

Are We Dead Yet?

9.8.24

Message 18

Romans Series

Romans 6:1–11 (CSB)

6 What should we say then? Should we continue in sin so that grace may multiply? **2** Absolutely not! How can we who died to sin still live in it? **3** Or are you unaware that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? **4** Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in newness of life. **5** For if we have been united with him in the likeness of his death, we will certainly also be in the likeness of his resurrection. **6** For we know that our old self^r was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be rendered powerless so that we may no longer be enslaved to sin, **7** since a person who has died is freed from sin. **8** Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him, **9** because we know that Christ, having been raised from the dead, will not die again. Death no longer rules over him. **10** For the death he died, he died to sin once for all time; but the life he lives, he lives to God. **11** So, you too consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Introduction: Are you weird at funerals?

A. I can't count how many times I've stood at the side of a casket.

1. Unfortunately, death is part of this fallen world.
2. Because Adam sinned, death entered the world.
3. Because I have sinned, I, too, am destined to die.

B. I bet almost every one of us who have been at a funeral has done this one thing:

1. We look to see if the person's chest is moving.
2. We've all done it!

3. We expect movement, and it's like we can see what isn't actually there.

- a. Dead things do not move.
- b. Dead things do not struggle.
- c. Dead things are not affected by politics, cultures, and whims.

C. Paul reminded believers that they have died with Jesus through baptism and live a new life free from sin.

1. The question our text asks of us today is, "Are we dead yet?"

2. Romans 6 is mostly about our death to sin and our resurrection to new life in Christ Jesus.

3. The Apostle Paul's argument is complex, but his point is simple:

- a. You cannot live in sin and live for Jesus at the same time.
- b. Life in sin means separation from Jesus.
- c. Death to sin means participating in Jesus' resurrection.

Let us look at Paul's argument.

1. Dead and Buried. Vs 4

A. In verse 4, Paul explains the how, Where, and why of dying to sin and self.

- 1. He says, "Therefore, we were buried":
- 2. How were we buried: By Baptism.
- 3. Where were we buried: into death
- 4. Why were we buried: so that we too may walk in newness of life.

B. How were we buried with Jesus: By Baptism.

1. Water Baptism is absolutely needed for believers.
 - a. At this point, someone usually reminds me of the thief on the cross.
 1. True, he was not water baptized.
 - a. But he actually participated in Jesus' death by identifying with him on the cross.
 - b. And he was physically crucified, too.
 - c. The thief is the exception, not the rule.
 2. If you have the chance, you must be baptized.
 3. Jesus was baptized in water, and so too have all who have followed Him.
 - b. Baptism to the Apostle Paul was more than symbolic.
 - c. Several meaningful things are connected with baptism.
 1. Dying to self and sin. (Which is today's emphasis)
 2. Sealing with the Holy Spirit.
 3. Resurrection to new life.
 4. Entrance into the Body of Christ.
 5. All of these, the Bible says, are pictured at Baptism.
 - d. Beyond any other sign, baptism declares we are with Christ Jesus.
 1. Baptism means a break with the old life.
 2. Believers are held accountable for their profession of faith at baptism.
 3. Baptism is the moment that distinguishes our old life of sin from our new life with Jesus.
2. For the Romans, baptism was more than a celebration.

a. In American Christianity, baptism is a time of celebration and excitement.

1. We cheer and clap.

2. Family comes to witness our baptism.

b. But the word "baptism" to the Romans was a word of violence.

c. QUOTE... "to "baptize" evoked associations of violence. It meant "immerse" rather than "dip". It was used, for example, of people being drowned, or of ships being sunk."¹

d. For the Greek-speaking Christians in Rome, the word Baptizo pictured death.

e. And DEATH is the theme of Romans 6.

3. In Paul's mind, baptism is death.

a. Before we can live with Christ, we must die with Him.

b. All throughout Paul's letters, Paul uses crucifixion and baptism to remind believers that we must die to self, crucify ourselves daily, and bury the old me.

c. I love what the Puritan John Knox said: "We have died, once for all, to sin; can we breathe its air again?"²

4. Paul declares that previously we had been "dead in sin," but now we are "dead to sin."³

a. I can't help but wonder, "How dead are we to sin?"

¹ Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), 246. See also NIDNTTE Volume 1, Baptizo, page 460.

² Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), 246.

³ Pillar commentary 245.

b. Are we living in such a way that grace must continue to multiply and cover over all our sins?

c. Are we living a life that causes people to point, and stare, and say, "look, the old man is still alive!"?

1. Sometimes our attitude sounds like this one from the German poet, Heinrich Heine:

2. "Of course, God will forgive me; that's his job."

3. But this is the very problem Paul is addressing!

4. Believers cannot say, "I can keep on sinning because God's grace never runs out."

5. The Holy Spirit does not save us so that we can keep on sinning, but so that we can cease from sinning.

5. Salvation is far more than raising a hand on a Sunday.

a. Salvation is more than giving your heart to Jesus and asking Him to live inside you.

b. Salvation is more than going to church, giving money, and being a good person.

c. Salvation is death to our:

1. wants,

2. passions,

3. desires, and

3. actions

d. Salvation is giving all that we are and all that we are becoming to the hands of God and telling Him to swing the hammer that crucifies our old self and drowns the old me in the waters of baptism.

We are buried with Christ by Baptism....

C. Where: With Jesus into death.

1. Before you can experience the life Jesus gives, you must experience the death that He received.
2. A death to self, sin, and the former ways of life.
3. You cannot live for Jesus while dragging the old self with you.

a. **Matthew 16:25** (CSB)

²⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of me will find it.

b. Dying for Jesus is worth it, but it is painful.

