

Romans 6: 1-5 Dead And Alive – 18 Sept 2011

Well, this morning, I am excited again to share with you again the Word of God. So, turn with me in your Bibles to Romans 6. We have moved, over the course of this year through the book of Romans and at least the first five chapters.

The book of Romans, is very neatly subdivided into five sections. The first section would be that of sin, how Paul convinces his readers that the Gentiles are in sin, the Jews are in sin and he concludes, all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God. So, the first movement, is that of sin. He moved then, to salvation in Romans chapters 4 and 5, salvation is found in Jesus Christ alone and it is given to mankind because God is gracious. But today, we transit, we shift gears to Romans 6 and it really is about sanctification and how God desires, those who have received Jesus to grow in Christ likeness. So, it is with that mindset, with that perspective that we come to Romans 6:1-5.

Scripture records for us,

- 1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?
- 2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?
- 3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?
- 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.
- 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

And may the good Lord bless the reading of His Word.

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There was a Sunday school teacher who wanted to teach his students about growing deep in Christ. He brought along some props to help in his teaching and he brought four glasses and along with it, four worms. He placed one worm each into the glass and to the first glass, he poured in whiskey, drowned the worm. To the second glass, he put in cigarette smoke and sealed it up. And the third glass, he poured in chocolate syrup and to the last glass, with a worm, he poured in good fertile soil.

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He left the cups aside and he continued to teach the class about growing in Christ. 30 minutes later, he has finished his lecture, he directs the attention of the whole class to the four glasses. He went to the first glass, full of whiskey, he stirred around it and managed to fish out that worm, now, lifeless and limped and said, the worm is now dead..

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He goes to the second glass, pulled out the worm that has been in the chamber and said “The worm is now dead.” He goes to the third glass and fish around for the worm and he said, “Likewise, the worm is also now dead.” He goes to the fourth glass, filled with good soil and he fished out the worm, the worm is still wriggling around, very much alive and says “This worm is still alive.”

He then asked the class, “What is the lesson I’m trying to teach, what is the moral behind the study?” Everyone was silent for a while, just like you are. (Laughter in the congregation). And one boy, Johnny a primary three boy stood up and said “Teacher, teacher, I know, if we drink whiskey, smoke cigarettes and eat chocolates, we will not have worms.” (Laughter in the congregation).

Well, sometimes, great teachings can result in all the wrong conclusions. People can take a great teaching and distort and pervert it with wrong conclusions. You know, when we are looking at the subject of grace, it’s a marvelous, marvelous teaching of Scripture that our God is a God of grace. Out of his love, out of His grace, He freely gives us salvation, He freely gives us His Son, He freely gives us Himself. He gives to those who do not deserve it a bit, we don’t. What we deserved is the wrath of God but the unmerited favor, that grace of God is given to those who deserves wrath. And that is so amazing, that is so mind blowing, it is so out of this world. The world today, can’t quite figure it out. And with such a beautiful teaching of grace, men can end up with all the wrong conclusions.

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There’s a man, this is a picture of him, his name is Gregory Rasputin. He is a Russian monk, who lived at the turn of the 19th century. He’s a man who has a distorted and perverted view of grace. To him, to experience the grace of God, you have got to sin more because he says, grace is given so freely, so, in order for me to experience, to know the grace of God, I should live in sin, so that my sin would abound and then, grace will abound. And therefore, Gregory Rasputin is a man who lived in gross

immorality and drunkenness. His life, is a life full of sin, because he has a distorted and perverted the understanding of grace.

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And I think, Paul being a seasoned preacher, interacted with plenty of people, knew that this is a potential danger when he teaches on grace. He knew that people would take the beautiful teaching of grace and distort and pervert it and therefore, right from the word go in verse 1, he says “What shall we say then, shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?”

You see, he knew that there would be people who would assume that grace is actually teaching people to live simply, to live as they wished, to live as they desired, to continue in adultery, to continue in bitterness, to continue in covetousness. Why? Because I have a godly reason, because when I live in sin, grace would all the more abound. How man can distort a beautiful teaching.

