



**15.**  
**'Lazarus look-alikes!'**  
Romans 6.1-14

**Background**

This is another important chapter: they all are, of course! For all his great theological acumen, and for all his warm evangelistic zeal, Paul had a truly pastoral heart. He understood well – from personal experience not least – the struggles we have as believers and the battles we have to face.

He's explained how, no matter who we are nor what we've done, we can be right with God through the righteousness which He has provided for us in Jesus. Good news, indeed! But there's still the reality of sin with which, even as believers, we have to contend.

As he starts in on this new section of the letter, therefore, Paul has this issue very much in mind: and he begins by addressing a question which some (he anticipates) might well be tempted to ask. If Jesus has dealt so completely with sin, why bother seeking to live rightly? After all, no matter what I do, I'm forgiven! The logic may be compelling: the theology, however, is wonky!

His answer is two-fold, corresponding to the two times that the question is aired (6.1 & 15). He argues first, in the passage on which this study concentrates, that as a believer you are a new person (vv.1-14): and then he goes on (vv.15-23) to insist that as a believer you are under new management.

His argument in this first section is in many ways the natural sequel to, and extension of, what he's just been articulating in 5.12-21. The believer is 'in Christ' now, no longer 'in Adam', and as such does not simply live in a new realm, but is in truth a new person. That's what these verses are expounding. First, how that happens (vv.3-4); then the liberating effect of that (vv.5-7); and finally the life-changing impact of that (vv.8-10). He then rounds off his argument with a series of exhortations by way of application.

Understanding what Paul is setting out here is transformative in both your experience as a believer, and in your living as a follower of Christ. It's worth careful study – and worth, too, not getting side-tracked into a discussion or debate about baptism! Paul is not setting out a doctrine of baptism in vv.3f so much as using a picture to explain the nature of conversion, that sovereign work of God whereby a believer is brought 'into Christ Jesus' and made one with Him.

Read the whole passage and if pushed for time concentrate on **'days' (4), (5)** and **(7)**.

## 1) Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April – sin and the believer

Read [Romans 6.1](#)

*“.. shall we go on sinning, so that grace may increase ..”* (Rom.6.1)

The question will be repeated (see v.15), an indication that while, in Christ, the guilt of sin has been removed and the power of sin has been broken, nonetheless sin remains an issue in the life of the believer and requires to be addressed rightly.

In what ways does sin remain a problem for Christians?

Read [1 Jn.1.5-2.2](#): what are the three false views in relation to sin which John exposes here, and what is his answer to each?

**Prayer:** *Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven – who like me should bring you praise, O God? Guard my heart and my living from sin today that I may live for Your glory.*

## 2) Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April – raised to new life

Read [Romans 6.2-4](#)

*“.. in order that .. we too may live a new life ..”* (Rom.6.4)

Baptism provides a picture for the believer of our union with Christ. Having been ‘washed over’ into Christ we are now one with Him and what’s true of Him is true of us. You’re a new person in Christ. The old ‘you’ died with Him: a new ‘you’ now lives!

How do you square the fact that you still struggle with sin, even as a believer, with the truth that you ‘died to sin’?

‘We too may live a new life’: in what ways has that newness of life found expression in your experience?

**Prayer:** *Amazing grace! How sweet the sound, Lord, that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see! Fill my life with Your praise today!*

## 3) Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May – union with Christ

Read [Romans 6.5](#)

*“.. we will certainly also be united with Him in a resurrection like His ..”* (Rom.6.5)

The believer’s union with Christ is key to an understanding of who and what we now are in Him. His death becomes our death. His resurrection becomes our resurrection. Future, for sure, but there’s a present dimension as well. We’re raised to new life!

Do Paul’s words here point simply to a *future* resurrection for the believer – or does the resurrection of Jesus have *present* implications for us too?

Read [Phil.3.10](#): what does Paul mean by knowing ‘the power of His resurrection’?

*Prayer: You have raised me to new life, Lord Jesus, and for that I can never thank You enough. May my whole life today, all I do and say, bear witness to Your great grace.*

#### 4) Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May – free from sin’s tyranny

Read [Romans 6.6-7](#)

*“our old self was crucified with Him .. that we should no longer be slaves of sin”*  
(Rom.6.6)

Jesus’ death became *your* death if you are now united by faith with Him. You were ‘in Him’ when He died. Thus, the tyranny of sin in your life is a thing of the past because that old self, ruled by sin, was done away with on the cross. You’re free from sin’s rule!

**What does Paul mean by ‘the body ruled by sin’ and how have you experienced that in your own life?**

How has your old self’s being ‘crucified with Him’ found expression in the way you now live your life?

What has been your experience as a believer of being ‘set free’ from sin?

**How might a person who struggles with some ‘besetting’ sin be helped and encouraged when, even as a believer, they fall into the same course of sin?**

*Prayer: Fill every part of me with praise, let all my being speak of Thee and of Thy love, O Lord, poor though I be and weak. Enable me by Your Spirit to live in Your freedom!*

#### 5) Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May – living to God

Read [Romans 6.8-10](#)

*“.. if we died with Christ, we believe we will also live with Him ..”* (Rom.6.8)

Jesus, crucified with and for the sins of His people on the cross, was raised back to life. His story becomes *your* story if you’ve trusted in Him: you, too, now live, a new person, no longer under the reign of sin, but freed in Christ to live, as He does, ‘to God’.

How does your having ‘died with Christ’ found expression in your living?

**To what extent, and in what ways, is it true for the believer that ‘death no longer has mastery over him/her’?**

What will characterise a life now lived ‘to God’?

**Read Lk.12.13-35 where the thought of being ‘rich towards God’ (v.21) is mirrored by Pauls ‘He lives to God’ here (v.10): what insights does the passage in Luke give in terms illustrating what being ‘rich towards God’ might involve?**

*Prayer: Purify my heart, O Lord, let me be as gold and precious silver: my heart's one desire is to be holy, set apart for You, my Master, ready to do Your will.*

## **6) Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> May – live the new life**

Read [Romans 6.11-12](#)

*".. therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal bodies .." (Rom.6.12)*

Here's the practical application of what Paul has been declaring. The gospel is not 'abracadabra' magic: it requires our grasping the truth of our union with Christ and then rigorously applying it. Sin's tyranny has been broken – don't let it have any sway!

How do you go about 'counting yourself dead to sin'?

What strategies can be helpfully adopted to ensure that the 'evil desires' which will still be there in you are now controlled and don't 'rule the roost'?

*Prayer: Thank You, Lord, for setting me free from the terrible tyranny of sin! Help me to learn how to combat and control the residual pockets of sin which still remain.*

## **7) Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May – servants of God**

Read [Romans 6.13-14](#)

*".. offer yourselves to God as those .. brought from death to life .." (Rom.6.13)*

Another "Lord's Day" when you're reminded that Jesus is risen. Rejoice in that truth and remember that you, too, have been raised to a new life. Not just given a fresh start, but made a new person. Offer yourself afresh to God and His service today.

In what ways are we able as believers to help one another avoid offering any part of ourselves to sin?

What part (if any) should formal pastoral discipline play in ensuring that believers do not offer any part of themselves to sin?

How will your being 'an instrument of righteousness' find expression in your life?

In what ways might the worship of God's people on the "Lord's Day" afford you the chance to offer yourself afresh to the service of God?

*Prayer: You deserve my every breath for You've paid the great cost, Lord: I will offer up my life in spirit and truth; in surrender I must give my every part.*