

## Men Ministering to Men

### Lesson 15 – Consider your ways!

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#### Phrase Study Romans 6:5-11

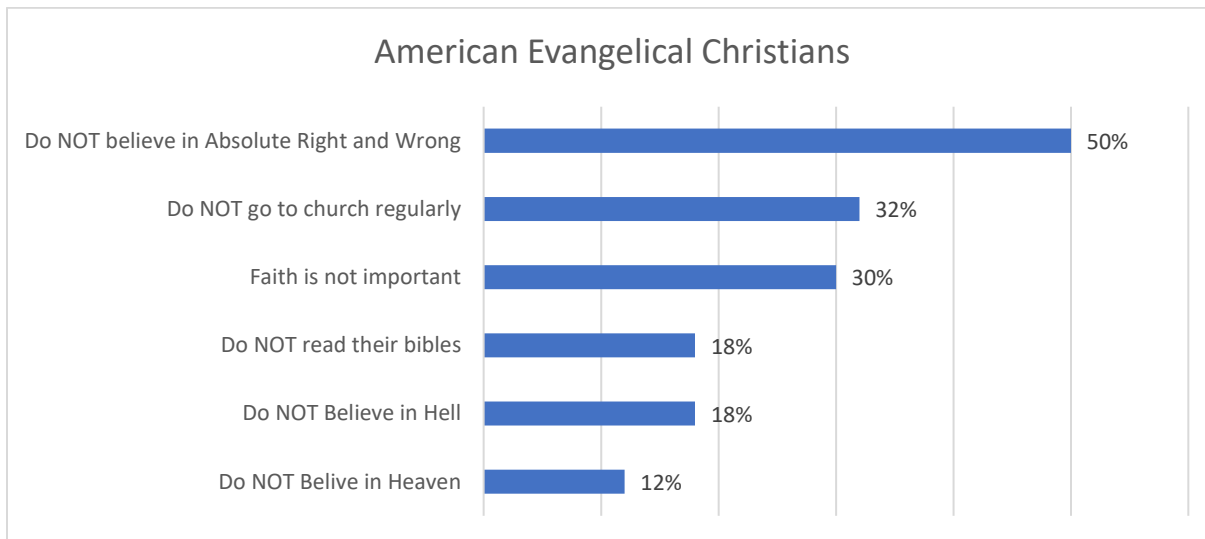
A phrase study is to examine the selected scripture and determine the hierarchy to thought. To create an outline of the scripture to provide insight into the thought pattern of the writer. The verse numbers are in { }.

- 1) {5} For if WE have become united with Him
    - a) in the likeness of His **death**,
    - b) certainly WE shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection,
    - c) {6} knowing this,
      - i) that OUR old self was crucified with Him,
      - ii) in order that OUR body of **sin** might be done away with,
      - iii) so that WE would no longer be slaves to **sin**;
    - d) {7} for he who has **died** is freed from **sin**.
  - 2) {8} Now if WE have **died** with Christ,
    - a) WE believe that WE shall also live with Him,
    - b) {9} knowing that Christ,
    - c) having been raised from the **dead**,
      - i) is never to **die** again;
      - ii) **death** no longer is master over Him.
      - iii) {10} For the **death** that He died,
      - iv) He **died** to **sin** once for all;
    - d) but the life that He lives, He lives to God.
  - 3) {11} Even so consider YOURSELVES
    - a) to be **dead** to **sin**,
    - b) but alive to God in Christ Jesus.
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What do you think is the main idea in this passage? \_\_\_\_\_

Just from the outline what words are repeated and emphasized?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 33% of the world is counted as Christian.
  - 70% of the United States population sees themselves as Christian
    - 36% of American Christians at least once a week.
    - 25.4% are associated with Evangelical Protestant groups
      - 58% of Evangelical Protestant groups attend church at least once a week
      - 45% are men
      - Marriage status among Christian men in America who are also evangelical
        - 55% are married,
        - 18% are single
        - 14% are divorced or separated
        - 8% are widowed
        - 5% are co-habiting
      - 31% are parents of children under 18
      - 70% see their faith as very important
      - 60% see their religion as the guide for right and wrong
      - 50% see absolutes to right and wrong
      - 18% seldom or never read scripture :(
      - 88% believe in heaven
      - 82% believe in hell



Why are not all those who call themselves Christian not living like it?

