

Sermon: A New Life

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Date: 04 April 2021

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[0:00] If Ass
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Ass Ass All right, if you've got your Bible, go to Romans chapter 6.

Romans chapter 6. We are concluding a series we've been in the last few weeks. It's been a mini-series called All Things New, and we've been looking at specific passages that deal with the resurrection and how that brings about something new in our life.

The big idea of the series has been this, that because Jesus is alive, we have a new way to live. And so we've been looking at these texts, like, for instance, in Hebrews, we discovered a new way of approaching God and dealing with our guilt.

Last week, we talked about the fact that we have a new hope, even in the midst of suffering from 1 Peter chapter 1. And today, we're going to look at the fact that because of the resurrection, we have a new life, that we are risen to walk in the newness of life here in Romans chapter 6.

Now, I'm trying to preach short, and that's not even a joke. I'm actually, actually trying to preach a short message because we've got more things to come, like celebrating and baptism and communion.

[1:43] And so what I need you to do is listen fast, okay? If this message goes long, you didn't listen fast enough, all right? So pray for me as I try to spend time in the text and yet realize we have other things involved in the service.

So Romans chapter 6, we're going to read verses 3 through 5. And if you're able to stand, would you please do so? We do this here at Faith Family as a way of honoring the reading of God's Word because we believe what we're about to read is the Word of God.

Romans chapter 6, verse 3. 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.

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.

This is God's Word. Pray for me. God, we ask You now to speak to us through Your Word that if there is one here that does not have the new life that is found in the resurrected Christ, that today would be that day.

[3 : 03] In Jesus' name we pray. And God's people said? Amen. Amen. Amen. You may be seated. They were big, boring, and according to their slogan, moving at the speed of business.

Evidently, they weren't moving fast enough because they were being blown away by their competitors. And so they decided that they would change their slogan to what can Brown do for you?

And most of you know who I'm talking about today. UPS is one of the leading shipping companies in the world. They were just another low-brow discount store, unable to stick out among their competition.

No matter how hard they tried, they just couldn't get traction. And so they signed some new contracts with some new designers, and now Target is one of the largest retailers in America.

In 1982, they had no money. They were \$90 million in debt, and they were about to disappear from the highway until they decided to redesign their product.

[4 : 09] And today, Harley Davidson is one of the leading names in the motorcycle industry. And these are just a few of examples, Faith Family, of what's known in the business world as rebranding.

It's when a company or individual tries to rebuild its image or change a public perception. They may change a slogan. They may change a strategy. They may change their name.

For instance, most of you don't recognize Pete's Super Submarines. That's because you know it as Subway. You've probably never searched on Backrub.

Just sounds weird. That's because you know it as Google. You thought Sound of Music was a movie, not the former name of Best Buy.

Rebranding. It's something we're very familiar with in our culture, and we do this individually as well. We might not change our name. For us, we might change our hair color to give off a different look.

[5 : 14] We might drop a few pounds to appear different. We might relocate to a different city to change up the scenery. But we know that in all of those cases, we're still the same person.

You can rebrand things on the outside, but we're still the same individual. Listen to me tonight, Faith Family, and those of you online. The Christian faith has something very different in mind.

Notice this on the screen. The Christian faith is not about rebranding. It's about a rebirth. It's about a new birth that happens in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

And that new birth, that new life, is exactly what Paul is addressing here in Romans chapter 6. And of course, Paul would know. He himself had experienced this change.

He'd experienced this new life. Oh, this was far more than a rebranding for Paul. It was a life change. He used to be a persecutor of Christians, blasphemer of Jesus, an opponent of the Christian faith.

[6 : 24] And those were his good qualities. Now, at the writing of this letter, the Apostle Paul is a writer of much of the New Testament, preacher, church planter, apostle.

His life has been radically changed. How? Because he encountered the risen Christ. Because on the road to Damascus, on the way to kill Christians, he met the risen Christ, and his life was never the same.

