Congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ,

A key focus of recent Lord’s Days has been the historical reality of the virgin birth, death, and burial of Jesus. And we have seen that these matters are a core part of what we must believe in order to be saved. So, you might expect the same approach with the Lord’s Day that deals with the resurrection, some statement about the historical reality of the resurrection. But there is nothing like that. It is just taken as a given that Jesus rose from the dead and the focus is purely on the *benefits* of His resurrection. And so, we are going to take our cue from this Lord’s Day and just take what we read in Matthew 28 and 1 Corinthians 15 as the truth about the resurrection, *because it is the truth about the resurrection*.

What we want to focus on, instead, is something we very briefly spoke about in this morning’s sermon. And that is the connection between the death and burial and resurrection of Christ and Christian living. And it is fitting that we do this having celebrated the Lord’s Supper. You see, back in the day, it was customary in Reformed Churches to celebrate the Lord’s Supper just two or three times a year. And the Lord’s Supper would become the focus of the sermons for the Sunday before the Supper, the Sunday of the Supper, and the Sunday after the Supper. There would be a preparation sermon, an explanation sermon, and an **application sermon**. And the application sermon would be about how we ought to live in the light of what the Supper represents. So, that is what we will do this afternoon as we look at our passage in Romans 6.

Now, if you have studied Romans before, you will know that Paul asks and answers a whole bunch of questions in the letter. And he does so in a very attention-grabbing way. If you have even seen a **courtroom drama** on TV, you will know that as either one of the lawyers is examining the witness, the other lawyer often cries out, “Objection, your honour!” And then he or she will explain why they are objecting – “ Badgering the witness” or “hearsay” or “irrelevant,” etc. Well, Paul casts himself in the role of a lawyer who is proving the truth of the gospel to his readers. And he does this by anticipating objections that some of his readers might have to what he is saying, and then answering them with an emphatic “by no means!” He does this 10 times in the Book.

* We see the first one in Romans 3:3. Turn there quickly. “*What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God?*” Answer: “*By no means!*” And then he explains that short answer.

But look now at **verse 8**. For that is where Paul introduces an objection that he won’t answer until chapter 6. In verse 8, he says, “*And why not do evil that good may come?- as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just*.” Some people were accusing the Apostles of teaching that doing evil is OK because it brings more of God’s grace and goodness. And we will see that that objection gets the same answer in our text. But Before Paul answers it, he devotes the rest of chapter 3, chapter 4 and chapter 5 to a celebration of justification by faith alone. He explains that salvation is by grace. It is the “*free gift of God*.” It is glorious stuff! And it is very important stuff for what Paul will say in chapter 6. You see, Paul is going to speak about Christian living in chapter 6. But he wants to be crystal clear: This is not about earning your salvation. It is about how one who has been saved, by grace, through faith in Christ, will live.

So, with that in view, let’s dive into the text. And you will see in verse 1 that Paul restates the objection of 3:8 in different words: “*What then shall we say? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?*” And the answer? “*By no means!*” And as we consider Paul’s explanation of this emphatic answer in the following verses, we will see that **our union with the resurrection of Christ requires righteous living**. And we will see this as we work our way through the two parts of Paul’s explanation, which are what we **know** about our union with Christ’s resurrection, and how we should **present** ourselves in view of our union with Christ’s resurrection.