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## Statement of understanding

# Anyone, including you and me, cannot do anything against our own nature.

- You cannot breathe underwater.
- You cannot jump off a 1,000-foot cliff and expect to fly.
- You cannot be a man and get pregnant.
- You cannot go without water for 90 days.
- You cannot weigh 300 pounds and fit into a size 32 Speedo shorts.

You can use things like Scuba tanks, and parachutes, and lose weight but inherently, without these aids you cannot. Our nature dictates our actions. (**WHO WE ARE DETERMINES WHAT WE DO**)

Romans 6:11 *Even so consider yourselves to be dead to **sin**, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.* NASB

When Peter walked on the water to Jesus it was a miracle of Peter's faith. So also, it requires a miracle, an outpouring of God's grace, love and power to make it possible. So also here in this scripture Paul is asking to do something, at first glance, is equally against our nature. Paul here seems to tell us to do something that is more impossible than walking on water. And to make this happen we also need God's grace, love, and power.

## How do we get there?

How do we get to a point in our lives, where we are dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus?

Question: Is there a secret handshake or special knowledge to get us to that point? \_\_\_\_\_

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It is not some secret ritual, or even a special insight into God that can cause us to be dead in sin and alive in God.

This truth is a game changer. Paul wants to get us here, for the gospel reaches into life now. Our unity with Christ is so complete that we can consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God right now! Today. Here. Currently.

But before a person can honestly say and do Romans 6:11 they must know and believe Romans 6:5-10. In other words, I cannot consider myself dead to sin and alive to God until I see the truth behind it. Paul introduced us to this theme in our last chapter, but he expands on it here.

## Freedom From Sin – Last week's lesson

We ended the lesson last week with this slide:

What is the solution to sin in the Christian life?

- Is there something greater than my want to?
- Is there something greater than my body?
- Is there something stronger than me to help me on to my narrow gate?
- Is there something greater than my efforts and works?

This information was to ask you some hard questions. It was to make you see the state of the Christian that has in a battle with the inner self trying to reassert itself back into our lives. I used the illustration of roping it in or pulling it back into our lives even after being forgiven for them.

**“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.”** (Romans 6:5)

Quite a cliffhanger? I tried to explain there is something more than a constant struggle with sin. So, we move on to the scripture for tonight. The method, the means, is the process of becoming alive in the likeness of the resurrection of Jesus. The key we try to understand is in the phrase “have become united”.

- In the King James Bible this phrase is: ***have been planted together.***
- In the New International Version this phrase is: ***have been united.***
- In James Moffatt this phrase is: ***have grown together.***
- In the New American Standard this phrase is: ***have become united.***
- In the Greek New Testament this phrase is: **σύμφυτοι γεγόναμεν (sýmphytos gínomai)**
- Just Larry’s literal translation from the Greek is: ***have been united, grown together, as kindred.***

So ultimately the phrase includes combining perfect living unity. That both Jesus and the believer are planted in the same soil so close they become one plant.

This concept of union with HIM is not the ultimate end of our lives. Our union does not mean we have to physically die. Paul in this verse states clearly that this union, this unification with Jesus, was something to become.

Jesus brought us into a death and resurrection **like** His. Not exactly like His, for we atoned for no one, but we were united with him in his death, and his resurrection. Again, look at the statement: Romans 6:11 ***Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.***

This is the conclusion but what is the process. How do we get there? Paul is saying we can make the bold declaration that we ,are dead to sin because of Jesus. If this is true, is there a methodology, a way to make that happen? Or is it just automatic at Justification or even Baptism?

