

Dying and Rising with Christ

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[0 : 0 0] let's pray together friends Lord Jesus please we pray that tonight you would teach us what it means for your strength to be in us what it means for sin's curse to lose its grip on us and we pray that we could know by faith that strength and experience it in our lives we pray this in your name Lord Jesus Amen friends if you hear anything in Romans you can't forget this one truth the gospel is powerful the gospel is powerful but I wonder if for some of us many Christians I know the gospel is a power for kind of salvation but that power is only theoretical in our day to day life that power is high in theory but actually low in relevance what's the gospel according to Romans what happens in the gospel we're declared righteous by the blood of Christ by trusting dependent faith we have a change status before God the end time judgment of God is given now and we're declared to be gods right with God through Christ his love is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit and we're not under Adam anymore but we're under a new head

Christ but for many Christians I'm afraid what's the day to day relevance of this zero the gospel for them is powerful but irrelevant it's just theoretical the same thing happens I think for the way some of us approach Easter what this weekend is about what is Easter about well Jesus dies on Good Friday for our sins what is Easter Sunday about what is today about well Christian will say it means Jesus gets to go home and one day I'll get to go with him that's where it stops what's the relevance for today friends that is a truncated gospel that's not the whole gospel that's a a truncated weak mediocre gospel yes our sins are forgiven yes we have a sure hope but should we try and stop sinning and even more importantly if you try and stop sinning as a Christian will it be any different to your struggle with sin as a non-Christian will things be any different from before the gospel may have powerful forgiveness but does it give me any power in the fight against sin will it help me will the gospel help me with my lazy attitude to prayer will it help me with my laziness just toward God that I'm so my back's turned on him all the time will it help me with my short fuse my temper or my bitter spirit toward those close to me or those I work with does the gospel have any power for my secret addictions that no one knows that I know are wrong will the gospel help me love God with all my heart today well last week

Megan took us through this amazing picture of the change that's happened the change of state from Adam to Jesus Romans 5 ended this way in verse 20 21 but where sin increased grace abounded all the more so that just as sin exercised dominion in death so grace might also exercise dominion through justification leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord the state of play is that we were under Adam the whole human race under his dominion but now we're under Christ we're under the dominion and rule of grace we have justification we have a new Lord sin is not our Lord Jesus is our Lord it's new territory for us it's a new state of being new location new ground we're in Christ we've moved to the reign of grace so Paul asks at the start of chapter 6 what then are we to say should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound by no means it is true that where sin increased grace abounded where we sin

God's grace covers all of that so sin does increase grace does that mean we should keep sinning so grace increases no says Paul don't you know that when you came to Christ something has changed in you not just your status of your declaration of righteousness but something does change in you and that's very very important and I think forgotten here's how he describes it in verse 2 how can we who die to sin go on living in it do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death so that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the father so we too might walk in newness of life don't you know you've been buried with Christ you've been baptized into his death this is new ground for

Romans by the way so far Romans has been focused on our new relationship with God our changes state it's been talking about justification but I think Paul's shifting gears now talking about the internal change that happens when God's spirit comes he's talking about regeneration what Jesus called being born again something actually does change in us with the gospel we died with Christ we've been decisively separated from the rule of sin it's quite incredible really like the song said it was great that sin's curse has lost its grip on us it's controlling mastering grip on us when you were baptized you were baptized into Jesus death just as Christ was raised by the glory of the father so you might walk in newness of life so he doesn't say just as Christ was raised by the glory of the father so one day you'll go to heaven no Christ was raised so that today you will walk in newness of life what happened to Christ that first

[7 : 26] Easter happens to us because we are in Christ we are in him the converted baptized Christian believer it's happened to us as well we have the power friends this is the message today we have power to live no longer under Adam but to live under Christ Paul's not going as far to say that sin kind of disappears from our life but he does say in very strong language that we are freed from the tyranny of sin or the bondage of sin or the slavery of sin and so of course you can't keep on sinning to make grace increase because you've died to sin one of my heroes it's good to have heroes one of mine is John Calvin the great reformer and here's what he says about this it's false to maintain that that which abolishes sin gives it strength the truth is rather that believers are never reconciled to

