

Lesson 2 --- Do You Not Know?

1. Give a truth from Lesson 1 that most impacted you.

2. Answer a-d based on, "Why do believers put forth effort to live righteously before God?"
 - a. From the notes, list answers given to the above question.

 - b. Summarize these answers by stating God's purpose for His Church.

 - c. Reflect on the implications of this for your life.

3. According to the Boice quote provided for you in the notes, ---
 - a. What is the secret of sanctification?

 - b. Why do you think this is important?

4. Discuss the following questions concerning being either "in Adam" or "in Christ."
 - a. What was the imagery Paul uses in Romans 6:5 for *being immersed in Christ*?

 - b. What deeper understanding of the new life did Jesus's word give?

 - c. What attitudes are given 1 Cor.6:19,20 & 2 Cor.5:14,15 that will characterize the new self?

 - d. What awkward picture was given for when someone lives in sin after claiming salvation?

5. Consider joy as one important characteristic of new life in Christ ---
 - a. Tell how joy is a major theme in both the Old and New Testaments.
 - b. Evaluate the presence of or lack of joy in: the church & your life. Explain your response.

Notes for Lesson 2

Question 2 (“Introduction to Sanctification” Romans 6:1-3)

1What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? 2May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? 3Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?

This question really gets to the heart of why believers strive to live holy lives and cannot be content with making allowance for the flesh. Why do believers strive to do what is right in God's eyes and lay aside sin? These are important questions. If you are trying to be good in God's eyes so that He will be happy with you, then you have missed the significance of your sin and of His grace.

The Bible provides a number of answers to the question, “Why do believers put forth effort to live righteously before God?” For example, one reason is to be pleasing to God---not in an attempt to gain approval, but simply to be pleasing to Christ. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:9, *“Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him.”* Paul reiterated this truth in Ephesians 5:8-10, *“You were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.”*

Another reason that believers strive to live righteously before God flows out of love for Christ. Jesus said in John 14:15, *“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”* In 1 John 5:2-3, we read, *“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. 3For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.”*

So in order to be pleasing to God and because we love Christ are some Scriptural reasons why we strive for holiness and righteousness. But let me give you a few more reasons.

First, one reason why you do not continue in sin or make allowance for sin in your lives is that the whole purpose of salvation is to save you from sin. Christ did not die only to save you from the punishment that sin deserves. Yes, you are justified by God in order that you might be saved from wrath and eternal judgment. But we find over and over in the Word of God that He is holy and He desires His people who represent Him on this earth to be holy too. Christ died so that you may also be made into His image here and now. We see in the Old Testament that God is zealous that His Person, and those who represent Him, be known as holy.

Psalm 99:1 and following demonstrate God's desire for holiness. *"The LORD reigns, let the peoples tremble; He is enthroned above the cherubim, let the earth shake! 2The LORD is great in Zion, and He is exalted above all the peoples. 3Let them praise Your great and awesome name; holy is He. . . . 5Exalt the LORD our God and worship at His footstool; holy is He. . . . 9Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at His holy hill; for holy is the LORD our God."*

Also the familiar passage in the beginning of Isaiah 6 provides a fearful picture of the transcendent God. The seraphim that are above the throne are awe-inspiring just in themselves: Fearful, wonderful beings who do nothing but proclaim the holiness of God on His throne. Isaiah's only response is an instant awareness that he is unholy.

Because God is holy, He desires His people who represent Him on this earth to be holy. God intended for the nation of Israel to be a people who are set apart from the rest of the nations. Exodus 19:5 *"Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."*

The Lord gave the dietary laws, civil laws, and the Ten Commandments in order to make the Jews distinct and different than other nations. Why? Not to alienate them from other people, but so that other people would see that they were different and inquire why they were different. The Jews would point to their God and say, "We are set apart because God is Holy and set apart." But the Jews were stiff-necked and forsook God's ways.

God declared in Ezekiel 36:20-23, *"When they [the Jews] came to the nations where they went, they profaned My holy name, because it was said of them, 'These are the people of the LORD; yet they have come out of His land.' But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations where they went. Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, 'It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. And I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD,' declares the Lord GOD, 'when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight.' ' ' "*

Later in Ezekiel 39:7 God summarized this declaration, *"My holy name I will make known in the midst of My people Israel; and I will not let My holy name be profaned anymore. And the nations will know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel."*

So God is jealous that His character not be treated in an unworthy manner. He is set apart; He is not like fallen man, and He wants those who represent Him on earth to be set apart.

Not only do we read in the Old Testament that God is holy and He desires His people who represent Him on this earth to be holy, but we also see in the New Testament that God is zealous that His Person, and those who represent Him, be known as holy.

In the New Testament, we clearly see Christ, God's exact representation on earth, is holy or set apart. In Mark 1:24, an unclean spirit possessing a man said, *"What business do we have with each other, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are--the Holy One of God!"*

The apostles knew God in Christ is holy. Do you want to know why the apostles could all die for the sake of Christ? They understood who He is. Simon Peter spoke for them in John 6:69, *"We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God."*

The Church is also to be holy. This high call to holy living comes to each one of us. It is God's purpose in salvation to make His Church holy.

Ephesians 1:4 *Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him.* He chose us not only for justification unto eternal life, but also for practical holiness in this life. Believers grow in holy living.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 *Do you not know that you [the Church] are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.*

1 Peter 1:14-16 *As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."*

So we do not continue in sin and we strive for holiness because we desire to please God and because we love Christ. We strive to live according to the Law of Christ because God is holy and He desires for His people to be holy.

