**The Book of Romans**

Part Three: God’s righteousness is revealed in His free gift of Spirit-life. (Romans 5–8)

***New Life: A New Beginning***

***We are dead to sin, therefore free from sin. Romans 6:1-14***

Paul has just explained how our being “in Christ” means that we are no longer “in Adam.” But what does that imply? These are not mere words, but through faith, are key to a new beginning in our fight with sin. He will later explain that we are now dead to the Law (ch. 7) and empowered by the Spirit (ch. 8), but here he tells us of the radical cleavage the Cross opened up between us and our sin. We are in a new place of new power, but there is a difference between “sin” as a nature and “sins” as individual decisions and acts. Baptism is a picture of our death and resurrection with Christ, and we are now free to “be who we are.”

***Does more grace mean more sin? No! Willful sin and following Jesus are mutually exclusive.*** vv. 1, 2

The knee-jerk reaction to forgiveness is that someone is “let off the hook” to continue his sinning ways. That is often the accusation grace receives (Romans 3:8), since people don’t understand that forgiveness comes as only the first blessing of grace, not its goal.

***Think about it! Your baptism pictured what? Your identification with Jesus in His death (because of sin) and resurrection to new life!*** vv. 3, 4

Baptism mimics a death and resurrection. The image is to transfer into action in our lives, but first we must understand our new place, or position, of being in Christ. Salvation lies not in the picture, but the reality for which it stands. These are not empty words. Our spiritual realities shift when we are converted. 2 Corinthians 5:17

***Just as death and sin have no more power over Jesus, they have no more power over you.*** vv. 6-10

At your New Birth, you received not only forgiveness, but God’s life, and that life is in Christ. Since you are “in Him,” all that happened to Him has happened to you. So from God’s point of view, you have died to the old life and are alive in Him. Thus, sin has no authority to rule you, for it has lost its power. 1 John 5:11, 12

***But these realities must be embraced and put into practice by faith.*** vv. 11-14

In light of our new standing, (1) we reckon, ourselves dead to sin, (2) we refuse to allow sin to dominate us, (3) we don’t yield our bodies in service to sin, but (4) we present ourselves and our bodies to God in service of righteousness. These commands can be obeyed in and by faith. Faith is not magical. Faith does not make anything real; faith makes it applicable and relevant and powerful. Faith is useful only because it connects us with Jesus, who is everything. Hebrews 11:1-3

Applying God’s Truth to Life

***1. The new life is a state, not a status.***

Being in Christ does not mean we will never will not sin. It means that in any given situation, we need not sin. Paul is not teaching perfectionism, nor passivism, but rather a purposeful choosing to live moment by moment for God because we love God. Philippians 3:12-16

***2. The new life is grace-energized, not lawless.***

While grace frees us from the Law’s condemnation, it does not free us to be lawless. With God’s Spirit within us, we no longer can sin without His convicting and drawing us back to the way of righteousness. True Christians may stray, but they do not walk away. Although sin remains, it no longer reigns. 1 John 2:1-6; 3:4-10