A popular preacher who has just passed away two months ago, John Stott, he said this

if we are proclaiming Paul's Gospel, with its emphasis on the freeness of grace and the impossibility of self-salvation, we are sure to provoke the charge of antinomianism.

You say, what is the antinomianism? Simply, the word anti means against. Nomianism comes from the word Nomos which is the law. So, antinomianism, is lawlessness, against the law, you don't live according to the desires of God as recorded in the Word, in the law.

So, John Stott is saying, if we proclaim the Gospel, the pure Gospel, according to Paul, with its emphasis on the freeness of grace, that God saves us freely, not because we merited it, not because we deserved it and the impossibility of self salvation, we are sure to provoke the accusation from men to say, you are teaching people to live sinfully, because you are teaching grace. Grace is free and the people thing that salvation is by grace, freely, won't they continue to indulge in sin and that is the question Paul has in mind when he begins in Romans 6 “What shall we say then, shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?” Good question. People like Gregory Rasputin would take it to the extreme and ruin his own life as a result of it.

So, Paul here helps us. Does grace, received into a man's life result in him living sinfully, lawlessly, recklessly. What is the answer of Scripture. Paul says in verse 2, very affirmatively, no shadow of a doubt. He says in verse 2, "God forbid." In the Greek, this is a word that means, that is of the strongest negative expression. It means "No, never, absolutely not, God forbid, perish the thought." It's a strong word that says no, because, grace does not lead us to the sinfulness. According to Romans 5:21, "Grace reigns through righteousness."

If, true grace is received into a man's life, it does not, it should not, it could not result in more sins. It results in righteousness. Why, why, is it that when grace is truly received into a man's life, we would live righteously and not sinfully? Herein, is a fundamental concept we would spend our time on. Because, Paul says, "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein." There is a phrase here that lays the foundation for the entire chapter 6 of Romans. If you understand this phrase, you will understand Romans 6. It's as fundamental as that. And that phrase, I'm sure you know by now, is, "dead to sin." Paul says, if you want to live a righteous life and I'm sure, if you are a child of God, you will want to. If you want to, you've got to start here, you've got to realize that you are "dead to sin." It is in an aoris (Time stamp in audio 0:10:57.8.) tense, in the Greek, which means, it is something that has already happened in the past and is still the reality today. You are dead to sin or you have died to sin.

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You say, pastor, what does dead to sin means. There were three men who were discussing amongst themselves about a quite dark subject. They say amongst themselves, what would I like people to say about me when I die? Not a very popular kind of a subject, but the three men were talking about it. And the first man says, well, I would like people to say that I was a good husband and a good father. The second man then says, well, when I die, I like people to say that I was very generous, very kind and I was involved in a lot of humanitarian work. But the third man says, when I die, I want people to say, look, he's moving. (Laughter in the congregation)

Well, that would be quite something isn't it, because a dead man doesn't move. A dead man cannot respond, a dead man cannot hear, nor listen, a dead man just can't follow and the Bible says,

When grace enters into a man's life, you become dead to sin.

You don't listen to sin, you don't obey sin, you don't have to follow sin; you are dead to sin.

You see, the Bible reminds us that we were slaves to sin. Before we came to Jesus, let me say this, we were all slaves to sin. We had no choice, but to obey sin. That was our nature and that was the authority we lived under, we live under the authority, the dominion, the power of sin. We can't do anything but sin. We had to listen to it, but when grace enters your life, when Jesus enters your life, something amazing happens. You became dead to sin, you died to sin.

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You say, a dead man, does not listen anymore. Previously, you may be an alcoholic but when you become dead, a dead man is now no more under the control of alcoholism, a dead man is now no longer under the control of pornography, or of drugs. He's dead, he doesn't respond to it, he doesn't need to listen to it anymore. You are dead to sin.

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Now, let me just say this, dead to sin, doesn't mean you would never ever sin anymore. Paul, is not teaching perfectionism. There are some people who believe that once you became a Christian, you would never ever sin. I personally, encountered one such man. Years ago, I was preaching in a Filipino congregation in one of the houses behind Orchard Road. We had this ministry called Jalan Ladah Puteh Ministry, it's along that road and there's a house, we preach. I was sharing with a group of brethren when one man stood up in the middle of the sermon, quite amazing. In the middle of the sermon he stood up, he says, "Brother, I think you are preaching falsehood." I was talking about sin and so on and the man says "You are preaching falsehood because I believe Christians will never sin."

