

One of the things we need to take note of is the tense Paul uses in verse 1. Paul is not looking forward to a future resurrection as a distant hope but is declaring that we have *already* been raised with Christ. This is because God's Word clearly communicates that our eternal life begins at the moment of our salvation, not at some nebulous point after physical death. We see this truth affirmed in passages such as Colossians 2:12–13, Ephesians 2:4–6, John 5:24–25, Romans 6:4–6, and 1 John 5:11–13. In John 5:24–25, Jesus makes it unmistakably clear that those who believe in Him “have eternal life” and “have passed from death to life.” Therefore, although we still await the completion of our sanctification and the resurrection of our physical bodies, we are not waiting for our eternal souls to be reborn or remade—that has already taken place. Thus, we ought to live in alignment with the eternal, Spirit-filled life that God has placed within us.

Paul is therefore calling believers to live true and authentic lives consistent with who they now are in Christ. As Christians, we often desire to avoid hypocrisy, yet in doing so some may suppress our good works out of fear that a sinful person striving to follow God appears to be hypocritical. This, however, is the wrong response. It is actually the times that we sin that we are hypocritical not the quick running back to Christ and living in his grace. When we lower the standard of godly living to avoid the pain of failure or appearance of hypocritical, we set our sights on pleasing man rather than God. Such self-protection only leads to a worldly sense of justification rather than genuine holiness.

Likewise, we must remember that just as we have two lives through Christ—one spiritual that is made new now and one physical that will be restored at the resurrection and return of Christ — so too must we experience two deaths. We must not only die physically at the end of our lives but also continually put to death the sinful desires and worldly tendencies that remain in us. These sins stand in direct contradiction to our new nature in Christ.