

## CHAPTER SIX

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*We Died with Christ: Our Baptism being Witness; and are to Reckon Ourselves Dead unto Sin and Alive unto God in Christ Jesus. Verses 1-11.*

*Presenting Ourselves to God as Risen Ones, not under Law but under Grace, Sin loses Its Dominion over Us. Verses 12-14.*

*Grace Not to be Abused, for Sin Always Enslaves, and would End in Death; Obedience brings Freedom, with the End, Eternal Life,—God's Free Gift in Christ Jesus Our Lord. Verses 15-23.*

**1** What then shall we say? Are we to keep on in sin in order that grace may be abounding? Far be the thought!

**2** Such ones as we,—who died to sin! how shall we any longer be living in it?

**3** Or [in the very matter of our baptism] are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized unto Christ Jesus unto His death were baptized?

**4** We were buried therefore [in figure] with Him through that baptism unto death; in order that, just as Christ was raised from among the dead through the glory of the Father, thus also we might be walking in newness of life.

**5** For if we became united with [Him] in the likeness of His death, so shall we be also [in the likeness] of His resurrection:

**6** coming to know this, that our old man was crucified with Him, in order that the body of sin might be annulled, that we might no longer be in slave-service to sin:

**7** for the person who hath died [as have we] is justified from sin.

**8 But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also be living with Him [in this world]:**

**9 knowing that Christ having been raised from among the dead dieth no more: death over Him no longer hath dominion.**

**10 For in that He died, unto sin He died once for all; but in that He is living, He is living unto God.**

**11 Thus do ye also reckon yourselves dead indeed to sin, but alive to God, in Christ Jesus.**

WE COME NOW to the second part of Christ's work for us—our identification with His death.\*

It is not until we come to Chapter Six that the question of a holy walk as over against a sinful walk, comes up. For the blessed verses which describe the results of the discovery of peace with God, and of "justification of life" and "reigning in life" through Christ, as revealed in Chapter Five, are things of experience, of rejoicing,—even in the hope of the glory of God Himself! But the question of a holy walk under this "abounding grace" is now brought up, in Chapter Six, in the answers to two questions: First, Shall we keep sinning that grace may keep abounding? and, Second, The fact having been revealed that we are not under the principle of law but under that of grace, shall we use our liberty to commit sin? That is, Shall we use our freedom from the law-principle for selfish ends?

The answer to the first question is, that for all who are in Christ, the old relationship to sin is broken,—for they federally shared Christ's death to sin, and are to reckon it so, and walk

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\* There are five parts to our salvation:

1. Christ's propitiatory work toward God through His blood: bearing the guilt and condemnation of our sins.

2. Christ's identification with us as connected with Adam, "becoming sin for us," releasing us from Adam, our federal head: "our old man" being crucified with Christ.

3. The Holy Spirit's whole work in us, as "the Spirit of grace," involving conviction, regeneration, baptism into Christ's Body; being in us as a "law of life" against indwelling sin, the Witness of our sonship; our Helper, Intercessor, and, finally, the mighty Agent in the Rapture.

4. Christ's present work in Heaven; leading our worship and praise as our Great High Priest; and protecting us should we sin, as our Advocate with the Father (as against our accuser).

5. Christ's second coming to redeem our bodies, and receive us to Himself in glory: The Rapture.

in “newness of life” unto God. The answer to the second question is, that anyone “yielding his members” becomes *servant* that to which he yields,—whether of sin unto death, or of righteousness unto sanctification.

Verse 1: **Are we to\* remain in sin that grace may be abounding?** This question arises constantly, both in uninstructed believers, and in blind unbelievers. The message of simple grace, apart from all works, to the poor natural heart of man seems wholly inconsistent and impossible. “Why!” people say, “If where sin abounds grace overflows, then the more sin, the more grace.” So the unbeliever rejects the grace plan.

Moreover, the uninstructed Christian also is afraid; for he says, “If we are in a reign of pure grace, what will control our conscious evil tendencies? We fear such utter freedom. Put us under ‘rules for holy living,’ and we can get along.”