Whoa! That blew my mind. You really believe you will never sin. Well, there are some people who do. It's a wrong understanding of what it means to be dead to sin. Paul is not saying that when you die to sin, there is no more possibility of sin. It's not, because in Romans 7, he says there is a struggle in his life. That's the flesh that he still in him that makes him, in a sense do things that he doesn't want to do. So, there is a distinct possibility to sin. But what happens, when Paul says we are dead to sin, is that the power of sin is annuled.

So, let me say these two words again. When you are dead to sin, it is not saying, a removal of the possibility of sin, but it is the removal of the power of sin. You are no more under sin's dominion and bondage, you are set free. That's what it means. And you know, Paul is saying, you have already died. He's not saying, go and die to sin, he's not saying, you can die or you should die or you may die or you are dying to sin. He's not even putting this like a command to you to do. He's saying, this is the reality, this is the truth, this is a statement of fact in the Bible. You have died to sin. You are now no more, listen, to obey, you need not listen and obey, you need not be under the authority of sin anymore and it is a glorious reality isn't it?

Isn't it true, it's glorious. I am dead to sin, it is. You are no more a slave. You sin now not because you have to but because you chose to, because you have died to sin. I think it is so exciting I want you to say together with me. Say to yourself, do yourself a favor if you are a Christian. If you're not a Christian, you can't say this. But you do have trusted Christ as your Savior, grace has entered your life, you can say to yourself, "I am dead to sin." Can you say that to yourself, let's say it together alright. One, two, three, "I am dead to sin." Are you convinced? Yes, ah.

Okay, faced each other. (Laughter in the congregation) turn to the person on your left and right and say to him or her, "I am dead to sin". One, two, three "I am dead to sin." (Laughter in the congregation). Hey, why do you all laugh, it's not a joke, it is real. You have been set free from the chains, the bondage, the dominion of sin. It's a beautiful verse, it's a beautiful phrase, Paul says, God says, you have been set free, you have died to sin.

But the question is, when did I die. I didn't realize I died, but when did I die, when did I die to sin, when did the power of sin get this, annulled in my life, when was I set free? You know, there are so many of you here, I can't remember your birthdays, in fact I only remember a few peoples birthday. I don't remember, I don't know your birthday, I know when you died. I know your death anniversary. (Laughter in the congregation). I am not kidding, it's true, I know all your death anniversary. And every year, we celebrate your death anniversary, together with a lot of other people. When did we die, the Bible is very clear, go to verse 3, Paul says

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

The word baptized here, by the way, this, I don't think is referring to water baptism, alright. This is about spiritual reality, this is a dry baptism, not a water baptism,

alright. Baptized here, is the word to be immersed, to be joined, to be united. On the day you receive Christ as your Savior, something amazing happens, you are joined, you are immersed, you are united with Jesus Christ. And you are so united with Christ that when He died, you died. You are so united with Jesus Christ that when He died, you died. You were baptized, united, joined into His death.

He uses an other phrase in verse 5, planted together.

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

This is a word that means to be fused, to be grafted, you know, that foreign branch that gets grafted into the original stock. You are joined, grafted, you are united with Jesus and you are so united with Christ that when He died, you died.

Well, this is an important teaching about the cross.

I want to show it to you by means of the whiteboard, very simply and there after we look at some slides. Let's look at this board. I hope all of you can see and look at the message of the cross. This is the cross and all of us are familiar with the message of the cross. You realize that Jesus died for me. True? Statement of fact, Jesus died for me and when Jesus died for me, what did He do for me?

Alright, He died for you, what he accomplished for you? Sorry,... this is a strange church. (Laughter in the congregation) because, no matter what questions I asked, the answer is quite uniform. sssss. When Jesus died for me, what happened? What was done, what was accomplished? He saved us?? From what? The penalty of sin.

