

Your Not Who You Used to Be

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[0:00] Welcome to this week's message from Faith Bible Church of Lake Charles.! We're excited to share a practical Bible-based teaching that we hope will encourage you and strengthen your faith.

! Thanks for listening. Now, here's today's message. Well, hallelujah. Those who've trusted Christ, are you excited to be part of the family of God?

Amen. One of the biggest challenges that so many people face is feeling like they're constantly fighting the same battles. They love Jesus. They know they've been forgiven, but they feel like they're stuck between who they are and who they want to become.

And so what do they do? We tend to try harder, make promises, set new goals. And then when we fall again, we assume something must be wrong with us spiritually.

The Apostle Paul understood that struggle. And as he writes in the book of Romans, instead of giving believers a list of behaviors, what he does is he gives them something far, far deeper.

[1:11] He gives them a brand new way to see themselves, of who they are in Jesus Christ. And as they have been identified with Jesus Christ through baptism, they were baptized into the death of Jesus Christ.

They rose with him when he arose to live a brand new life. Paul also says in Scripture that if we are in Christ, we are a brand new creation.

And we are in Romans chapter 6 this morning. We looked at the first five verses last week. This morning we are going to be in verses 6 through verse 11.

This section is not primarily about rules. It's about identity. Paul wants the believers to understand that something has already changed at the core of our being if we've trusted Christ as our Savior. We have a brand new identity. And in verses 5 through 11, where we're going to be this morning, what Paul does is he takes us deeper into where we've already begun, deeper into the understanding of our being united with Jesus Christ in His death, His burial, and in His resurrection.

[2:26] And he moves from the historical work of Jesus Christ to the personal reality of the believer.

And unlike giving some onerous set of rules, what he does is he gives a message that is eminently freeing.

Rather than giving us a list of rules that Jesus said to the religious leaders even they couldn't keep, instead of giving a new set of rules, what he does is he says, you're not trying to be someone new. You are already new in Jesus Christ. You have a new identity. You have, but because of that you can have a brand new behavior. And the Holy Spirit is the one that gives you the power, the same power.

Think about this. The same power that rose Jesus Christ from the dead, that raised Jesus Christ from the dead, is the same power flowing through you and me if you've trusted Christ as your Savior. And so God's Holy Spirit gives us this power because of the new identity, because of the new nature that you and I have.

[3:32] Let's get started looking at verse number 5 in Romans chapter number 6. For if, now before I go even any further, often when in Scripture, especially in the book of Romans, Paul uses an argument, and in English when someone says if, what do they mean?

Come on, talk to me this morning. It's possible. It might be. But this phrase that the Apostle Paul uses, and he uses it multiple times in Romans, it could probably best be translated since.

So what Paul is saying, for since we have, because it's accepted as what is true. So he says, for since we have been united together in the likeness of his death, certainly we shall also be in the

likeness, or after the same fashion, of his resurrection.

So what Paul does is he begins with our connection to Christ. Now that's an important concept for us to understand, if we're to understand who we are.

Now to begin with, we start with that first term in verse number 5. For if we have been united together, the KJV uses the term planted together.

[5:02] Now this is probably one of those Greek terms that's a little bit difficult for us to translate into English and fully understand it.

There's not really an equivalent English word. So different translations translate it somewhat differently, but have a similar meaning. And what each translation does is captures a different part of the same idea.

They all mean the same thing, but it's like a plant that has variegated colors. You'll say, what color is it? Well, and well for me, who's colorblind, I couldn't tell you what color it is anyway.

But there are shades of meaning to this. And become one with him probably is the most literal translation of it.

And it's a compound word made up of two portions. The first is the prefix, means with, and the word itself means born or grow up or to grow.

[6:13] So we are united with Christ. We are grown up with him, if you will, probably the best way that I could illustrate it for us to understand.

And we had one of these trees before in our backyard, before the year of Laura and the big freeze, and it killed that fruit tree. But it was a grafted tree. It was a tree where, when it was a young plant, someone had grafted into it, and so it became a different tree, so to speak.