Another sad fact is that some professing Christians welcome the “abounding grace” doctrine because of the liberty they feel it gives to things in their daily lives which they know, or could know, to be wrong.

Verse 2: **Such ones as we, who died to sin! how shall we any longer be living in it?**

Here we have, (1) **such ones as we** (*hoitines*). This is more than a relative pronoun: it is a pronoun of characterization, “placing those referred to in a class” (Lightfoot). Paul thus has before his mind all Christians, and he places this pronoun at the very beginning: “such ones as we!”

(2) He characterizes all Christians as those **who died**. The translation, “are dead” is wrong, for the tense of the Greek verb is the aorist, which denotes not a state but a past act or fact. It never refers to an action as going on or prolonged. As Winer says, “The aorist states a fact as something having taken place.” Note how strikingly and repeatedly this tense is used in this chapter as referring to the death of

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\* It is what is called the deliberative subjunctive here; “May we?” or “Should we?” But best rendered in English by the form we have chosen: “Are we to”—“is such the path?” And so in verse 15.

which the apostle speaks:\* Mark most particularly that the apostle in verse 2 does not call upon Christians to die to sin but asserts that they shared Christ's death, they died to sin!

(3) Paul here therefore affirms that it was in regard to their relationship to sin that believers died. He is asserting concerning Christians that they died—not for sin, but unto it.

(4) Paul now asks the question: "How shall those whose relationship to sin has been broken by their dying, be still, as once, *living in sin*?" The answer to this can only be, It is an impossibility. In this second verse, therefore, the apostle is not making a plea to Christians not to live unto sin; but asking how they who died to sin could go on living in it. It is as if one would say, Those who died in New York City, shall they still be walking the streets of New York City?

This does not mean that all Christians have discovered, or walk in, the path of victory over sin; for in this second verse Paul is answering directly the bald bold insinuation of verse 1—that grace abounding over sin warrants and enables one believing that doctrine to go right on in his old life! We know from other Scriptures the impossibility of this: "Who-soever is born of God doth not practise sin, because His [God's] seed abideth in him, and he is not able to practise sin, because he is begotten of God."<sup>†</sup>

Note the repeated declarations in this Sixth Chapter of our actual identification with the death of Christ:

Verse 2: "We who died to sin."

Verse 3: "We were baptized into His death."

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\* Verse 2, "We *died* to sin" (an aorist tense,—definite past fact).

Verse 6: "Our old man *was crucified* with Him" (another aorist tense); not "*is crucified*," as in the Old Version, which expression is a relic of Romanism, and the meaning of which no one knows.

Verse 7: "The one *having died*" (aorist again; and meaning anyone in Christ) "is declared righteous from sin."

Verse 8: "If we *died* [aorist] with Christ."

Verses 10 and 11: "The death that He *died*. He *died* unto sin, once for all. (Aorist tenses, the second specially emphasized by "once for all.")

† Of course, John deals with the new life; Paul, with the new relationship, the new creation. See II Corinthians 5:17: "If anyone is in Christ,—a new creation! the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new." The seed of God the new creature, being of *God* does not consent to sin; however weak and ignorant of the truth of the deliverance of the cross they may be, there is always the absolute difference between those in Christ and those not in Christ.

Verse 4: “We were buried with Him through baptism into death “

Verse 5: “We became united with Him in the likeness of His death.”

Verse 6: “Our old man was crucified with Him.”

Verse 7: “He that hath died is justified from sin.”

Verse 8: “We died with Christ.”

Verse 11: “Reckon yourselves dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus.”

Verse 13: “Present yourselves unto God as alive from the dead.”

The same great federal fact is brought out in Colossians 2:20: “If ye *died* [aorist tense, past fact, again] from the religious principles of the world”; and Colossians 3:3: “For ye *died* [aorist tense again] and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

It is most evident that the apostle is not here speaking of some state that we are in, but of a federal fact that occurred in the past, at the cross.

