

The Foundation of Sanctification

Romans 6

Romans 6:1-15: "What then shall we say? Should we continue in sin that grace may abound? Far be the thought. We who have died to sin, how shall we still live in it? Are you ignorant that we, as many as have been baptised unto Christ Jesus, have been baptised unto his death? We have been buried therefore with him by baptism unto death, in order that, even as Christ has been raised up from among [the] dead by the glory of the Father, so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we are become identified with [him] in the likeness of his death, so also we shall be of [his] resurrection; knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with [him], that the body of sin might be annulled, that we should no longer serve sin. For he that has died is justified from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him, knowing that Christ having been raised up from among [the] dead dies no more: death has dominion over him no more. For in that he has died, he has died to sin once for all; but in that he lives, he lives to God. So also ye, reckon yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body to obey its lusts. Neither yield your members instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but yield yourselves to God as alive from among [the] dead, and your members instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not have dominion over *you*, for ye are not under law but under grace. What then? should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Far be the thought."

Shall we pray?

Lord, we are so grateful for these words. We recognize just in the pure reading of them how full they are, how comprehensive they are. And we know these words are beyond our ability to communicate all that they mean and all that You have done in Christ Jesus. But we are asking for a special visitation of the Holy Spirit to meet us, to open our hearts, to open our ears so that we might hear what the Spirit says to the churches. That He would open us and grant us anointing that we may speak with all boldness what we ought to speak of the mystery, and that You who have the words of eternal life, You alone, would make those words be alive in us. We do not want to go away from here just apprehending what is written on the page. We want to go away from here, captured by the Spirit of the Word that is upon these pages. For this we ask together, in the mighty and only name of the Lord Jesus. Amen.

Introduction

As most of you know, we are dealing with this matter in Romans chapter 6, these first 15 verses, on the foundation of sanctification. Pay close attention to this chapter. Pay very close attention to these first 15 verses. These are of monumental importance to our life as a Christian, and to our walk as a believer. So, I would ask you to pay very much attention to it.

As a matter of fact, I like what Griffith Thomas said when he was talking about the importance of these verses. He said that in chapter six, "we are arriving at a turning point in this epistle;" it is a turning point. Let me put that in my own words and attempt to help. Chapter 6 is a monumental transition from the first of God's solutions for man's deficiencies, to the second grand, divine

solution for man's utter and complete inadequacies. Let me repeat that. *It is a monumental transition from the first of God's solutions for man's deficiencies, to the second, grand, divine solution for man's utter and complete inadequacies.* I believe that is what these 15 verses are dealing with. If you want to look at the book of Romans and maybe understand the first eight chapters, I think you could say chapters 1-5 are reconciling the past. Now we had a wonderful opening, and we had a wonderful time of worship at the Lord's table where we were dealing with reconciliation. It is full reconciliation with God, not partial, not incomplete, it is full reconciliation with God. That is what Romans 1-5 deal with.

Chapter six is how the redeemed of the Lord live in the present. You notice the difference. Chapters 1-5 deal with reconciling the past. Something needed to be reconciled, or you would never have a start. When you are looking at chapters 6-8, it is the same thing, but chapter six has to do with how the redeemed of the Lord live in the present, how we are going to do that. I think that is an important distinction that may help you when you study this book.

Last time, we talked about Romans 5:12-21, and we gave the title, "In Adam or In Christ." These two men are the lens through which God looks at all of humanity. You only have two choices. You have heard me say that for years, and I do not want to bore you too much, but there are only two choices. You can think that there are millions of choices; you really do not. You have a lot of choices to make, but it gets down to just two. Are you in Adam or are you in Christ? God makes it simple, thank God! I get far too complicated when I read the Word of God. God makes it utterly simple. How marvelous these two men are, and how He looks at humanity.

The great work of redemption through justification, which is what the first five chapters are about; by faith it completely deals with our past in Adam. Completely! It is done! It is a work that is finished for those who have believed. It grants full reconciliation to God for those who are placed in Christ. You remember I Corinthians 15:45 says, "And so it is written, 'The first man Adam was made a living soul;' the last Adam (who was Christ and notice the distinction in the difference) was made a quickening spirit." So, this gets into how we can begin to live the Christian life. First, we must be justified, and that makes us reconciled to God. Secondly, we must come into what is called sanctification which follows justification, and this really means being made alive, being made holy.

