

## A Call to Believe

**“Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?” Romans 6:3**

In our last devotional study, we focused on the need to genuinely repent as the first step to living sanctified and wholly devoted to Jesus Christ. Since repentance and faith always go hand-in-hand, Paul in this verse confronts the real reason why so many Christians continue to live in sin - *unbelief!* More specifically, most Christians do not *believe and act* on the truth that they have died with Christ. Paul here asks, “Do you not know that when you were born again, you were baptized into Christ’s death?” The Greek word for baptized means immersed. Therefore, when we were saved, we were spiritually immersed into Christ’s death! When Christ died, we died with Him! This is a divine fact. The Bible says, “Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).” The Bible also says, “We died with Christ (Romans 6:8).” Most Christians mistakenly think that because they were water baptized, they “know” this truth. Mental assent might work to acquire intellectual knowledge but it does not work to obtain divine knowledge. Although they may mentally concur with the Biblical doctrine that they have died with Christ, most Christians do not have divine revelation on this truth. Only God’s personal revelation of this truth to you will produce a true conviction in your spirit that your sinful nature is dead and gone. “So faith comes from hearing and hearing by the word of Christ (Romans 10:17).”

Four times in Romans Chapter Six (verses 3, 6, 9, and 16), Paul uses the word “*know*” to express the importance of spiritually comprehending what Christ’s death on the cross has accomplished for us. In Biblical terms, to spiritually *know* a truth means much more than just mentally understanding a Biblical concept or doctrine. It means that you are so convinced of this truth that you base your entire life on it. Many Christians doctrinally “know” that they died with Christ; however, they do not *act on this truth*. From God’s perspective, if you “know” a Biblical truth, it means you believe and *act on it*. Conversely, if you do not act on a Biblical truth, it means you really do not spiritually know it. This is what Jesus Christ taught: “Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and *acts on them*, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the flood came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. Everyone who hears these words of Mine and *does not act on them*, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell and great was its fall (Matthew 7:24-27).”

Therefore, in Romans 6:3, Paul exhorts us to *believe and act* on this great truth of Christ’s Atonement. This is the divine truth: when we were saved, we were immersed into Christ’s death so that when Christ died, we died with Him and our

sinful nature was buried (removed) with Him. This is the gospel message of Christ crucified and the foundation of our Christian faith. The Biblical definition of faith is found in the book of Hebrews: "Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see (Hebrews 11:1)." We can be just as sure of the fact that we have been freed from sin (*since we died with Christ*) as we are sure of the fact that our sins are forgiven in Christ (*since Christ died for us*). Both of these divine facts are Scriptural and both of these divine provisions of Christ's Atonement are certainly ours. However, just as saving faith *in Christ* cannot be mentally grasped, neither can the divine knowledge that we have died *in Christ* be mentally grasped. The eyes of our heart will only be enlightened to see the divine meaning of Christ's death on the cross *if* we are willing to come under Christ's Sovereignty.

God will not reveal the precious truth of His Son's death to anyone who is unwilling to do His will. God gives heavenly insight to those who are willing to submit to His Son's authority. This is the spiritual lesson of the story of the centurion who asked Jesus to heal his servant (Matthew 8:5-10). As commander of one hundred Roman soldiers, the centurion understood how authority worked. Because the centurion was submitted to Rome's authority, he was also entrusted with the power to use that authority. The centurion knew that because Jesus was under the authority of God the Father, He had God's authority and power to heal. "When Jesus heard this, He marveled and said, 'Truly I say to you, I have not found such *great faith* with anyone in Israel (Matthew 8:10)." In other words, true faith springs from a heart of humility and submission toward God. "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God (1 Peter 5:5-6)." So, let us wholeheartedly submit ourselves to God's Sovereignty. Let us stand firm in faith *without wavering in the truth* that we have died with Christ. If you are having trouble believing this Biblical fact, immerse yourself daily in the word of truth, repent from unbelief, and by faith (without depending on your feelings) submit yourself to God.

In Hebrews 6:1-2, six topics are listed as the foundational teaching for all new believers in Christ. The first two are: 1) Repentance from dead works, and 2) Faith toward God. In our devotional studies, we have now briefly discussed these two. The third topic listed in Hebrews is "instruction about baptisms." This would include teaching on water baptism and the baptism in the Holy Spirit. In our next devotional study, we will look at the spiritual meaning of water baptism. Note: Instruction on the baptism in the Holy Spirit can be found elsewhere in our website.

Tomorrow: Romans 6:4

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