

Dead To Sin
Romans 6:1-11

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. (vv. 1-4)

Who here is dead to sin? Let me ask it another way. Who here is baptized into Christ Jesus? All who are baptized! All who are baptized, are baptized into Christ's death. And so, all who are baptized are to be walking in newness of life?

Who here still finds themselves continuing to do something that they know is sin, without any attempt to amend, or turn away from their sinfulness? Who here thinks, "Well, since I cannot help myself stop from sinning, I'm not going to even bother trying to stop." I know that some people are not convinced that what they are doing is sin, and don't care what the Bible may say about. They see the world saying it is OK, and they see "everybody else" doing it, so they believe it is acceptable.

These things are what God, in part, is addressing in our text by the pen of Paul.

Having been baptized into Christ, we are to be dead to sin - living a new life - a life that is free from sin.

Having been baptized into Christ, we are to be dead to sin - living a new life - a life of repentance. Having been baptized into Christ, we are to be dead to sin - living a new life - amending our sinful life, turning from sin and attempting to do better.

Our sinful flesh was crucified with Christ, our fleshly desires are to be nothing. Why? So that we might no longer be slaves to sin. But if the truth is told, too often you and I are enslaved to sin. How does sin enslave you?

Are you enslaved to use God's name in vain, that same three word phrase that else uses? You cannot help it. You've tried to quit before, but it didn't work. Maybe you have come to think, "I'm not going to bother trying anymore, after all, I'm forgiven anyway." Dear friends, the Second Commandment says we are not to use God's name in vain – period!

Or maybe you are enslaved to drunkenness. You try to excuse it, "But I only do it on Fridays." While Jesus made wine for the wedding, He also told us to be sober. They are not incompatible. Yes, a drink may gladden the spirit, but God forbids that you use it to dull the senses. The higher the alcohol level, the more apt to be doing other things we know we should not.

Dylan Roof shot and killed nine people at a church in Charleston, South Carolina – he is a murderer. I am sorry to say, but I have a confession to make to you all. I am also a murderer. (hang

head and pause) It happened the other day. For no reason whatsoever, I got angry. Yes, according to our Gospel lesson and the words of Christ there, I too am a murdered – as guilty as Dylan Roof.

Everyone who is unwilling to forgive and be reconciled is guilty for judgment.

That latest tidbit of news you just heard from Hertha may seem to be just too good *not* to pass on to others. But if your words harm another's reputation, you have broken the eighth commandment. Whether it is true or not does not leave you sinless if you have ruined another's reputation.

When we continue to excuse or look beyond our sin, we continue in impenitence, there is no longer any forgiveness. In Hebrews it is written, "*For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins.*" (Hebrews 10:26 KJV)

Dear friends in Christ, I would guess that you are much like I am. While I know I shouldn't sin, I do. As I repent of my sins, and try to amend my sinful life, I fall into the same sin again. It happens not because I want to or because I figure, "oh what the heck, go with the flow," but because I stumble and fall short. But, just because I am trying not to sin, does not mean that my stumbling failures to live according to God's law are *not* sin. That is exactly what they are, sin.

It is when I realize that I am a sinner, that the words of our text come to mind. *What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?* These words lead me to think, "Oh woe is me. Wretched man that I am, who will save me from this body of sin?"

That is exactly where the words of this whole text can come to us and comfort us. We are dead to sin.

Who am I? I am in Christ, a new creation. Didn't you hear that in the text? *For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.* (vv. 5-6)

You and I have been baptized into Christ, and therefore, we are united to His death. As we continue in the faith of our baptism, that old self is daily crucified in repentance, and that body of sin is made nothing.

Satan loves to show you yourself. He especially loves to show you your sin. He wants to wave your continuing sin in front of your face. Satan loves tempting you to doubt God, saying, "You are not worthy of God's gracious goodness to you. How can God love you if you keep asking Him for forgiveness, and then you turn around and do the same sin again?"

You can tell Satan, "Yeah, I know I am not worthy of God's merciful goodness and grace to me. I know I am a sinner. What of it? I am baptized. By water and His Word, God proclaimed to me that I am His beloved and forgiven child. God no longer acknowledges the sins you are throwing at my face I know I am not saved by my goodness, but by the worthiness of Christ. I am one with Him in His death and resurrection through baptism, all that is Christ's is mine."

While our sinful flesh indeed assault us daily, but it is no longer our master. Our sinful flesh blind-sides us, but we don't take it by the hand and pledge to it our faithfulness. According to this text, you and I are no longer slaves to sin.

Indeed, believe God's Word and what it says about how sinful you are, but trust also what it says about the grace of God that is yours in Christ Jesus. Yes, confess your sins and then boldly say, "I am baptized! I am dead to sin, and alive to God in Christ Jesus."

Yes, as long as you live in this life, you live in sinful flesh. You still face the fact that your body will taste physical death, unless Christ returns first. (It is why we pray, "Come Lord Jesus, yea, quickly.")
Depend also on this, Satan will constantly assail you. Temptations will abound."

But Satan's most insidious evil and His greatest lie is trying to get you to doubt the promises of God in Christ Jesus. This is his.

When you find yourself doubting God's promises, wondering whether He could continue to love you, sinner that you are, remember this passage from Romans. A child-like response to doubt is often best.

I am baptized!

I am dead to sin.

Jesus unites me to His death and His resurrection.

If sin and death are defeated by Jesus, then they are defeated in me.

As Jesus died, and rose again, victorious over sin and death, so I will also be raised to life eternal.

Dear friends in Christ, live in your baptism. Eat and drink of Christ that He may dwell in you and His forgiveness is yours. You are dead to sin, for you are alive in Christ. You are forgiven and redeemed. You have a new life – live it – in Christ. Amen.