Let me put it to you in a distinct way which you will understand from Romans 8. It is being conformed to the image of Christ, and that is a process which is what we are looking at today. It is the beginning of this new division in this book, the foundation of sanctification. "Understand" this is the change, and that is important. I Corinthians 15:22 says, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive." That was God's secret. It was not just to make you alive; it was to make all alive in one Man, the last Adam, the second Man. That is the way I Corinthians 15 refers to Him. So, this is what we are dealing with today. Today we see how God makes it possible for us to begin to live the Christian life through that second man in Christ Jesus. Everything is in Christ Jesus. We are brought to life in Christ. All the divine resources are made available to you and me in Christ. Everything that is lacking in Adam, all the ruin that we see, is dispensed with on the cross. And in Christ, something new is completely done. That is the glory of sanctification.

Justification versus Sanctification

We are going to look at justification versus sanctification, and that is important. For a moment, we need to pause when we are making this transition. We need to understand what really happened in those first five chapters, and what is happening now in chapters 6-8, which all deal with sanctification. If you want to divide up this chapter, you can do it. First is the issue; we are turning to justification. Secondly, the fact of our death in Christ is very important. You must understand that the way God deals with this matter of us living the Christian life, is through the fact of our death—not just His death but our death in Christ. This is very important. Third is the fact of our resurrection in Christ. It is not just that you died, but that you have been made alive in Christ Jesus. And there, all those infinite resources that are His alone, are made yours through this process of sanctification.

Finally, I think of the last thing which is the power of two responses. I always think responses are important. You have heard me say it before, that the Bible is, to me, a book of calls and responses. Okay? That is all it is. God is always calling, and He is always looking for human beings whom He will save and give them the glory of His life to respond to the divine call. If you can keep it, Just remember two things: call and response. So, that is the important reason that Paul ended in verses 12 and 14 with two responses. So, I hope that helps.

Now, let us begin with justification versus sanctification, and clarify a little bit the difference between these two essential things. These alone make the Christian life possible. Justification deals with our past actions. In other words, if you read the first five chapters, you will notice the word “sins.” I repeat with emphasis, “sins” with an “s” on the end. It is plural because it is dealing with our acts or our actions. It is dealing with what we do or what we have done—our actions. Sanctification deals with our nature which is different; it deals with our sin-nature. Therefore, when you go out of chapter five and you come into chapter six, you notice that *sin* is always referred to in the singular. It is no longer what you do; it is who you are. God must do something big in His deliverance plan. He must deal with your past because it eliminates you if it is not dealt with. He must also deal with who you are so that you can currently live the Christian life. Do you understand the distinction? It is a very real distinction for us to understand.

Justification is concerned with what we do or have done. Sanctification deals with who we are. Justification provides a completely new position of righteousness in Christ. There are people that I still hear saying, “We were made righteous in Christ.” No, you were not. You were reckoned righteous in Christ. In I Corinthians 1:30-31, “It is Christ our righteousness.” You were granted a righteousness that was not your own; it could never be your own because you could never rise to the standard of what God was looking for. You were given righteousness; you were not made righteous. That is justification. I think there are people who probably understand that. That righteousness which is in Christ allows you to stand unimpeachable before a holy God. You cannot be condemned because now you can say, “Christ, my righteousness.” That is justification; that is reconciliation.

Sanctification provides a new life in Christ that enables us to do the impossible. You can now, because of this life that He puts in us, live the Christian life. This is unthinkable. There has only been one Person who ever lived the Christian life. Did you think it changed, and now you are able

in yourself to live the Christian life? It never changes. Only that Person in you can live the Christian life. That is sanctification.

We have already said that Romans 1-5 cover justification and chapters 6-8 cover sanctification. Justification deals with our position in Christ. Sanctification deals with our living through Christ, or in Christ. Now the word “sanctification” is a New Testament word in the English versions. It never occurs in the Old Testament. In other words, it never says, “sanctification” in the English versions I look at. It occurs ten times in the New Testament alone. And it is translated equally five times as holiness, and that is true, and five times as sanctification. Sanctification is holiness; it is being able to live a holy life. You cannot live that life, but that Life in you can live it. That is holiness. Sanctification and holiness are interchangeable words. It is not like they are two different words; they are the same word. Sanctification and holiness are what we can do because of His grand work within us.

