

Death to Sin, and Resurrection

by Robert B. Thompson

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the difference between the law of Moses and the eternal moral law, and how we can attain to the resurrection from the dead by dying to sin and obeying God's commandments.

Duration: 1:18:00

Scripture: Romans 6:1, Hebrews 10:1

Topics: "Baptism", "Resurrection"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the significance of water baptism and its connection to the believer's declaration that their old life in the world is over. They emphasize that deliverance from sin is a reward that God can provide, and encourage listeners to trust in God's faithfulness and seek His guidance in their lives. The sermon also explores the concept of pursuing the resurrection, referencing Philippians 3:11 and explaining that believers must take hold of the life God offers and not let it run out. The speaker concludes by highlighting the freedom from the law of Moses that comes with declaring one's place with Jesus Christ on the cross.

Transcript

How great you are, Lord, and how you watch over us in such faithfulness. It's just great, Lord. Watching over the details of our lives, we appreciate it so much, Lord.

We pray that you will be with each family representative here, Lord. Give them peace and grace in their homes. Love you and serve you.

To be protected, Lord, against the destroyer. We pray, Lord, as we continue tonight, that you will guide what is said, what is perceived, Lord. That each one may receive something from your table, Lord.

We pray that you will do this, Lord, and we trust you in Jesus' name. Amen. Now, we have been pursuing a topic for the last three weeks, but you don't hear every day.

If I were to put a title on it, I'd call it Pursuing the Resurrection. And a good scripture on that is Philippians 3.11. Many of us know it very well, but nonetheless, it is a shocker. It is a shocker.

Philippians 3.11. And here the Apostle Paul says, he said, And so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead, well, that's really not something that you think about a great deal. I guess we kind of take

the resurrection for granted, whatever it is out there. Something that will happen someday.

Well, in our day, the Spirit of God is going to make it the center of our attention. Because this really is evident from the way Paul writes that this was his goal. You read the preceding verses and the verses that follow, and you'll see that Paul, towards the end of his life, had made attaining to the resurrection his goal.

Well, we're all Bible-believing people, and so we are to make it our goal. Historically, it has not been the Christian goal, but that's all right. We're in a new day, maybe.

And this is the Bible goal, is to attain the resurrection. It's something that has to be attained. And as we study the context of the preceding verses, we see that Paul was laying aside everything that he might attain the resurrection.

Isn't that interesting? You don't usually think of that. But that's what the book says. So, let's take a look then at what is, and this is what we've been on for three weeks.

So let's go back and see what there is to this in the sixth chapter of Romans. In my opinion, the sixth chapter of Romans is probably the most succinct, pertinent chapter, explanation of what salvation is all about. And if you add chapters 7 and 8, I mean, you've really got it.

You've really got an explanation of what it means to attain to the resurrection from the dead. It's found in Romans chapter 6, 7, and 8. Just spells it out. And when he starts off, he says, what shall we say then? Shall we go on sinning? He's reacting, of course, to his comments in chapters 3 through 5, that we're not saved by works, but by faith in Christ.

There has been some misunderstanding of that, in that when we hear works, we think of upright behavior. But Paul is not talking about upright behavior when he says works. What is he talking about? He's talking about the first five books of the Bible, the law of Moses.

And that includes many things that we don't think about as Gentiles. We don't think about the kosher laws. We're not troubled by eating shellfish, for example, that we can only eat that which has fins and scales.

You cannot eat any seafood under the law, except that which has fins and scales. You can't eat anything on the hoof, unless it divides the hoof and chews the cud. It's not enough that it just chews the cud or divides the hoof.

It must do both. And this you have to observe scrupulously. You cannot work on Saturday.

It's very important. If you have skin disease, in general, leprosy in particular, you must tear your clothes, go away from the Christian population, and cry unclean, unclean, when anyone comes near you. Keep the lower part of your face covered.

If you practice witchcraft, you're to be stoned to death. If you curse your mother or father, you're to be stoned to death. It's all part of the law.

You don't break it. The rule was, if you break any part of the law willfully, that is, if you set out to despise God, not if you're overtaken in a temptation and you fall, but if you set yourself out to deliberately break one of God's laws, you're to be cut off from Israel. If you sin through ignorance or because you're overtaken, then you have the animal sacrifice, which is also part of the law.

Very important, the animal sacrifice. When you sin, you bring the prescribed animal and you offer it. Now you say, I never heard of that.

Well, that's what Paul is talking about in Romans 3-5, when he says we're not saved by works but by faith. He's not talking about doing good. He's talking about the law, which in Paul's day was in full force.

That's been a tremendous understanding on the part of Christian people. They think we're saved by grace. See, the Bible contrasts grace and law, not grace and godly behavior.

Never. Because grace produces godly behavior. But you see, it says, for the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

The contrast is between the law, and the law consists of those things that I just told you, along with how you deal with slaves, and how you deal with a thief, how you deal with jealousy, and a number of other things. That's the law. And Paul was very learned in it, and it was a very oppressive thing, because one of them, I think it's in Acts, which neither we nor our fathers, it's either Acts or Galatians, were able to bear.

Don't put a yoke on the Gentiles that neither we nor our fathers were able to bear. As much as the singing and rejoicing over the law, it was nevertheless a very heavy yoke to bear. It controlled every part of your life.

And you had to remember it, and do it. And so, we cannot appreciate, as Gentiles, Paul's teaching about grace, because we don't contrast it with the law. We contrast it with righteous behavior.

Well, you can see what a sheer disaster that is. Because it leaves you the impression that grace is another way of pleasing God, other than by behaving yourself. In particular, keeping the commandments of Christ and his apostles.

Only can see what I'm talking about. Can you see what a monumental difference there is between saying that grace is the opposite, or the replacement for the law of Moses, the first five books of the Bible, particularly beginning with Exodus, or grace, which it is, or grace is in place of keeping the commandments of Christ and his apostles, which it is not. Because that would make most of Paul's writings absolutely non-sequiturs, because what he gave was commandment after commandment, after commandment after commandment, but none of them were commandments of the law of Moses.

