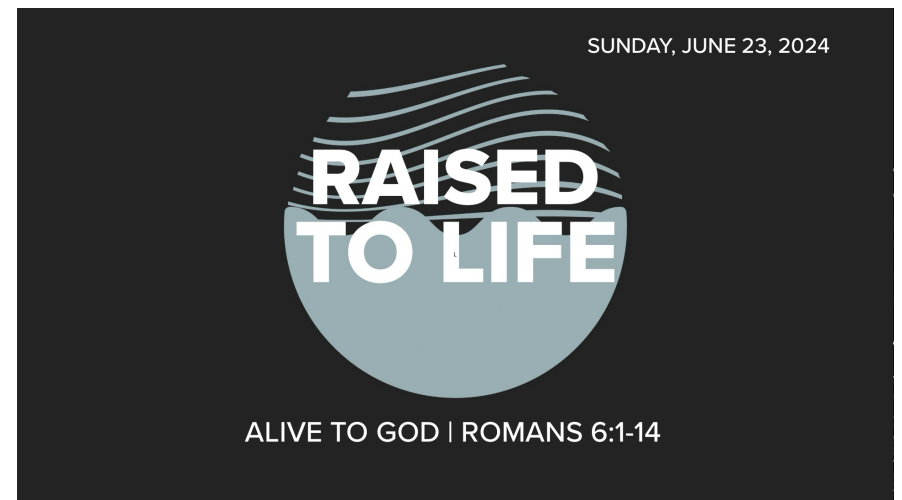


2. John Mark Comer has written a helpful book on the Christian life entitled “Practicing the Way.” He challenges us to “Be with Jesus, Become Like Jesus, and to Do as He did” In the same manner Paul challenges us to look to Christ for our pattern of life. He reminds us “The death he died he died to sin once for all” and “the life he lives he lives to God.”
 - a. Why should we adopt Christ’s pattern of life as our pattern for life?
 - b. What does it mean for us to die to sin in order to live for God?

3. Michael Bird writes, “Union with Christ is both indicative and imperative, a reality *in us* that requires further action *by us*.” “Count yourself dead to sin and alive to Christ” is the first of five imperatives (or commands) that Paul offers us as practical ways we can live out the realities of our union with Christ. He tells us
 - *Count yourself dead to sin and alive to Christ (v. 11).*
 - *Do not let sin reign in your mortal bodies so that you obey it’s evil desires (v. 12).*
 - *Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness (v. 13a).*
 - *Offer yourself to God as those who have been brought from death to life (v. 13b).*
 - *Offer every part of yourself to him as instruments of righteousness (v. 13c).*
 - a. Why is it important that we internalize the truths about who we are in Christ before we attempt to live for Christ?
 - b. Why is it important that we offer ourselves to God rather than simply trying to restrain sinful impulses?
 - c. What are some of the daily choices we will need to make if we want to die to sin in order to live for Christ?

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One of the great mysteries of the Christian faith is that “those who are in Christ” are so organically joined to Christ that his life becomes our life, his death our death, and his resurrection our hope in life and death.

In the moments before suffering the agony of the cross, Jesus promised his followers:

I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. (John 14:16-20)."

Remarkably Jesus describes our union with him in the very same breadth and with the very same language as he describes his union with the Father, “On that day you will realize that I am in the Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.”

Paul has this same idea in mind when he reminds us that our union with Christ is vividly on display in baptism. “We were buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life (Romans 6:4).”

As we anticipate our baptism celebration next Sunday evening we’ve explored some deeply meaningful passages on baptism. We’ve looked at our Lord who openly identified with us in baptism in order to fulfill all righteousness (Matthew 3:13-17). We have looked at the three thousand who openly identified with our Lord in repentance and baptism on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:37-41). Now we turn to Paul’s theological rich treatment of baptism in Romans 6.

A CRITICAL QUESTION ASKED AND ANSWERED (vv. 1-2)

¹ What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?

Paul begins this section by asking a critical question. There were many in Paul's day, and in our day as well, who presume on the riches of grace as a license to live anyway that they pleased. Paul comes back to the topic on three different occasions.

- *ROMANS 3:7-8* Someone might argue, "If my falsehood enhances God's truthfulness and so increases his glory, why am I still condemned as a sinner?"
⁸ Why not say—as some slanderously claim that we say—"Let us do evil that good may result"? Their condemnation is just
- *ROMANS 6:1-2* What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?
- *ROMANS 6:15* What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means!

How would you describe Paul's attitude toward those who claim to be in Christ but have a cavalier attitude toward sin and grace?

THREE VITAL REALITIES AT THE HEART OF OUR FAITH (vv. 3-7)

³ Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. ⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—⁷ because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

The reason a believer should never have a cavalier attitude toward sin, is that Christ died on the cross so that "the body ruled by sin might be done away with." Paul describes three vital realities that are at the very heart of our union with Christ.

- **We are united with Christ in his death.** ³ All of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death."

- **We are united with Christ in his resurrection.** ⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. ⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his.
- **As a result, our relationship to sin has changed for ever.** ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—⁷ because anyone who has died has been set free from sin."

How do these truths motivate and enable us to live a life of wholehearted devotion to Christ?

BELIEVING, KNOWING AND COUNTING (vv. 8-14)

⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. ¹⁰ The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹ In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³ Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

1. There is a nice rhythm to this section. Paul reminds us of what we believe, what we know, and what we can count on. We believe "if we died with Christ... we will also live with him." "We know that... the death [Christ] died he died to sin once for all" and "the life he lives he lives to God." We can count on the fact that we are "dead to sin and alive to Christ."
 - a. Why are believing, knowing and counting critical to the Christian life?
 - b. What is the difference between simply believing something and counting on something?
 - c. What is the one thing Paul tells us we should count on?
 - d. Why is this absolutely critical to following Christ?