Maybe this will help you. In the Old Testament, you might say, “Well, brother, I thought I read sanctify a lot of times.” You did. It usually means “set apart for God.” Everything in the tabernacle was set apart for God. Everything! Sanctify occurs a lot of times in the English versions of the Old Testament. Sanctification only occurs in the New Testament, and it means “to make holy.”

Now remember, God did not make you righteous when you were justified; He gave you righteousness. But think how complete the work on the cross is, and the glory of God's work is. Now, His intention when we come to chapter six is to make us holy. Can you believe that is possible? I do not know if you are a skeptic like I am, but I know you have heard that phrase, “You have your work cut out for you.” Do you understand? With us, it would seem impossible. But with God, all things are possible.

This verse in I Thessalonians shows us the importance of sanctification.

Verse 4:3a, “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification,”

There is the verse I Thessalonians 5:23: “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly.”

Is that not beautiful? This is the will of God, even your sanctification. Now, if you do not believe God can do it, He believes He can do it. And it is His will that you would be sanctified. And He says that it is not as if there are holes in you. W-H-O-L-L-Y, We are to be sanctified wholly—Spirit, soul, and body. How marvelous is this deep work of sanctification.

Delivered from the Penalty of Sins

Let me try to explain the difference of how God approaches this matter of sanctification. There are three phrases I think will help you when we talk about sin, singular. Justification delivers us from the Penalty of Sins. Do you understand that? It delivers us from the Penalty of Sins. Christ died on the cross, bearing our sins. It is that Old Testament illustration that speaks of the scapegoat. You remember the two goats. One, they put their hands on the head to transfer the sins to that scapegoat, and it went off into the wilderness where it bore the sins away forever. That was one aspect of Christ's work on the cross. The other goat was sacrificed as the sin of sacrifice and it paid for our sins. Those two scapegoats in the Old Testament show us how grand this deliverance from the penalty of sins is.

Think about this; Christ who knew no sin was made sin. He took upon himself our sins; He bore our sins away, and now it has been removed from us as it says in Psalm 103:12a, "As far as the east is from the west." This is a vicarious death. Now, what does that mean? Sometimes we read these words from commentators and say, "What does vicarious mean?" Well, it simply means a substitutionary death. He was our substitute. You did not have to bear your sins any longer. You did not have to remove your sins. In His body, on that tree, He took away all the sins. He bore all the sins, and He was crushed by the Father so that you could go sin free. This is what it means that He removed us from the penalty of sin. Remember in verse 23 it says, "For the wages of sin is death." Who bores those wages? Did you bear them? you could not! The Holy One of God took the penalty of our sins. Well, that is one way we can look at it. That is how we were counted righteous.

Delivered from the Power of Sin

The second important thing about sanctification and sin is that He delivers us from the Power of Sin. This chapter deals with us being delivered from its power, not its penalty. You never have to suffer the penalty of sins again because you have been fully reconciled to God. But the power of sin is another question. How are you going to live? How are you going to overcome the power of sin? How are you going to live this life and not be completely overwhelmed with sin? Well, that is what He does in sanctification.

Delivered from the Presence of Sin

And the third phrase is that ultimately you will be delivered from the Presence of Sin. You get that? When the Lord comes, we will get a new body, it says in chapter eight. We will get this new body of redemption, and we shall be removed from the very presence of sin.

Is not that marvelous? We will not have to deal with sin in eternity; sin will not be recalled. Sin will have been completely dealt with and done away. You will have been made righteous through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, and then no longer will there be even the presence of sin. I long for that day. What a day it will be when we have it. Romans 8:23b says, "We also ourselves groan within ourselves, awaiting adoption, which is the redemption of our body." When that day happens, we will be done with even the presence of sin. So, I hope you understand from these three phrases, it is a pretty good way to look at the comprehensiveness of the Lord's work.

The last one is the presence of sin, and it deals with glorification. We have justification which deals with the penalty of sin. The second one is the power of sin which is dealt with through sanctification, and it is living this life. And the third one is the presence of sin, and in chapter eight that is dealt with through glorification.

