

Tusculum Hills Baptist Church
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Sermon Title: United With Christ, Romans 6:1-14

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INTRODUCTION: We are continuing in the Book of Romans, as Paul writes in Chapter 6, about what the Resurrection of Christ means for us as believers.

To review: Romans Chapter 5 talked about the new reign of Christ. We talked about how we have peace with God—through Christ—the benefits of this peace, and we saw the big difference between our identification with Adam and our new identification with Christ.

This morning, we celebrate our hope of eternal life—when Jesus Christ rose from the dead. His Resurrection is *THE* central truth in Christianity. Without it, we would have no basis to believe Jesus was the Son of God or has the power to save us. Without the Resurrection, we would not have a victorious Savior. We would have no victory over sin or death. Jesus' resurrection proves his identity as Lord and Savior. And, as believers, in Jesus Christ, we need to consider what it means.

Christ gives us victory in this life and in the life to come. There are three points to the message today:

1. We are united to Christ in his death.
2. We are united to Christ in his resurrection.
3. Our life in Christ is for the living.

First, WE ARE UNITED TO CHRIST IN HIS DEATH.

SCRIPTURE: Romans 6:1-4 ¹*What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?* ²*By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?* ³*Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?* ⁴*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.*

EXPLANATION: Paul’s question, “*What shall we say, then?*” refers back to how he closed Chapter 5—with the reign of grace and the promise of eternal life. Of course, now the Romans would understand grace saves them—not anything they could do. It is tempting to think after hearing the gospel, we can keep sinning because we are forgiven.

But, Paul takes the mindset of—*we’re forgiven now; we can keep on sinning*, as a teaching time. Paul asked whether the Romans knew that all who were baptized into Christ were baptized into his death? *Don’t you know? If you’re in Christ—you also have died with him.* Then, he explains, if this is the case, they were also buried with Jesus. Looking at Jesus’ burial, we see it was an incredible display of God’s glory and power. We’re not just dead to our sin—we’re now separated from that life. Jesus separates our sin from us, as far as the East is from the West.

FURTHER EXPLANATION: Paul explains we are baptized into Christ, too. *Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death ?(verse 3)*

Baptism, in scripture, has two meanings—a literal and a symbolic. Literally, baptism is immersion. It is a physical and literal act. You are baptized when you go under the water and are brought back up. But, it is also a spiritual and symbolic act. Another translation of the word “baptism” is “identification with.” In each symbolic part of baptism, we are united with Christ. We are united in death (going under the water), united in burial (underneath the water), and united in resurrection (being raised up out of the water.)

BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATION: Even before the coming of Christ, the idea of baptism as a unifier is mentioned in scripture. The word “baptism” was used for the Israelites who were led by God from Egypt to the Promised Land.

SCRIPTURE: 1 Corinthians 10:2-4 ² *They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.* ³ *They all ate the same spiritual food* ⁴ *and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.*

EXPLANATION: Paul meant they were joined with Moses, who was their mediator and deliverer. This is the symbolic use of baptism—the concept of

identification. And, he says they drank the spiritual drink from the spiritual rock—which he says was Christ. We see, even before Jesus came in the flesh, Jesus was the provider for his people.

EXPLANATION: Today, we celebrate the Risen Christ. We celebrate his resurrection. But, before we move on to our identification in his life, we must see Paul starts with our baptism into his death and burial. If we have been baptized into Christ:

Verse 3- *we were baptized into his death.*

Verse 4- *we were buried with him through baptism.*

APPLICATION: We are sinners, yet Paul emphasizes, through baptism, our joining with Christ, we have died to sin. And, the fact we are buried, means it is final. *We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?* (verse 2)

Now, we get on to the reason for this final 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* — (verse 4).

Second, WE ARE UNITED TO CHRIST IN HIS RESURRECTION.

If we are joined with Christ, we are dead to sin and alive in Christ. Continue in Romans 6, verse 5—

SCRIPTURE: Romans 6:5-10 ⁵ *For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his.* ⁶ *For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—* ⁷ *because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.* ⁸ *Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.* ⁹ *For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him.* ¹⁰ *The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.*

EXPLANATION: We saw we were united with him in a death like his. Now, we see we will also be united with Christ in a resurrection like his. This passage is not only talking about our future resurrection, but it is also talking about our present

resurrection. It says our bodies will no longer be ruled by sin. We are no longer slaves to sin. We are set free. We have a life to live, and that life has a purpose. We are able to live for God. Let me add to this, when we come to Christ, when we sin we immediately know it, I believe. The closer we are to Christ the more aware we are when we sin.