Can anybody testify to that happening in your life? You encountered the risen Christ, and life has never been the same. That's what Paul is talking about.

Look at it in verse 4. 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 the newness of life.

Did you notice how Paul anchors this new life that is Christianity? This is what Christianity is all about, about having new life, how he anchors that in the resurrection of Jesus.

[7 : 36] Jesus, I'm going to give you four things tonight about the new life. You're like, you don't have time for four things? Hush. I didn't ask your opinion anyways. Four things about the new life that is given to us through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

So listen fast. Number one, the essence of this new life. What I mean by the essence of this new life is, what is it? When Paul says we've been raised to walk in newness of life, what is he talking about?

Like in John chapter 3, when Jesus tells Nicodemus, you must be born again if you're to inherit eternal life. What does Jesus mean?

I mean, if you remember in John 3, even Nicodemus didn't quite understand what Jesus was talking about. Born again? What is this? Well, listen, faith family, I can absolutely tell you what it is not.

Are you ready? Are you listening? What it is not is become religious. To be born again is not to be a religious person. You say, how do you know?

[8 : 41] Because that's what Nicodemus was. And often this is what we think about someone. I'm a born again Christian. Oh, you're one of those kind of Christians.

One of those born again, like one of those, like you take it really serious, and you're really strict, and you follow all the rules. Is that what it means to be born again?

No. The apostle Paul in Philippians 3 was a Pharisee of Pharisees. He was zealous for the law, followed it strictly. Nicodemus in John 3, he's a teacher of the law.

He's moral and upright. In other words, here's my point. Listen, faith family, Paul and Nicodemus were religious, but they weren't reborn. Oh, that's a good place for an amen, and you missed it, all right?

You're 0 for 1. 0 for 1. Notice it on the screen. Here it is. Even religious people must be born again. There you go. Nice.

[9 : 39] You even caught me off guard, all right? So when we talk about this new life, this being born again, this risen to walk in newness of life, we're not talking about come be a religious person.

So what is it? Now, we're going to be a little technical and theological. Can we do that on Easter? Is it allowed to be theological on Easter? Okay. So hang with me. I want to show you quickly what Paul means here by this newness of life, and I'm going to start with something that Jesus says in Matthew chapter 19.

So notice this scripture. Jesus said to them, Truly I say to you, in the new world... Now note that. A literal reading could even be, At the renewal of all things, in the new world, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

And watch. Everyone who's left houses, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, is going to receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life.

Now Jesus uses a word here, palogenesis. Palogenesis. It's a word that the Greeks used to talk about... They believed that the world would reboot itself, that it would restore itself, kind of like if you've ever restarted your computer, and you reboot the system.

[11 : 06] Of course the reality is it's still the same earth. It's still the same world. It just restarted. And that's what the Greeks thought. But Jesus here, interesting, uses this word palagenesia to talk about a day that's coming, if you remember here in Matthew 19, where everything will be made new.

Everything will be restored. Whatever you've lost, you'll regain a hundredfold. That everything's going to be made right. There'll be no sickness, no death, no brokenness.

Everything will be restored. Now, hang in there. Listen, listen, listen. Do you remember when Lazarus died? And Jesus shows up and he's talking to Martha?

And Jesus says, your brother will rise. And she says, I know, direct quote. She says, I know he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.

In other words, yeah, there's a day of newness that's coming. There's a day of restoration. There's a day when all will be made right. Now watch how the New Testament uses that language.

[12 : 17] Titus chapter 3 verse 4, stay with me. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God, our Savior, appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of palagenesia.

Paul uses the same word Jesus used. Regeneration and the renewal of the Spirit. Here we are. Are you ready? Paul uses that word to make this point.

And this is exciting. That day when all is made new has already started in you.

That's what Paul's talking about. That day of restoration, that day of newness that's going to happen in the future is now a part of your present.

It's why Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5, 17, therefore if anyone is in Christ, he's a what? A new creation. You're already part of this new work that God is doing in Christ.