II Corinthians 1:10: "who has delivered us from so great a death." That is justification. "who has delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver;" Notice that is present tense, and that is sanctification. Paul understood these three things, "in whom we confide that he will also yet deliver;" That is glorification. That is all three in one. Thank God for that.

Grace is not a Liberty to Sin, But a Liberty from Sin

Well, let us go back. Now you will know why Paul wrote this first verse, “What then shall we say? Should we continue in sin that grace may abound?” How important this is. These 15 verses are dealing with that one matter, “Should we continue in sin?” Look at verse 15 at the tail end of it. These are very similar questions that he asked. Verse 15a says, “What then? should we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace?”

These are two important questions. These are the bookends of this introduction to sanctification, and if you understand them, these are flawed arguments. Immediately Paul reacts to his own writing. He does not hold back. He is putting forth a human argument that is a flawed argument. And immediately in both cases, he says, “God forbid.” In other words, being under grace is not somehow a license to sin. The whole point of grace is to bring us to a point where we are so sanctified that we are no longer controlled by the power of sin. This is what he is trying to get to. This is an argument that is so wrong Paul cannot help but react.

You remember that phrase, “God forbid,” is in the book of Romans ten times. It is there ten times. It means, “Banish the thought,” as one writer said. In the old Authorized Version it is, “God forbid.” And in my version that I like, it is, “Far be the thought.” So, this is a reaction to this wrong understanding of grace, that somehow, we can be saved and left like we were in our desperate condition, that nothing needs to be done. And because we are under grace, we can live in our unchanged condition. Those are the two questions. But the answer is, “We cannot! God forbid!” He is after a people who are not just justified, but a people who are sanctified, and who are conformed to the image of His Son. All His work following salvation and justification is for that purpose. I believe this is what these 15 verses mean. Verses 1-14 answer these two questions.

What it specifically gets at is that grace is not a liberty to sin, but a liberty from sin. Do you understand the difference? If you are going to live the Christian life and not continue in sin, grace is not a liberty to sin. You know, a lot of people say, “Well, I am under grace.” The argument really is when you delve into it is, “Since we are under grace, why not sin more so grace can be even more wonderfully shown?” To that, Paul says, “God forbid! That is wrong thinking!” Often, you may have been referred to as wrong-headed thinking. I know I have. That would be wrong New Testament thinking.

When it comes to law and grace, grace is not a license to live under sin. Some people think it is. “We are in the age of grace; we can live under sin!” No, you cannot! There must be a vehicle. God has not determined to do a partial work and leave you with your sin nature, dominated by sin, controlled by sin. He had a grander plan than that, and so grace is not a license to live under sin but through sanctification, to live unto God. That is what grace is for. Now we will get into that in a moment.

The Fact of Our Death in Christ

Let us look at the fact of our death in Christ, and this is a very important thing. How does God make sanctification possible? I tell you; we can struggle with this. Let me just say for a moment, that in the evangelical Christian world, these verses are rarely talked about. People in evangelical Christianity understand justification by faith, but hardly understand sanctification. What God

wants to do in you and me as believers is to be conformed to His image, and we hardly understand it.

I think of Watchman Nee's book "The Normal Christian Life." And I recommend this book. It is the most glorious presentation on Romans six that I have ever heard, and I have read several things. I cannot think of anything more complete. Jerry and I read it in 1972 together during our lunch break in the city of Richmond. This book, "The Normal Christian Life," changed our lives. Now, please, if you have read it, read it again. Brother Nee had such light on this, and he saw there was a possibility that we did not need to continue to live under sin, but we could be free from the power of sin, and he made it clear. He tells a very humorous story. Now, this must come by divine revelation, but in the story he said that he was upstairs, and one day he realized what Romans six said, and he said, "I am dead! I am dead!" He went downstairs and told the first brother he ran into, "I am dead! I am dead!" So, we need to see that we have been put out of the way.

