

Romans 6:1-11 p.942

1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. 6 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. 7 For one who has died has been set free from sin. 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9 We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. 10 For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. 11 So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:9-11 p.944

9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. 10 But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you

New Life in Christ

Cryogenics Some people want to live for ever. 14 year old girl now preserved in the US said:

I am only 14 years old and I don't want to die but I know I am going to die.

I think being cryopreserved gives me a chance to be cured and woken up - even in hundreds of years' time.

I don't want to be buried underground.

I want to live and live longer and I think that in the future they may find a cure for my cancer and wake me up.

This is about a longing for *Physical* life and existence in the *future*.

But in the *present* there's also *emotional* and *spiritual* life to consider.

Our spiritual and emotional condition is so bad that some people want to die because the pain of coming alive appears too much to bear.

It's one reason why people addicted to drugs seem so hesitant to going to, and remaining at, places like Betel: the buried hurt and pain seems to be unfaceable, and it's easier to crawl back into the familiar dark and broken world than it is to step out and keep going in a new and better direction.

It's one reason why so many of us, addicted or otherwise, struggle in our lives and our Christian walk: we don't want to face the hurt and pain and sin and shame that's in us, even though it blocks our way to peace and contentment. It's easier to blame everyone else and God than it is to take responsibility and chose to work out the way to live well.

In both cases – life in the future and and life in the present – we have the most fantastic answers and possibilities in Jesus.

Daily Prayer - taking on each day what God has for us

- Father
- 1-3-1
- Son: 100% God, 100% human
 - Incarnation – God one of us. living and suffering as we do
 - Crucifixion – dying for us, taking on himself all our sin and shame hurt and pain
 - Resurrection – Physical raised from the dead
 - Ascension – all power in heaven and earth given to Jesus, who shares it with us.

Today it's **resurrection**. What is that, and what does it mean for us now an the future?

Early refs in the NT letters

1 Cor 15:3-8

I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. 8 Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

Then the gospel accounts were written. Later the resurrection was given a key place in the creeds – ancient statements of Christian faith, with key non-negotiables in our belief system and worldview.

Nicene Creed

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures

Apostles' Creed

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again

Jesus was born, lived, died and then rose again.

The resurrection is a historical claim by which Christian faith stands or falls.

People have tried to explain it away, and failed.

Some even set out to write books about how it didn't happen, couldn't have happened – and ended up coming to faith. For example:

Frank Morrison – *Who moved the stone?*

<http://www.gospeltruth.net/whomovedthestone.htm>

“The inner story of a man who originally set out to write one kind of book and found himself compelled by the sheer force of circumstances to write another”

In addition, Bishop & Professor NT Wright's *The Resurrection of the Son of God* is an exhaustive account of just about anything you can think of

around this – the story as handed down, the contemporary culture, ways of understanding, the events as set out in the Bible.

Two facts:

1. **Empty Tomb**
2. **People met Jesus** – physical, new kind of body, not a ghost or memory

'Half rates' were then turned into worldbeaters, who set about changing the world with what they knew and had experienced, and, as they believed with the power of God in them.

What explains both the empty tomb and the meetings with Jesus?
What could have triggered the explosive growth of the early church?

Jesus Christ is risen from the dead.

If you've never sat down and thought it all through, do so – it will change your life!

Two consequences: for the Human Race:

1. **New life starting now**
2. **New life going on forever** with a Jesus-like resurrection for all – no cryogenics required!

Today we're going to think about **new life starting now**: the new spiritual and emotional opportunities Jesus' resurrection gives us.

Old life v New Life. We die and are raised up Spiritually *now*.

The same power that raised Jesus from the dead starts to live and work in us.

Crucifixion: our hurt, pain, sin and shame are all on Jesus. We die on the cross with him – we're no longer trapped by sin and hurt.

Resurrection: we are free to rise again and to start living well, as God designed us to.

Sometimes saying a prayer of commitment helps start this immediately and powerfully; for others, the prayer of commitment is a more gradual process right from the outset.