It was upon this federal fact that Paul’s whole life hung, as he testified to Peter: “I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me” (Gal. 2:20).

**Such ones as we, who died to sin! How shall we go on living in it?** Paul expresses his very soul in that opening word—“Such ones as we!” Believers were seen by him as risen ones,—dead with Christ to sin. How shall we any longer be living in sin—if indeed we died to it? This perplexes many, this announcement that we died to sin,—inasmuch as the struggle with sin, and that within, is one of the most constant conscious experiences of the believer. But, as we see elsewhere, we must not confound our relationship to sin with its presence! Distinguish this revealed *fact* that we died, from our *experience* of deliverance. For we do not die to sin by our experiences: we did die to sin in Christ’s death. For the fact that we died to sin is a Divinely revealed word concerning us, and we cannot deny it! The presence of sin “in our members” will make this fact that we died to it hard to grasp and hold: but God *says* it. And He will duly explain all to our *faith*.

Verse 3: **Or [in the very matter of our baptism] are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized unto Christ Jesus unto His death were baptized?**

Here the apostle turns them back to their baptism, that initial step in public confession of the Lord upon whom they had believed. Did they not realize the significance of that baptism—that it set forth their identification with a crucified and buried Lord? For in their baptism they had confessed their choice of Him, as against sin and the old life. But Christ having been “made sin on our ‘behalf,” had *died unto* sin; had been *buried*, and had been *raised* from the dead through the glory of the Father; and now lived unto God in a new, resurrection life.

Therefore they could see in their baptism the picture of that federal death and burial with Christ which Paul sets forth so positively in the second verse: “Such ones as we, who died.”

We must first of all receive the statement of our death unto sin with Christ (verses 2 and 11) as a *revealed federal fact*; and then allow the Apostle to press the *symbolical* setting forth of that federal death by the figure of water-baptism. For these early Christians had not been befuddled regarding the simple matter of baptism,—as later generations have been! To them it was a vivid and happy memory,—the day they dared step out, against the whole world, and often in the face of persecution and even death, and confess the Lord Jesus, definitely and forever, as their own Savior and Lord.

Now, says Paul, in that very matter of your baptism, you set forth what I am teaching you, that you who are Christ’s *died with* Him. Not only so, but your baptism set forth further that you were buried with Him: for was it not a vivid portrayal of your death and burial, when you went down into the waters which signified—not cleansing, but *death*? “Water,” says Peter, “which *after a true likeness* doth now save you—even baptism: *not* the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” Eight souls, Peter here says, were saved in Noah’s day in the Ark—type of Christ. For

those eight were, in the Ark, brought safely through the waters of judgment which drowned the world; as we were bought, through Christ, safely through the judgment of sin at the cross; and now have “a good conscience toward God”—through God’s having raised up Christ: all of which, baptism sets forth—“after a true *likeness*” (I Pet. 3:20, 21).

Scripture here connects baptism with death, not with cleansing; with burial, not with exaltation; with the ending of a former connection that we may enter a new one.

**Or [in the very matter of our baptism] are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized unto Christ Jesus unto His death were baptized?**

We find therefore, here in Romans 6:3:

1. That Paul, along with all believers of his day, had been **baptized**. He offers no explanatory word, thus showing that the matter of having been baptized was a common consciousness among Christians.

2. That it was **unto Christ Jesus** that believers had been baptized. The preposition “unto” (*eis*) seems best rendered here as in I Corinthians 10:2, where we read that the fathers of Israel were all “baptized unto (*eis*) Moses.” Those Israelites were not baptized into Moses, but were indeed judicially associated by God with the Mosaic economy,—“into a spiritual union with Moses, and constituted his disciples.” So believers are baptized unto Christ Jesus, which we believe, must be the meaning here. They were indeed so “baptized unto the name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 19:5), that they thereafter bore His Name (James 2:7, marg.). But we must not confuse this water-baptism of Romans Six, which stands for the identification of believers with Christ in death, burial, and resurrection; with that Holy Spirit baptism of I Corinthians 12:13. For our identification with Christ-made-sin, and our death in and with Him) must never be confounded with what follows our Lord’s ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit,—baptism into the one Body. These are two absolutely different things. One has to do with taking us out of our old man, justifying us *from sin*, as well as from sins. The other, the Spirit’s

baptism into “one Body,” has to do with the glorious heavenly position God gives us in a Risen Christ.