## **Our relationship with Jesus is what changes our relationship with sin.**

When I experience temptation, I must recall the fact that I died and rose with Jesus, for my identification with Him changes the power of sin over me. I have a new relationship with sin, one in which I am dead to it. I am alive to God instead, all because of my unification with Jesus.

Look at that blessed word: UNITED. It means joined with Jesus, knit together with Him. You’ve become one with Him, identified with Him. You are planted in the same soil.

This unity with Jesus is both the ground and goal of our sanctification or growth. How can I even find the power to grow? Because I was united with Jesus. What am I trying to grow into? Towards unity and likeness with Jesus. I can be sanctified because of him, and my sanctification takes me toward him. Unity with him is my launching pad. Solidarity with him is my destination.

### So how does this unity happen?

So we have been fused together with Jesus. We are so strongly united with, tied to, Him. Do you know this? This truth is vital and must be embraced by every believer. Your unity with Christ is your precious possession.

After stating this result Paul goes on to explain this great life with Christ.

***“We know that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.” (Romans 6:6)***

The goal here is simple: no longer enslaved to sin. To get to a place where the constant struggle is over. This is where our unity to Jesus can take us. Freedom. But how do we get to that place?

Observe the verse. There is a process mentioned there. Something has already happened — "our old self was crucified with Him." Something needs to happen — "in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing." And freedom is the result — "no longer enslaved to sin."

So there is the process. The first step is our crucifixion with Jesus. The next step is bringing our bodies of sin to a state of nothingness. Then, finally, we experience freedom from sin.

This process is an important one, so let's investigate more deeply how it works. Again, we will never confidently say we are dead to sin and alive to God until we understand and live this process, so we must understand it.

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## The process

### Step ONE: Encounter with the Old Self

First, our old self was crucified with Jesus. This is something Jesus did, appropriated by faith. He did the hard work, and we believed. At that moment, our old self was killed with Jesus. We are done with Adam. We are new.

Now, the old self was all bad. He was under sin, weak and ungodly, a sinner, and an enemy of God. But ***“if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”*** (2 Corinthians 5:17). But the question must be asked: do you believe this? Something radical occurred in you. To bring the body to a state of nothingness is much more **potent** than a “try hard not to sin message.”

Quick thoughts:

- The gospel isn't an example designed to encourage you to stop sinning.
- The gospel is not the reason to stop sinning.
- The gospel is about change.

- The gospel recreates you.
- The gospel is not a remolding out of the same materials.
- The gospel is about change.
- If you are a new creature in Jesus when you sin, you aren't you.

Believing our death to sin occurred with Jesus is one of the more difficult elements of the Christian life. The attention to it is constant. William Newell, in his commentary on Romans, said it well:

*"It is a stupendous thing, this matter of taking note and keeping in mind what goes so completely against consciousness, - that our old man was crucified. Emotions, feelings, deny them. To reason, they are foolishness. But ah, what stormy seas have faith walked over! What mountains have faith cast into the seas! How many impossible things have faith done! To believe my old man died with Christ is often contrary to my experience and the feeling that I am alive to sin because my old nature seems vibrant, very much alive."*

### Step Two: Belief of the effect of Jesus in your Life

At this point step two comes in. We believe we were crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be brought to nothing. This is sanctification. I am left with a body that knows how to sin. Because it can sin, and I am left with it, the only way forward for me is to allow Christ to bring those sinful desires to a place of nothingness. The second step is belief in the power of God.

#### My struggle

My body is not sinful in itself, but it can be used for sin, for it has not yet tasted full redemption. It has tasted what sin is like. I battle it. I want to bring its passions to nothing. My old self was crucified with Jesus, and now I continue to crucify my sinful desires. "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." (Galatians 5:24).

#### God's plan

This is God's destination for my body of sin: nothingness. To this, the believer understands there is always more to pursue, more to destroy, more to bring into submission to Christ. Paul hasn't told us much of how at this point, but we see the goal. After believing I have been crucified with Christ, I set out on the destination God has for me, that my body of sin would be brought to nothing. Remember, this is newness of life we're talking about. We want to live in it, run in it, drink it. Paul is showing us the way.