Question 3 ("Immersed Into Christ" 7/8/18)

The following is an extensive quote from James Boice concerning the importance of knowing that a Christian cannot be in abject slavery to sin and how this truth impacts sanctification. "Some people try to find the key to sanctification in an intense emotional experience, thinking that if only they can make themselves feel close to God they will become holy. Others try to find sanctification through a special methodology. They think that if they do certain things or follow a prescribed ritual they will be sanctified. Godliness does not come in that fashion, in fact, approaches like these are deceiving. A holy life comes from knowing. . . knowing that you can't go back, that you have died to sin and been made alive to God. The secret of sanctification is not some neat set of experiences or emotions, however meaningful or intense they may be. It is knowing what has happened to you."

Question 4 ("No Longer Slaves to Sin" 7/15/18)

The main focus in our last study was to consider the spiritual baptism that the believer undergoes at the point of conversion. When you repented and believed the Gospel, the Holy Spirit immersed you into Christ Jesus. We saw that within the context of the last part of Romans 5 and the first portion of Romans 6, it is clear that Paul did not have water baptism in mind. Instead, we have seen the focus was on being united or immersed into Christ.

We saw in our study of Romans 5:12-21 that Paul's main focus was on whether a person is "*in Adam*" or "*in Christ*." Paul summarized what he wrote in those verses in 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, "*For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.*"

This imagery of being "*in Christ*" is taken up in Romans 6 as Paul referred to being immersed into Christ. This was clearly his aim as seen in Romans 6:5, "*For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection.*"

We saw that, as a result of being immersed into Christ, there was a death and a resurrection. The old self dies and the new self is resurrected with Christ. The understanding of death to self was preached by Jesus and the apostles.

In Luke 9:23-24, Jesus said, *"If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me. 24For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it."*

The imagery here is clear. Jesus' reference to the cross had only one meaning: death to self. So if anyone desires to be a disciple of Christ, he must first understand that his life is no longer his own. The second statement makes it unmistakable, "You must lose your life for Christ's sake and then you will be saved."

Furthermore, Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, *"For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; 15and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf."*

In reference to immorality, Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, *"Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? 20For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body."*

So at conversion, one is immersed into Christ first and as a result there is death to the old man who was obsessed with sin. The old man is buried and a new man is resurrected. The believer is taken out of one state and placed into another state. We as believers have endured a process similar to that of the Jewish nation after they had been brought through the Red Sea. They were joined to Moses; we are joined to Christ. There is no turning back. We died to the old life when Christ transferred us to the new one.

Baptism into Christ's death includes the picture of being buried with Him. The image is that of being entombed or being buried at a grave site. That is significant in the sense of the finality of the death of the old man. It would be easier to dig up a body out of a grave and enter back into life through that dead body than to go back to the old man. To go back to a life of continual living in sin once you have been joined to Christ is like digging up a dead body.

Question 5 ("No Longer Slaves to Sin" 7/15/18)

It is easy for us to get fixated on our problems and, as a result, lose the joy and newness of life that Paul refers to. Joy is a vital, foundational, identifying characteristic of the church. If we made a list of the most important, vital qualities of the church, what would you say they are? Many may say holiness, doctrinal faithfulness, unity, or love. These are all foundational to the church, no doubt. But one characteristic that normally would not make the list, but is important to Christ, is joy. We do not think high enough of the importance of the joy in the newness of life. Our lack of joy shows how far we have moved from a basic expression of the early church.

Jesus said in John 17:13, *"These things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves."* Christ also spoke of His joy in us in John 15:11, *"These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full."*

Jesus intends for His followers to know a depth of joy not known to those in the world. When you study what the New Testament has to say about joy, you find that joy is a major theme. The verb which means, "to rejoice" or "be joyful" is found 72 times. The noun which means "joy" occurs 60 times.

For example, the angel who announced the birth of Jesus to the shepherds said in Luke 2:10, *"Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people."* Furthermore,

a common greeting among Christians in the early church was "Rejoice." Most of the letters found in the New Testament begin with an encouragement to "rejoice." Lastly, Luke describes the early church in Acts 13:52 by saying, *"The disciples were continually filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit."*

We could go on and on concerning the centrality that joy played in the early church and God's intention for joy to be expressed in the church even today.

Joy is a quality grounded in God Himself and which originates from God---

Psalm 16:11 *You will make known to me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; in Your right hand there are pleasures forever.*

Psalm 32:11 *Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous ones; and shout for joy, all you who are upright in heart.*

Romans 15:13 *Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

So when we read in Romans 6:4, *"Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life,"* we rightly conclude that one result of the newness of life is joy in the midst of life on this earth.

The question necessarily arises, "Is the church today characterized by newness of life and joy?" Across the board in most churches if someone were to observe week after week the lives' of the individuals who make up the church, I wonder if the newness of life that obviously characterized the early church would be visible.

I have told you before that the church has lost a sense of joy and laughter in life. For many, it is easy to be gloomy, dismal, and grim. Negativity flows out of the old nature naturally. Being heavy and bleak does not take much effort. But we are not called to be dreary. We have every reason to know joy even in this life.

James Boice wrote this concerning joy in the Christian life, "I wish that all Christians were more joyful. Unfortunately, there are many long faces and sour looks. There is too much defeat, too much unhappiness. It does not need to be that way."

I believe that, if we are honest with ourselves, we would have to admit that we would like to know more of this newness of life that Paul described. We would like to know more joy in our lives. I believe a foundational reason that we do not know this newness of life in joy is because when we read in 2 Corinthians 5:17, *"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come,"* we do not realize the long-ranging implications of what took place at our conversion.

When Paul said in Romans 6:2, "Do you not know . . . ?" he is touching on a problem that exists today; namely, people do not know the nature of the transformation that happened upon their salvation. We live defeated lives with little joy because we do not fully grasp and implement the truths concerning sanctification found in the opening remarks of Romans 6.