When we are united to Christ in his resurrection, we ask him in his Name to help us love him, to love others, to keep his commands. He promises he will be with us in this life. And—being united in his resurrection also gives us hope in our future resurrection—our hope of eternal life.

SCRIPTURE: Now—listen to the Contemporary English version of John 3:16: *God loved the people of this world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life and never really die.*

EXPLANATION: Of course, unless Jesus comes back—our bodies will physically die. But, in Christ, who we are—our soul—will never be lost or destroyed. Even when our bodies stop working, God promises we will live forever. And, as we see—if our resurrection is like Jesus, we will have heavenly bodies. *Death has no mastery over us.*

ILLUSTRATION: Billy Graham, a true servant of the Lord, and instrument for the Word of the Lord to be proclaimed to thousands upon thousands of souls, recently passed away. When he was still alive physically, he said something remarkable. He said,

Someday you will read or hear that Billy Graham is dead. Don't you believe a word of it. I shall be more alive than I am now. I will just have changed my address. I will have gone into the presence of God.

So, we have—

- We are united to Christ in his death.
- We are united to Christ in his resurrection.

Third, OUR LIFE IN CHRIST IS FOR THE LIVING.

Now, Paul continues that in the same way Christ lives, we also are alive to God in Christ Jesus. Now, he gives a command. So far, Paul has not written any commands in the Book of Romans. Listen to his command in the following verses—

SCRIPTURE: Romans 6:11-14 ¹¹*In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.* ¹²*Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.* ¹³*Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.* ¹⁴*For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.*

EXPLANATION: Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so you obey its evil desires. Do not offer any of yourself to sin. Offer yourselves to God. Offer every part of yourself to God for his use. Sin is not your master. By the grace of God, your perfect, loving Father is your master.

If we are united with Christ in his death, we are dead to sin. If we are united with Christ in his resurrection, we are alive. And, in this life—we are called to live—alive to God in Christ Jesus.

BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATION: We talked last week about Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. He was buried for four days when Jesus told him to come out of the grave. I want to point out to you—he was still wearing his grave clothes when Jesus called him out of the tomb. He couldn't have taken the grave clothes off himself. I'm sure his friends and family had to help him.

APPLICATION: When Jesus calls us to a life with him, we are spiritually dead. We are slaves to our sin nature. When Jesus calls you, you might not look like a holy child of God. You might be sitting here today, feeling very inadequate—thinking about all your secret sins or thinking, *“If people really knew who I was, they wouldn't accept me...I don't even know if God accepts me.”*

The Good News is this: we can take off our grave clothes. As believers, we should help each other with this. None of us are perfect. And, we must be willing to come with our struggles and shed them off.

Before he went to die, Jesus prayed for his people—“*Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.*” By the Word of Jesus, we are saved and can know everlasting life. When Jesus said this, he had yet to die. But, he never “really died.” He never “perished.” And, in this truth—we will never really die.

CONCLUSION: Happy Resurrection! We can say this when we understand the joyous resurrection of Jesus. It is a celebration of who Jesus is and who he has made us in him. We are united with Jesus.

You have heard the Word of Jesus today, and this is how you can know him. Perhaps you have heard the Resurrection story and know John 3:16 by heart. But, let me tell you: You must be united with Christ to experience the resurrection yourself. You must die to your sin—believing in Jesus and repenting of your sin.

If you have never prayed in the Name of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins, he is waiting. He is knocking on your heart. Maybe you know a lot about Jesus, but you need his Spirit, to unite you to him in Truth. Maybe he is calling you to be baptized—both literally and figuratively into Christ’s death, burial and resurrection. Maybe you have some grave clothes—some sins or struggles— you finally need to shake. Whatever it is, there is power in the Name of Jesus, and in the Name of Jesus, we have victory.

Answer with me “Ask in the Name of Jesus” after each question:

Do you need to know Jesus? Ask in the Name of Jesus.

Do you need a new life? Ask in the Name of Jesus.

Do you need the Holy Spirit? Ask in the Name of Jesus.

Do you need healing in a relationship? Ask in the Name of Jesus.

Do you need guidance in a situation? Ask in the Name of Jesus.

Do you need victory over sin? Ask in the Name of Jesus.

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I use the NIV translation of scripture because of its conversational nature. Feel free to go to Bible Gateway and copy and paste whichever translation you want to use. This transcript has been edited to an outline format that improves readability and therefore may not exactly follow the video edition.

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