

FREE

ROMANS 6:1-14

DEAD TO SIN (Romans 6:1-7)

Sometimes the truth that our eternity is secured by faith in Jesus can lead people to think and behave as if what we do, now, does not matter. If I am saved and secured and if where sin abounds grace super abounds (Roman 5:21) doesn't my sin bring about more grace? Paul answers this rhetorical question by saying, "*Absolutely not! How can we who died to sin still live in it?*" (Romans 6:2). Another way to say it is "*May it never be!*" Paul is literally saying that it cannot be that one who is justified by faith would live ungodly. It cannot be since our souls have been united with Christ in a powerful and transformative way such that our lives must follow this newness of life (Romans 6:3-4). This union with Christ is not simply experienced with His death but with His life as well. Yes, Christ died for my sins, but by faith in Him, I – the old self – died too! When Christ rose from the grave (symbolic of death) with life, so too I, when I believed, rose with him in new life. That's Paul's point when he says: "*For if we have been united with him in the likeness of his death, we will certainly also be in the likeness of his resurrection*" (Romans 6:5). To die to something is to have its life taken. When, by faith, we died to sin, we were freed its life and the power of its penalty. Christians cannot (will not) live in that which they died to (Romans 6:7).

ALIVE IN CHRIST (Romans 6:8-11)

To be alive in Christ is to be dead to sin because the power of sin's penalty, symbolized as death, no longer rules (Romans 6:9). This should not be mistaken to mean that sin no longer has the power to influence our actions and thinking. It does and it can. So being alive in Christ means that the life of God now resides within us but the choice to live by it is ours to make every moment. This is why Paul says that we should "*consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus*" (Romans 6:11). This is a powerful statement that deserves our attention. To *consider* means to *reckon or to think a certain way as something that is really true*. Paul is saying that believers have the life of God in them and yet we must always keep in the front of our minds: "I am dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus." This is not motivational, pump yourself up gimmick to face the challenges of the day, ritual. It is the mindset that believers must always have in order to choose the life of God in the face of sin. What is instructive is that Paul calls us to look at Christ's example: "*because we know that Christ, having been raised from the dead, will not die again. Death no longer rules over him*" (Romans 6:9). In other words when Christ died, He died once. Death would not take Him again. So, with us, Paul is saying you cannot die to sin multiple times; you died to sin once with Christ. Now we are to live like we are dead to it. So, Christians are not called to die to sin daily. We are called to *kill it* (Colossians 3:5). If sin is ruling, Christ is not reigning; death is.

TOOLS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (Romans 6:12-14)

When I consistently remind myself that I am dead to sin and alive to God I set before me the distinction of right and wrong, sin and righteousness. I call my mind to live in a way that

reflects and honors the life of God in me through the powerful witness of the Holy Spirit. I empower my choice for God over my choice for sin and self. That's why Paul now commands us: *"Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, so that you obey its desires"* (Romans 6:12). Sin is always present in the heart of a believer but its presence in the life of a Christian is based on our giving it permission. We are in Christ with the power of God within us therefore we have control over what has prominence in our souls and, consequently, our actions. Paul tells us to not let sin have a control that your faith in Christ killed. To do so is to wage war against oneself and soul when we use our bodies for things that bring death (Romans 6:13). That is not what believers do. We are alive to God and as such we live our lives as weapons of righteousness. Not the righteousness that comes from the law but that which is from grace. In other words, we live righteous not in order to be saved but because, by grace, we have been saved (Romans 6:13-14).

CONCLUSION

An old hymn that used to be sung my church when I was younger had these words: "I am free, praise the Lord I'm free. No longer bound. No more chains holding me. My soul is restin. It's just a blessin'. Praise the Lord, hallelujah I'm free." May that be our daily anthem!