I was to be punished in hell for ever and ever but Jesus took the punishment on my behalf. When Jesus died for me, He paid the penalty of my sins, He became my what? Substitute. It's the understanding of substitution and that is what Romans chapter 4 and 5 would teach us, true? Jesus died for me. Now, there is another aspect about the teaching of the cross that we may miss. Can you tell me what is it? It's what we have been talking about. Jesus not only died for me, but? (Laughter in the congregation), the universal answer is out sssssh, very good, well at least you are smart enough to change it around. In the first service, you have someone who said, "Jesus died for me and Jesus died with me." (Laughter in the congregation) in a sense, it is true but maybe let's put it this way. I died with Jesus. That is what is so amazing about our salvation. When Christ enters into our life, when grace is received into our life, our sins, past, present, future are forgiven and something amazing

happens, I am so united with Jesus that when He died, 2000 years ago, or some 2000 years ago, I died with him, I am baptized into His death. I am united into His death and this is foundational for us to understand that Jesus not only paid the price, the penalty of my sins, but He also broke the power of sin.

Christian living begins with understanding, I died with Christ. Sin has no more dominion over me, because, the old man that was a slave to sin, is nailed to the cross with Jesus. You've got to get that. And this is the understanding of identification. First, it is substitution, the other is identification and that is the teaching of Romans 6.

Now, you don't have to fret you can't see these words, I'm going to show it on the slides here. And it is this, very simply. The cross, is a message about how Christ died for us, absolutely and it is His death on the cross that saves us from the penalty of sin, gives us what we call justification. I am seen to be righteous because I am seen in Jesus who died for me and that is the understanding given to us in Romans 4:5 and that is about substitution.

But Christian living is to move from chapter 5 to chapter 6 and chapter 6, reveals to us the other aspect of the centrality of the cross, when only Christ died for me, I died with Jesus and He now sets us free, Christian believers, children of God, He sets us free from the power, that means the word that means the authority, the dominion, the bondage of sin, that is how sanctification can even start the process of being less like the world and more like the Son, and that is Romans 6, identification through and this is vital for us to grasp.

You would be familiar with the man called Charles Wesley and he wrote songs, and one of the songs that I want to illustrate this with, is the song "And can it be." Familiar with the song?"

And can it be that I should gain

And this is a great song, because this song, illustrates these two aspects of the cross.

In stanza one, these other words :

And can it be that I should gain an interest in the Savior's blood!
Died he for me? who caused his pain! For me? who him to death pursued?
Amazing love! How can it be that thou, my God, shouldst die for me?
Amazing love! How can it be that thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

Stanza one, it's about which aspect of the cross, then the one is about how? Jesus died for me. But let's move to stanza 4.

Long my imprisoned spirit lay, fast bound in sin and nature's night;
thine eye diffused a quickening ray; I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
my chains fell off, my heart was free, I rose, went forth, and followed thee.
My chains fell off, my heart was free, I rose, went forth, and followed thee.
This is about what? Is it about the penalty of sin? It's about the power, the bondage, the imprisonment of sin and because Jesus, died on the cross, I died with Jesus and I am set free from the chains and the bondage of sin.

Christian living begins with the understanding that I died with Christ. It's quite cool, isn't it? When someone ask you, how old are you, you can say to him, I am 35 years old, I died 2000 years ago, Wah, it is a cool statement I feel? Very spiritually profound statement, but that is exactly who you are. , you're 20, you are 50, you are 40, doesn't matter, you all died when Jesus died. The old man, is nailed to the cross with our Savior. That's why we can be set free from the bondage of sin.

You would be familiar with this man, Harry Houdini, he is a famous escape artiste, he is able to get himself out of situations that are, look nigh impossible, wrapped all around, chains all around and he would be able to wriggle himself free. He was challenging, prisons, jails, and cells in this. If you can lock me into a jail, I will be able to escape from that jail if given some time. So, he challenged, jails, prisons cells from place to place and there was once, he challenged this particular cell. They put him into the cell, shut the door behind him with a clang and he began to work on it. He took out a piece of metal from underneath his belt and started to fashion it, started to tweak it so that it is almost like the shape of a key and he began to work on the lock.