### Step Three: Consider your ways

The final step in the Romans 6:6 process is simple: "You are no longer enslaved to sin." This is where God is taking us. Out of slavery. We are **positionally** free because of the cross, but God wants us to daily experience that freedom.

***"For one who has died has been set free from sin."*** (Romans 6:7)

God has already done this to us. He has already set us free. He has already justified and declared us righteous. Paul isn't describing a prison break kind of freedom, but freedom through death. It is one thing for a prisoner to leave the prison via escape, but quite another to simply die. Through Jesus we have died, so we've been set free.

There are types of freedom:

1. **Positional:** The state of our lives has changed. Our position has changed in our relationship with God. While we were condemned and before we were justified, we were a long way from God. God was on the edge of our lives. Positional freedom is a change in this relationship. God, in response to faith, justifies us. He makes us without sin. The past is gone. It is over and done with. Our relationship with God is one that acknowledges God and accepts his free gift. As a result He becomes a resident in our lives. We have been freed from all past sin. "Free at last, free at last, thank God I am free at last." MLK we are no longer prisoners of our past.
2. **Crisis:** The state of our lives when we realize we are made free. We walk almost with head hung low toward the prison gates. It is the event that ultimately makes you feel free. It is a mutual consent between the lawgivers and the law keepers.
3. **Progressive freedom:** Based on our **positional** freedom and subsequently our **crisis** freedom, You will never experience the freedom Christ gives until you receive the victory He won for you on the cross. To live as Christ is the Goal. We may not be there yet but it becomes the driving force of all you do.

Life To God

***"Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God."*** (Romans 6:8-10)

This life of freedom is a life we live for God. How is this possible? What does this mean? Paul believed we could currently live with Jesus, that we could appropriate his victory into our daily experience in the here and now.

Paul wants us to **consider** our connection to Jesus. Jesus died, and we died with Him. This seems impossible to us, but it is so.

- The Bible teaches that when Adam sinned, we all sinned with him. You weren't there, but you were.
- When you believe in Jesus, you join in with his righteous act instead of Adam's act of rebellion.
  - You died with Jesus.
  - You might not have experienced the pain, but from God's perspective, it is so.
  - This obliterates the seemingly impossible barrier to living with God. It is part of a new experience.

We often look to the future, to eternity, as the time of sanctification, growth, or change. This change is not reserved for the narrow gate. Nevertheless, it is the only path to that gate. He wanted us to expect life with Christ right now. Heaven or Hell is not the reason for changing your life. It is a restoration to a new life.

## **It is living in our now with Christ in the same space.**

Our unity with Jesus is strong. Jesus died to death, for it no longer has dominion over him. Jesus died to sin, once for all. Jesus lives to God, for the resurrection meant he left this sinful world, now enjoying uninterrupted fellowship with the Father God. He lives singly devoted to God and his glory.

The point Paul makes is that we are connected to that. Jesus died to death. Jesus died to sin. Jesus lives to God. You, as a believer, are connected to Him. You died to death. You died to sin. You live to God.

***“So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.”*** (Romans 6:11)

After six chapters in Romans, Paul finally gives us something to do. Our first command. We are to **consider** something to be so. We are to consider this all to be true. We are to consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God.

What does it mean to consider? Various translations give us a well-rounded look at the concept. We are to **reckon, regard, look upon, recognize, count, or see ourselves** as dead to sin and alive to God.

This reckoning involves the will; it requires thought. Even in the face of contrary experiences, we must believe it to be so that we are dead to sin and alive to God.

Additionally, this consideration is something we must continuously do. It is not a one-time event, but continual. I go through this process a hundred times a day. If you haven't realized how thoughtful and introspective the Christian life is by now, hopefully, you're beginning to see. Christianity is a thinking person's religion.