They were commandments according to the eternal moral law of God, which existed before the law of Moses, and continues after the law of Moses, and never will change because it's the nature of God himself. The eternal moral law, which is summed up in do unto others as you would have them do unto you, and love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength as your neighbor as yourself, which capsulates the eternal moral law, which existed from eternity, and will continue to eternity, because it's the nature of what God is. And so, the law of Moses is covenantal, dealing with the Jews, it was temporary until Christ had come, it doesn't include by any means all of the moral law, and it tends to be negative.

Thou shalt not, thou shalt not, thou shalt not. So, you can see that if you confuse the eternal moral law and the law of Moses, it comes out that Christ saves us by grace, meaning we don't have to do good, because we're saved by grace, meaning it's an alternative to doing good. This is, as you can see, is a monumental error.

Not only is it a monumental error, it has destroyed the witness of the church, because the witness of the church is doing good works. Let your light so shine among men that they may see your good works. So, if grace does away with good works, it does away with the testimony, with the light of the world.

So, it is truly an awesome, awesome misunderstanding. Are there any questions? Alright, so, Paul understood that his doctrine could be misinterpreted. Peter also commented on that.

And one thing that greatly added to the problem was the prevailing Greek philosophy of Gnosticism, which in fact does teach that we're saved by our mental set regardless of our behavior. So, you can see how Paul's writings in Romans 3-5 were immediately polluted by Gnosticism, and it was a great problem in the first century for that reason. Because Paul's writings in 3-5, if you don't relate it to the law but relate it to godly living, then it becomes Gnosticism.

That's what Gnosticism is. So, we're saved by our knowledge of certain facts, and these bring us to heaven, and it has nothing to do with how we behave. Any questions? And, evidently, James and 1 John have many things to say that are a pure reaction to Gnosticism.

So, but Paul covers it if these people, and even today, would not... See, 3-5 of Romans is the basis of the Protestant Reformation, but if you don't add chapters 6-8, you have Gnosticism. You don't have the gospel at all. And so this is why Paul starts off as he does.

It's because he saw the danger of what he was preaching. And he said, what shall we say then? That is, what do you conclude from what I've just taught you about grace? And he said, shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? Is this the conclusion? He said, by no means. By no means.

That's about as far from what Paul was saying as could ever be imagined. And so he said, and this becomes very critical, because starting with, we died to sin, from this point forward, Paul begins to explain how you attain to the resurrection from the dead. This is the beginning of the explanation.

All that grace does, the kind of grace, there's many kinds of grace, but the grace he talked about in Romans 3-5 is the grace that moves you from the law of Moses to faith in Jesus Christ, which is the beginning. You can't continue with the law of Moses. People do.

In fact, we just heard from a brother that used to attend this church. He's been worshiping in a messianic congregation because they're godly and he loves it. And now this congregation is going back under the law.

People have been confused on this for 2,000 years. They can't see the difference. They cannot see the difference.

And the difference is in Romans 3-5. We are not under the law. We are under Jesus Christ.

We are not under the law of Moses. But this fellow wrote to us this past week. And he's very distressed about it.

He's going to have to leave the congregation because they're going back and observing the law of Moses. And that's not the only messianic congregation that's doing this. The reason, of course, is evangelical teaching.

After it leaves, forgiveness has nothing to offer. Or very, very little. Whereas the teaching of the law, the Torah, has much to offer.

It's substantive. There are things you can get your teeth into. It's really rich in meaning, the law is.

And the way the rabbis interpret it, it's very satisfying to the person who wants to be moral. Nonetheless, one person wrote to me on the Internet and it says, How dare you say that the law of Moses... What was the word he used, Brian? Brian, remember? The law of Moses is not passed away, but... Obsolete. Obsolete.

How dare you say that? He says, Are you trying to take the place of God to say a thing like that? Don't you know that the gospel was added to the law? And all I did in reply, I just sent him one verse from Hebrews in the same verse it says two times. In the NIV it says, The law is obsolete. I didn't have to argue.

I just sent the verse. It's in Hebrews in the 10th chapter, I believe, in the NIV, it uses the very term, obsolete. So, it is obsolete.

For all of its richness, it doesn't compare with the riches that are in Jesus Christ. But those riches start when you are forgiven apart from the law, but then they continue to attaining the resurrection from the dead, and that is infinitely richer and more substantive than the law ever could be. Because the law was only a stopgap, as Galatians 3 tells us, it was added until the seed should come to whom the promise was made.

It just puts sin on ice, as it were. So, beginning with verse 2 of Romans 6, we begin to see the root, the practical doable root, R-O-U-T-E, to attaining the resurrection, attaining to the resurrection from the dead, which was Paul's goal. First of all, we died to sin.

He said, how can we sin any longer? Because we died to sin. Now, how you interpret that, you can interpret that several ways. You can interpret that as some have, some teachers of sanctification have taught that meant that the Christian does not have a sin nature.

The early Nazarenes taught sanctification root and branch, that you could get at the sin nature and it would be dead. Okay? They carried the Nazarenes for many years, picked up the baton of holiness and carried it from the Methodists until Pentecost came, and that came out of the Nazarene church, by the way. How can we live in it any longer? Well, we can't live in it any longer, but what does it mean we're dead to sin? You can say, we have no sin nature, which obviously is incorrect because that would make the rest of the New Testament useless and exercise impubility if we have no sin nature.

Secondly, you can treat it this way, it doesn't matter if we do sin because we're covered by the blood. And that's probably the prevailing interpretation today in evangelical theology. By the way, to my knowledge, the expression covered by the blood does not exist in the New Testament.

I'd be glad to be proven wrong, but I don't think it does. Because it gives a false impression. It gives you the impression that there's a blood screen over us and God can't see our actions.

And if that were the case, much of the New Testament wouldn't make sense. The blood doesn't screen us from God's sight, it forgives our sin. 1 John 1.7 If we walk in the light, that's the light of God's will, as He, that is God, is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin.

Then it says, if we say no, we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Can you see how different that is from the concept that the blood covers our sin in the sense that God can't see our behavior? It's totally different.