So what they've done, what they did was, they took two separate plants, they grafted it in together, and what happened as it grew? It united.

Those two parts united together, and it grew up together into being one tree. It weren't two trees. It was one tree.

And so they took upon themselves the characteristics of both trees, and so they were grafted together, planted together, if you will, united together, and so they became one with one another.

[7:24] Probably the best way I could illustrate what the Apostle Paul said, that we have been united together with Jesus Christ in His death, His burial, and His resurrection. For if we, or since, we have been united together in the likeness of His death, and His point is, certainly we'll be united together in the likeness of His resurrection.

So Jesus didn't, wasn't raised again to have the same body that He had before. It was a brand new type of existence. He could walk through walls. He could transport from one place to the other.

So He had a brand new type of existence. And the same holds true for you and me when we trust Christ as our Savior.

So we two separately become one with Jesus Christ. And it's because of this new reality that we can't be forced to live in sin.

Sin is no longer our master. Because He says we are dead to sin. Because we have a new relationship, we have a new identification with Jesus Christ. You see, the one who trusted Christ as their Savior has died to the old life and has been raised to enjoy a brand new kind of life.

[8:45] And the believer doesn't want to go back into sin any more than Lazarus wanted to go back into the tomb. Remember we mentioned Lazarus last week where, yes, he was alive, but what did Jesus tell the folks around Lazarus to do?

Because remember, he had been in the grave four days. He had been in the tomb four days.

Because he, what did his sister say? Well, Jesus, if you'd have come sooner, he might not have died.

But it's been four days. And yet he now, he used the king, stinketh. And so he stinks. But what did Jesus say to do after he rose again to live again?

Take those old gray clothes off. Take those old stinky clothes, gray clothes off. And the Bible, matter of fact, uses that analogy a number of times. He says, we are to cast off the old garment, so to speak.

So, that old sin nature that we have comes with a whole lot of baggage. So, he says, put it off, like you would shed a coat. And so, we have a brand new, unite, we are united with Jesus Christ, and the believer who's been saved, who's been ransomed, who has been justified, who has been redeemed, doesn't want to go back to that old sinful life any more than Lazarus wanted to go back in the tomb or keep those stinky gray clothes on him.

[10:11] Because you know what? Have you ever smelled yourself after a long day of work? You know, something stinks around here. And your spouse probably says, honey, it's you.

There are a lot of people who call themselves followers of Jesus Christ, who call themselves Christians, and their life stinks. Because they're still stuck living like they were before they came to know Jesus Christ.

And then Paul goes on to explain a little bit more in verse number 6. Paul says, 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 the slaves of sin.

Now, I've preached through Romans before in many, many, many years ago. and I've done it from verses 5 all the way through verse 14 as one unit.

And if we look at the construction of this section, probably a good way to organize it in an outline would be no reckon and yield.

[11:20] Those are the three main words the Apostle Paul uses. We need to know who we are. we need to reckon it or count it to be true.

And then we need to yield to that new reality. But we're not going to necessarily take that outline here. But first of all, we see in verse number 6, Paul says, you need to know something.

You need to understand this. This is the knowledge that you need to have. So, by definition, we were sinners. sinners.

Paul starts by appealing to knowledge, the knowledge of that who we were before we came to Jesus Christ, that old person has died with Christ. So, in effect, it's dead.

Our former identity was shaped by sin. That's who we are. That's who we were. We were sinners. Kind of like if you want to know an identity, Paul says, for all who have sinned come short of the glory of God.

[12:21] We are all, or we were all, sinners by nature. That was our identity. But for us, who have been redeemed, who have been justified, who have been united together with Jesus Christ, it's important for us to know who we are.

We're no longer way down by our past. Or at least we shouldn't be because we are not that person anymore. And then what does Paul do? He refers to, in verse number 6, he says, knowing this, that our old man, our old person, the old you, the old me, before we came to Jesus Christ, he says, our old man, old woman, old boy, or whatever, the former you, he says, was crucified with him.