Very quickly, he worked on it but after 15 minutes, nothing changed. After 30 minutes, nothing changed. After one hour, nothing changed. He is now beginning to be panting, he is now beginning to be sweating, he's now beginning to be flustered and he's getting very, very tired. He has never had this experience before. He worked on for another hour and when he was totally exhausted, he slumped to the floor, leaned against the door and behold, the open. The door was never locked in the first place. (Laughter in the congregation)

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We are like Harry Houdini, we are like him. We want to be free, but we didn't realize, our chains have already fallen off. The doors have already swung wide open because

we died with Jesus on the cross. We need not be imprisoned in sin any longer. You have been set free, you have been set free.

I always use this illustration and I'll use it again, some new friends here and this may benefit you. I hated the Army, and all of you who are in the Army, sorry, but this is my personal feelings (Laughter in the congregation). I really hated serving the national service, it was not my kind of a lifestyle, waking up early in the morning and doing things that I don't like to do, but I have to submit to it and one of the most torturous periods of my life, was when I was in Pulau Tekong, BMT. The training was tough and the environment is tough, but what is even more difficult for me to accept is that my superior was tough. His name is, you're totally right, (Laughter in the congregation), I hope he's not here (Laughter in the congregation), but if you got here or if you're listening online, let me say, I love you (Laughter in the congregation), I don't hate you anymore, I just want to use this as a simple little illustration, alright. He is Sgt..... you all don't remember?, Sgt. okay, let's call him Sgt., let's not name his name. So, my Sgt. was someone I was terrified of. I mean, every time he takes us on lessons, he takes us to the army drills, we could easily do 100 push-ups a session.

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I mean, our arms were, were, were big by then, I mean every session with him is at least 100 push-ups as a form of punishment. And what is worse, is that Sgt. Yong likes to pick on me, I don't know why (Laughter in the congregation). I think, I was a very very kwai person, I mean, I was not like weird, neither was I like, overly bubbly. I just wanted to go through my army almost incognito, just finish this tour of duty as it were. But, he liked to pick on me and I really had it from him. There was once, we had guard duty together. He was the sergeant on duty and I was there recruit on duty and I was supposed to prowl the place in the morning, we would get back to the station and rest. But, he looked at me and says, Jason, I want you to dance. (Laughter in the congregation). I mean, that was ridiculous, where are there army soldiers that dance for the sergeant. But he told me to dance. I said, Sgt., I really don't know how to dance, I cannot dance, there's not a single bone in me that can dance. I negotiated with him, I pleaded, I implored, I beg him as far as I could and he says, alright, I will set you free from dancing, I want you to do jumping jacks for me. And so, the whole night, if I'm not prowling, I will be doing jumping jacks. The whole night, just entertaining my Sgt. I really wanted to kill him that time, but sergeant, I love you now alright (Laughter in the congregation).

One day, a dramatic change happened in my life. Six months after NS, I was given the great news that I could disrupt for further studies. And I went for further studies, I went through my course, medical course, I went back to the Army to go through a Medical Officers' Conversion Course and now, I am of a different status. In the past, I had no choice but to listen to Sgt. Yong, why? Because there is nothing on my shoulders (Laughter in the congregation) and he has three big stripes on his shoulders. But now, when I see Sgt. Yong, I would kindly, gently remind him, that now I have three stripes, on my shoulder. I think, it's a bit higher than yours (Laughter in the congregation). Now, of course I know the stripes are now in front of the chest, it's a bit different. But if I were to meet Sgt. Yong on the streets and Sgt. Yong says, "Hey, Jason, remember the good old days (Laughter in the congregation) when you had to do 100 push-ups, remember the good old days when you did your jumping jacks, would you like to do it for me, I command you to do it for me now." What would I say to Sgt. Yong? Someone in the congregation says "It's your turn" (Loud laughter in the congregation) it's your turn, Ha, Ha, Ha. Wow, that's wise. No, vengeance belongs unto the Lord, lah. (Laughter in the congregation).

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But, I would be very foolish, if I were to say, yes Sgt., and start to do jumping jacks for him. I mean, I will be ridiculous, because I am now no more under his authority. I have a new position in life.

