

## Romans Session 76

### Dying to Live 6

*Romans 6:1-7 (NASB77)*

<sup>1</sup> *What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase?*

<sup>2</sup> *May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?*

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

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

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

<sup>6</sup> *knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin;*

<sup>7</sup> *for he who has died is freed from sin.*

Last time we were discussing the idea of a dual nature in man. We said that this perverted view is taught even in evangelical churches and it leads to false and destructive doctrine, that hinders growth in believers.

In verse six, Paul has laid out three marvelous truths that should protect believers from such false views about the old and new natures.

1. That our old self was crucified with Him
2. That our body of sin might be done away with
3. That we are no longer slaves to sin.

Let's take these one at a time;

First the truth that **our old self was crucified with Him**, that is with Christ.

Crucifixion does not simply produce extreme suffering; it produces death.

To be crucified is to die.

The **old self** of every believer **was crucified with** his Lord, or else he has not been saved.

There is no such thing as a true Christian who has not died with Christ.

In Ephesians, Paul writes some detail about the **Old self**, or the old man.

He tells believers:

*Ephesians 4:20-24 (NASB77)*

<sup>20</sup> *But you did not learn Christ in this way,*

<sup>21</sup> *if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus,*

<sup>22</sup> *that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,*

<sup>23</sup> *and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind,*

<sup>24</sup> *and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.*

The Christians new self is actually in God's own likeness!

*John Murray and other New Testament scholars have pointed out, both "Lay aside" (v22) and "Put on (v24) translate Greek infinitives that in this context should be rendered as infinitives of result. In other words, Paul is not giving an admonition or command but rather a statement of fact about what has already been accomplished, finished. Murry therefore translates verse 22 as, "So that ye have put off according to the former manner life the old man" (Principles of Conduct [Grand Rapids: Eerdman, 1957], see pp. 211-19)*

*Another scholar, Bishop Handley Moule, translated that verse as, "Our old man, our old state, as out of Christ and under Adam's headship, under guilt and in moral bondage, was crucified with Christ." (The Epistle to the Romans [London: Pickering & Inglis, n.d.], p. 164).*

*Still another expositor and commentator, the late Martyn Lloyd Jones, rendered the verse: "Do not go on living as if you were still that old man, because that old man has died. Do not go on living as if he was still there" (Romans: An Exposition of Chapter 6 [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972], p. 64).*

Even if verse 22 is taken as a command, it would not be a command to reject the dictates of our old self which the apostle has just declared has been crucified and is now dead, and therefore cannot dictate to us anymore.

It would rather be a command for us not to follow the remaining memories of its sinful ways, as if we were still under its evil mastery.

Paul again declaring that true believers have already been removed from the presence and control of the old sinful self, Paul tells the Galatian church;

***Galatians 5:24 (NASB77)***

***<sup>24</sup> Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.***

In a somewhat parallel passage in Colossians, Paul clearly states that a believer's putting off the old self is a fait accompli, something that has already and irreversibly been accomplished.;

***Colossians 3:9-10 (NASB77)***

***<sup>9</sup> Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices,***

***<sup>10</sup> and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him***

It was not that every Colossian believer was fully mature and had managed to gain complete mastery over the residual old self.

Paul was saying rather, that every believer, at any level of maturity can claim that his old self already has been laid aside, with its evil practices and he or she will be speaking the truth.

In the same way, his new self in Christ is already being renewed into conformity with the very image of the God who has recreated him.

That then brings us to the **second** great truth, that **our body of sin might be done away with.**

The phrase **might be** does not here carry the idea of possibility but is simply and idiomatic way of stating an already existing fact.

In other words, our historical death to sin at the cross in Christ results in our **sin** being **done away with**. These truths are so nearly synonymous that verse six is almost a tautology.

Sin that is dead (**crucified**) is obviously **done away with**>

Paul states the truth in those two different ways in order to make his point more understandable and to remove any possible ambiguity.