And then he goes on to refer to the body of sin. Now that's a little bit interesting that Paul used that term of phrase. The term doesn't mean the body itself is sinful.

There have been some groups in history past that have referred to the body as itself being sinful.

That's where there were people who would whip themselves, flagellate themselves, and they would, as they call it, buffet their bodies.

[13:48] Why? Because they felt the body was sinful, and if they could put down the flesh, then they could live a life that honored and pleased God. But that's a wrong understanding.

There's nothing inherently sinful necessarily with our bodies. They're just our bodies. They're the tent, the tabernacle the Bible uses in which we live.

It's our sinful nature. It's what comes from inside the body. The Apostle Paul brought out a number of times. He said, it's not what you put into the body that makes the body wicked.

He said, it's what comes out from the inside. And so that's who we were before Jesus Christ, before we came to Christ. So he talks about the body of sin.

It means that one's body is controlled or ruled by sin. It was our condition before we came to Christ. So he says this body of sin.

[14:46] So what does happen to our sinful nature? Paul said, the old man is dead. The old us died with Jesus Christ.

And in verse 6, he says the body of sin might be done away with. Some of your translations might say destroyed. Now on the surface, that might sound a little confusing.

Because when you destroy something, destroy doesn't mean to completely annihilate something. It means to be rendered inoperative or to be made of no effect.

And I tried to find an illustration for you. As a matter of fact, I was at the store yesterday and I looked for it. But if you can picture this in your mind, how many of you, when you were younger, went to the store and you saw hanging near the register one of those little balsa airplanes that you would put together, you have a rubber band and you would wind up the propeller and it would fly a little bit.

They weren't big. They were just made of balsa wood, very, very light in wood. And I wanted one of those because they're cheap and I could have destroyed it. Now, you little ones would have probably said, Pastor, why'd you destroy it?

[16:11] Because I wanted to play with it. So let's say, in your mind, picture one of those that I had in my hand. And I would fly it around and it would work. It would be operational.

But let's say, I would throw it to the floor and I would step on it and I would just grind it into the floor. Did I destroy it? Yeah.

It's no longer operational. It's rendered inoperative. It will no longer fly. No, I could take it and I could throw it, but would it actually fly?

No. It wouldn't fly. You can't destroy matter. And so I didn't annihilate it. It didn't just go poof and it's gone. It's still there, but it's not operating like it was intended to operate.

I rendered it inoperative. So what Paul is saying is, our old man, this body of sin, our old sinful nature, if you will, when Jesus died on the cross, when we died with him, and when he rose again, to become a new creation, he said, our old sinful nature was rendered inoperative.

[17:25] It's still there, but yet, it was rendered inoperative. It's no longer our master. It's like the illustration last week, if you were here, and I said, if an employee working for a company dies, and the boss calls the next day and says, hey, you need to show up for work, sorry, I can't show up, I'm dead.

He's no longer your boss, he's no longer your master, can no longer tell you what to do. As a matter of fact, the book of James says that when we sin, we can't say that anyone else made us do it.

You know, you've heard the saying, the devil made me do it. The devil doesn't make us do anything. What the writer of the book of James says is, we sin because we take it up and we choose to do something with it.

That's why, that is what's going on when a person who is redeemed and renewed and belongs to Jesus Christ. That's what happens when we sin.

We choose to allow that body of sin. We choose to disobey Him. So, Paul says, our old self died with Jesus on the cross so that our propensity to sin, our bent towards sin, would be rendered inoperative or might be done away with.

[18:52] So, our sinful nature has been crucified, has been put to death, rendered inoperative, but we can still pick it up and try to make it work. Some people still want to toy with their old sinful practices, their old sinful habits.

We pick it up from time to time. So, that's what we do when we choose to give in to temptation. We go against our new nature. We go against our nature.

So, we've been freed from sin's power over us. That's what Paul says. And he says, we need to know that. But let's look at the next verse, verse number seven. For he who has died has been freed from sin.