And I just quote it to you, 1 John 1.7-9 It doesn't say, that's our tradition that God doesn't see our sin. Many verses belie that. Put that to the line.

Many verses belie that. Of course God sees our sin, and He reproveth us, and if we don't change, He judges us. 1 Corinthians 11.

If we still don't repent, it says some get sick and some die. So, this doctrine, and many of our doctrines are being put to the test today. They're not in the Bible.

They're not in the Bible. They're venerable. They've been believed for years by many people.

But listen people, if they're not in the book, we can't trust them. Especially when they're contrary to what the book teaches. So, the interpretation of we who have died to sin, it's not that we have no sin nature.

We know we do. Is there anybody in here that does not have a sin nature? Or is not aware there's something wrong? Okay. We know we have a sin nature.

And as Paul said, we beat our body and keep it under for that very reason. Unless we should be disqualified. Secondly, that God doesn't see our sin is probably the prevailing interpretation.

The problem with that is it is completely opposite to the rest of the chapter. Outside of that, it's fine. But when you read down in the chapter, it's exactly the opposite.

Which is a consideration, don't you agree? When it comes to interpretation. Alright. So then, what does it mean we have died to sin? And this is very important to understand.

It means that we as a Christian, it has to do with water baptism. And it means that when we are baptized in water, what we are saying by faith is that we have died to the world. That's what we're saying.

When we go down in the water of baptism, what we're saying is that my life in the world is over. The reason Christians have the trouble that they do and find that there are sins in their life that they cannot shake no matter how hard they try and no matter how many times they confess them, the reason is they are not oriented properly to the gospel. Okay? Now let me give you another one-liner.

Deliverance from sin is a reward. And if you have something in your life that you have wrestled with and is harming you and yet you can't stop it, then what I'm telling you is that God can deliver you. It is His will to deliver you.

And He shall deliver you when you do what He wants. To get a devil off your back is not in your power to do. It's only in God's power.

But God has given you things in the Bible that you can do. And if you will do what God has commanded you to do, then God will do what He alone can do. And the interesting thing about deliverance from sin is it's a double whammy in this respect.

When you obey God as a reward, He delivers you spiritually and sometimes physically as well. That's scriptural. Pray one for another.

He says, confess your sins one to another. Pray one for another that you may be healed. It's talking about physical healing.

That's in James. Confess your sins one to another. Armateia in the Greek.

I think King James is false. The word is sins. Confess your sins one to another.

And pray one for another that you may be healed. And the context is physical healing. Okay? Now, it's a double whammy for this reason.

When you obey the commandments of Christ and His apostles and God will help you to do that, then your reward will be to be delivered from sin and then God rewards you for being delivered. It's a double whammy. The deliverance itself is the reward for your obedience to the gospel.

God delivers you. The result is you live a godly life that you never did before and you get rewarded for it. So, it's all hinges on obeying the words of Christ.

How many times in the gospels did Jesus say, If you love me, keep my word. Keep my commandments. If any men, keep my word.

And so on. Keep the word of my patience. The reason that people do not get delivered is they're waiting for God to do something He can do but will not do.

And He will not do it because they have not done what He said. They have not presented their body a living sacrifice. They have not denied themselves and taken up their cross.

They haven't done the things they can do. And therefore they pray and they don't get delivered. Does that make any sense to you? That's a very important thing to understand.

If you're dealing as pastors do and some of you do too. I know Lynn does and others that have a ministry of dealing with people. When you're dealing with somebody that's going right down into the pits and they know what they're doing.

They know what's wrong. They can't help themselves. It's a good straw to have in your mouth.

Because when they come to you and say, Alright, you prayed for me and you prayed for me but I'm not delivered. What do I do? I'm being destroyed because I'm drawn into this thing that I don't want to. Then if you know what you're talking about you can say, Look, the reason you're not getting delivered is because you're not oriented properly to the gospel.

You're not doing what God told you to do. He's told you to take up your cross and follow Jesus and you're not doing that and therefore you're not going to be delivered. Do you see the sense of that? It's a lifeline to people who want to be free.

Drugs, alcohol, homosexuality, rage, adultery, fornication. People are bombing these things. We look at gays and say, Oh, how terrible.

Listen, homosexuality is a bondage as heavy as drugs and alcohol. It's a terrible bondage that people get and they can't get out of it. But gambling is another one.

Sometimes you pray and God delivers you. Some people just pray and God delivers them from smoking. Others go through a nightmare trying to kick smoking.

But God can just take all the urge for smoking out of you. All the urge for gambling out of you. All the urge for adultery out of you.

All the urge for... If you just snap his fingers, gone. They're demons. They're spiritual bondages.

Gossip and slander. How many of God's people know that gossip is wrong and can't stop it? How many of God's people know that criticizing others is wrong and they can't stop it? You know why? You've got a demon sitting on both shoulders talking in your ear. It's a spiritual problem.

What you do when you... I've tried and tried and tried to stop gossiping and criticizing people and I can't stop it. Okay. You're not oriented properly to the Lord.

What am I doing wrong? Deny yourself. Take up your cross. Follow Jesus.

Wrecking yourself dead. Present your potty living sacrifice. Obey the commandments.

Pray. Gather with the saints. Give.

Serve. Do what you can do. You can't heal yourself.

But you sure in the world can call up the elders. See, there's things you can do. And God will reward you for doing what you can do.

Then God will do what He alone can do. Does that make sense? Okay. It's as simple as that.

It's no big mystery that you have to write a new book or make a new denomination. It's plain, forthright, and simple. When things don't work, there's a reason.

Go to God. Don't wreck yourself. Beat yourself over the head.

Just go to God and say, I need wisdom. I'm not getting delivered. What's up, Lord? He'll show you.

And one of the reasons people come to church is, like tonight, maybe some of you didn't realize how you're to interpret Romans 6. Three. God wants you in water baptism to declare, and it's good to say it verbally if the minister, like Stan or whoever's ministering in water baptism, will get you to say, I am taking this step to show that my life in the world is over. I'm no longer alive in my Adamic Kingdom.

