

Revive Us Again!

Romans 6:1-23

Good News, Good News, Christ died for me.
Good News, Good News, if I believe,
Good News, Good News, I'm saved eternally.
That's wonderful EXTRA Good News!

For many years, this was a theme song in CEF Good News Clubs.

Christ died for me, If I believe, I'm saved eternally!

That's the GOSPEL, that's GOOD NEWS!

The word Gospel translates the Greek word euangelion (*you'-ahn-gel'eon*): eu means good, angelion means message, so... Good Message/Good News!

When we speak of the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, we often refer to them as the Gospel of Matthew, the Gospel of Mark, of Luke, of John. We'd be more accurate to refer to them as the Gospel **according** to Matthew, the Gospel **according** to Mark, and so on, as you'll find it in most versions. The Apostle Paul's understanding of the euangelion, the Gospel, is that it does not refer to a book about Jesus. The word focuses on the person of Jesus Christ, and what God has done for us through Jesus Christ.

As we look at the sixth chapter of the epistle Paul wrote to the believers, the saints, in Rome, let's go to the end of the chapter, to verse 23.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

On Easter Sunday this year, I spoke on Romans 6 as well with the emphasis on new life. Let's review the focus of that message.

This illustration is called the Bridge, used extensively by the Navigators Ministry. It helps us understand what it means to be made right with God. We refer to what happens as salvation. Another word would be justification.

"We are made righteous by a declaration of God. And with that declaration, our legal standing is changed. Before God declared me justified in His sight, and I became clothed in the righteousness of Christ, I was a sinner separated from God. But when I came to Christ, who had died on the cross to pay the penalty for all my sins, I was pronounced righteous in His sight.

"Forgiveness is negative—the removal of condemnation. Justification is positive—the bestowing of righteousness based on our standing in Christ.

"Justification can best be defined as the legal act of God by which God declares the sinner righteous on the basis of the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ." (Henry and Richard Blackaby)

We need to read Romans 5:18-21 as a background to Romans 6:1 where it says, “What shall we say then?” The word “then” is like the word “therefore.” We need to see to what the word “then” is referring.

It speaks of the believer receiving justification of life, being made righteous, and God’s grace reigning through righteousness. Now the question... “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?” Here we have a somewhat rhetorical question. We wouldn’t answer “yes” to the question, but in fact we may be guilty of living out a YES answer.

Paul quickly provides an emphatic answer, “Certainly not!” Your Bible version may say...

- God forbid!
- Absolutely not!
- No, we should not!
- May it never be!
- Of course not!
- By no means!
- That’s unthinkable!
- What a ghastly thought!
- *Literal translation from the Greek:* “Not let it be!” or Let it not be!

All of them end with an exclamation point which is used to express that a sentence should be read as though someone were crying out, yelling, shouting, screaming, or making some type of loud remark.

You can see that Paul wants the reader—you and me—to not only get the point but to apply it to our daily living.

Because he goes on to say, “How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?”

That’s what we want to talk about this morning.

This speaks of the baptism by the Holy Spirit into Christ Jesus—that moment His salvation becomes ours. That’s the justification we’re speaking about...and the purpose given in verse 4: we should walk in newness of life!

But doing that can be a challenge, as we face temptations to sin, and in our humanness give in. We must keep going back to His grace. Only the grace of God revealed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ will give us the courage to get up again and keep on going even after we have failed for the umpteenth time.¹

Verse 8 says, “Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him.”

In verses 5-7 we read that he who has died in Christ has been freed from sin. Someone has rightly said that freedom in Christ is the power to do that which we should, not the right to do that which we would. (Galatians 5:13-14)

In verses 9-11, he says to reckon—or consider—ourselves to be dead indeed to sin. If you are a believer, the penalty of sin is gone—Jesus paid that—and the power of sin in your life is gone. That doesn’t mean that you will never sin, it means it is not our master as it was before we put our trust in Christ. No matter how many years we have believed in Jesus, we are all works in progress.

God's grace comes to us as we are, but it does not leave us as we are, for it teaches us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives (Titus 2 12).