Sin is like that Sgt., he comes into your life to terrify you. He comes into that life to torture you. In what way? Torture you in sin and you know what, you have no choice, you had no choice, you were enslaved, you have nothing against it. It is that powerful, it is that authoritative in your life. It was your nature. But when grace entered your life, you died with Jesus on the cross and you have been set free. You have now a new identity. You need not be obeying sin any longer. Oh yes, you may, sometimes, out of the own choice, make wrong decisions but actually, you need not do that. You sin today, not because you have to but because you chose to.

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Dr. John MacArthur said this

Until a believer accepts the truth that Christ has broken the power of sin over his life, he cannot live victoriously, because in his innermost being he does not think it is possible.

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It begins right here friends, this is not a message to tell you what to do. We have many messages, I think, over the years to tell a Christian what to do. But this is not about what you do. This is to help you realize, first of all, who you are.

Victory begins not by doing but by knowing and believing. Paul says you have already died to sin.

Puritan theologian, John Owens said “One of the hardest things in ministry is to convince people of two things. Number one, to convince sinners that they are slaves to sin, to convince those who have yet to come to Jesus that they are slaves to sin. It’s hard to convince them so. Number two, to convince believers that you have been set free from the bondage of sin.”

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It is so much a part of us in the past that even up till today, the shadow of that Sgt., the shadow of sin still looms over our lives. But you have got to believe it, you have got to accept the reality that you are dead to sin. So, say it with me again alright, “I am dead to sin. Ready, I am dead to sin”. You have got to know that because that’s the foundation to spiritual victory.

But what I like about this, is not that we are just dead. I mean, dead and so, what else. The beautiful thing about our unity with Jesus is not only we are united in His death, we are also united in His resurrection, we have new life in Christ. In verse 4,

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

Something amazing happened. When you died with Jesus 2000 years ago, you also rose with Jesus 2000 years ago. You have a new life, in Christ. Totally new, the Bible says that you are a new creature. The Bible says, you are a new creation. The Bible says, you are a new man and the word new used in the Greek, is not new in terms of time, but new in terms of quality. So, it is not taking the old things, washing it up and say this is new. No, it is a totally new creature, a totally new man. What God has done in your life when grace enters, it’s not just renovation or rehabilitation, it is a totally new creation. The old man died, and in its place is a totally new man, with new

desires, with new goals, with new passions, with new purpose. You have a new life in this new man lives for Christ.

I recently heard a very simple definition of life. What is life? He says, "Life is this, life is what you are alive to." Can I say that again " Life is what you are alive to. " Let me illustrate.

To a little boy, who is bored with his studies, that's not his life. But when you tell him, I have ice cream, his eyes light up and he comes alive. To him, life is "ice cream". You tell a boy, I have a computer game and he comes alive, to him, life is "computer".

When a Christian is made a new man, he has a new life and what do you think he is alive to? What do you think he is alive to? Life is what you are alive to, so a new creature, you are alive to what? According to Paul, he says in Philippians 1, "For me to live, is Christ." That is my new life, I live for Christ, I obey Christ because this is love that I will obey Him and His Commandments. In my own devotional reading, I have been reading 1John and I am reminded in 1John 5:3 that we will obey His Commandments and indeed His Commandments are not grievous.

To a Christian man who is born again, he has that new life and he desires, he delights in the Word Of God. He desires to obey the Word of God. This is what he is alive to, Jesus Christ. And that's why, if Grace has truly entered your life, you would not continue to live in sin, because the old man is dead and a new man arises who has a desire for the things of God.

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Martin Luther was asked once. You preach on the doctrine of grace, justification by the grace of God. Don't you think people would just do as they please? To which Martin Luther says, "Yes, they would do as they please, but what pleases you?" Very good question. Yes, they would do as they please, but what pleases you, to a new creation in Jesus Christ, godliness, Christ, righteousness, is what he lives for.