Which, of course, you are. But you're saying that. You're declaring that.

God works in a vision. It's very important to remember. God works in a vision.

When he says a thing that's true, it's true. If it hasn't come to pass for 6,000 years, it's still true. Once God says it, that's it.

Bang. And we can enter into that timelessness by doing what God said. See, get on there.

Now, the minute that you declare yourself dead, God counts that as death. He says, take it by faith. You take it by faith, and God says, done deal.

Okay? That frees you from the law of Moses. Because the law of Moses has dominion over you as long as you are alive. Right? Okay.

Now, what you have done, is you have taken your place with Jesus Christ on the cross. That's what you have done. You haven't just died and gone into a hole in the ground.

You have taken your place with Jesus Christ on the cross. When Jesus said, it is finished, he meant the whole Adamic creation is over. And when you take your place on the cross with Christ, Jesus says to you, it is finished.

Your life is finished. Okay? What's next? Well, you don't stay under the water, first of all. They bring you back up out of the water.

And what you are declaring by that, is that you have two things. You have not only been raised with Jesus Christ from the dead, but you have ascended with him to the right hand of God. See, both of these things are true.

You have not only been resurrected, but you have ascended. Now, when you do this by faith, in water baptism, God counts that as done. And the Holy Spirit will begin to lead you into judgment, because it's appointed unto man once to die, and after this, the judgment.

God counts that as a real death. No Mickey Mouse thing. That's the real stuff.

And so, that's what it means, that you're dead to sin. So then, if you continue a life of sin, you're behaving in a contradictory manner to what you professed in water baptism. And that's what Paul is saying.

How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? It doesn't make any sense. And then he explains what he means in the rest of the chapter, all the way through to the last verse in Romans 8. He explains what he means by this. Which is equivalent to attaining the resurrection.

Now, that brings up another thing, doesn't it? That when you have come out of the water, you have proclaimed that you have risen with Christ. And have ascended with Christ. Is that correct and biblical? I mean, I can stop and go through and show you all the verses.

You want to take me on faith? Colossians 3. If you then be risen with Christ. Ephesians 2 in verse 6 has raised us up together with Him. We're already raised.

And we're already ascended. Okay? So, the resurrection's passed, right? So what does it mean to attain to the resurrection? The bond. This thing is what it's all about.

See, we lost our body in the Garden of Eden. We were denied access to the Tree of Life. And so Adam died.

Didn't die the next day. It took 900 years, but he died. The day that thou thereof, you shall die.

And God speaks, that's it. He speaks in a timeless vision. And Adam was a gone goose.

Right then. And all of his descendants. As in Adam died, we all died, right? Okay.

So, Jesus Christ, God so loved the world. That He gave His Son. That whosoever believes in Him.

Would get back there to that Tree of Life. See? Have everlasting life. He's talking about the body.

What Paul was talking about in attaining the resurrection. Is attaining the resurrection of the body. His inner nature was already resurrected.

Romans 8.10 is a key verse. Listen. Brian will be flashing it on the screen pretty soon.

Thank God. You need to see these things as well as hear them. If Christ be in you.

Romans 8.10. If Christ be in you. The body is dead. Because of sin.

That's speaking of all people. Saved and unsaved alike. But.

Then he goes on to say. But the spirit. And that's not the Holy Spirit.

That's your spirit. Your inward nature. Some translations capitalize it.

But see, that doesn't make any sense. And I'll show you why. The spirit is life because of righteousness.

Well, the Holy Spirit is not life because of righteousness. It's your inward nature. Your spirit.

The contrast is not between your body and the Holy Spirit. It's between your body and your spirit. Does that make sense to you? Your body is dead.

But your spirit is alive. If the spirit of God is in you. Your inward nature is alive.

But your body is dead. Does that make sense? Your inward nature has been raised with Christ. And has ascended to the right hand of God.

According to the New Testament. Okay. Your inward nature is alive.

Because of righteousness. The righteousness. It goes back and explains in Romans 8.4. That when we follow the spirit of God.

That the righteousness of the law of Moses is imputed to us. Okay. Therefore, there's righteousness there.

And eternal life always, always, always follows righteousness. The body is dead because of sin. The inward nature is alive.

Because the righteousness of Christ. Perfect observance of Moses. Has been imputed to us.

When we follow the spirit of God. Romans 8.4. Okay. So here we are.

We have declared ourselves dead. With Christ on the cross. We have.

And we did that. We dramatized our profession in water baptism. We declared ourselves alive with Christ.

And ascended with Christ. Coming out of the waters of baptism. And we took this by faith.

Any questions so far? That's so scriptural it's pathetic. So scriptural it's pathetic. Alright.

That's where you are. That's where I am. If you are a true Christian.

Praying, following the Lord. Your inward nature has eternal life. Because the righteousness of Christ has been imputed to you.

Romans 8.10. Cool? Okay. But your body and my body are dead. Because there's sin in it.

Capiche? Is there sin in your body? That's why it's dead. Alright. Then put it together.

How do you get life in your body? Say it. By putting it to death by the Spirit. By overcoming.

What? Sin. And that's what the epistles are about. They're one long drawn out explanation.

Of how to overcome sin in your body. So that the last enemy, death, can be destroyed. Now think about that.

There's a matrix. There's a model for you to pin scriptures on. And the whole thing will make sense to you.

How in one place it sounds like we do nothing but believe. And in another place it looks like we're running a race and fighting and straining every nerve. One of the translations says in Philippians 3. It puts it together for you.

It explains what's going on. Your inward nature is alive. But your outward nature is dead.

Well you say, but when the Lord comes he'll automatically make my outward nature alive. If that were the case, then when Paul would not say, I'm striving to attain the resurrection. Right? And that's what Romans 6 tells you.

That if you continue in sin you're going to die. What does he mean by that? He means that God gives you life inside. But you have to take care of it.

If you don't you're going to lose it. That's what he's talking about. And then when he comes you won't be raised.

And that's the parable of the five foolish virgins. They hadn't killed anybody. They just didn't have what? Oil.