Do you think you can live the Christian life? The first thing Paul deals with is death. You need to see that your old self, the old man, Adam, who you were in Adam, was taken care of at the cross. Now, I mean that in the gentlest way. It was executed at the cross. Did you know that you were executed? That you died at the cross? So, Paul begins to deal with this matter of death. You see the words "death" and "dying" and "dies" in these 14 verses, and I think it is 14 times that you see it. This is a major thing, and this is the fact of our death in Christ. Once we see this in the same way Watchman Nee saw it, and many others have seen it, we begin to realize that now there is a way through. Now there is a possibility that I can live the Christian life because I no longer live. Someone else lives in me that has the power to overcome sin. This is the beauty of the fact of death in Christ. We need to understand that Paul in this book is dealing with two facts. You remember my argument that the Bible is about twos. The first fact is that you died in Christ. Paul makes a very big deal about it. If you look at verses 1-7, they say that it is a fact you died in Christ. You can say until you are blue in the face, "I do not feel dead. I do not look dead. As a matter of fact, I look pretty good for a 72-year-old man." But nevertheless, you are dead. Christ took you to the cross and there you died. There you began to experience the liberation of sanctification that you no longer need to live, but Christ can live in you.

This is the beauty of these 15 verses. Verses 1-7 answer to that first argument, "Should we continue in sin that grace may abound?" This is the argument for that—you died. I think sometimes we get confused about that. I had an old book, I think it is, "Dying To Live" by Jessie Penn-Lewis. There is another, maybe more famous one than that, "Dying We Live" by Edward Gleason. But thank the Lord, brothers, and sisters, through dying in Christ, we begin to live in Christ. This is an eternal fact, this is not a hope, this is not a wish, this is not something you hope will happen in your lifetime. This is something that is declared in these first seven verses, that has already happened. It is a historic event!

When Christ died, you died in Christ. That was the beginning of sanctification. It was not only Christ that died. A lot of times when we look at the cross, we say, "Christ died on the cross," but the miracle of it is that you died on the cross. Let me read verse three, "Are you ignorant that we, as many as have been baptised unto Christ Jesus," (Notice the tense of it, "have been baptized.")

Now my English is not so good, we set that record straight long ago, and I have my sidekick here that will make it right if I mess it up. "Have been baptized," is a past tense. It has already happened. "Have died" is past tense. It is something that happened historically when Christ was on the cross, and by it your liberation began. When you know that, you no longer have to live, because first of all, you are dead. Or you can read on to verse 4, "We have been buried therefore with him by baptism unto death." Notice the tense, "We have been buried therefore with him by baptism unto death, in order that, even as Christ has been raised up from among the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also should walk in newness of life." This is a divine fact.

Do you know the difference between a fact and a feeling? I get so troubled. I do not know if you get so troubled, but when I hear testimonies of people, three-quarters of the words are, "I am not feeling it," or "I am feeling," or "it does not feel like," or "this is what I feel." Paul does not begin with feelings. Feelings are not in the picture here. What Paul wants us to see, to believe, and understand about sanctification is that, in fact, you died in Christ when He was at the cross. How marvelous that is! You have been put out of the way. You have been put aside. And then when we come to the second fact, you will see that you have been raised in Christ. These two facts, just two facts, change the whole world forever. We were reconciled; now we have become sanctified. How? We died in Christ. How? We live in Christ. Only those two things. It is the whole of chapter 6:1-14.

Sometimes we think of baptism as a religious experience. It is not a religious experience. It is being completely identified with Christ. So much so, that that day He died on the cross, all of Adam's race died. And all of Adam's race, that become reconciled to God by believing this, begin to discover the secret of living the Christian life, which is now that Christ has been raised from the dead, and we live through him. This is the whole explanation.

I remember when I was trying to relate this to the folks in Pakistan, they thought I was talking about baptismal regeneration. I knew there was something wrong because I said something that took all a minute to say, and it was about five minutes of translation. Then finally, it got to our brother so much that he stopped me and said, "Brother, we do not believe in baptismal regeneration." I said, "Well, I do not either. Why do you think I believe in baptismal regeneration?" They had never seen this reality. They had never seen this part of the sanctifying work. Everybody believes Mark 16:16, which says, "He that believes and is baptised shall be saved." And somehow, they try to impose that as baptismal regeneration. What I do believe in is baptismal sanctification. It is a huge difference. That is what we need to see. Through His death, we were literally included by baptism into His death.