So, Paul uses a word for has been freed. That word is a loose rendering of the word that would be more literally rendered, has been justified or declared righteous.

So, when we died with Christ, rose again with Him, he says we've been freed from sin or we've been declared righteous, we have been justified. And the perfect tense of that verb describes a past action with continuing effect.

[20:05] So, we die with Christ and we don't continually have to put to death our flesh. We don't have to do penance for our sin over and over again. Why? Because it was already taken care of at the cross of Calvary.

We were freed from sin once. A past action that still has a continuing effect today. We don't have to go back and try to do it again. We don't have to go in and put our body down and beat our body up just so we don't sin.

It's already been taken care of. So, sin no longer has the legal right to force its mastery over us. We are dead with respect to sin because we have a brand new legal status.

So, what does that mean for us this week? What does that mean for you and for me? If you have a recurring pattern of sin, if you have an old thought pattern that is wrong, that is bad, that's sinful, it could be a lack of forgiveness, it could be bitterness, it could be a sin habit in your life, bring it into the light and step into the truth that, God, I don't have to do this anymore.

God, I have died with you and sin is no longer my master and I ask that by the power of your Holy Spirit that you would free me from the grip of sin.

[21:30] And you know what? God says He will free us. He has already freed us from it, but experientially God's Holy Spirit can give us the power to say no to sin when we're tempted.

And also, the second thing is invite accountability into your life. Invite someone else, someone that is trusted, someone that may be more mature in the faith and give them permission to check in with you.

Just to check in with you from time to time and say, how are you living in your new freedom? How are you doing? Have you gone back to drink at that old well? Have you? And be honest, be honest with them.

So invite accountability. All right, let's move on, verses 8 through 10. Paul continues, Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more.

Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin. What does He say? Once for all, but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

[22:39] Now these verses are pretty much the same as verses 5 through 7, and in the same format, beginning with if, or as we say, better translated, since. And again, we see that word, know.

So He says, For if we die with Christ, we believe we shall also live with Him, knowing. So that we see that, we see that word again, because it's true that if we've trusted Christ by faith, and we're identified with Him, we died with Christ, and because this is true, present tense, we should go on believing, or keep on believing, that we'll live with Him.

We share in the resurrection life of Jesus Christ. Isn't that an awesome truth? We share day by day, in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

At the moment of regeneration, when we trusted Jesus Christ, that was true, but we continue living in that reality every day. And the Bible says that Jesus died for sin, or died to sin once for all.

That's also important. You know, there's no such thing as a perpetual sacrifice of Christ. There is no reason that Jesus, or that we would have to continue over and over again, as the New Testament talks about, that Jesus died to sin once for all.

[24:12] We no longer have the need of the blood of bulls and goats. We no longer have to perform any other sacrifices that can't take away sin. The Bible says Jesus died to sin once for all.

Before He took His last breath, what did Jesus say? Remember one of the seven sayings from the cross? It is finished. What was finished? The payment for our sin.

It's finished. I've completed my task, and I am getting ready to breathe my final breath, and the propitiation, the payment to satisfy the wrath of God towards sin, is being paid.

And He said, It is finished. And now Jesus Christ lives. And let's finally, let's move on to verse 11. He says, Likewise, you also.

And we see that next word. He says, We need to know who we are. We need to know that we're identified with Jesus Christ, that our old, the old us, the old me, the old you, has been put to death with Jesus Christ, and we're raised again to walk in newness of life.

[25:23] And then He says, Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord. Jeremy, you were in Alabama last week.

People like to say what? I? I reckon? Yeah, I pastored a number of years. We lived in quite a few years in Alabama. That's where I went to. That's where I went to school, to college in Alabama. And so people say, Well, you know what? I reckon. What does that mean? What's the equivalent of when they say, I reckon? I suppose. I believe.

You know, I guess so. I guess it's true. I reckon. But none of those popular meanings can apply to this verse. The word reckon here is a translation of the word that Paul used.

It's used 41 times in the New Testament. It's used 19 times alone in the book of Romans. And where it's translated, in Romans 4, it's translated count, to reckon, or to impute.