4. Dying for Jesus and crucifying self is not easy or funny,

a. This is not Weekend at Bernie's.

b. This is not Clark Griswold tying dead Aunt Edna to the top of the car.

5. This is deciding that we will identify ourselves with Jesus to the extent that "I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."

a. The process of this death, symbolized by crucifixion and baptism, may be painful.

b. But the result, the why, is worth it.

D. Why were we buried with Jesus: So we may walk in the newness of life.

6 What should we say then? Should we continue in sin so that grace may multiply? ² Absolutely not! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³ Or are you unaware that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in newness of life.

1. The death Jesus is calling us to is not pointless.

- a. The Apostle Paul calls us to die to sin because it is the only death worth dying.
 - b. Why should you die in your sin when Jesus invites us to die to your sin?
 - 1. If I die in my sin, then sin wins.
 - 2. If I die to my sin through Jesus, then I win.
 - c. Why should we follow the first Adam, who brought death, when we can follow the Second Adam, who brought eternal life?
2. Because we are dead to sin and we are baptized with Jesus into His death, we cannot let sin continue in our lives.
- a. Should we keep on sinning so that grace may multiply?
 - b. Absolutely not! Heaven forbid, Paul says.
 - c. Grace is not an excuse for sinful living.

2. Dead and Resurrected. V 5-11

Notice the flow of verses 5-11.

⁵ For if we have been united with him in the likeness of his death, we will certainly also be in the likeness of his resurrection. ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be rendered powerless so that we may no longer be enslaved to sin, ⁷ since a person who has died is freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him, ⁹ because we know that Christ, having been raised from the dead, will not die again. Death no longer rules over him. ¹⁰ For the death he died, he died to sin once for all time; but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹ So, you too consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

A. Only the dead are resurrected.

- 1. We can't live for Jesus if we haven't died to sin.
- 2. We can't have eternal life if we haven't been united with Jesus in the likeness of his death.

3. Jesus doesn't want to resuscitate us; he wants to resurrect us.

a. Before we can be raised with Jesus in this new life, we have to die to the old life first.

b. Resurrections require deaths.

B. Paul tells us that our old self was crucified with Christ.

1. When we give ourselves fully over to Jesus, submit our will and desires to Him, and obey the Scriptures by being baptized with Him, we move from a life ruled by sin to a life free from sin.

2. What does that mean?

a. It means I don't have to sin.

1. No, we aren't perfect.

2. No, we are not sinless.

3. But the excuses for sin are removed.

b. Sin becomes a willful choice and decision instead of an automatic, predetermined behavior.

c. Yes, there are some exemptions and difficulties, such as addiction, where biologically and chemically we are addicted to a behavior.

3. But Paul is speaking very clear here:

a. Excuses for living in sin do not apply to those who have died to sin and have been resurrected with him.

b. VS 6. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be rendered powerless so that we may no longer be enslaved to sin, ⁷ since a person who has died is freed from sin.

4. Paul is pointing us to a new realm of living that was impossible under the Law.

- a. Because of Jesus, the body ruled by sin is now powerless.
- b. Because of Jesus, we are no longer enslaved to sin.
- c. Because of Jesus, we are freed from sin.

C. In the church today, too many are trying to die to sin without living for Jesus.

1. The world is trying to crucify bad behaviors without dying to self.
2. We want behavior management without actually dying to ourselves.
3. We want to manage sin instead of killing it.
4. We cannot let live what God tells us to kill.
5. We cannot bless what God has cursed.
6. God will never anoint your sin.

3. Alive and believing.

⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be rendered powerless so that we may no longer be enslaved to sin, ⁷ since a person who has died is freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him, ⁹ because we know that Christ, having been raised from the dead, will not die again. Death no longer rules over him. ¹⁰ For the death he died, he died to sin once for all time; but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹ So, you too consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

A. Where does this change begin?

1. It begins in our thinking.
2. In verses 6-11, Paul says, "For we know, we believe, we consider."

B. Do you know that your old self was crucified?

1. Do you believe that you live with Jesus?
 - a. Actions follow belief.
 - b. Do my actions speak for my faith or against it?
2. Do you consider/count yourself dead to sin and alive to God?
3. When I forget what Jesus has called me to, I'm prone to go back to sin.
 - a. When I take my eyes off the freedom Jesus gives, I find myself longing for the familiar slavery of sin.
 - b. When I stop dwelling on the truth of God's Word, the lies of the enemy flood in.

Apply. I have some dying to do.

- A. As long as sin is an option, I have some dying to do.
 1. As long as I still desire to live a life contrary to God's will and plan for me, I have some dying to do.
 2. There are times when the old me wants permission to live again, at least for a moment.
 3. The good news is that I don't have to resurrect the old me.
 4. MY old life only has power over me to the extent I enable it.
- B. Do you have some dying to do?
 1. Are there areas in your life where you are harboring sin?
 2. Are there arenas in your life where you are intentionally allowing sin and destructive behavior to not only live in you but to enslave you?
 3. And do you feel that pull from the Holy Spirit to help?
- C. We need not worry about the power of sin if we are committed to the power of the Holy Spirit.
 1. Today, there is help and hope for all of us to live a new life in Jesus.

2. For the next few moments, we are going to take time to pray.
3. We are at a moment of decision:
 - a. For us to continue to grow in faith and belief, we must die to self and to sin.
 - b. Our next season of church growth must have an increased awareness of our need to look like Jesus.
 - c. That begins as we confess Jesus as our Lord and Savior.
 - d. And as we repent of our sin and invite Jesus to change our lives forever.

Prayer of Repentance and Prayer for Change