We are dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord! We must fix our eyes on the Lord. Listen to what David wrote in Psalm 57:7: my heart is fixed, oh God, my heart is fixed I will sing and give praise. The Hebrew word for fixed here (*koon kuwn*) has the meaning of being established, settled, rooted, grounded, decided, unwavering. It is desiring what God wants for our life. Micah 6:* says, "He has shown you, oh man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?"

Before we read the next few verses, I want us to consider 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So, glorify God in your body." If you have trusted in Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, God the Holy Spirit lives in you. You are His temple. You have been bought with a price, the blood of Jesus. You are not your own.

Let's look at verses 12-14. Sin can only reign in your body if you allow it to. When you or I allow sin in our lives, it takes away the love, peace, and contentment God wants us to enjoy, and it gives nothing of value.

Let me read these thoughts from Jerry Bridges

"As dangerous as the world and the devil are, neither is our greatest problem. Our greatest source of temptation dwells within us. It's what the apostle Paul called the flesh. It's the principle of sin that still remains within us, though it no longer exercises dominion. Paul called indwelling sin a law, or as we would say, a principle, that's at work within us constantly seeking to draw us into sin (Romans 7:21-25). Indwelling sin now wages guerrilla warfare against us, and as any military person will attest, that's the most difficult warfare to defend against."²

Matthew 26:41 "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit is indeed willing, but the flesh is weak."

Alistair Begg writes, Our attitude toward sin in the week will affect how we listen to God's Word preached to us on Sunday. Sin is a barrier to listening to and profiting from the Bible. The way in which we come to the preaching of the Word is so vitally important. When the Word is preached Sunday after Sunday and some people in the congregation grow and mature while others do not, it speaks to the soil, not the seed.

LeRoy Eims, who served with the Navigators, shares an illustration from his life regarding idol worship.

"I was participating in a Christian conference just outside Jakarta Indonesia and was walking to breakfast one morning when I saw a young man on his knees bowing down to something hidden from my view. I walked a little farther and saw it was a motorcycle. He had a set of wrenches and screwdrivers nearby. I smiled at my ignorance and felt bad that I had mentally accused the young man of idol worship. Later that day, when I shared the incident with a friend, he told me I had been right. That young man's God was his motorcycle. He loved it more than anything else in this world."

You know, it doesn't make sense to worship anything else when the Lord of heaven has staked His claim on our hearts.

What, then, are we to make of our stumbling? God promises that nothing will separate us from the love of Christ, that includes our stumbling and sinning. When you stumble, stumble toward the cross. And when you awake each day, ask the One who died in your place for a fresh outpouring of His grace in order that you may persevere in your faith.³

Now Paul is going to talk about slaves. Keep in mind that you belong to God because you've been bought with a price.

Let's read verses 15-19. Remember, freedom in Christ is the power to do that which we should, not the right to do that which we would.

On June 19, Juneteenth celebrated 155 years since the Emancipation, the abolishment of slavery. Have you experienced spiritual Emancipation in your life, i.e., have you trusted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior? If so, how many years have passed since He came into your life, forgave your sins, and made you His own? The question that remains is, are you living in that Emancipation? Or are you, more often than you should, allowing the mastery of sin back into your life?

We make a serious mistake if we think that we are the ones who can overcome sins indwelling power. Since Christ is your life, your battle against sin is not faced in your own strength but in God's mighty power. You need to ask the Holy Spirit to overwhelm you with His wonderful love and fullness so as to create within you the desire to do that which God's Word calls you to do.⁴

Leonard Ravenhill writes, "A spiritual revival is not important to the Church and to America—it is imperative!"⁵

Perhaps today is the day for you to make a renewed commitment to God. Remember, the Lord looks for persistence rather than perfection in you walk with Him.

2 Chronicles 7:14- If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

¹ Jerry Bridges, *A Heart Warmed for Work*

² Jerry Bridges, *The Discipline of Grace*

³ Alistair Begg, *Guarded by God's Power*

⁴ Alistair Begg, *Dealing with Indwelling Sin*

⁵ Leonard Ravenhill, *Revival God's Way*