

SECTION FIVE : IDENTIFIED

41. IDENTIFIED WITH CHRIST

Substitution and Identification

We understand substitution – one on behalf of many, or one in the place of many. Christ the Sinless One, died for our sins, in our place, on our behalf, and we received forgiveness because of His substitutionary work.

There is also another aspect of truth we see in Scripture and that is identification – many in the one.

The apostle Paul brings this to light in Romans chapter 5 and in 1 Corinthians 15.

Romans 5:12,19

12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

1 Corinthians 15:21-22,47-49

21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

47 The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven.

48 As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly.

49 And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.

One man sinned; many were made sinners. Death came through one man. In Adam, all die. Death passed on to all. Adam was the natural man made of dust, and we bear the image of the natural man. The entire human race was identified in the first man Adam.

One Man obeyed; many were made righteous. In Christ all those who believe are made alive. In Christ, we bear the image of the spiritual, heavenly Man. All believers are identified in the second Man, Jesus Christ.

In identification, what happened to the one, was extended to the many. Although this happened back in time, it is experience today. In Adam, everyone sinned, and experience death passed on to them. In Christ, everyone who believe are made righteous, and have life, both the quickening of eternal life, and the promise of resurrection from the dead.

In the mind of God, the new creation was in Christ. So, what happened to Christ, happened to the new creation. Consequently, we see the Scriptures teach us that because we are in Christ, we have become identified with Him in His crucifixion, burial, resurrection, ascension, and exaltation (position) at the right hand of the Father.

Having introduced the truth of identification in Romans 5, Paul explains this for us in Romans 6. We need to look at the entire chapter to unpack truths Paul is presenting to us here.

Romans 6:1-23

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,

6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

7 For he who has died has been freed from sin.

8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.

10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.

13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!

16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?

17 But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.

18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

19 I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.

20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.

21 What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

22 But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Form of Doctrine

Romans 6:17-18

17 But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.

18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

Notice in Romans 6:17-18, the apostle Paul refers to that form of doctrine, which when obeyed from the heart moved people from being slaves of sin to being set free from sin. The word 'form' in Greek refers to a die or mold that gives shape to what is poured into it. The doctrine or teaching Paul delivered to them, when obeyed from the heart shaped their lives and moved them from being slaves of sin to being free from sin and becoming slaves of righteousness. This is the teaching we are going to explore here in Roman 6 and we can expect the same to happen to us. When we obey from the heart the teaching of God's Word we will be set free from sin and become slaves of righteousness.

We Died To Sin, But When?

Romans 6:1-2

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

In Romans 5 Paul has announced that we are recipients of God's abundant grace and the gift of righteousness. However, Paul is emphatic that we cannot continue in sin because of God's grace. The reason he states is that we died to sin. A dead person does not and cannot sin. And we are dead. What does that mean? How and when did we die to sin?

Identified In His Death, Burial And Resurrection

Romans 6:3-5

3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,

6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

Now Paul introduces us to identification into Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.

In verse 3, Paul states that when we were baptized into Christ we were baptized into His death. To be baptized means to be immersed. We were immersed into Christ spiritually, at the time of our new birth by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13). We expressed that this has happened to us by being immersed in water at our water baptism. So, when we were made spiritually one with Christ, we were also immersed or made one with His death. That is, when Christ died, we the new creation, believers in Christ, died with Him.

In verses 4-5, Paul states that since we were buried with Him, we were also raised (or resurrected) with Him to walk in newness of life.

Then in verse 6 he backs up and states, not only were we buried and raised, but we were also first crucified with Him.

In the first five six Paul indicates that we as believers do not live any longer in sin because we who are in Christ have been identified with Christ, in His death, burial, and resurrection. We will include here Christ's ascension and exaltation, since we see this mentioned in other Scripture passages.

Hence through identification, the believer is crucified with Christ, buried with Christ, resurrected with Christ, raised up (ascended) with Christ and seated with Christ. This is spiritual truth, and it has bearing or consequences on the life we now live. We will examine each of these.

Crucified with Christ—The body of sin was destroyed.

Buried with Christ—Separated from the past life.

Resurrected with Christ—Given new life.

Raised up into the heavens with Christ—Separated from the present age/world.

Seated with Christ—Positioned to rule and reign.

42. CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST

Romans 6:6-7

6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

7 For he who has died has been freed from sin.

We were crucified with Him. The old man, the old person, the old sinful, Adamic, nature was crucified with Him on the cross. In Ephesians 4:22-24 we have a contrast between the old man and the new man. The old man had to do with the life before becoming a new creation. The old man was corrupt and full of deceitful lusts. In contrast the new man is in the image of God, full of righteousness and holiness. So, to put it simply, the old man is the old sinful nature that used to be in us. The new man is the life and nature of God in us. So, the old sinful nature was put to death, crucified, on the cross.

The result is that the “body of sin” representing the totality of sin, the full person of sin, or the power, influence and dominion of sin was destroyed, rendered powerless and done away with. Hence, we are no longer slaves and captives to sin. We are free to choose a life of freedom from sin and a life of righteousness and holiness.

This is spiritual truth. We must understand this. We are free from the old man and the body of sin. Both these were dealt with when Christ was crucified on the Cross. These were nailed and destroyed with Christ on the Cross.

Paul reaffirms this truth in Colossians:

Colossians 2:11–13

11 In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,

12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses.

Here in Colossians, Paul draws a comparison with circumcision. He states that in Christ we were circumcised. Something was taken out. This was the “body of sins of the flesh” or the sum totality of sin that controlled our flesh. The power and dominion of sin over us was cut out and put away.

We were identified with Christ. We were crucified with Him. The body of sin—the power of sin—that old sinful nature was crucified and destroyed. We are free from the dominion of sin.

43. BURIED WITH CHRIST

Romans 6:3-5

3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,

In Christ, we are also identified in his death. When Christ died, we died.

When a person dies, the earth realm has no more claims or influence over that individual. The person is dead and has stepped into the realm of life after death, into the eternal spirit realm. On the earth this person could have had huge debts left uncleared, could have many things good and bad, against their name. But once dead, none of these will affect that individual personally in the realm they have stepped into.

Similarly, to be dead with Christ indicated that we have been separated from the past life. The old life has no more claim on us. The influences and powers that gripped us in the past life, have no more claim over us now. We are new creation.

Colossians 3:3

For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

We died and now we live in God, in Christ. We are in a realm where the old life cannot touch us and has no right over us.