To seek to have a man baptized by the Spirit into Christ before he has been identified with Christ at the cross in death and burial, is really to ignore man’s awful state in the old man which God had condemned to crucifixion with Christ made sin. So with the Bullingerites and many others: they do not distinctly see or solidly preach our identification with Christ *in death and burial*. “Buried with Him in baptism”—how can these words of Colossians 2:12 possibly apply to the work of the Holy Spirit? *We beg all to consider this*. Death to sin, and burial with Christ, water-baptism, *and that alone*, sets forth.

3. **Unto His death were baptized.** Neither must we confuse baptism unto Christ Jesus here with that actual identification in Christ’s death of which baptism is a symbol. That our old man was crucified with Christ is one thing; baptism, quite another. However much baptism portrays our death with Christ, it in no wise brings about that death. If we had not died with Christ, there would be no meaning to baptism.

Certainly baptism sets forth the fact of our death with Christ. Christian baptism in water is the Scripture picture,—not of our being cleansed, nor of our being introduced into the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit (which is an entirely different matter); and not, of course, of our regeneration. But it is a setting forth of the great fact that we federally died and were buried with Christ, unto sin, unto the world, and unto all of the old creation; and are now raised with Him and share His risen life;—on new ground altogether.

Verse 4: **We were buried therefore with Him through the baptism unto [His] death.** Here the apostle declares that all believers by the very matter of their baptism, proclaimed themselves as having been so identified with Christ’s death that they were buried: that their past was ended,—not, of course, by the ordinance, though the ordinance confessed and proclaimed it.\* And now the object of our identification

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\* 1. Godet remarks: “Burial is the act which consummates the breaking of the last tie between man and his earthly life. This was likewise the meaning of our Lord’s entombment. Similarly, by baptism there is publicly consummated the believer’s breaking with the life of the present world, and with his own natural life.”

And he relates this striking incident, which proves how these sayings of the apostle, apparently so mysterious, find an easy explanation under the light of the

with Christ's death is set forth: **in order that, just as Christ was raised from among the dead through the glory of the Father, thus also we might be walking about in newness of life.**

Christ on the cross not only bare our sins in His own body, but He was also made to be sin,—to be the thing itself. Then God the Father, through His glory, raised Him from the dead,—“that working of the strength of His might which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead.” This was the most marvelous display of glorious, Divine power ever known. The words “through *the glory* of the Father,” bring into action all that God is. Christ had fully glorified God in all that He is, in His earthly life, and on the cross (as we saw in Chapter 3:24 and 25). Then God raised Christ from the dead in glorious triumph. And thereafter Christ walked for forty days on earth “in newness of life.” He was “the First-born from the dead.” He was the Last Adam, now become (though having His flesh and bones body) “a spirit making [others] alive,” the Second Man, “a new starting point of the human race.” The old man was crucified with Christ, and all that belonged to “man in the flesh” was ended before God there on Christ's cross. Now the “glory of the Father” is put forth in raising Christ and placing Him in that risen “newness of life” never known before, and in receiving Him up in glory!

**Walking in newness of life.** Note that walking presupposes the possession of life. The literal translation of this word is seen in I Peter 5:8, “walking about.”\* Now mark in this verse that it is Christ who is raised from the dead, and the saints are to walk, consequently, in “newness of life”—showing

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lively experiences of *faith*:

A missionary was questioning a converted Bechuana as to the meaning of a passage analogous to Romans 6:5,—namely, Colossians 3:3. The Bechuana said to him: “Soon I shall be dead, and they will bury me in my field. My flocks will come to pasture above me. But I shall no longer hear them, and I shall not come forth from my tomb to take them and carry them with me to the sepulchre. They will be strange to me, as I to them. Such is the image of my life in the midst of the world since I believed in Christ.”

