

Death Becomes Life

Key Verse:
*“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.”*
—Romans 6:4

Selected Scripture:
*Romans 6:1-4, 12-14,
17-23*

ALTHOUGH GOD’S GRACE

refers to the unmerited favor he bestows upon us, it would be an absurdity for us as believers to conclude we may willingly practice sin in order to receive more of divine favor. God’s object in justifying us is that we might lay down our lives in sacrifice. This is with a view to becoming a part of the sympathetic royal priesthood that will help to eradicate all unrighteousness in God’s kingdom, when the benefits of Christ’s ransom sacrifice are applied on behalf of mankind.

All consecrated Christians who have received the Holy Spirit, therefore, have been baptized into Christ’s death. Through self-denial they engage in crucifying their human wills, instead striving to practice holiness in all that they say and do.—Rom. 6:1-3

Our Key Verse affirms that just as our risen Lord will accomplish the ultimate purpose for which he died, we also as New Creatures, who have been baptized into Christ’s death, are to walk in newness of life throughout our Christian sojourn. At the end of our course, faithfulness in this endeavor will result in our attainment of the first resurrection. Then, united with Christ in heavenly glory and power, we will share in the task of uplifting

mankind from sin and degradation back into harmony with God.

The serious nature of the consecrated lifestyle for believers continues to be emphasized by Paul in this chapter. “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”—vss. 11-13

Elsewhere in Scripture, we are likewise reminded of the need for diligence in our walk to avoid becoming ensnared by unrighteous practices—sowing to the flesh as opposed to sowing to the Spirit. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”(Gal. 6:7,8) We should carefully examine our activities, our interests, and our speech to determine whether seeking to glorify God is uppermost in our minds. Are we seriously striving to keep our body of flesh under control? In those instances where we may have failed, have we petitioned the throne of Heavenly grace and then made a determined effort to overcome our deficiencies?—I Cor. 9:27; Heb. 4:16

The invitation of being associated with Christ Jesus as part of his bride in order to help eradicate sin during God’s kingdom is profound. Let us value this great privilege by exercising faithfulness in our consecrated walk. “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”—Col. 3:1-3 ■