

Walk in Newness

Lesson 7

Baptism is an object lesson, a visual demonstration of a doctrinal truth concerning union with Christ. Water baptism inserts the disciple, in a very visible and tangible manner into the story of Jesus.

Baptism marks a disciple's setting out on Jesus' way by ritually enacting the death of the old self and the birth of the new. It is a communicative act that corresponds to the disciple's new reality in Christ.

In submitting to baptism, a person publicly and symbolically performs union with Christ and membership in the company of the gospel, for the baptized disciple has theatrically identified with the death and resurrection of Jesus.

It is a rich theological lesson that also grips the church's imagination, particularly when congregants are exhorted to “remember your baptism” as they watch the baptism of someone else. **How do we live the Christian life?** It involves remembering our baptisms. It involves walking in newness of life that we now have through our union with Christ. Union with Christ means we have a new identity, new security, new power, and a new destiny.

In Romans 6 Paul speaks of the glory of our union with Christ, teaching us much about these benefits, and he touches on some important aspects of our sanctification—that is, the believer's growth in Christlikeness.

Justification involves being saved from the penalty of sin. **Glorification** (which Paul will address more fully in chapter 8) involves being saved from the presence of sin. **Sanctification** is about being saved from the power of sin.

1. TRUTHS WE MUST KNOW: ROMANS 6:1-10

- a. We Died to Sin (6:2)
- b. We Have Died with Christ in Baptism (6:3)
- c. We Share in Christ's Resurrection Life (6:4-5)
- d. Our Old Selves Were Crucified with Christ (6:6-7)
- e. We Will Also Live with Christ (6:8-10)

2. ACTIONS WE MUST TAKE: ROMANS 6:11-23

Here in verse 11 Paul gives the first of several imperatives. Our new life in Christ must result in new actions. We can break it down into three broad exhortations.

- a. Reckon Ourselves Dead to Sin and Alive to God in Christ (6:11)
- b. Offer Ourselves to God (6:12-19)
- c. Remember the Superior Benefits of Serving God (6:20-23)
 - Whom will you serve? Sin or God.
 - The outcome of that service: death or eternal life.
 - How that outcome is obtained: wages earned, or a gift received.