Both the NASB (**done away with**) and the King James (**destroyed**) can suggest that **our body of sin** is annihilated. But *katargeo*, (**done away with**) literally means "to render inoperative or invalid", that is to make something ineffective by removing its power of control. That meaning is seen clearly in the term's rendering in such other passages in Romans as 3:3, 31 (nullify), 4:14 (nullified), 7:2 (released from).

As every mature Christian learns, the more he grows in Christ, the more he becomes aware of sin in his life. In many places, Paul uses the terms body and flesh to refer to sinful propensities that are intertwined with physical weaknesses and pleasures (Rom. 8:10-11, 13, 23).

New birth in Christ brings death to the sinful self, but it does not bring death to the temporal flesh and its corrupted inclinations until the future glorification.

Obviously, a Christian's body is potentially good and is intended to do only good things, else Paul would not have commanded the following;

**Romans 12:1-2 (NASB)**

***<sup>1</sup> Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.***

***<sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.***

It can respond to the new holy disposition, but does not always do so.

Paul explains more fully in Chapter seven of this letter, a believer's unredeemed humanness of which he uses his own as example, remains with him until he is transformed to heavenly glory.

And as both scripture and experience clearly teach, the remaining humanness somehow retains certain weakness and propensities to sin.

The tyranny and penalty of sin both in and over the Christian's life have been broken, but sin's potential for expression in his life has not yet been fully removed.

His human weaknesses and instincts make him capable of succumbing to Satan's temptations when he lives apart from the Spirit's Word and power.

He is a new, redeemed, holy creation incarcerated in unredeemed flesh.

To combat that remaining weakness in regard to sin, the apostle admonishes believers later in the present chapter:

*Romans 6:19 (NASB)*

<sup>19</sup> *I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.*

Now then that brings us to the **third** great truth about the old and new natures and that is that **we should no longer be slaves to sin.**

Again, the translation leaves the meaning somewhat ambiguous.

But the Apostle makes unequivocal a few verses later,

*Romans 6:17-18 (NASB)*

<sup>17</sup> *But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed,*

<sup>18</sup> *and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness*

All the verbs in this passage makes it clear that a believer's slavery under sin has already been broken by Christ and is henceforth a thing of the past.

Later in the chapter he reiterates the truth that the believer's new enslavement to righteousness is made possible because he is now enslaved to God (v22)

Put another way, the immediate context of **should no longer be slaves of sin** carries the more precise and extremely significant meaning that believer can **no longer be slaves of sin.**

Paul is not teaching that a Christian is no longer capable of committing sin but that he no longer is under the compulsion and tyranny of sin, nor will he dutifully and solely obey sin as he formerly did. For all genuine Christians, slavery to sin no longer exists.

The reason of course is because that, **he who has died is freed from sin.**

Because the old life **has died** what characterized the old life has died with it, most importantly slavery to **sin**, from which all the redeemed in Christ are once and forever **freed.**

In his first epistle Peter strongly emphasizes that truth;

*1 Peter 4:1-2 (NASB)*

<sup>1</sup> *Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,*

<sup>2</sup> *so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.*

Now, Peter is not teaching sinless perfection in this present earthly life, because he goes on to give the severe warning;

*1 Peter 4:15 (NASB)*

<sup>15</sup> *Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler;*

Martyn Lloyd Jones offers a helpful illustration of the believer's relation to his old sinful disposition (*Romans: An Exposition of Chapter 6* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972, pp.26-27]).

*He pictures two adjoining fields, one owned by Satan and one owned by God, that are separated by a road. Before salvation, a person lives in Satan's field and is totally subject to his jurisdiction. After salvation, a person works in the other field, now subject only to God's jurisdiction. As he plows in the new field, however, the believer is often harassed by his former master, who seeks to entice him back into the old sinful ways. Satan often succeeds in temporarily drawing the believer's attention away from his new Master and his new way of life. But he is powerless to draw the believer back into the old field of sin and death.*

So, Paul clearly give the arguments to keep us from making the mistake of believing we have two living natures in us that is fighting for control. We have only one nature, that of the living God. While we yet live in a corrupt body which has propensities to sin, we are no longer slaves to sin. We can overcome by the blood of the Lamb and by the Word of God and by His Living Spirit within. Victory can and should be increasingly ours in His Name.