God without the gift of regeneration indeed we are justified for this very purpose that we may afterwards worship God in purity of life so Calvin says we're never reconciled to God without the gift of this regeneration of this dying with Christ and rising with him in fact we're justified for that very purpose that we would worship God in purity of life the death and resurrection of Jesus should be making a massive impact in your lives right now not just in your knowledge of God not just in your motivation to be live his way but actually in terms of the power and your potential for holy living we cannot simply say that we can we're still Adam that like I'm only human or it's my human nature

Paul's gonna really nail that for us and it's worth thinking about why does he talk about when you were baptized what Paul seems to be doing is connecting a spiritual reality with an outward sign so I don't think in every baptism people die with Christ I don't think that necessarily happens in every baptism because not everyone who is baptized it appears from observation is saved but nor would I say that baptism is irrelevant to this if you have a true faith in Christ then this is what your baptism means to you you've been joined to Christ you've been buried with him and you've been raised with him now it's really funny that people think baptism is actually is about water and it's about washing but I actually think Paul's use of baptism is that it's about dying it's about drowning dying with Christ and so friends there's a power here for our lives when you wake when you wake up in the morning tomorrow you can say I've been buried with

Christ I've been raised with Christ I can live for him today friends I think many of us don't appropriate this power many of us have a truncated gospel I've rarely heard Romans 6 preached and God's really been goading me with this truth through this Christian hymn that I've just kept coming up in my life for the last couple of years and it's really just attacked me on this truth this is the hymn it's called Rock of Ages and the first verse goes Rock of Ages cleft for me let me hide myself in thee it's about Jesus let me hide in you let the water and the blood from my wounded side which flowed be of sin this is what this is what gets me the double cure be of sin let the blood of Jesus be of sin the double cure cleanse me from its guilt and power now I think for many Christians the cross of Christ is only a single cure but it's not meant to be just a single cure it's a double cure it's not just meant to be there so we can feel our sins are forgiven it's meant to be there so we can actually have be freed from the power of sin so it's a double cure it frees us from sin's guilt and frees us from the power of the slavery of sin so it's a double cure friends is that what the gospel is for you is it a double cure or is it just a single cure Paul goes on to unpack this and you know I feel really nervous teaching this because what am I saying if God's promising people they've got power over sin you know if it wasn't repeated so much in chapter 6 and then again in next week's sermon I'd be hesitant to say it but it must be true because it's in God's word verse 5 if we have been united with him in a death like this we'll be certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his and again I don't want you to think of course that means one day we'll be resurrected with

Christ but I think he's talking about the unity we have with Jesus today in his resurrection the the power we can have from his resurrection today that's that race in from the dead is alive in us eternal life in the New Testament has always been about starting now it's never been about just pie in the sky when you die so Paul tells Timothy for example take hold of the eternal life to which you were called take hold of the eternal life so eternal life in the New Testament is always about starting now and making a difference now leading to heaven leading to life with God forever we know that verse 6 Paul says our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed and we might no longer be enslaved to sin for whoever has died is freed from sin our old self or our old man as the old translations put it was crucified with

[13 : 58] Christ that is our sinful nature which went to our very core died that day with Christ and whoever has died like that is freed from sin now the word there for freed in the in the Greek literally is is justified from sin that is we're kind of the the power of sin over us is gone that the accuser can't say you're guilty you know don't even try not sinning you're guilty God's going to punish you he can't do that anymore where we're justified from sin we're truly forgiven so we have a power to fight sin and the evil one has no kind of accusatory power over us it's like we're we're disentangled from sin we were so entangled in it before it's still an issue for us but we're not as entangled in it we're no longer under the sphere of sin we're under the sphere of Christ so we won't let past guilt burden us or discourage us from fighting sin so we've died with Christ and also where there's a risen power today verse 8 if we have died with

Christ we believe that we will also live with him we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again death no longer has dominion over him the death he died he died to sin once for all but the life he lives he lives to God the life Jesus lives now he lives to God and so what happened to Christ at Easter what we've been thinking about all weekend it is to be our identity our experience that has happened to us too if we died with him we will live with him today now Christ never sinned so it's awkward for Paul to say he was under the dominion of death but it's like Christ submitted himself allowed himself to die submitted himself to that dominion for a moment so that he could destroy it forever the death he died he died to sin once for all the life he lives he lives to God so this week you are to say I'm dead to sin