Oil. And oil in the Bible represents the Holy Spirit. Life.

They let it run out. And you say, well once you have it, it can never run out. Hey, have you been around? Have you ever seen anybody that started out as a radiant Christian, and then backslid? What happens to them? You look at them, and like I was saying, Sunday night they're all ready for the velvet.

I mean just put out the mahogany, polished mahogany box with the velvet in it. Lay them on their back, hands folded around their chest, and put a lily in their hand, because they'll never be any deader than they are. You can see it in their face.

Oh, eternal life is not a legal state. It's something in you. It's God's life in you.

And it can run out. And we have that in the parable of the virgins, and we have it in the parable of the sower, which presents it in a little different way. It brings forth fruit, and then it withers and dies.

That's why one of the most deadly teachings in evangelical circles is eternal security. It's deadly, because it leaves people with the impression that no matter what I do, I'll be saved somehow. But the whole New Testament roars, if you sow to your flesh, you're going to reap corruption, because the only life you have is the life of God that He put in you when you put your faith in Jesus Christ.

Your body is dead, and therefore, if you live in your body, you are living in death. What's the Bible? I didn't write it. I just preach it.

Alright. Now, does it make sense to you how we died this sin? How can we live in it any longer? It's completely antithetical to our whole profession. It isn't that we can't.

We surely can. And it isn't that God doesn't see it. He surely does.

It's that it's not consonant with what we have professed. It just has no business in our life. And so, does that mean we can just say sin be gone? No! That's why he goes on to explain you have to choose to be the slave of God.

And we know from the Old Testament allegory of the wilderness wandering that you don't get in there all at once. There's a whole bunch of things that lead into the land of promise, and then you have to take it a city at a time under the Spirit. So, our whole Christian life then becomes a fight.

And that's what it says in 1 Timothy 6.12. Fight the good fight of faith. Lay hold on eternal life. And then in 1 Corinthians 9, I think it is, he talks about running the race and beating his body down, keeping it under, lest he should be disqualified.

It's a fight. That's why the promises go to the overcomer, to the conqueror, the one who through Jesus Christ and doing what he can do by the grace of God overcomes the sin that is pulling him down to death. That's what it's all about.

That's what Christianity is. It's one long fight to lay hold on eternal life. You have an enemy, and so do I. He knows you.

He's studied your profile. He has one goal in mind, and that is to keep you spiritually dead. He does not want you to have life.

And so what he does is he keeps either frightening you or tempting you or distracting you, wearing you down, discouraging you. He wants you to immerse yourself in things, in the world, not necessarily sinful things, just anything that is not nourishing the eternal life. And if he manages to do that, you will kill your own resurrection.

You'll slay it. You'll die. You've got your life now because you believe in Jesus Christ.

But we have the parable of the virgins, and we have the parable of the sower, and many exhortations that tell us, Galatians 6, 7, and 8, God is not mocked. Whatever a man sows, he shall reap. And he's talking to the Galatian Christians.

So, you say, well, then it gets discouraged. I'm all discouraged. No, you're not all discouraged.

Life is difficult. Period. Whether you are fighting the good fight of faith, or living in the flesh, it is difficult.

How many here have no problems? Well, you've got problems whether or not you are seeking Christ or not. One of the greatest industries in this country are pills to relieve indigestion. And they're not all being purchased by Christians that are trying to live the life.

They're sinners. The way of the transgressor is hard. So, Satan is a tremendous liar.

And he said, oh, if you deny yourself and set out after Christ, you're going to have an unbearable life. Let me tell you, if you don't, you're going to have an unbearable life. People say, oh, the cost, the cost.

Have you ever thought of the cost of not obeying Christ? I don't have that much money. I don't want to pay that bill. Okay? The cost of serving Jesus is disciplining yourself and not yielding to the wild passions and fears of your body.

That's what you have to give up to serve God. That I'm willing to pay, because it's only destructive in any case. All you ever lose by following Christ is that which is harming you.

I was a one liar. All you ever lose by following Christ is something that is harming you. Now, call me a liar.

You think of something you lost following Christ, following Christ, that wasn't harming you. Jesus, the way of the cross carrying after Christ is the only way you can get through this crazy culture we're in. Without getting AIDS, or hooked on gambling, or on money, or having a catastrophe in your family you can't cope with, or some other thing that keeps you in an uproar.

How many tonight are in an absolute uproar about one thing or another? You're distressed. People aren't doing what they're supposed to. And if you'd only let them, they would shun you to death.

You shouldn't do this. You shouldn't do that. You shouldn't do the next thing.

You shouldn't do this. You shouldn't do that. Are people giving you the shouldn't treatment? Everybody's in an uproar.

The American family's in an uproar. They have to double the police department on major holidays because of spousal uproars. That's how happy all the sinners are.

They're in one miserable state. God knows it's hard enough to take up our cross and follow Jesus. But being a transgressor is ten times harder because you don't have anything going for you and back in your mind you figure if I die now I'm going to meet a frowning Christ and according to Brother Thompson that is real bad news whether I go on to church or not.

I don't know what I'm facing. It sure isn't the first resurrection. So don't talk about discouragement.

Life is discouraging. Life, period, is enough to take a beautiful little child, a little burst of sunshine and by the time they're 80 they're a shrunken, wizened, dying thing. Life does that.

Life does that. It just beats the juice out of you. There are three crosses on the hill.

Not one, three. Everybody's crucified. God, the saved and the unsaved are all crucified in this world.

And Paul says, By whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world. So, get a life. I mean, let God help you get over the death that's in your body in the hope that you can attain at His coming the victory over the last enemy and then you're free forever from the bondage of the devil.

Now if that isn't worth going after I'll eat my Bible guaranteed leather cover or all, the whole thing, Janet. Leather and all. I'll eat the whole thing.

If that isn't the way it is. Now, don't you know, it says, the man says that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death. I was talking about water baptism.

That's the meaning of it. Baptism into the Spirit is a different matter altogether. That has to do with the life in the Spirit.