You know, when you die, and I am not hoping for any of us to die yet, I am hoping the Lord will have more time to do that sanctifying work. We think of three questions: When did you die? Where did you die? And why did you die? Right? If someone comes up to me in business, an old businessperson that I knew quite well, and he says, "Did you know John died?" I would say, "John died? How did John die? When did John die? Why did John die?" And then they give me this new information. Well, when you died was when Christ died on the cross. Where did you die? On the cross. That is where you died. Why did you die? So that you would be enabled to walk in the newness of life. That is the whole thing. That is the "when," and the "where," and the "why."

Baptism is so comprehensive. Baptism is not just a statement or a testimony that I believe in the Lord Jesus, and I am reconciled to God, and I am His. That is not all that baptism talks about. Paul made it abundantly clear. "Are you ignorant?" Now, he was not calling us stupid, you know. Are you not aware? Are you ignorant? As many as have been baptized unto Christ Jesus have been baptized unto His death. Oh, what a wonderful verse! He goes on to say, we have become identified with Him through baptism into death. Now what does that mean? That word "identified" is very important to baptism. It means that you were planted together. You were literally planted together with Christ in His death. You were buried. What do you do with a dead person? You bury them.

It says later that we are justified. It means that we are free from sin because of this. How marvelous that is! I love what brother Ironside said when he was trying to explain these verses, which are not easy to explain. H. A. Ironside said, "How many people were crucified on Calvary's cross? He said, "There were two thieves, and there was Christ Himself." He realized there were three, but he went further than that. Are those all? Paul said in Galatians 2:20: 'I am crucified with Christ.' He was there also. So that makes it four, but he went further than that. And each believer can say, 'According to Romans six, our old man is crucified with Him.' So untold millions were seen by God as hanging from that cross." Do you understand the importance of that? What a huge cross! Untold millions! We met our end there. Thank God for it! And because of that, we have been buried. This is the way sanctification begins with a divine, vital fact. If you do not understand it, you will never know how to be free from sin.

That is the simple thing that Paul is telling you; it is so important. Romans 6:6 says, "Knowing this." I will never forget years ago when I read for the first time, "The Normal Christian Life;" Brother Nee said so much about "knowing this." "Knowing this" means objective truth. It does not mean subjective experience. Now if you look at verse nine where it talks about knowing, and you look at verse 16 where it talks about knowing, they are conscious knowledge. They are subjective knowledge. There are two different words here for the Greek, according to Brother Darby. In Romans 6:6, the profound word is that you must know this as an objective fact. It already happened. You do not make it happen. You do not ask God, "Take me to the cross, Lord, so that I might forever die." He must get confused when people make those kinds of prayers to Him. That is what happened 2,000 years ago. How marvelous! This is how sanctification begins. Why did you have to go to the death on the cross and be included, or to be planted with, or other versions say to be united, in union with Christ in His death? Because He knew you could never be free from sin unless you were liberated by death. That is the wonderful story of the Romans chapter six. I hope you begin to see it. Holiness is impossible for us apart from our old man being crucified with Christ on the cross.

The Body of Sin Might be Annulled

I remember brother Nee's illustration he used, and it is a good illustration. He called us a "sin-producing factory." God knew He could deal with our past, but He knew in His divine wisdom that He had to deal with who we were. And if left alone, we will continue to be that sin-producing factory. So, He had to put that sin-producing factory out of business and close the doors. That is what He did. It is so marvelous. This is sanctification. This is what it means by the body of sin in

verse six. Our old man has been crucified with him, that the body of sin might be annulled. It means, "Put out of business." It means, "No longer in service." It means, "It has been terminated." And once we are terminated, there is made available to us a whole new life that can live this Christian life.

This is the fact. Do you understand the fact? Do not pray this will be true; stand in the fact. You cannot change this fact; you cannot alter this fact; you can disbelieve this fact; you can doubt this fact, but if you do not live in this fact, you will never be sanctified. You died with Christ that the body of sin might be annulled. Our old man, our unregenerate self, was crucified. Ephesians 4:22 is a beautiful verse: "Having put off the old man," is what it talks about. God took care of that by putting off the old man. He is gone; he is buried. This is wonderful! Colossians 3:9 says, "Having put off the old man," and it goes on in verse 10, "and having put on the new." That is the secret of sanctification. That is the foundation that all sanctification is built upon.