I like what Spurgeon said, he is ever so quotable isn't it, he says:

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Charles Spurgeon

God has so changed your nature by his grace that when you sin you shall be like a fish on dry land (Added by Pastor : Not very comfortable, huh, fish on a dry land, he is struggling, where's my water, with my water, he doesn't fit in when God so changed the nature and when you sin, you shall be like fish on dry land) you shall be out of your element, and long to get into a right state again. You cannot (continue in) sin, for you love God.

There is a new heart, the new spirit according to Ezekiel that God has given to your new nature. He goes on to say:

The sinner may drink sin down as the ox drinks down water, but to you it shall be as the salt of the sea. You may become so foolish as to try the pleasures of the world, but they shall be no pleasures to you.

A new creature in Christ, has a new life and you know it.

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I like the illustration, a very simple one of a pig. Suppose, one day you desire to have a pig as a pet. So, you go to the pig sty and picks up a pig and he looks so cute. But he's so dirty. So, in order to have him as a pet, you bring the pig home and you soak it in Dettol for three days and three nights. (Laughter in the congregation). After that, you spray all kinds of fresheners into its mouth, smelly like nothing. You brush his teeth and then you put ribbons on its ears, on his tail and he looks so cute and pink. So you have a pig as a pet. Then one day you decided to bring your pig out for a walk and so, you bring him out and when the pig, in the park, saw a puddle of mud, he squealed and he screams and he runs from your grasp and he goes straight to the puddle of mud or he goes to the mud pool and he rolls himself in the mud. He enjoys himself. Why did you soak me in Dettol he is screaming out to you but he enjoys the mud. You see him in that dirty state and says, my poor little pig and you carry him from the mud and you bring him to a shower and you bathe him and you soak him in Dettol again for three days and three nights. But I'm sure you know the next time you bring him out and he sees a mud pool, he is going back to the same pool.

Why? Because he is a pig and pig loves mud. Suppose one day, something amazing, magical, miraculous happens and your pig, suddenly gets transformed into a young, handsome prince like me (Laughter in the congregation) and he is so clean, he is so pristine, he smells so good, he's a prince and this prince walks on the street one day, callously stumbles over a log and falls into a pool of mud. You know, what the prince would do ? He won't say, oh, such nice mud, Oh, such nice mud, oh, ho, ho, so Shioik

! he won't. The prince, would immediately pick himself up and say, I've got to clean myself. And he goes to the shower and he cleans himself and he walks carefully the next time round.

You say, what's the difference ? Big difference. He has a totally new nature. If I may say, pardon maybe that stark contrasts or that very unpleasant comparison, but it is this: "We are like pigs, spiritually." Yes, we may go to church, oh yes, we may attend moral lessons and we get cleanup on the outside once in a while, soaked in Dettol for three days and three nights, but within our souls, within us, we love mud. We love to get dirty, we love sin and if given an opportunity, we will roll and revel in it. Yah, once in a while, we may go to church and have some cleansing on the outside, but nothing changes on the inside. But when true grace enters a pig's life, a sinner's life, it totally changes him around. That old pig nature is gone and in him is that, that new man who desires purity, righteousness, fragrance of Christ. Occasional because he is careless, he may stumble and fall into the mud of sin. But that's not what he desires, that's not where he will stay. He gets up, by the grace of God and pursues the things that are better.

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Has there been a change in your life? My friends, real grace must result in a transformation from a pig to a prince because that's what God does for us. You see, the question that we began with, is no more an issue if we understand true grace. Grace doesn't lead us to antinomianism or lawlessness, grace leads us to Christlikeness and righteousness, why? Because we were dead to sin and now alive in Christ.

Let me summarize Romans 5 and 6 in this way again. God and man, the story of this world. Man has been separated from God because of sin and he is driven by guilt. Guilt is what drives him and he wants to get back, he wants to get right with God and so, he attempts to do it by himself. Whole of humanity, is about man trying to reach God. All religions, is about man trying to reach God, all religions that are not of the true faith of course. And man tries to reach out by his self-righteousness. According to the Bible, it doesn't cut, according to the Bible, this would never ever work, because, no man is able to get to God on his own terms. It is an impossibility. So, banish that thought and start afresh. God and man.