[13 : 26] That's a whole lot more exciting than religion. And if you don't amen that, I will beat you. All right? Religion does not get us excited here at Faith Family.

The newness of life that's found in Jesus does. So what is this new birth? What does it mean to be born again? It's not becoming religious. It's not rebranding yourself as a moral person.

Rather, it's the future reality of God making everything new becoming a present reality in your life. It's the power of God that will one day change the world starting to change you now.

Now what does that have to do with the resurrection? Because remember verse 4, we were buried therefore with him by baptism into death in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead, we too might walk in newness of life.

How does the resurrection fit in this reality of a new life? Well, here's the summary of the Bible. In the beginning, God created everything new and it was good.

[14 : 32] It was very good. It was right. There was no brokenness or sin. Then sin enters in and everything is shattered and broken. But God so loved the world, He sent His only begotten Son into the brokenness of the world.

And what? He shows you, He's got the power to start putting it all back together. Lazarus, come forth. He can bring the dead to life. The leper is healed.

People are cleansed. Jesus is showing you in His miracles, He's got the power to make your life right. And He also has the power to forgive sins. And then He takes that sin and brokenness on the cross and dies as the payment for those things.

And here it is. This is the exciting part. When Jesus walked out of that grave three days later, He started taking us back to the future. He started taking us back to the future.

Back to the place of newness. Back to the place where everything is made right. The future invading your present because Jesus walked out of the grave.

[15 : 44] That's what this new life is all about. God's restoration project starting in you now. That's what it is.

Now secondly, what's the experience of this new life? Okay? I got 45 more minutes. Sweet. I wish. The experience of new life.

So now that we know what it is, this risen to walk in newness of life is God's restoration project in the future coming into the now. But what's the experience? Well, this is actually what Paul is trying to explain.

Look at verse 1. 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?

So let me catch you up to the context and those verses will then make sense. Romans chapter 1 through 3. No one is right before God. No one is righteous before God.

[16 : 40] We worship creation instead of the Creator. Romans 1. We have broken God's law in our heart Romans chapter 2. All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

Who can quote it? Romans 3.23. No one is right before God. And so God put Christ forth as a sacrifice for our sins. Romans chapter 4 through 5.

If we will put our faith in God, then we have peace with God. And you say, whoa, whoa, whoa. Time out, Paul. You don't know all the sin I've done. You don't know everything that's in my past. You don't know all the things that I have done in rebellion to God.

In fact, it's not just the bad things I've done. Are you listening? It's the bad reasons for the good things I've done. I've done some good things for bad reasons.

Maybe I was motivated for myself. And so what about all that stuff? Here's what Paul says. Oh, I might get excited. Romans 5.20. Here it is. Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more.

[17 : 47] So that as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness, leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. That is fantastic news.

Do you know what Paul just said? You can't out sin the cross. Wherever sin reigns, guess what reigns more? Grace. So like, listen.

Oh yeah, you can get excited about that. If your sin is a bucket full, well guess what? God's grace is an ocean full. Where sin abounds, grace abounds all the more.

And now people start thinking. They send him the little thinking emoji. Now wait a minute, Paul. Hmm. If I'm tracking with your argument that where sin abounds, grace abounds all the more, that God loves sinners, I know how to make him love me more.

I'll just go sin it up. And then there'll be more grace in my life. And God will love me more. This is a fantastic idea, Paul. If sin increases, grace increases.

[18 : 55] So more sin equals more grace. I'm in. Are you tracking with the argument? Maybe some of you thought that way. And here's what Paul says.

Are you ready? That would be true if you weren't new. That would be true had God not made you new.

Look at verse 3 again. Do you not know that all of us who were 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, we too might walk in the newness of life. When you were united to Christ by faith, you were made into something new. You didn't rebrand.

You were reborn. And because you were reborn, your desires changed. Yes, you still sin.

[19 : 53] Anybody testify to that, right? Start with pride if you said no. All right? We still, everyone, and Faith Family Church, Faith Family Church wants to be a place where genuinely all are welcome.