Then he concludes in this fact of our death in Christ in verse 7, "For he that has died is justified from sin." I wish Darby had not used the word justified; this is unfortunate. Now you know that I am an acolyte of his; okay? It is only because I did not know any better. I asked Brother Kaung years ago, what Bible should I get? I was into the King James. And he said, "Well, I like the Darby version; it is more accurate." So, I started with that, and I have never given it up. But I will tell you, it is more awkward, and I do not think this is a good word, and even Darby recognized it. He said in his notes, "Freed from sin." That is how he explained it. I wish he had not talked about justification because we are talking about sanctification. Justification has already happened in the first five chapters, and now we come to what it means to be sanctified. It means that you are freed from the power of sin. It means literally, that those who are dead cannot sin. You know, it is a wonderful miracle that in America those that are dead can still vote. I saw a fellow at the bank who must have been a disgruntled conservative, and on his truck a bumper sticker said, "I hope when I die, I do not vote Democrat." But one thing you cannot do when you are dead and laid in a grave is you cannot sin. That is the fact you need to stand on. That needs to be your daily stand, "I have been dealt with. It is over, and now You are doing a wonderful sanctifying work in me." That is a process that will go on until you are released from the presence of sin. The rest of your life will be in this process. Well, this is the divine fact and the wonderful power that we see in there.

The Fact of Our Resurrection in Christ

Now, another thing is the fact of our resurrection in Christ. Notice there are two facts. Just remember these two facts. You died in Christ. You were one of those untold millions who hung on the cross and one of those untold millions that was buried in that tomb with Christ. And then when He was raised from the dead, you were one of those untold millions that believed in the power of His resurrection life. And because you did, you are ever alive in Christ Jesus. "So that we might walk in newness of life" was the word. What a powerful fact this is! You have been raised in Christ. When He was raised from the dead, you were raised with him.

It says in verse 8: "Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him."

It was a fact. We have died with Christ. We shall also live with him. We believe that Christ, having been raised up from among the dead, dies no more. Death has dominion over Him no more.

Verse 10: "For in that he has died, he has died to sin once for all; but in that He lives, he lives to God."

How marvelous! This is us! This was not supposed to be the Lord Jesus only. When He was raised out of that grave in the newness of life by the divine power of resurrection life, He now no longer lives to sin. He no longer continues in sin. He was sinless; He bore the sins. But no longer, no longer do we have to continue in sin because we have been raised with him in the newness of life. Do you understand? What a fact. Can you imagine if He had said, "I have just left you in the grave"? It is the power of resurrection life; people do not understand that enough as Christians. Paul said in Philippians 3:10, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection."

Romans 1:4: and this is how the book begins. I know this is my awkward version, but bear with me as I read it, speaking of the Lord Jesus: "Marked out, Son of God in power," this is speaking of the Lord Jesus. "according to the spirit of holiness," That is the spirit of sanctification; "by resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord." Do you know that the power of His resurrection life is now in you? This is the greatest power. Paul could have said anything about the Lord Jesus in this introduction, but what he wanted to focus on was the power of sanctification, holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. Brothers and sisters, there is a power in you that is inexplicable. It cannot be told. There is a power of life in you, once you have become identified with the Lord Jesus, that is above every power that ever existed.

Now, you may know that I tend to be infatuated with the Shroud of Turin. I do not want you to think I have religious artifacts in the home because Linda would not let me do it if I wanted them. But the Shroud of Turin is amazing to me. I do not necessarily believe that it is the burial cloth of the Lord Jesus, but I was listening to a fellow who was one of the original researchers who, in fact, did research this in the early 70s. He said something so powerful happened in the resurrection that this thing that they cannot replicate, and they cannot explain was transferred in the burst of power and was left as an indelible mark on this cloth. Now, whether that is true or not, but I do believe in the part about the power through resurrection. Something powerful happened, and that power is in you, and that power is in me. And the fact that this power is in you and this power is in me makes it possible for us to no longer continue in sin. This is Romans 6:1-14. How marvelous this story is!