1. And we begin with what we **know** about our union with Christ’s resurrection. And this is laid out in verses 3-11, where the word “know” is used three times. The first “know” is in verse 3: “*Do you not* ***know*** *that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? …”* The second “know” is in verse 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...*” And the third “**know**” is in verse 9: “*We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him…*”
   1. Now, I am sure you can already see that we cannot possibly hope to explore every salvation nugget in this theological goldmine. There are complexities here that could be the subject of a series of sermons. We just want to see the main idea. And Paul helps us see the main idea in the last part of verse 2: “*How can we who died to sin still live in it?*” That is the main idea that verses 3-14, and even further beyond that, unpack and explore.
   2. So, what does “***died to sin***” mean? Well, the phrase “*died to sin*” appears three times in this section, verses 2, 10, and 11. Two of those references are to believers and one is to Christ. And a sound principle of interpretation is that whenever a phrase occurs more than once in one context it should be taken the same way unless there are strong reasons not to do so. And there are no such strong reasons here, Paul is saying that we know that Christ died to sin and by virtue of our union with Him we have died to sin.
      1. So, **what does it mean that Christ died to sin**?
         1. Well, Christ’s relationship to sin is completely ended. He experienced it when He was on earth because it was all around Him, and He took the sins of all the elect upon Himself and endured God’s awful wrath as He hung on the cross, as we considered this morning. But then He said, “*It is finished*.” And now, having risen and ascended, His relationship with sin is completely over. He has “*died to sin, once for all*.”
      2. **So, when it says that we have died to sin, does that mean that our relationship with sin is also completely over**?
         1. Well, are there any believers here who do not experience sin or commit sin anymore? I didn’t think that there would be. Sin is omnipresent, isn’t it. There is nowhere we can go to escape the sin of others, our own sin, or the consequences of sin in creation.
            1. The other morning there was a **thick fog**. And fog is a good picture of sin. You can’t escape fog and it seeps in and affects everything it touches. And it is the same with sin.
            2. In chapter 8, Paul speaks about the whole of creation being in “*bondage to decay*.” Everything is decaying and dying because of sin’s corruption.
            3. And in chapter 7, Paul speaks about personal sin: “*I am of the flesh, sold under sin. I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate*.”
         2. And so, we encounter sin and commit sin every day.
         3. Do you hate sin? I do. And what I hate most about it is how easily I commit it. I can resolve in my heart not to do something, and then do it, sometimes enthusiastically, just seconds later! And this so frustrating and maddening!
         4. So, if our relationship with sin or our experience of sin is not completely over, what does our having died to sin mean? Well, it means that as a result of our union with Christ in His death and burial and resurrection, we are no longer only connected to Adam and death, we are no longer dead in trespasses and sins, we are no longer slaves to sin, we are no longer only able to sin. We are now connected to Christ and life, we are now new creations, we are now slaves to righteousness, we are able to resist sin. Our old life led to death and condemnation; our new life leads to righteousness and heaven!
         5. And if I had to boil it down to one phrase? It would be that we can now choose not to sin.
   3. But before we say anything more about this, let’s spend a few moments thinking about the word **baptism**, which is used several times in this section. We were baptized into Christ, baptized into His death, buried with Him by baptism into death… And if you are looking at the baptism font, right now, uh uh. The water of baptism cannot be the chief focus here because there have been many people who have been baptized who do not truly believe in Jesus Christ. And therefore, they have no union with Him at all. And again, this matter could be a sermon in itself, so I will try and keep this as brief as possible. But the word baptism has a range of meanings in the Bible. It can mean immerse or wash or sprinkle or change or identify with. And “**identify with**” best suits what is in view here. In fact, down in 5, Paul himself sums up what he said by talking about our being “united with Christ.”
      1. **Galatians 3:27** talks about us having “*put on Christ*.” In **Luke 9:23**, Jesus described it as denying ourselves and taking up our cross daily and following Him. In Colossians 3:3 it is described as having a life that “*is hidden with Christ in God*.” **Galatians 2:19-20** expresses it beautifully: “*I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me*.” So, to be baptized into Christ means that who you are and how you live is now all about Him and not you. You are now a Christ-representer! Do you see how all-embracing being baptized into Christ is?
      2. But let’s not ignore the mention of our union into Christ’s **burial** either. We talked this morning about how the burial of Christ demonstrated that He had truly died. If He had come back to life just after being lifted of the cross, people would have said that He mustn’t have been really dead. But three days in the sealed tomb made His death undeniable. And in the same way, our union with Christ’s burial helps us understand how we should view our new relationship with sin.
         1. And I don’t mean to be unnecessarily morbid, but I think the following **illustration** will help us here. Have you ever seen a dead body? Some of us have. A loved one who has died or a friend in their coffin at the funeral home, perhaps. And so long as it is soon after death, it is tolerable. It is not pleasant, but we can handle it. But I am pretty sure that none of us could comprehend for a moment digging up a corpse that has been buried for a while. That would be disgusting. Well, that is how Paul wants us to view sin. His mention of our union with the burial of Christ is meant to help us see that to sin after we have been united with Christ is like digging up a rotten corpse from the grave. It should be that disgusting to us.
      3. Now, I should add here that for the believer **water baptism is a sign and seal** ofour identification with Christ. We can remember our baptism and what it reveals about our union with the death and burial and resurrection of Christ, and our obligation to live for Him. But it is our identity in Christ that is foremost in view here.
   4. And so, having considered the gospel, what we know about our union with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, **verse 11** says, “*So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus*.” Is this how you consider yourself? Do you hate sin? Does it disgust you?
2. Then Let’s press on to our send point, which is how we should **present** ourselves in view of what we know about our union with Christ’s resurrection. And we see this in **verses 12-14**.
   1. Having laid out what the believer knows about their union with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, we see this command: “*Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions.*” And the reason why we must not do this is explained in verse 14: “*For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.”* 
      1. In the earlier chapters of Romans, Paul made it crystal clear that the law cannot save anyone. **Romans 3:20**: “*For by works of the law no human being will be justified in His sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin*.”
      2. And this is why Christ came! If the law could promote or fuel or foster righteousness, there would have been no need for Jesus. But He came, that we might be saved by grace. And it is God’s grace in Christ that promotes or fuels or fosters righteousness. Only God’s grace in Christ will make us resist sin and choose to what pleases the Lord.
   2. And what “*righteousness*” or “*walking in newness of life*” or “*not letting sin reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions*” looks like is described in verse 13 in terms of a ‘do not do this and do this instead’ formula: “*Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.*”
      1. The word “**present**” means to place at someone’s disposal, or to offer as a sacrifice.
         1. Sometimes to raise money for charity, people will arrange a ‘**slave auction**.’ I expect they have been cancelled today because they are offensive and colonial, etc, but in recognition of something that sadly but truly happened in history, people hold ‘slave auctions’ today. And it is all in good fun and for a good cause, but you can bid on the services of a person. And if you are one of the ‘slaves,’ you must present yourself to the winning bidder and do their bidding, which usually means some household chores or something of that nature. So, you are for their use.
         2. And it is similar with a **sacrifice**, the sacrifice does not get to decide what it does, the one to whom the sacrifice is given decides. Maybe they will burn the sacrifice, or maybe they will store it on a shelf, but to offer yourself as a sacrifice means the one to whom the sacrifice has been offered determines what to do with you.
      2. So, do the terms “present” and “sacrifice” remind you of another verse in Romans? **Romans 12:1**, “*I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship*.” In other words, Lord, because of your grace to me in Christ, I place myself at your disposal. I want to do and say and think what *you* want me to do, say, and think. And I am ready to *die* for you but also to *live* for you!
      3. And if you want to know what not presenting your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness and instead presenting your members to God as instruments for righteousness looks like, **study Romans 12-16**.
         1. For there we are commanded to renew our minds by the study of Scripture.
            1. Have you heard of the **GIGO principle**? GIGO stands for Garbage In Garbage Out. It comes from the world of computer data. But it works with our minds also. If you fill your mind (Notice the word fill – spend all or a whole lot of your time!) with garbage – mindless entertainment, violent video games, sexually explicit movies, bad language, hours of scrolling through the trash can of twitter and Instagram and tik-tok, well, guess what will come out of your mind? Garbage. But GIGO could also stand for Gospel In Gospel Out! Fill your mind with sermons and Bible studies and wholesome and edifying podcasts and music, and guess what will come out of your mind? Gospel thinking!
         2. But in those chapters of Romans, we are also commanded to have a very humble view of ourselves and a lofty view of others. We are urged to practice brotherly love and to show hospitality, and to not seek revenge for wrongs done to us. We are commanded to submit to authority instead of being rebellious. We are warned to avoid orgies and drunkenness and sexual immorality and sensuality and quarrelling and jealousy. And we are warned to not condemn others about matters where Scripture allows for different convictions or practices.
         3. But there are plenty of other places in Scripture where what we should avoid is described and what we should pursue is described. Look them up. Make a study of these things.
      4. And notice also that our text talks about “**our** **members**.” And by members is meant all the parts and faculties of our bodies. Every part of who you are and all that you have ought to be placed at the disposal of the Lord. The hymn-writer captured this beautifully with these words:

