placed on Christ and Christ died in our place and for our sin we died to sin. As a result, we are now dead to sin. We have been set free from the law. Galatians 5:1 says, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.” That is why Paul asked whether we should continue to live in sin even though we are no longer slaves to sin. Instead of continuing to live in sin, Galatians 5:13 says, “For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.” In this verse, we see that this liberty that we have been given has now set us free to serve one another in love. Paul is going to explain how to enjoy this liberty.

Romans 6:3-4 says, “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.” Here, we see that when we placed our faith in Christ, we shared in His death. Galatians 2:20 says, “I have been crucified with Christ; 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 for me.” Since we have been baptized into the death of Christ, we were also buried with Him. As a result, we have now been raised to a new life. We see that we are now able to live by faith in the Son of God.

Since we have died with Christ, been buried with Him and raised to newness of life (the new life that we have because Christ is in us), we are now able to walk in newness of life. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, “Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away;

behold, all things have become new.” All things have become new because of the fact that we are able to walk in fellowship with Christ instead of walking in the darkness of sin. 1 John 1:3 says, “That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.” As we walk in fellowship with Christ, we are able to enjoy the newness of life that we have in Christ.

This change that has happened in our lives is explained more fully in Romans 6:5-7 where we read, “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.” Here, we see that we are in the likeness of His resurrection. This means that we have been given spiritual life. Christ told Nicodemus in John 3:6-7, “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.’” We have been born of the Spirit because the Holy Spirit came into our human spirit at the moment that we placed our faith in Christ.

At the moment of salvation, our old man was crucified with Christ. The old man was our old sinful self. Before we became Christians, we were sinners. The moment we placed our faith in Christ, He made us saints because our sin was placed on Christ and buried with Him. Before Adam sinned, he had the freedom and power to do what was right or he had the freedom to sin. Once he sinned, he immediately became a slave to sin. Because our sin was buried with Christ, we are no longer a slave to sin. Our sin was removed as far as the east is from the west; it was buried in the depths of the sea; it was blotted out and God promises to remember it no more. This means that we are now free to choose to do right or choose to sin. This will be explained in more detail in our next topic on Romans 6:11-16.

Because we have died with Christ and have been raised with Him, we have now been freed from our slavery to sin. Before we placed our faith in Christ, Satan held us in fear and bondage. Hebrews 2:14-15 says, “Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Christ became a man so that through death He could destroy him who had the power of death. Of course, that is Satan. That death made it possible for Christ to release us from our bondage to sin at the moment that we placed our faith in Him. This release also set us free from the fear of death.

The fact that we have been freed from sin does not mean that we no longer sin. Instead, it means that we are no longer under the control of sin. We realize that we sin every day. That is why 1 John 1:8-9 says, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” We would actually be deceiving ourselves if we thought that we could now live a sinless life. Instead, we are reminded of the need to confess our sins to maintain our fellowship with Christ. Christ is faithful. He will always forgive and cleanse us. Christ is just. He has the right to forgive and cleanse us because He paid the penalty with His blood on the cross.

Romans 6:8-10 goes on to say, “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.” The fact that we died with Christ means that we can now enjoy life with Him both on this earth and for all eternity. 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10 says, “For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.” While we live here on this earth, we are to live together with Christ. When the Lord takes us to heaven, we will continue to live with Him for all eternity.

Christ died once for all. As a result, He will never die again because death no longer has dominion over Him. The word that is translated “dominion over” means *to have power over or to rule over*. Death will never again rule over Christ. Since we are in Christ, we no longer need to let sin rule over our lives. That is why Romans 6:12 tells us, “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.” This is a key principle to help our children fully understand. We are dead to sin. Sin has lost its control over our lives. Therefore, we are not to let sin rule in our earthly body any longer. We do not need to obey the sinful lusts of our earthly body any longer.

Christ died to sin once for all. This is important to us for two reasons. First, Christ died to pay our penalty for our sin. That is why Romans 6:23 says, “For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” The penalty is paid and we have received eternal life as a free gift. However, there is also a second reason why it is important that Christ died for sin once for all. That second reason is that Christ broke the power of sin over our lives at the moment that we placed our faith in Christ. Romans 6:17-18 says, “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. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.” The fact that Christ set us free from the power of sin at the moment that we placed our faith in Christ means that we now have the power to do what is right as we yield ourselves to righteousness.

Christ chose to do the will of the Father. In the same way, we are now able to “live to God” by living to bring glory to God. We want to help our physical and spiritual children understand clearly what this means to their lives. They are now free to choose to do the will of God. As we yield our human spirit to the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit gives us the power to carry out the will of God. In Romans 7:15-25, we see what happens when we yield to sin as Christians. In Romans 8:1-39, we see what happens when we yield to righteousness as Christians. We want to help our children both understand and learn to explain to others the results of learning to yield to God. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children to understand that their old man has been crucified with Christ.