



Sermon Notes | The Death of Death | Romans 6:5-14

INTRODUCTION

Today is not an ordinary morning for the followers of Jesus Christ. Why is that? Is it because the choir is singing songs to us, or because we are singing different songs, or is it because it is a pillar day for family celebrations? Why is this not an ordinary day? What is so special about this day? To the followers of Christ, this day marks the day that 'death died'. Two thousand years ago, 'humanity' observed the 'death of death'. If the 'cross' was death's check, as it has been said, then the 'empty tomb' was God Almighty's checkmate!

Luke 24:1-9

"But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, 'Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and the third day rise.' And they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest."

'Why are you seeking life among the dead', the angels queried? 'He is not here, but 'has risen'.' And the Apostle Paul confirms this was so.

I Corinthians 15:3-4

"For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures ..."

I Corinthians 15:12-13, 20-23

"Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ... But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ."

I Corinthians 15:35-37a, 42-49

"But someone will ask, 'How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come? You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And what you sow is not the body that is to be. ... So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. Thus it is written, 'The first man Adam became a living being; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit.' But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven."

I Corinthians 15:54-57

"When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory.' 'O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ'."

How are the dead raised? And with what body? What are the implications of 'death's demise'? How did death die? Does it die for all of us? What does it mean for those 'dead to death'? The Bible answers these questions as we continue our study in the book of Romans.

Romans 6:5-14

"For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace."

We are now under 'grace', and because Christ has removed the sting of death in our lives, we too, like Christ, will 'rise'. May we walk appropriately in these truths.

Romans 6:8

"Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him."

The implication is that 'dying with Christ' is to 'live with Christ'. Death has died in Christ, and now the bottom line is, to die with Christ is to live with Christ! Let us consider now what it means to 'die in Christ'.

I. CRUCIFIED WITH HIM: (vv. 5-7)

Romans 6:5-7

"For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin."

Last week we began this chapter with a survey of the doctrine of 'Union with Christ', meaning, if you have stopped believing in yourself, and if you have turned to 'believe' on Christ and placed all your trust in Him, and you have been spiritually 'baptized' into Him, if all this true, and you are no longer in Adam, then it means that you are 'one in Christ'. If all this is true of your 'humanity' then your 'identity' 'is in Him'.

Romans 6:5a

"For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his."

Now, when verse five says, 'if we have been united in death with him', this does not mean that you will actually die on a cross, but you do share in that death. The cross is not yours to do. You could not do what Christ did, yet Christian, you do experience Christ's death—with Him, in Him—in some way. You still have a part in it. We are united in a death like His. It is a union with Christ because He is our active representative. This is 'solidarity' language. It is union by way of Christ standing as 'our head'. 'Union in Christ' means that He not only died, but He has died 'for all', and therefore, 'all in Christ have died'.

II Corinthians 5:14

"For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died..."

And likewise, we are also 'united', not only in 'death' with Christ, but also in 'resurrection'.

Romans 6:6

"We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin."

Verse six is a connecting verse to where we are going next. There is nothing new being said in verse six. Paul has covered the material already, but he uses verse six to pull the ideas altogether. It proves to be a review of what he covered earlier.

1. The 'old self', the old man, was 'crucified with Christ'. This is the kind and type that we were/had in Adam. 'Old' refers to the quality of the self, not the next word in a grammatical sequence. It is a 'radical' descriptive, just as 'newness' in verse four is also.

Romans 6:4

"We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life."

It speaks to 'regeneration', referring to 'new quality' and 'new type'. The 'old man' has died, was 'crucified' with Christ. 'Crucifixion' was more than just death; it was more than suffering or even extreme suffering. The 'crucifixion of Christ' brought about the 'death of the old self', the old man, and 'put to death', crucified, the 'old head'. Therefore, in Christ we are no longer represented by Adam; we are now under a 'new head'. This was a 'headship transfer', from Adam to Christ, and from Adam's old humanity to a 'new humanity' in Christ. The 'old self' died.

2. The 'old self', in totality, the whole man/the whole self, was 'crucified' so that 'the body of sin was brought to nothing'. As a result, we are now 'dead to sin'. Sin no longer has power over us or our bodies. The penalty was paid. The power was removed. The body has 'died to sin'. Sin still exists, and being present remains a 'threat', but it no longer has mastery over our body.