*Take my life, and let it be, wholly consecrated, Lord, to Thee.*

*Take my moments and my days; let them flow in endless praise.*

*Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of Thy love.*

*Take my feet and let them be, swift and beautiful for Thee.*

*Take my voice and let me sing always, only, for my King.*

*Take my lips, and let them be, filled with messages from Thee.*

*Take my silver and my gold, not a mite would I withhold.*

*Take my intellect, and use, every power as Thou shalt choose.*

*Take my will, and make it Thine; it shall be no longer mine.*

*Take my heart, it is Thine own, it shall be Thy royal throne.*

*Take my love; my Lord, I pour at Thy feet its treasure store.*

*Take myself, and I will be, ever, only, all for Thee.*

Is this your prayer? Is this your commitment? Lord, I am so thankful for all that

you suffered and secured for me by your death and burial and resurrection, that

every part of me and all that I have is at your disposal.

Well, as we draw to a close, in Martin Lloyd-Jones’ commentary on this chapter, he illustrates this whole passage with two fields with high stone walls around them. One is Adam’s realm – the realm of sin and death. That is where you were. But when you were converted, God picked you up from that field and placed you in the field of Jesus – the realm of grace and life. That is where you are now and that is where you belong. By God’s grace, you have union with Christ. Now, the problem is that you can still hear Satan calling you from the old field. “Hey! Come over here and play!” But you must put your hands over your ears. And you must, in those moments, listen even harder to the voice of Christ. And you must tell yourself, “I don’t belong there anymore. I belong with Jesus. What a fool I would be to listen to that liar.”

And we hear the voice of Jesus in here (the Bible).

O beloved brothers and sisters, praise God that we have been united into the death and burial and resurrection of Christ. May we live according to who we are in Him. Amen? Amen.