

Alive in Christ, Dead to Sin

Romans 6:8—14

Paul continues to define how we are considered to be dead to sin. He compares how God sees us and how we should translate our position of being in Christ into a daily life practice that reflects who we are in Christ.

Verses 8—10

Verse 5 states that we (who are believers) have been united with Jesus in His death. This verse says the same thing. The word *if* is better understood to mean *since*: “Now since we died with Christ...”. Our identification with Him in His death means we are just as certain that we will be resurrected and live with Him when we shed this temporary body. Our connection to Christ was made before the world was even created and it will not be able to be broken by any one or any thing. In God’s mind we have already completed our life and are now living with Him for all eternity.

Ephesians 1:4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him In love

This idea of identification with Christ in His death and resurrection was incorporated in what was probably an early church hymn: **2 Timothy 2:11** ¹¹It is a trustworthy statement:

For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him;

¹²If we endure, we will also reign with Him;

If we deny Him, He also will deny us;

¹³If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.

According to verse 9 it is a fact that Jesus Christ rose from the dead and was given a resurrected body. This is the same hope we have because we are so completely identified with Christ. Lazarus was raised from the dead but he was not resurrected. He was given his old body back that eventually died. We will be resurrected which means we will be given a glorified body like Christ received when He was resurrected. This is a body that will never see death. Jesus Christ needed only to die once because that’s what it took to deal with our sins. If all our sins were not taken care of with His one death, He would need to die again and again until they were. He was the perfect sacrifice.

2 Corinthians 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;

Hebrews 7:27 who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

Hebrews 9:28 so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

Christ’s resurrection proved His power over death. He was able to abolish death (2 Timothy 1:10). Death could not hold Jesus and because we are found in Him, death cannot hold us. Just as sin would result in our death, it was because of sin that Jesus died. Death is the only way for us to break the bond of our sinful nature. Since our sin was imputed to Christ, His death took care of my sin and now I am able to have life if I am found in Christ. Those found outside of Christ are not identified with Christ and have rejected Christ’s offer of life and therefore will see death. We in Christ have conquered death. Those without Christ are still being mastered by death.

Notice verse 10 says Christ died for all. Those who believe in Limited Atonement would say Christ died only for the elect. They would use such passages as John 10 to prove their case.

John 10:1—5 ¹"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. ²"But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep. ³"To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴"When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵"A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers."

This was a communal sheepfold combining several flocks of sheep. When the shepherd left the fold he would call them and because they knew the voice of their shepherd they would follow him. They reason that Jesus will die for His sheep (John 10:14—15), He will not lose any of His sheep (John 10:28) and many people will not receive eternal life (Matthew 7:13—14). From this we see that those whom He died for will be saved, those He did not die for will die. He even says of the Pharisees that they do not believe because they are not part of My flock (John 10:26).

They also use passages like these:

John 17:9 "I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours;

John 15:13 "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends."

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,
Matthew 1:21 "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

1 Peter 2:7—8 ⁷This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone," ⁸and, "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed.

These verses do not necessarily indicate that God died only for those whom He elected. The verses indicate groups He did die for but do not say He did not die for those excluded from the groups mentioned. As for 1 Peter, they appointed themselves to doom because they did not believe, not because God appointed them to eternal damnation.

There are many verses that point to Christ dying for all people:

John 1:29b"Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

John 3:16-17 ¹⁶"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷"For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

2 Corinthians 5:14-15: ¹⁴For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; ¹⁵and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

Titus 2:11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,

1 John 2:2 and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

Those who believe in Limited Atonement also believe in Double Predestination, that God not only elected certain men to be saved but also elected the rest to eternal damnation. This would give certain men the inability to become saved making it difficult to understand how God would desire for all to be saved. God does not need to elect anyone unto eternal damnation since man is destined for hell at birth. God, in love and mercy, merely chooses some to escape there they should go and give them eternal life.

1 Timothy 2:4—6 ⁴who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.

Verse 11

To sum up everything Paul wrote in this chapter he tells us to apply what we have learned. The old body of sin is dead because we are in Christ and Christ defeated sin. We are no longer slaves to sin. Once we could do nothing to please God because there is nothing in the old nature that can please God. Now we have the new nature that is given to us from God. We are now able to please God because we now have a nature that is “born from above”. We are not to try to tame the old nature but feed the new nature and consider the old nature dead.

Because of these things we need to live our lives as if the old nature is dead and we are being controlled completely by the new nature. We are to walk in step with the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 5:16, 24—25 ¹⁶But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. ²⁴Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Stam summarizes this first half of Romans 6 like this:

Thus the redemptive work of Christ in the sinner's behalf stands between the believer and *his sins* (I Corinthians 15:3; Ephesians 1:7), between the believer and *his sin* (II Corinthians 5:21), and between the believer and *his sinning* (Romans 6:1-14). C. R. Stam, *Romans*

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