But either way, we're meant to *change on the inside – change from the inside out*.

Christianity *isn't* about keeping up appearances and trying hard to do good things to please God or other people.

Christianity *is* about dying to everything that's gone wrong in us and our world and rising to live a whole new way of life which fits in with God's Kingdom, starting now and going on forever.

Romans 6:3

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death,

We were buried with him. When we trust Jesus for our life and salvation, our rescue, then what Jesus did for us becomes ours – and that includes his death and burial.

Baptism is one of the key symbols of coming to faith in God through Jesus. In Jesus' day John the Baptist did a lot of it; people were baptised in rivers – we think by being lowered, submerged and raised up again out of the water.

Jesus told his disciples to go “and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”

And this is still the key moment in becoming a Christian.

The symbolism is important – being washed clean is part of it, but burial is another part. Shocking? If ever you've despaired of the world and yourself, this is actually good news. We were buried with him by baptism into [his] death.

That means – in a funny sort of way – **your baptism is also your funeral.**

What dies with Jesus on the cross and is buried with him in his tomb is the old you – the former you – the damaged you – the sinful you – the shameful you – the hurting you – the addicted you – the compulsive, anxious you.

And just as Jesus rose physically and Spiritually from the tomb, so we rise as well.

Remember there are two parts to this.

Right now, we rise spiritually with him, not physically. For now we keep our old physical bodies, with all their frailties and tendencies to sin and go wrong and let us down. But what we do get is a new Spiritual start – a re-birth, if you like – where our heart – the core of our being is changed.

Instead of being hopelessly lost in our sin and brokenness, we start all over again, with a new heart. We're no longer bound to keep going wrong as we used to be; we have a new heart inside of us which is connected straight to God.

Or think of a little, **battered old car**: it keeps going wrong, and getting rustier. My first car was an old red Ford Escort – it rusted and declined, and eventually had to be taken away for scrap. Imagine that battered car with a new engine in it – and not just any old engine, but the best possible engine – a Rolls Royce jet engine. While it's the same old shell of a car, there is now something really dynamic and powerful working in it.

In the future, one day the shell of the car will collapse in a rusty heap – but the engine will go on in a new luxury structure, one which fully matches the powerful engine. That's next week's sermon.

But now, even though we have the same old car frame, the new engine makes it possible to do things and go places we didn't think possible, which weren't possible. *The new engine in us means we are empowered to start living well, according to God's intended ways.*

The process of learning to go to those new places is called *sanctification* – *being made holy.*

Holy ≠ goody goody, pious religious sanctimonious

Holy = whole, good, alive as God intended.

Now – think of the car again – there is some conflict between the new engine and the car frame. It's unlikely they'll work together seamlessly.

It's the same with us: our new heart doesn't sit well with our old frame. The new heart is powered from God to live like God intended – full of love and peace, patience, goodness, kindness, and so on.

But the new heart is still in the old body – and a lot of what’s programmed into our old body is against what God wants, and damages us and these around us: Anger bitterness, jealousy, envy, selfish ambition, addiction, life-controlling sin, and so on.

But as soon as we get in on the death and resurrection of Jesus, all that stuff is not who we *are*, but who we *were*, and *that part is dead*, even if in our old bodies, it continues to try to operate unless we change it with God’s word – and God’s power.

We can change – we can grow – right here and now – as we rise up with Jesus.

Here’s the video... <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=weB76W-3dsk>

That’s why the Bible talks a lot about dying to the old and rising to the new. We have the gift of grace of what Jesus has done; now we have to apply it in our lives. We have resurrection power to come and live in us right now

That’s why it’s in the daily prayer too: in the section where we take on Jesus’ crucifixion, it talks about

I receive all the work and triumph of your Crucifixion, whereby I am cleansed from all my sin through your shed blood *1 John 1:9*, my old nature is removed *Col 2:11*, my heart is circumcised to God *Romans 2:29*, and every claim being made against me is disarmed *Col2:15*. I take my place in your cross and death, whereby I have died with you to sin and to my flesh *Romans 6:11*, to the world *Gal 6:14*, and to the evil one *Col 1:13*. I take up my cross and crucify my flesh with all its pride, unbelief, and idolatry. I put off the old man *Eph 4:22*.