This is talking about your basic orientation to the Gospel. We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father we too may live a new life. So, you're living a new life in Christ a new life of victory is dependent on what? Dying and being raised with Christ.

And that's your orientation. Now many, many Christians are not oriented to the Christian life properly. They have no intention of laying down their life.

They'll do a lot of church stuff. They'll even speak in tongues. They'll prophesy and do all kinds of things.

But when you get down where the rubber hits the road they are unwilling to surrender their life to Jesus. Oh, they'll talk about it. But they're still hanging on to their prerogatives.

I mean, they get stuck. They're not going to let go of it. Hey, forget it.

So, they've never done it. That's what I say. They're not oriented.

And that's why sins hang on. Because they're not oriented properly to God. God says, look, I want you dead and on the cross with my Son.

I want you raised with my Son. I want a newness of life coming out of you. And I'm going to help you.

And I'm going to deliver you. I'm going to bring you to glory. But you see, we don't take the first step.

We cling to our life. Amen? You say, but I don't want to die. Well, no.

Go ahead. Live in your flesh. You're going to die for sure.

Isn't that what the Lord said? If you save your life, you will lose it. There's no other way. And you're not going to bear fruit until you go into the ground and die.

You're going to abide alone. Okay? So, everything depends on this orientation. My life is over.

It's past. God says, pack up tomorrow and go to Tibet and only bring a sweater with you. Aye, aye, sir.

I'm going. You take care of it. You make a Gulf Stream go by there and keep me warm.

You're faithful, Lord. You will do it. And it does not matter what I think or want.

It matters only what He wants. Because I'm dead. Okay? And we keep ourselves that way.

But it's got to be done and done right the first time. You've got to cut the head off the chicken. I mean, you've got to get that thing finished.

Or you'll be struggling endlessly with the Christian life. Running around the barnyard, squawking your head off. Kill the thing.

Be done with it. I mean, this dead thing you're dragging around. So, how come I'm not getting deliverance? Well, look who you're dragging around behind you.

Yeah, but I'm so cute. Yeah, I agree. You're just as cute as you can be.

I'm just still dragging around. Oh, well. We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death.

All right. We too may live a new life. If we have been united with Him like this in His death, we will certainly also be united with Him in His resurrection.

So, if we're going to attain to the resurrection from the dead, we have to be oriented to it. You see? Do you see how this is the way toward attaining the resurrection? It's by counting that you've been crucified with Christ. And then the rest of your life, you live by faith that this is a fact and God makes it a fact.

I mean, He'll crucify you as slowly as is necessary. God will do it. He's not going to kill you off at once.

But step by step, He will replace your dead life with His life as quickly as you can go. And He's not going to push you. He's not going to be mean to you.

But He wants you doing the thing the way He said in His word. He doesn't want you making up your own program. Amen? Alright.

We will certainly also be united with Him in His resurrection for we know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be done away with. Now, that's very important that you look at the wording there. There's two different things there.

There's two different entities there. One is your old self and one is the body of sin. Now, that's very important because there's people saying today that all that God wants to slay in us is the bad part of our nature and He wants to save the good.

That's not true. That's not scriptural. You have in you, each one of us has in us many fine qualities varying from person to person.

Some of us are naturally generous. Some of us are stingy. Some of us are outgoing and kind to other people.

Some of us are all shut up in ourselves and prickly. Some of us have no problems at all with sexual problems and others of us are just about walking through a swamp all the time. Some of us have no problems with smoking.

With others, it's a devil that if they ever get over it, it'll be the miracle, it'll be the eighth wonder of the world. So, we vary. Some of us, all of us, have good parts depending on the person.

We're not all the same. There's one thing we have in common though. You know what that is? A body of sin.

We all have good parts and bad parts to our personality. But all of us have a body of sin. So what God said is, okay, I'm not going to try to pick out of you what's good and what's bad.

I'm going to take the whole thing and put it on the cross. And that way, I can destroy the body of sin. Of course, the common illustration that we all know is what insurance companies do with a car.

They make a decision whether to total the car or try to fix it. Well, that's a decision God made. He said, I'm going to total the Adamic race.

That's it. I'm not going to try to... I know there's a lot of bravery there, there's a lot of honor, there's a lot of integrity, there's all kinds of good things. But, there's sin in it, and I don't want it, and so I'm not going to try to fix it up.

I'm not going to fix up the Adamic creation. I'm just going to cut it over with. Period.

Final. Total it. That's it.

Any problem with that? But you see how it's worded? That He has assigned our old self, that's what we are, what was born of our parents, that the body of sin might be destroyed. That He might get at that sin. That's why it says in 2 Corinthians 5.10, if any man be in Christ, he is what? A new creation.

Not worked over, old creation. And then it goes on to say, all things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new.

And then the first clause in verse 11, and all things are of God. So, I'm sorry, but you've been totaled. God is not going to save any part of you.

But I'm such a dear person. True, I behave terribly at times, but in my heart I am a gem. Aren't we all? People in death row feel the same way.

Alright. That's our human foibles. Now He says, for we know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be done away with, so that, now look, that we should no longer be slaves to sin.

So we're not talking about a theological position. We're talking about slavery to sin. No one who sins is the master of sin.

No one. When you sin, you are the slave of sin. Jesus said, he that commits sin is the slave of sin.

No one can master sin. Okay? If you sin, you're the slave of sin. You say, well, I can kick it.

Well, try it. Try it. With God's help you may be able to overcome it, but without God's help, it isn't going to happen.

Grace is given to us so we can be forgiven and then overcome it. But I want you to see, because sometimes these things are treated theoretically like some abstract thing that just happens out there. It's talking about conduct.

Slavery to sin. Are you bound with fornication? Are you bound with profanity? Are you bound with pornography? Are you bound with gossip and slander? Are you bound with lying? Are you bound with stealing? Are you bound? If you are, you're a slave of sin. And God doesn't want that.

Under the old covenant, the law of Moses made no provision for slavery to sin. It only forgave you. The superiority of the new covenant is that it gets at the slavery and sets you free.