Two Responses

Well, this is the last point, and this is very important, by the way. You remember I have been talking about two men, two facts, divine facts, eternal facts. Now I want to talk about two responses. There are only two responses you need to begin to live in this sanctified way of being made holy. This transformative process will last the rest of your life if you do these two things. Now, if you do not do these two things, it will never happen in you. You will be saved; you will be reconciled, and you will be justified, but you will not be sanctified. That is what Paul is trying to get us to see in these first verses. Let me read them.

Verses 12-14: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body to obey its lusts. Neither yield your members instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but yield yourselves to God as alive from the dead, and your members instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under law but under grace."

The first response to these two facts is "reckon" it so in Romans 6:11. That is not a casual word. You know, I have told you already in the book of Romans, that word, "reckon" occurs again and again. It is in your account. It is a divine fact. It is an accounting term. Reckon it so. All sanctification is cooperation with the Holy Spirit. Now justification is different. It says, "Believe in the Lord." That is all you have to do. That is the response, and you are justified. But in sanctification, there are two things you must do. The first is that we must reckon it so. We must reckon. Now I am not telling you to wear yourself out reckoning. The first time I discovered that word from Brother Nee in *The Normal Christian Life*, I went around, and every third word was, "I reckon it so, Lord. I reckon it so. I reckon it so." I am glad people did not hear me saying that, but I said it over and over again. But you need to take that and declare in the Lord, "It is so!" I reckon this because it was not my doing. It is God's way to full sanctification. Reckon it so!

The second response is equally important. It is the word "yield."

Verse 13: "Neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but yield yourselves to God as alive from among the dead."

Do you understand that word? So important was that word to the Apostle Paul that he repeated it twice. Do not just reckon it so, but now do something else, yield yourselves to God. When you were under sin, you were reigned over by sin. You did not even have to yield yourself because it was your nature; It is who you are. But now in this sanctification process, God wants your cooperation.

There are two things that will determine in your lifetime whether you are cooperating with God or not. The first is, do you reckon it so? You were dead in Christ; you were raised in Christ to newness of life. The second thing is do you yield yourself now as an instrument of righteousness to God in order that you can live by Him? Do you do that? When you get up in the morning, will you do that? When you go to bed at night, will you say, "Lord, with everything in me, by the power of your resurrection, I yield myself to You as an instrument." It is something He can play, like a musical instrument for righteousness. Do you do that?

These are the power of two responses. If you just do these two things—accept the divine facts and reckon it so, yield yourself, and you will begin to discover that the Holy Spirit is working in you the divine process of sanctification. May this become our own experience.

Conclusion

Let me conclude with this. What marvelous provision has been made for us in the cross! Could you imagine that we who were sinners and enemies could have been justified and completely reconciled to God? That is one aspect of the cross. Christ died for us. But there is a second aspect of the cross and that is Christ lives in us. That is sanctification. The only way you can begin to enter into this process is to realize that you were included in, you were planted in

His death. You were included in His burial, and you were included in the greatest event of all history, the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Incalculable power! What a glorious gospel! You know, I think sometimes we have demeaned the gospel. Remember how when Paul spoke, he talked about God's gospel in Romans 1. He said, "It is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and to the Greek ..." "For as it is written, the just shall live by faith" (see verses 16a, 17b).

This is that glorious gospel. It is full reconciliation and sanctification in the continuous present sense until we see the Lord. We are being wholly sanctified—spirit, soul, and body—until that day we are received to be with Him forever and are delivered from the presence of sin. This is Romans 6:1-15. The impossible has been made possible through the work of our Lord. It is the complete work, not the partial work, but the complete work of our Lord on the cross of Calvary.

Lord, we thank You so much for Your Word. Forgive us, Lord, when we simplify it and demean it and reduce it to something just for human apprehension. It is all to divine glory. Who could have thought of these things? Who could have thought of making Your enemies, sinners, righteous in Christ, accounted as righteous? Who could have thought that You could take these same unchanged ones with the nature of sin and transform them to be according to Your image? Who could have thought? But it is true. It is altogether true. You made it possible when we died with You and when we rose with You. And You are looking to us to cooperate with You in Your Holy Spirit, to reckon it so and to yield ourselves to You completely that You will finish this work of the cross that You started in us. All these things we ask in the precious name of Jesus. Amen.