

United with Christ in His Death

Romans 6:1-7

Sermon-in-a-Sentence: When we accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, our old fallen sinful Adamic nature was crucified with Him so that we no longer have to obey its demands and fulfill its desires.

In Romans chapters 3, 4 and 5, Paul has explained the doctrine of Justification by Faith. That is, how we can be **Justified** by God and declared Righteous in His sight. Paul tells us how we can be in right relationship with God through faith in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is *Positional Righteousness*. In Christ, we are *Positionally Righteous* before God.

Now, in Romans chapters 6, 7 and 8 Paul's focus is on *Practical Righteousness*. That is, how we can be **Sanctified** and become holy in God's sight in our daily lives.

In these chapters, we are seeking the answers to some very basic and important questions in the Christian life:

1. How can we overcome the tyranny of sin in our daily lives?
2. What spiritual truths must we know and understand?
3. What mindset (mental perspective) must we adopt toward sin and toward ourselves?
4. How can we appropriate the Resurrection Power of Jesus Christ, the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, so that we can be victorious in our daily battle against sin?
5. What must we do? What practical steps must we take in our daily lives in order to conquer sin?

Romans 6:1-4 – Overview: Our Spiritual Union with Christ in His Death and Resurrection

1. We must not presume upon the grace of God. (vss. 1-2a)
2. We must realize and constantly remember and live in light of the fact that, in Christ, we have died to sin. (vs. 2b)
3. Our baptism (and that of others) should serve as a constant reminder to us that we have been spiritually united with Christ in His death to sin. (vs. 3)
4. And that we are spiritually united with Christ in His resurrection to life. (vs. 4)
5. Verses 1-4 are an introduction and an overview of what follows in verses 5-14.
 - Verse 3 – our spiritual union with Christ in His death, is further explained in verses 5-7.
 - Verse 4 – our spiritual union with Christ in His resurrection is explained in verses 8-10.
 - Verses 11-14 – the application of these two concepts to our daily life is explained.

Romans 6:5-7 – Our Spiritual Union with Christ in His Death

1. When we accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, our "old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with" (vs. 6).
 - a. *Our old self* refers to our fallen sinful nature, the nature that we inherited from Adam at birth; that which motivates and empowers us to rebel against God and to choose to sin.
 - b. *The body of sin* refers to the manifestation of our sin nature in sinful attitudes and actions—a sinful manner of living; our physical body which is used by our sinful nature as an instrument and vehicle of sin.

- c. Our fallen sinful nature was crucified with Christ so that our lifestyle¹ of sin and disobedience to God might be done away with—that it might be buried and left for dead.
2. Does the fact that our fallen sinful nature has been crucified with Christ mean that it is dead and no longer has any influence on us? No, unfortunately not!
 - a. I find that I still give in to temptation and I still choose to commit acts of sin.
 - b. Ephesians 4:20-24; Galatians 6:7-10; Romans 8:13; Romans 13:12-14; Luke 9:23.
 - Our nature manifests and reveals itself in our behavior, the deeds of the body.
 - Our sinful nature manifests itself in sinful behaviors characterized by death and destruction; in other words, evil.
 - Our new nature, which is controlled and empowered by the Holy Spirit, manifests and reveals itself in behaviors characterized by life (eternal life = a new *quality* of life—godliness and righteousness) / “doing good” / good deeds / good works that are pleasing and glorifying to God; faith in God and obedience to His Word.
 - Our sinful nature must be re-crucified every day (Luke 9:23)—it is crucified but it is not yet dead and gone!
 - Our old self, our fallen sinful nature, is the motivating and empowering force that lives within us and that uses our physical body as the instrument, the vehicle, to express and to fulfill its desires and impulses. (The “body of sin”, Romans 6:6).
 - Our new self, our new nature, empowered and controlled by the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, is the motivating and empowering force that uses our body as the instrument and vehicle of righteousness and good works.
 - Know / Grow / Show: We are to Grow and Become more like Christ by Cultivating Christlike Character (our new nature) and Conduct (manifested in a body of righteousness). Our character manifests and reveals itself in our conduct.
 - The body is used to express and to fulfill the desires and impulses of either our old fallen sinful nature or our new, righteous and godly nature.
 - The Holy Spirit is not our new nature but He implants it within us when we receive Christ as Lord and Savior and He dwells within us to help us cultivate it and nourish it in true righteousness and holiness.
 - Clearly, as believers, we possess both an old sinful nature, made in the image and likeness of Adam and a new righteous nature, created in the image and likeness of God.
 - Our old, sinful nature cannot and never will be redeemed or reformed—it can only be crucified and put to death on a daily basis!
 - Our old sinful nature has been crucified and ultimately, when the Lord comes back at the Rapture or we die and go to be with Him, it will perish forever!
 - But in the meantime, like one who has been crucified and nailed to a cross, condemned to death but not yet fully dead, our old sinful nature continues to scream at us and influence us and demand that we feed it and give it something to drink. And when we give in to its desires and impulses, that’s exactly what we do—we feed it and keep it alive and give it more strength to influence and corrupt our daily lives. We can indulge our sinful nature, but we will never satisfy it!

¹ Lifestyle = “A way of life or style of living that reflects the attitudes and values of a person or group.” (*The American Heritage Dictionary*)