[26:32] It means to take it into account, to calculate, or to estimate. So when He's, and the word impute also means to put to one's account.

Maybe the best translation. So when we, when Paul says in verse 11, Likewise, you also consider it to be true, that you're dead with Christ.

We need to know it, but then we need to put it to our account. We need to realize that it's true. Paul didn't tell his readers to feel feel like they were dead to sin.

Because there are some days, you know what? I don't feel saved. There are some days, I don't feel on top of the world. There are some days, I don't feel super spiritual. Probably more, probably more days than not.

But Paul didn't say, for us to, to feel like we're dead to sin, or even to understand it fully. What Paul says here, is to act on it, and claim it to be true.

[27:40] It's true, whether we believe it or not. So he says, reckon it to be true, that we're dead to sin. Reckoning is a matter of faith, that results in action.

Reckoning it to be true, that our old identity is dead, we have a new identity in Jesus Christ, we have a new nature, Holy Spirit is residing within us. He says, that reckoning it is a matter of faith, that results in action.

It's like, it's like endorsing a check. When you write a check, and when you sign it, or when you endorse a check, that you receive, if we really believe, that the money is in the account, we'll sign our name to it, and we'll collect the money.

So we have, we consider it to be true. You know, why would, have you ever, any of you ever received a check in the mail, that just, it just looked too good to be true? And then when you read the fine print, if you, if you, if you sign it, you're borrowing money.

Right? But if you receive a check, and you're expecting a check, now we've gotten this, this doesn't happen often, I wish it happened more often, we overpaid for something, and we get a refund. And it's a check from, from whoever, from your, from your local physician's office, or the hospital, or from wherever.

[28:59] And, it looks legit. And what you'll do is, you'll turn it over, you'll sign, you'll endorse it, and you'll bring it to your bank, and you'll cash it, or you'll deposit it.

You reckon, that they have enough money in the account. Paul says, put it to your account. Just, just know that you're dead to sin, and then live like it.

Just count it to be true. See, the gospel is not just about escaping judgment. That's part of it. We come to know Jesus Christ, we trust Christ as our Savior, so that our sin can be forgiven, we can be united with Christ, we can be adopted, placed into the God's family, but the gospel is not just about escaping judgment, it's about receiving a brand new identity.

God doesn't just forgive us our sin, when we trust Christ as our Savior, and say, good luck. No, there's so many things that take place, when we trust Christ as our Savior.

And one of those things, is that, it gives us the Holy Spirit. The Bible says, if a person doesn't have the Holy Spirit, he says he is not of mine. It's about receiving a brand new identity, and when you live your life, from that identity, that I'm a new person in Jesus Christ, everything changes.

[30:28] It changes our perspective, it changes our priorities, and it changes our direction as well. You're not who you used to be. If you trusted Christ as your Savior, you're not who you used to be.

You're alive to God. You're dead to sin, and you're alive to God. And the more you believe that, the more your life is going to begin to reflect it. Let's pray. Father, we come to you this morning.

We thank you so, so very much, for the fact that, we have been identified with you, when we trusted Christ as our Savior. In effect, you tell us that, we died with Christ.

We were buried with him, and we were raised in units of life. And Father, we pray today that you would help each one here, each one listening to the sound of my voice, to be able to understand our brand new identity.

We don't have to sin. When we do sin, you told us to confess our sins, and you'll be faithful and just to forgive us our sin.

[31:40] Father, also, we thank you that sin is no longer our master. We've been freed from the bondage of sin. You've broken the shackles. We pray, Heavenly Father, that we can live like it, and that we can live a life that honors and pleases you, as we surrender to you, as we surrender to your Holy Spirit, that's leading and guiding in our lives.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Thanks for joining us today. We hope this message encouraged you and gave you something to apply to your life this week.

If you'd like to learn more about Faith Bible Church or connect with us, visit our website at meetfaith.org. We'd love to hear from you. Have a great week, and we'll see you next time. We'll see you next time.