

Romans Session 74

Dying to Live 4

Romans 6:3-10 (NASB)

³ *Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?*

⁴ *Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.*

⁵ *For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection,*

⁶ *knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin;*

⁷ *for he who has died is freed from sin.*

⁸ *Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,*

⁹ *knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him.*

¹⁰ *For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.*

The idea that the believer can glorify God by continuing in sin apparently was pervasive in the Roman churches and elsewhere, or Paul would not have given it such attention.

In a series of four logical and sequential principles, he reasons from his basic point made in verse 2 that the person who has died to sin cannot continue to live in it.

WE ARE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Romans 6:3a (NASB)

³ *Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ*

So, the first principle is that all true Christians **have been baptized into Christ Jesus**.

When John the Baptist baptized in water for repentance of sin, the clear and obvious intent was a turning to righteousness.

In receiving John's baptism, the sinner renounced his sin and through symbolic cleansing henceforth identified himself with the Messiah and His righteousness. Baptism uniquely represented identification.

Kenneth S. Wuest defines this particular use of baptize (to be baptized) as the introduction or placing of a person or thing into a new environment or into union with something else so as to alter its condition or its relationship to its previous environment or condition. (Romans in the Greek New Testament [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955], pp. 96-97).

In his first letter to Corinth, Paul spoke of Israel's being baptized into Moses;

1 Corinthians 10:1-2 (NASB)

¹ *For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea;*

² *and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea;*

This symbolized the people's identity or solidarity with Moses as God's spokesman and leader and the placing of themselves under his authority.

By that identity and submission, they participated in the leadership and consequent blessings and honor of Moses. The faithful Israelite was, as it were, fused with Moses, who was fused with God.

In a similar but infinitely more profound and permanent way, **all of us**, that is, all Christians, **have been baptized into Christ Jesus**, thus permanently being immersed into Him, so as to be made one with Him.

It should be noted here that the Greek term as well as the concept call for water baptism being by immersion in order to symbolize this reality properly.

In other passages, Paul affirmed the importance of water baptism in obedience to the Lord's direct command

1 Corinthians 1:13-17 (NASB)

¹³ *Has Christ been divided? Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?*

¹⁴ *I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius,*

¹⁵ *so that no one would say you were baptized in my name.*

¹⁶ *Now I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized any other.*

¹⁷ *For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not in cleverness of speech, so that the cross of Christ would not be made void.*

Ephesians 4:1-6 (NASB)

¹ *Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,*

² *with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love,*

³ *being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

⁴ *There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling;*

⁵ *one Lord, one faith, one baptism,*

⁶ *one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.*

Now realize that that is only the outward symbol of baptism to which he refers here.

He is speaking metaphorically of the spiritual immersion of believers into Christ through the Holy Spirit, of the believer's intimate oneness with his divine Lord.

It is of the same truth that Jesus spoke;

Matthew 28:19-20 (NASB)

¹⁹ *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,*

²⁰ *teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

And also, when John talks about that fellowship;

1 John 1:1-3 (NASB)

¹ *What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life—*

² *and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—*

³ *what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.*

In first Corinthians Paul speaks of it as the believer's being one spirit with Christ;

1 Corinthians 6:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ *But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him.*

Paul also explains to the Galatian believers that;

Galatians 3:27 (NASB)

²⁷ *For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.*

In each instance, the idea is that of being totally encompassed by and unified with Christ.

In the light of that incomprehensible truth that Paul so strongly rebukes the sexual immorality of some of the Corinthian believers exclaiming incredulously;

1 Corinthians 6:15 (NASB)

¹⁵ *Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be!*

Now as noted throughout the book of Romans, salvation not only is God's reckoning a sinner as righteous but of *granting* him a new, righteous disposition or nature.

The believer's righteousness in Christ is an earthly as well as a heavenly reality, or else it is not a reality at all.

His new life is a divine live.

That is why it is impossible for a true believer to continue to live in the same sinful way in which he lived before being saved.

Many people interpret Paul's argument in Romans 6:3-10 as referring to water baptism.

However, Paul is simply using the physical analogy of water baptism to teach the spiritual reality of the believer's union with Christ.

Water baptism is the outward identification of an inward reality, faith in Jesus' death, burial and resurrection.

Paul was not advocating salvation by water baptism; that would have contradicted everything he had just said about salvation by grace and not works in Romans chapters 3-5, which has no mention of water baptism.

Water baptism was a public symbol of faith in God.

The apostle Peter said baptism is a mark of salvation because it gives outward evidence in an inward faith in Christ.

1 Peter 3:21 (NASB)

²¹ *Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,*

Titus says the same thing;

Titus 3:4-5 (NASB)

⁴ But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared,

⁵ He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,

Paul is recorded as saying in Acts;

Acts 22:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ 'Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.'

This verse is not saying that you are saved by baptism but rather that now that he has a relationship with God he must give evidence of that by being baptized. Why, because it is a symbol of genuine saving faith.

The Roman believers were well aware of the symbol of baptism.

When Paul says **do you not know**, he is in effect saying, "*are you ignorant of the meaning of our own baptism? Have you forgotten what your baptism symbolized?*"

They were unaware that water baptism symbolizes the spiritual reality of being immersed into Jesus Christ. The tragedy is that many mistake the symbol of water baptism as the means of salvation rather than the demonstration of it.

To turn a symbol into the reality is to eliminate the reality, which in this case is salvation by grace alone through faith in Christ.

Now next week we will not have the Romans study but will pick it up again the next Sunday.

At that time, we will take up the 2nd of four arguments by Paul, that being

THAT WE ARE IDENTIFIED IN CHRIST'S DEATH AND RESURRECTION.