3. We are no longer 'enslaved' to sin. We are 'set free' from 'sin'. But Paul does not say that the one who 'dies to sin' is then free to self and free from everything. No. Such is modern thought, but not Biblical truth!

Romans 6:7

"For one who has died has been set free from sin."

We are now 'justified'. Meaning, we are pardoned from sin's penalty. Thus, we are made right before God. We are declared 'not guilty'. This is a legal release. We are now 'not guilty' of sin before God. This is not 'self' liberation. We become 'dead to sin' but not free to do our own will, to do what 'we' want. We are a 'pardoned criminal', but not free to return to our own standard. No. We are 'not guilty', and are 'reconciled back to God, and are pardoned and free, not to self, and not to Adam, free only to God the Creator. We remain 'enslaved', not to Adam, but to the 'new representative', the 'new head' and 'master'. We remain enslaved only to CHRIST.

II. RAISED WITH HIM: (vv. 8-11)

Romans 6:8-11

"Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus."

Not only were we crucified and reconciled with Him, we are also 'raised with Him'. We 'die' with Him. We 'rise' with Him. We are 'united' in Christ's death.

Romans 6:8

"Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him."

We are 'united' in Christ's life. This is referring to 'life after death'. This is a reference to 'resurrection', not to resuscitation, not to reincarnation. This is concerning 'life after death', 'union' after death, life with Christ, 'union' with Christ after the 'resurrection'.

We do not understand 'resurrection'. We do not tend to think about it. But 'resurrection' does not just mean 'being brought back'. It is not resuscitation. It is not like Jairus' dead daughter being restored, or like Lazarus being raised after he had died.

Mark 5:40b-42a

He (Jesus) "... took the child's father and mother and those who were with him and went in where the child was. Taking her by the hand he said to her, 'Talitha cumi,' which means, 'Little girl, I say you, arise. And immediately the girl got up and began walking ..."

John 11:39a, 43-44

"Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' ... He cried out with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out.' The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.'"

Both of these events were supernatural miracles which Jesus performed. They point to Christ's 'resurrection', but neither the daughter nor Lazarus were 'resurrected'; yes, they were just 'restored' to life, but they will still face death. They will die. So, 'resurrection' is not just being restored. It is more.

But how does one gain 'resurrection'? How does one experience 'life after death'? There remains 'resurrection' confusion. We don't understand or believe that we will 'live after death' otherwise we would not fear death. 'Life after death' is largely seen as fantasy, a farce, or fiction by society. The reality for most is a 'culture of death'. Medically and legally there is a real growing problem around death. People, collectively, try to avoid death, by slowing it down, by stopping it. That is our attempted solution, but death cannot be avoided. We all will die. Even Jesus died (of His own will). Why do we suppose we can stop death from happening? We pretend. We deny death. We avoid death. But in the end, we will die, sooner or later.

And then what? Think about it! You will die. Do you know where you will go? Are you certain? Do you fear death? Do you fear death alone? Do you fear what is coming after death? You should.

God says that it is "appointed for man to die once and then comes judgment," (Hebrews 9:27). It is not all bliss, God points out. And we compound the problem, having a massive 'fear of death', but we do not consider what comes after that. But we can herald

this 'good news' truth, for 'death need not be feared'. You need not 'fear death' again. Today, if you turn from sin, turn from trusting self, turn from closet 'fears of death', turn from denial and 'suppressing truth', and 'repent' and believe and trust in Christ Jesus with your whole heart (not in lip or token expressions, but the whole self thrown into Jesus), then you too will follow Jesus from death to life.

It never will be 'death' again. Death has no dominion over Christ. The sting is gone, the power is out. He will never again die.

Romans 6:9

"We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him."

He will live forever, and by His 'death', sin's power has been overcome. Soon you will die, but in Christ, so too will you be 'resurrected' after death. Yes, you will die, but 'death' will not lead to judgement and eternal punishment. Scripture is clear:

Revelation 20:11-15

"Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

His death gives 'right standing' before God to those who 'repent and believe', not for a time, or for a thousand years, but for 'forever'. Right standing, justification, and eternal life in the presence of the One who made you. This is the promise to those who follow Christ.