What are we talking about? Attaining the resurrection from the dead. It begins with your orientation. And now it's come down to the fact that this new covenant that God has made breaks the chains of sin.

Not all at once. It's a lifelong following on Jesus. The Holy Spirit gives us wisdom and strength to put to death the deeds of our body.

Romans 8.13 In the meanwhile, the blood of Christ is making up the difference. Let me go through that again. Your trip through life as a disciple of Jesus is one long fight called the fight of faith.

The good fight of faith. It's an overcoming. Your whole thing is to get back to what was lost in Eden.

God starts you off by forgiving you completely. He takes your inward nature and it's born again as the first fruits of your personality. It is raised with Christ, not apart from Christ, with Christ.

And it ascends with Christ to the right hand of God. That's how you start. You start in the Christian race as high as it is possible to go.

You will never go higher. You start at the top and work your way down. What is at issue is your body.

It's dead because of sin. And the whole purpose of God sending His Son is to set you free so that you can attain everlasting life in your body. To reverse the damage done in the Garden of Eden.

See, when God created man, He created him body, soul, and spirit. For eternity, man will be body, soul, and spirit. No other creature of God that we know of is body, soul, and spirit.

When you don't have your body, you are not man. You're like an angel. That's why Jesus said, A spirit has not flesh and bone as you see me have.

So your whole Christian life is to overcome so that you may put to flight the last enemy which is death, physical death. Now, did you ever view your Christian life like that? That your goal is to attain the resurrection? It's really wonderful when you think of it because death makes a mockery of all that we do. We just get real good relationships going, death puts an end to it.

We develop a talent, death puts an end to it. We just learn, I say, myself, I never learned manners until I was 60. You just begin to learn manners, death puts an end to it.

You just get to where you can be at peace with everybody and yourself and your wife and your husband and live, and then you get stiff. It'll happen to you, don't worry. It'll happen to you.

You're not quite as limber as you once were. That's why I say youth is such a wonderful thing, it's a shame that it was given to the young. But you see, that's wisdom under the sun because when you attain life, you're attaining a body full of life that no young people ever dreamed of.

See? It's really more valuable than a mansion. It's really the way to go. And the older you get, and I speak from experience, the older you get, the more you appreciate that.

I can understand what the Lord said, how am I straight until this is accomplished because the moment that he died and was raised, he was free to do whatever he wanted to in heaven and earth. How am I straight until this is accomplished? And Paul said much the same thing. Who will deliver me from this body of sin and death? And Paul then wasn't talking about what I'm talking about now.

Paul was talking about righteousness. Paul's goal was righteousness. As a rabbi, he wanted to be righteous and he saw his body as an obstacle to righteousness.

Not only is our body an obstacle to righteousness, but it's an obstacle to life itself. It's like a prison that we're dragging around. Just think, to get us off the ground, you have to burn how many tons of kerosene a minute, Bill? Just to lift our miserable carcass off this terra firma and up just a short distance into the clouds takes how many tons of kerosene a minute? I mean, we are so bound with gravity.

You know, our greatest athletes, after all their training, managed to get a few feet off the ground. Whereas in the ages to come, the cities will be many miles in height because Christ revealed to us the secrets of light and gravity. And we will not be bound with these things anymore.

I mean, there's a wonderful life coming, but if you don't overcome sin, your future is very... It's not even... You know, it's talked about like reaping corruption and in the case of the virgins, it was, I never knew you. Then we've got outer darkness. Then we've got, take your talent from... You've got all kinds of things.

These are the promises to the person who doesn't overcome. So every promise, and the book is mine we used to sing. Stan was a song like that.

Every promise in the book is mine. Okay, well, every promise in the book is yours if you obey God. And not if you don't obey God.

Amen. Such a profound statement that is. Alright, now, that we should no longer be slaves to sin because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

Now, what does he mean by that? He means primarily that we're not under the law of Moses. In chapter 7, he said, the law of Moses causes sin in that it didn't create sin. The law is righteous and holy and perfect and unblameable.

But what it does is it points out the sin in our life and when we see it, we die because there's no way of escaping from it. But when grace comes, God says, you're forgiven. You're not under that anymore.

So then the temptation to say is, well, whoopee, I've made it. No, no, no, no. You leave the rules of one game and you come under the rules of another game.

See? It's like going from football to soccer. Isn't that, you know, like, I'm free, I'm free from the law. Yes, you're free to be married to Christ which is ten times more demanding than the law.

But it has ten times the grace that the law doesn't have grace to set you free. It doesn't give you the born-again experience to set you free. So, God... So, we're not debtors that we have to sin like the person does under the law.

And he has to sin and that's why every year there's a Day of Atonement recognizing the fact that the Israelis were not delivered from sin. Hebrews points that out. Therefore, the sacrifice is made again year after year because the first covenant can't take away sin.

But the new covenant can take away sin by the power of God. And the result of taking away sin is the resurrection from the dead. I keep reminding you what we're talking about here so we don't get distracted.

Alright, now, we're about through here so don't collapse. Now, he's been freed from sin and Paul, of course, is reflecting on the law of Moses and he's also reflecting on the fact that we have been crucified with Christ been raised with Christ to walk in newness of life. Alright, now.

Now, if we died with Christ we believe we will also live with him for we know that since Christ was raised from the dead he cannot die again. Death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all but the life he lives, he lives to God.

In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Now, the key there is the verb count. You have to take it by faith.

You take the whole Christian life by faith and you have to take by faith that as far as God is concerned sin is over. Now, this is brought out in Hebrews where it says, by one sacrifice he has perfected forever those who are sanctified. As far as God is concerned he does not contemplate that a Christian continue in sin.

Well, how do you reconcile that with 1 John that says if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves? Just as I told you. We count that we are dead and sin is over for eternity as far as we are concerned. So then, what do we do? We start obeying the commandments of Christ and his apostles.

When we cannot obey one because we are bound, what do we do? We go boldly unto the throne of grace to get mercy and help or grace in our time of need. There has no temptation taken you but such is as common to man. But notice how artful the Lord is.