That’s a bit like a daily reminder about your baptism being your funeral – all that old stuff is now dead, and, where it still clings, we can learn gradually, even in our old bodies, to live according to the new power in us.

Then comes the Resurrection bit, the rising up:

Jesus, I also embrace you as my new life *Eph 4:24*, my holiness and sanctification, my hope of glory, and I receive all the work and triumph of your Resurrection, whereby I have been raised with you to a new life, to walk in newness of life, dead to sin and alive to God *Romans 6:11*. I am crucified with Christ and it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me *Gal 2:20*. I now take my place in your Resurrection, whereby I have been made alive with you *Eph 2:5*, I reign in life through you *Romans 5:17*. I now put on the new man *Romans 6:4* in all holiness and humility, in all righteousness and purity and truth. Christ is now my life *Col 3:4*, the one who strengthens me *Phil 4:13*.

Put to death – crucify – the old nature

Put on the new nature, true nature. Live from the power of God in you; re-program your mind, and re-power your heart.

Don’t put to death your true, good self – become your true good self

Some people take this the wrong way, and put to death their true nature.

I’m no good, Everything I do is wrong. It’s not allowed, I can’t enjoy myself. I mustn’t want anything. Everything is sinful so I mustn’t do anything.

That’s not it at all. Jesus came to give *life to the full*, not squeeze us into a miserable, legalistic existence.

To life as fully and excitingly as God intends, though, we have to die to all that’s bad, and rise to all that’s good and true.

Sin doesn’t have any control, any dominion over us – instead, buy God’s grace in Jesus – we’re made new. And right here and now we can get access to that new engine.,

Prayer – Re-live your baptism/funeral

As well as a great thing to do every day, this is also a way to become a Christian, or renew your commitment. Perhaps as you pray this, you'll start out on the Christian journey. You're choosing to follow a route most people prefer not to – learning to live in a new way, facing up to old hurt and wrongdoing, and letting Jesus transform you.

First of all, let's do the down bit – putting to death our old nature, saying we no longer want to live the old, broken ways, whatever they are.

I receive all the work and triumph of your Crucifixion, whereby I am cleansed from all my sin through your shed blood *1 John 1:9*, my old nature is removed *Col 2:11*, my heart is circumcised to God *Romans 2:29*, and every claim being made against me is disarmed *Col 2:15*. I take my place in your cross and death, whereby I have died with you to sin and to my flesh *Romans 6:11*, to the world *Gal 6:14*, and to the evil one *Col 1:13*. I take up my cross and crucify my flesh with all its pride, unbelief, and idolatry. I put off the old man *Eph 4:22*.

Now let's do the rising up, out of the water, out of the grave – putting on our new nature, perhaps for the first time, learning that we are no longer bound by sin and addiction and hurt and wounds, but can start work on living a new life.

Jesus, I also embrace you as my new life *Eph 4:24*, my holiness and sanctification, my hope of glory, and I receive all the work and triumph of your Resurrection, whereby I have been raised with you to a new life, to walk in newness of life, dead to sin and alive to God *Romans 6:11*. I am crucified with Christ and it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me *Gal 2:20*. I now take my place in your Resurrection, whereby I have been made alive with you *Eph 2:5*, I reign in life through you *Romans 5:17*. I now put on the new man *Romans 6:4* in all holiness and humility, in all righteousness and purity and truth. Christ is now my life *Col 3:4*, the one who strengthens me *Phil 4:13*.

AMEN! Now Send your Holy Spirit into my heart – I want the same power that raised Jesus living in me right here and now...

If you prayed that and meant it, then, if you haven't been baptised, it's important that you do: come and talk to me! And with the Daily Prayer, you can do this every day as part of your changing on the inside.