Romans 6:10-11

"For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus."

So you also! Jesus Christ paid the price, and 'every believer' is now also alive to God in Jesus Christ. Consider yourself 'dead to sin'. This is a must. This is how you will be 'raised in Him'. 'Union with Christ' means no longer in Adam as we deserve, but 'united in Him'; it is to 'die in Him' and be 'raised in Him'.

Meanwhile, there are implications for today. Being in Christ is to 'rise' to 'newness' in life, and this is now, today! The 'resurrection' is not happening yet, but 'new life' has begun.

Romans 6:12

"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions."

The 'baptised' are not told to wait till 'resurrection'. No! 'New life' is now. 'Rise' to 'newness' of life now!

III. LIVING IN HIM: (vv. 12-14)

This is the reality of our 'new practice' and our 'new imitation'. We've been made right before God. Our new 'identity' and our new 'position' are now in Christ, and this truth now has implications for living life. No longer are we living 'the old life'. Such is foreign to New Testament teaching. There is to be no 'inching' around on the ground like caterpillars. No! Rather, new Christians with 'new wings' are to be flying, undertaking their 'new life' in Christ. The 'old self' has passed away; all is now new.

Romans 6:12-14

"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace."

This is what is true, and what must be practised. Let not sin reign in the mortal body. Present yourselves to God. You've been brought from 'death' to 'life'. Sin has no more power over you. These verses lead us from 'position' to 'practise', to what we must do. There are implications that flow out. Identity is now 'regenerated' in Christ. The Word of God exhorts this truth. Therefore it is crucial that the 'professing believer' must live the Christian life, must act like a believer! He is 'prone not to', and therefore must 'press in'.

There are two reasons alone why we act like 'the old man':

i. We forget our new position in Christ:

Though we truly have a 'new position in Christ', we forget the 'power' that comes with the 'new life'. It is important to remember that in Christ, you are 'dead to sin'. Sin no longer reigns, (actually, legally, or truly), and therefore you are not powerless to live the 'new life'. Sin's power is now broken!

Romans 6:12

"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions."

Romans 6:13

"Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness."

In Adam, in the 'old life', we could not help practising death, we had no choice, but now 'in Christ' you are free to live as you ought to, and as you now can. You have been brought from 'death' to 'life'. Why then would you want to do this, to continue to live and practice 'death'? A commentator observes, "Sin living is like digging up a corpse for fellowship." This is trying to find happiness with the dead. As 'saved' Christians, we are 'new creations', though still with a dying body. We are in 'transition', being 'sanctified' between 'justification' and 'glorification'. Sin's power is broken. New habits are forming. In Christ, there is only one direction.

OR

2. We do not have a new position:

You are still in Adam, in the old self, and do not have 'union with Christ'. The problem is not 'forgetful thinking', it is 'false security'. If sin is a 'pattern of life', if one's members 'obey its passions' and are 'instruments for sin', if sin is still 'presenting', then sin has dominion over you. It is not simply just a carnal Christian believer, a lover of Jesus who went through a bad experience, which is true of us all. No! Sin has dominion over you still! You remain under the Law. You remain under 'condemnation', are 'guilty', not 'justified', not okay. You remain in sin; you remain in Adam. And therefore, you are not 'living in Christ', not living under 'grace', and things are NOT okay.

But we need not stay in this place. You do not need to live or die like this. 'Repent'. 'Turn to Christ'.

'Live after death'. 'Come under grace'. Today, you can be 'not guilty', 'forgiven', and truly free. Turn from 'obedience to sin'. Sin is an 'awful master', but the chains can be cut. 'Pardon' and 'forgiveness' are available, regardless of your sin. Turn and 'repent'. Become 'forgiven' now! The true 'death of death', the death of our members, can die because of 'His grace', because of Christ and His obedience, given to you. Today can be the first Sunday you experience 'resurrection', for 'resurrection' lies beyond death's control. 'Death' cannot touch or hold the 'the believer'. 'Death' dies to you as a 'resurrected believer'.

Humanity's only hope is in Christ Alone! 'Unity' with Him is our only hope. In Christ, 'death dies' to the 'believer'.