He doesn't show you all your sin at once. He just deals with one thing at a time. Otherwise we would be under condemnation and God does not want us under condemnation.

There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. Now, God does not want you under condemnation so he shows you something. Now, he may show you, for example, that you are hurting people with your tongue and you know it's wrong and God points it out.

Maybe you never realized that. You know how many sins we do that we don't realize? Okay, so what about those sins? The blood takes care of that. See, the blood makes up the difference.

If we walk in the light, all God requires is that we walk in the light of his will. He does not require that we be perfect. He requires that we walk in the light of his will.

We can't save ourselves from sin. But we can obey God each day. Now, when we do that, he said the blood of Jesus Christ what's the word? Purifies us, I think it is, from all sin.

Otherwise you'd be under condemnation. Now, let's say that God shows you that you're doing something wrong and it's been brought to your attention by the Spirit of God, often by the pastor or preaching. If the pastor is praying and obeying the Lord, the Holy Spirit will speak out things that will convict you.

Have you ever been convicted by the preaching? Okay, what I mean by that is God brought up something in your life and you say, whoa, I didn't realize it, but this old boy is standing in the need of prayer. Did you ever feel like that? Alright, that's the Holy Spirit. Now, how you respond to that thing depends on what that will be the determiner of whether you continue without condemnation.

Now, make no mistake about that. If God shows you that you are doing something wrong and you don't do something about it, you don't say, Lord, I'm sorry, I confess that is sin, I renounce it, I denounce it, and by

your grace and help I'm going to overcome that thing. If you don't do that, but instead say, well, everybody's doing it, or I'm too busy right now, or what's the use, or like that, then you begin to come under judgment.

That's why it says in 1 Corinthians 11, if we judge ourselves, we're fine, if we don't, God judges us, and He says, for this reason, many among you are sick, and some have died, because you didn't judge yourself. When the Holy Spirit deals with a sin in your life, you are to judge that thing by the Word. The Word says it's wrong, the Spirit's saying it's wrong, you say it's wrong.

You, the Word, and the Spirit agree on that thing that it's wrong. You pronounce judgment on it. If you don't, if you say, everyone's doing it, or it's all right, or God loves me anyway, or Christ wants me to be happy, or whatever you're saying, you have not judged it.

You have not judged it as sin, and the whole mechanism of deliverance stops right there. Because deliverance only operates as you follow the Spirit, Romans 8.4. If we walk in the Spirit, we are without condemnation. But not if we're not following Christ.

If we walk in the light, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. But if we're not walking in the light, but in darkness, we're not doing what the Bible says, we're not, we've been convicted, and we have just run through the checks. We're not walking in the light, and the blood is not cleansing us from all sin.

Otherwise, if that weren't the case, all of this makes no sense. If we're just forgiven willy-nilly, it doesn't matter what we do, I have faith, which isn't faith at all. Remember I told you how you tell the difference between belief and faith? Belief turns into faith when what? When it pursues Christ with all its heart.

When belief doesn't pursue Christ with all its heart, what is it? Mental ascent. And there is no eternal life, and there is no salvation in mental ascent. In believing facts about the atonement or the virgin birth, there is no salvation in that.

The demons know that very well. If it doesn't turn into a total pursuit of Christ, it's mental ascent, it's not faith. We're not saved by mental ascent, we're saved by faith, and faith lays hold on the promise of God and goes for it.

Every day. Fight the good fight of faith. Boy, none of you are arguing with me.

Okay? So I don't have to flee from this city, do I? All right. I'm about through here. Therefore, now look at verse 12.

Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Don't do that. What are we talking about? Attaining the resurrection to the dead.

And to do that, you say, but I can't help myself. You can help yourself a lot more than you think. Sometimes we don't try.

We're waiting for God to do it all. And God isn't going to move in until you do what you can. When you come to the end of yourself and say, Lord, I've tried, I've done everything I can, I've renounced this thing, I've denounced that the elders have prayed for me, and I've been anointed with oil and everything, and I'm still flopping around like a fish.

What then? What'd I tell you? There's something wrong with your orientation to God. Go to God. Don't fret yourself.

Don't worry. Don't beat yourself to death. Just go to God and say, how come I'm losing this battle? Don't give up.

It's not God's will for you to walk in known sin. Don't give up. Just go to the Lord and keep at it.

You get delivered if you do that. And if you're doing something wrong, and God's getting at something new, He'll show you, and then you can say, oh, I didn't realize I was doing that. And you're doing it, and God will take care of it, and deliverance will come.

Off it goes, and you're free. It's real neat. It's the way it works.

Do not let sin reign in your mortal bod that you should obey its evil desires. Shall we stand? Oh, glory. I'd rather be an old-time Christian than anything I know.

Lord, we do give praise to You. How we praise You, Lord, when we think of those dear Jewish people as they strove for righteousness, strove for righteousness, and then You came. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

And You showed us the way back to Eden, Lord. You showed us the way back to the tree. And it's all in You.

You are the resurrection and the life. And so, Lord, we're alive inside, but we're dead outside. But we're determined, Lord, to fight this good fight until You come and give us a new body that we can glorify God in our body, soul, and spirit.

Praise Your holy name. What a hope! What a hope! What a hope! Hallelujah! We'll be alive as we never were in the flesh, and alive forever as that, with no aging, no sickness, no death, nothing, no relationships broken, no talents being destroyed, nothing. Just endless life.

Endless life. Oh, thank You, Lord. And help us not to get discouraged and to lift up the feeble knees and straighten up the back and realize that God has given birth inside of us.

Christ is in us, and we can do it. We can overcome through Jesus Christ. Hallelujah! Thank You, Lord.

Thank You for Your Word. Thank You for Your promises. We believe every one of them.

Every one of them. So, Lord, I pray for these dear ones that have come tonight. Lord, be with them.

Keep them safe on the highway. Give them a good sleep without troubling dreams, Lord. They may arise in the morning ready to fight the good fight of faith and press toward the first resurrection, the resurrection from among the dead.

Grant that, Lord, to each one. And bless their families and keep them safe and healthy, I ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

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