So, I am to constantly consider something to be true. But what? Well, there are two parts to this consideration process. First, I must know I am dead to sin. Secondly, I must know I am alive to God.

First Consideration 1 — I Am Dead To Sin

So I must continually regard myself as dead to sin. I am commanded to remember that sin does not have the same influence on me as it used to have. Every time I stumble, I must remember. Every time I am tempted, I must remember. Sin no longer has the same imprisoning power over me. I am not destined to go there. I am clean. I died with Jesus, and he died to death and sin. Sin is not as effective as it once was. I am free not to sin. I have died to it.

Illustration: Driving down the freeway from Red Bluff to home at three in the morning in a little sports car I used to own. I am tempted to go a little faster than the speed limit. I say to myself. What harm? The road is empty and I push it up to 80. Immediately a black and white car behind me turns on a bright blue light. California Highway Patrol. I know I was wrong. My response, pull over onto the shoulder and pull out my documents. For the moment I am under the control of a badge and my own, you could well call it, sin. He gave me a ticket. I deserved it. I ultimately paid the price for it. A few weeks later I was back in Red Bluff and eating at the local Denny's and seated two stools down was the CHP officer. He was no longer in his uniform. He was there minding his coffee and eggs. I went up to him and reminded him of our last encounter and complimented him on his professionalism and due diligence. We struck up a conversation and I discovered he was the father of an old friend from High School. Our relationship changed. It was different. Because he no longer have authority over me.

So it is with sin. I have to consider this to be true. The relationship has changed. God will make it an experiential reality, in time, through this consideration and prayer.



Believers would do well to remind themselves of this reality. We need to tell each other of our powerful position in Christ. It is hard to consider ourselves dead to sin. Let us help each other by reminding each other of this truth.

## Consideration 2 — I Am Alive To God

But that is not the whole of the consideration process. I am also to consider myself alive to God. Not only have I died to sin with Jesus, but I am alive to God with Jesus. This is an integral part of the consideration process. I must know how alive I am to God.

What does this mean, to be alive to God? Well, think about Jesus. How is He dead to sin? He died on the cross, was buried, rose, and then ascended. He left the sin of this planet behind. He exists in His eternal home of sinless perfection. Sin has no claim to him. He is dead to it. How is he, then, alive to God? Same answer. He ascended. He is in unbroken fellowship with the Father. He and the Father are one.

I must regard myself as just as alive to God as Jesus. I am commanded to remember that I am now awake to God and responsive to God. The fellowship between Father and Son was broken as Jesus atoned for the sin of the world. Jesus cried, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" But after the cross, their fellowship would never again be broken. Jesus is alive to God, and I am alive to God with Him.

To put it another way, Jesus would never have a moment where he felt far from God. No, he is in unbroken and deep communion with God. Since I'm in Christ, I also am in that kind of unbroken fellowship with God.

This grates against my feelings and experience, for I often feel far from God. But this is not reality. Reality is that I am alive to God. Again, the very reason this must be our consideration is that we are in these bodies still, but our experience is not our reality. No, we are alive to God, very much so. No matter how far I feel from God, I am in Christ, and I must know my feelings are untrue. I am just as alive to God as Jesus is.

This is unlike what I was in Adam. In Adam, I was in death and separation. Sin was very alive to me, and I was alive to it. It had power over me. My relationship with God was one of alienation. We were separated from each other. My sin kept me from his holy presence.

This has all changed. The gospel is God's power to save me. He has made a way to remove my sin from me. It came through death. I died with Jesus, so I have died to sin. It no longer has the same power over me. I am also alive to God.

A married person can live as if they aren't married, but they must remember their relationship and reality, and return to acting like a married person. Likewise, you can live as if you are alive to sin and dead to God, but you must remember. Know who you are. Know you are dead to sin and alive to God. Reckon this to be so, constantly. At every turn of your day, think on this reality and truth.

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Next week we are taking a larger chunk of Romans. Please read and read again Chapter 6:12-23