No matter how much you have screwed up in life, God's grace abounds all the more. You are welcome here. Amen. Absolutely.

We don't accept golf claps here. All right? But the reality is, at the same time, because we've been made new, our desire is to walk in the newness of this life.

Let me give an illustration that's probably a really bad analogy but if you've been around here for very long, what's new? All right? When it comes to bad analogies. How many of you like chocolate?

Show of hands. Let me ask the same question a different way. How many of you are Christians? Oh, I'm just, I'm kidding. No, I'm just comparing liking chocolate to be a Christian. It was a bad joke.

[20 : 54] Anyways, all right? How many of you, like, you love to eat chocolate and imagine that you lived in a world where there was no chocolate? Okay, you might call that hell.

All right? There's no chocolate. You don't even know what chocolate is. And all of a sudden, you taste the best chocolate ever. So amazing is this, like it literally changes you.

Something, some of you are like, I'm really hungry. Hurry up and finish this illustration, right? Like something in you changes and now what you crave is that. And when you eat the things that you used to eat, they don't taste the same anymore.

Why? Because you tasted something that changed you. Paul's argument here is this. How can we who have tasted life desire death?

Oh, somebody say, preach preacher. Alive people crave life. That's what it means to walk in newness of life.

[21 : 56] Augustine said it this way. It says, this is when the loves of your heart get reordered. So what is it? It is God's future work of newness coming into your life now.

What does that mean practically? It means you start to desire the things of God. As someone who has experienced life, you desire the things of life, not the things of death.

And number three, the expense of this new life. The expense. This new life was costly. You've heard it said that salvation is free to us, but it costs Jesus everything.

Amen? Look at Romans chapter three. It says that God put Christ forth as a propitiation, as a sacrifice by his blood.

Notice this on the screen. Our new life cost Jesus his life. Our new life cost Jesus his life. And I was thinking in John three, when Jesus uses the metaphor of childbirth, Jesus is giving that metaphor, that illustration in a culture where giving birth to a child would very frequently mean your death.

[23 : 10] I mean, ladies, in those days, you didn't have hospitals or epidurals or modern medicine. I mean, literally, a birth of a child came to a great risk of the life of the mother.

But a mother took great joy in her death because she knew it meant life for the child. It reminds me of Lorraine Allard, 33 years old.

She's diagnosed with liver cancer. Told that she needed immediate treatment if she was to survive. The problem was she was four months pregnant. Given the fact that she needed immediate treatment, Lorraine was offered the opportunity to terminate the pregnancy, but she refused.

This is what she told her husband. She said, quote, I may die, but my baby's going to live. And sure enough, Lorraine gave birth to Liam 15 weeks premature, eight weeks before she died.

That family is a picture of the gospel. Listen, listen, listen. Jesus took joy.

[24 : 22] Let this land on you. Jesus took joy in giving up his life so that you could have new life. Hebrew says, for the joy set before him, he endured the cross.

Lastly, this evening, the entrance to new life. How do we get it? How do we receive it? How does this new life happen in us?

Look at verse five. 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. Here's the answer.

Here's how you get this new life. You must be joined with the one who walked out of the grave. The way you get this new life is that you're joined with the one who walked out of the grave.

And you say, Pastor, how do I become joined with the one who is risen from the dead? Romans 5 verse 1. Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

[25 : 31] In one word, faith. Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? For if you will confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Do you realize that God's future restoration project can start in you right now? How? By faith. faith. By trusting him. by believing him.

By putting your life in his hands. faith. Today, you can have a resurrection. You can have new life by faith in Christ. Faith family, you and I live in a world that is very common with this idea of rebranding.

But I'm here to tell you tonight that you can change your name and you can change your slogans, you can change your hair color, but you cannot change your dead heart.

Only Jesus can do that. And so the cry of the empty tomb is not come and be rebranded.

[26 : 44] It's come and be reborn. That's the good news of the gospel.