Now, men cannot reach God but, that is why God reaches out to us. We begin here, but the arrow really begins from God to man. It is mercy, in His love, He reaches out

to us and we call this, the grace of God, because, while we were yet sinners, while we were enemies, when we have nothing in us that deserves the love of God, out of His grace, He freely gives. And what does He give us? He gives us Christ's righteousness, His perfect righteousness is given to sinful man. Amazing! And when grace enters into a man's life, a whole miraculous transformation takes place. The old man is dead and in its place, is a new man created in Christ, a man who lives for Christ. And as a result, real grace will result in a response, not of sinfulness but of righteousness. There will be a response of righteousness and he does this, not because he wants to get accepted with God; he's already accepted, he's already forgiven, he's already favored and loved and nothing he do would ever separate him from the love of God which is in Christ. He's accepted. But he response now, not out of guilt but he response out of gratitude. We love him because He first loved us. It is the love of Christ that constraints us. He has a new desire to live in righteousness because grace has so changed his life.

On the right hand side, you have that receiving of God's righteousness in Christ, on the left hand side, the revealing of Christ's righteousness. But it is all Christ, you see, it's not man. It's all in Jesus Christ.

So my dear friends, this is true grace. Please don't pervert it, please don't distort it, it's a beautiful teachings of Scriptures and it would change your life. Salvation is not just a business transaction where God gives you a ticket to heaven. Salvation is more than a transaction, it is a whole transformation. Oh yes, my sins are forgiven, but He gives you a new nature, to pursue righteousness in Christ. That is the amazing grace and that is where, real Christian living begins. May we all recognize, we are dead to sin and alive in Jesus Christ our Lord. Let's bow for a word of prayer.

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This morning, as we come to the Scriptures, I want to speak first to our friends who are here and you have not come to Jesus Christ for salvation and life, you have not tasted that grace that we have been speaking of. You have heard that Jesus came to save us from our sins, you have heard that Jesus can give us salvation and life. But you have not come to Jesus because you thought to yourself, I am not good enough, I have got to get my life right, I don't deserve salvation, I have got to change myself. But my friends, nobody can change himself because that has been your nature, that has been your default mode. And it is not about man reaching God, is about God, in His mercy reaching out to us, God in His mercy, giving us His Son and so would you this morning, simply come and admit and confess your utter helplessness, your total

sinfulness and rejoice and depend on the amazing grace of God found in Jesus Christ His Son, that grace would enter your life and change you from the inside out. You see, it is all about God, about Jesus and you got to come to Jesus Christ. I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man comes to the Father but by Me.

I speak today also to my brothers and sisters in Christ. Maybe, for a long time you have wondered about your salvation, am I really saved? I made a decision 10 years ago, am I really saved? My friends, authentic salvation is a work of grace and grace must result not only in justification but sanctification. Real grace, would result in a transformation of life, real grace, will result in genuine desire to honor, to obey, worship and serve God. It will show, it will flow because that is grace that not only saves us but changes us. So would you examine yourselves whether you be in the faith and if not there is yet time for you today to turn to Jesus Christ, cease from self-righteousness, cease from presumption and cry out to God for mercy, for salvation. Many would say unto me, Lord, Lord, but I would say unto them, I never knew you.

And to my other brothers, sisters in Christ. Christian living is not about doing, doing, doing all the time. It begins, by knowing, accepting, believing what God says about you. It may take time for you to allow this thought to sink in but would you say to yourself, I am dead to sin and alive in Jesus Christ. I need not obey sin, I am no more a slave, I am no more under the bondage of sin, Lord, thank you for setting me free, I died with my Savior when He died on the cross. No more dominion, no more power of sin, you are set free. Begin by believing that and as we journey along in the book of Romans, may God help us to be authentically transformed into the image of His Son. Let us pray, Father, we thank You for Your Word, do Your work that only You can do in the hearts of men, by Your Spirit convict us, draw us, convince us that we might become the people You want us to be. For those who need to be saved, Lord, have mercy, we cry out to You for their souls. For those who are living in illusions and presumptions, would You awake them and for those who yearned and longed for victory, root us in the foundational teachings that we are dead to sin. So, bless each one, because we ask and pray all these in Jesus name, amen. God bless.