Jesus as Jesus is alive I'm alive to God and that's how I'm going to live this week I can because of the power of the resurrection because I'm in Christ because I went through that with him in effect I can live to God as Christ lives to God I can live for God I can live loving God I can live serving God obeying God just imagine with me it's true but you can't see it right now the Lord Jesus lives to God at God's right hand he's victorious and it's like by the Holy Spirit he transfers that living power to us that begun in the resurrection and he transfers from his nature to ours another great Calvin line Calvin says Christ now gives life to believers by his spirit because he breathes his own life into them by his secret power from heaven so as you're out there fighting sin the Holy Spirit is in you given by the resurrected Lord Jesus who is with you your ally you're serving him you've got strength to fight this battle we're no longer enslaved to sin we are freed disentangled from it we're in

Christ united in his death and resurrection now you should be asking if you've got a pulse you should be asking why do I still sin why is it so hard to fight sin if Romans 6 is true and I think there are a few answers to that the first answer has to be because we haven't actually been meditating on the gospel in this way we have it we've been limiting it to a single cure and not a double cure and we haven't actually been trying to appropriate the power of Jesus death and resurrection in the fight against sin we've had a truncated gospel too long and maybe we've been in a truncated church with a truncated gospel and so we've become apathetic to the fight against sin now I just think it's so weak I mean maybe this is a cheap shot so forgive me if this is a cheap shot but the whole thing about the WWJD badge right the power of Christian living is not thinking about what would

Jesus do it's not thinking about how can I copy Jesus the power of Christian living is thinking about I've died with Christ I've risen with Christ I've got power I've got power to beat sin that's the power of Christian living please someone make me a DWC RWC badge and I'll wear it die with Christ risen with Christ okay when you're tempted to sin you have to think I'm not under Adam anymore I don't have to do this I'm dead to sin I'm raised with Christ to live with God in newness of life there's a power there I think we're not using we're not it's in the gospel that we're not taking on so that's one reason I think why we're still sinning another reason is that Paul hasn't said like he will later in Romans that we have have our sinless bodies yet that is we're not in the in the resurrection yet we've been freed from sin's dominion but we're still caught up in kind of a lifestyle of habits there's kind of a tension here between what God has begun but the not yet the now and the not yet there's there's more to come God has done something very real and powerful in us but it's not a completed work yet we still have I think what people call indwelling sin or the vestiges of the old self but we're not under slavery to sin but the old parts kind of remain or the old habits in fact

[20 : 29] Paul Paul knows we still sin because he says in verse 11 you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus you must reckon you must actually do the mass and remember what's happened to you if you don't you will just keep sinning Paul knows the battle of sin continues we're not under its tyranny we actually got power now to fight power to fight it's a bit like um if you are used to playing one code of footy and then you have to change codes so if you were playing even I'll make this even more extreme just say you've been playing rugby all your life I used this last time a little bit and then you're asked to play netball and you haven't actually no one you haven't actually figured out the new rules yet and you're likely to grab that netball and just run through people and elbow them and you know and people are crying and there's you know and they've got the blood on their bibs and you know it's going to take some time to retrain your mind to you've actually got power now over sin it's going to take gospel meditation reflection on the word using

God's word reminding yourself using it as a weapon against sin or another sporting illustration in the 2003 rugby world cup really the only time I've watched a rugby match Australia played Namibia in one of the early matches and it was kind of a one-sided match if you remember we beat Namibia 142 to 0 and you're not actually meant to get triple figure scores in rugby normally you get like 2017 that was the final so 142 to 0 Australia humiliated Namibia on our home turf and it was frankly it was just embarrassing but that's what our life's been like up until when we knew Christ we were losing to sin every day 142 to 0 we were dominated by sin and so if that's been your life's daily experience every day all your life and now you're a Christian you're in Christ you have this resurrection power you're dead to sin it's going to take time to get over the humiliation and actually get a taste for the fight and a taste for the victory some of us I think there's no fight in us there's no fight in our

Christian life maybe we've sinned so much we just take it for granted we're desensitized to how far we fall short of the glory of God we're so used to lusting and laziness and ignoring God treating his word carelessly that's all become so normal for us that we actually going to need a lot of time maybe our whole life to kind of undo that damage undo that kind of thinking that mindset Paul says you must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus and then he comes in with his own metaphor which I like because it's an army kind of fighting metaphor therefore do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies to make you obey their passions no longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness for sin will have no dominion over you since you are not under law but under grace the idea of presenting yourself to the general of the army saying I'm ready to fight for you and

Paul says stop presenting yourself to the army of sin and present yourself to Christ as one who's been transferred from one to the other from death to life don't let you report to Jesus now he's your commanding officer don't let sin make you obey its passions don't be a wimp you know so often sin is so habitually kind of controlled us they're just the the littlest trigger the littlest emotion and we give in to sin so we're so weak don't let sinful passions control you like the reins of a horse report to God as an instrument of righteousness don't have low standards and just say God will forgive aim for righteousness there was once a time in Telstra when everyone was under the cruel reign of a telecommunications company called telecom and the times have changed now the industry's being deregulated and there are alternatives sometimes people move house and

I've heard them say I better ring telecom to get the phone line hooked up I'm like no there's other companies you can go with Optus you know you only they've got this fiber optic cable can go straight to your house some people are still stuck under the old monopoly of sin they don't realize that there's a new player in the market you are in Christ you're with a new company friends we need to learn what it means to present all our members as it were as instruments of righteousness our members our intellect our will our affections our strength our time our insights our our passions our sexuality our God given personality all of this all ourselves are to be presented to God as an instrument of righteousness because we're we're dead to sin and alive with Christ Calvin says again one more Calvin this work of God is not completed on the day when it is begun in us it's not completed in a day but it gradually increases and by daily advancement is brought by degrees to its completion so it's not something that just turns over overnight but it's brought to advancement day by day by day as you appropriate Jesus death and resurrection in your life the power of it friends you cannot let the fact you are born into Adam be an excuse for sin anymore because you're not in Adam you know you can't blame the fact that you're a slave to sin anymore you're not a slave to sin that's why it's so odious that Christians still sin so much when we're not slaves to sin anymore in fact that the very fact that if you are fighting sin if you are wrestling sin and experiencing some small victories that's good signs that you're on the right side that Jesus is at work that the resurrection power is at work in you should you continue to sin no of course not why would you continue to sin when you don't have to how dodgy is it when we've got strength for the fight that we give in to the enemy as soon as we see them that's so weak friends the gospel is first and foremost about reconciliation with God I'm not I don't want to demean that that's so important it's the first thing justification declaration of righteousness but don't stop there don't just have an Easter Sunday where the point is heaven when you die in the gospel God declares us to be righteous and what he's declared in you he's beginning to produce in you now the death of Jesus gives us the freedom from sin we need to fight sin today and the resurrection of Jesus is the new power we have to fight sin in newness of life friends are you a new person do you fight sin with spirit-filled vigor and life do you call on the power of the risen Lord Jesus to fight the remaining indwelling sin in your life do you family people you live with see you fighting sin do you celebrate the victories over sin as victories of the death and resurrection of Jesus friends I just think it's sinfully convenient to have that truncated gospel it's so sinfully convenient to have the single cure gospel because you keep sinning God forgives you but actually it's a double cure gospel it frees you from sin's guilt and sin's power friends you have died to sin what has happened to Christ this weekend has happened to you so be strong in the battle against sin

[29 : 40] let's pray for that now Lord Jesus we pray that your death and resurrection for us would be of sin the double cure that you would cleanse us from sin's guilt and sin's power Lord Jesus please revive us by your Holy Spirit Lord Jesus I pray that you would not let us become lazy drifting complacent Christians help us to not be comfortable with our old habits thank you Lord Jesus and I just pray that you can make us Easter people who every day draw on your death and resurrection as the source of power to live for God alone Amen well when we look at the cross we do see just the price that Jesus paid for us to give us the freedom to fight sin we're going to sing a song now when I survey the wondrous cross and it's a really it's a great reflective song that just lets you just really try and grasp the enormity of that sacrifice so please stand with us as we sing this song but really pay attention to the lyrics really dwell on them think of what they're saying when I survey the wondrous cross on which the praise of glory died my righteous game

I count but loss and pour content on all my pride forbid it Lord that I should boast save in the death of Christ my God over vain fear that shall be most I sacrifice then to his blood see from his hands his hands his feet sorrow and love flow mingled down did of such love and sorrow meet all thorns compose so rich a crown with a whole realm of nature of nature of nature of nature of nature of nature of nature that were an offering far too small love love so amazing love so amazing so divine demands my life my soul my all demands my life my soul my all love so amazing love so amazing please take a seat we're about to start a time of prayer please take a seat we're about to start a time of prayer dear come on sohuered moderate