\* Unfortunately, we do not have this word “walk” in this Pauline sense in ordinary English use. Men have substituted the word “live,” and that in a *legal* sense: “*Live the Christian life*,” “*Live as you ought to live*,” etc.

at once their union with Him; that as He was raised, so also they, when they are placed in Him, walk about in *newness of life*.

Note that it is *life*—not a mere manner of living. Then it is newness, or a new kind of life, for that is the meaning of the word. Resurrection life was never known until Christ was raised from the dead. Lazarus, and the widow of Nain's son and Jairus' daughter, were brought back into this present earth-life. Indeed, it is written concerning Jairus' daughter, that when the Lord said, "Maiden, arise!" her "spirit returned," and she rose up instantly. The spirit had left the body, the earth-life had ceased; it was now resumed.

But in Christ's resurrection this was not so. He was the First-born from the dead, the First-fruits of them that slept. It was not back into the old flesh and blood earthly existence that He came. He had, indeed, His body: "Handle Me and see." "Have ye here anything to eat?" Yet He had poured out His blood. The life of the flesh was in the blood (Lev. 17:11). He had laid that life down. He is now a heavenly Man. He is in the heavenlies. And He is there as to His human body: "God... wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and made Him to sit at His right hand in the heavenlies." Poor human reason attempts to follow here; but this revelation is addressed to faith only. The disciples "were glad when they saw the Lord." Into the upper room He came, and stood in the midst; and "He showed unto them His hands and His side." And Thomas was told, "Reach hither thy finger, and see My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and put it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing"; and further, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

It is in this newness, this new kind of life, which they now share,\* that believers are to walk about in this world.

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\* Many quote Paul's words in I Corinthians 15:31: "I die daily," to prove the Romish idea of our "dying daily to sin." But we need only remember that the great message of I Corinthians 15 has to do with the *body*, to refute this. Indeed the preceding verse and the following verses (30 and 32) show what Paul meant by "dying daily." "We stand in jeopardy every hour,"—meaning the physical dangers that beset his ministry. And, "If after the manner of men we fought with beasts at Ephesus,"—referring to the terrible outward trials he had faced and yet would face.

To make the words "I die daily" mean an inward spiritual struggle with sin, is to falsify Paul's plain testimony: "I *have been* crucified with Christ"; "Our old man was

They are one with this Risen Christ! Being “joined unto the Lord,” they are “*one spirit*” with Him now; and shall have bodies, shortly, conformed unto the body of His glory (I Cor. 6:17; Phil. 3:20, 21).

Verse 5: **For if we became united with [Him] in the likeness of His death, so shall we be also [in the likeness] of His resurrection:** Here Paul looks back to verse 2, to the *fact* he declared true concerning all believers, that they *died* to sin; and he now insists that that death is a fact about *true believers only*—those who have been vitally enlived with Christ. The word means to *grow together*\*—as a graft in a tree, so that the graft shares the tree’s life. The meaning of Verse 5 may be paraphrased: If we became actually united with Him, which, in our baptism—the “likeness of His death,” we profess; so we shall also be united in the likeness of His resurrection: (so therefore to be walking in newness of life!). Conybeare well remark concerning verse 5: “The meaning appears to be, *If we have shared the reality of His death, whereof we have undergone the likeness*” (in baptism).

Now when the apostle says we are to be united with “the likeness of His resurrection,” he refers to the walking in “newness of life” just spoken of in the preceding verse. (For this verse explains that.) To be joined in life with the Risen Christ, and thus daily, hourly, to walk, is a wonder not conceived of by many of us. But it is the blessed portion of all true Christians. They shared Christ’s death, and now are “saved by [or *in*] His life”—as we read in Chapter 5:10. But not only saved: we walk here on earth by appropriating faith, in the blessedness of His heavenly “newness” of resurrection life! This is what Paul meant when he said, “To me to live is Christ”; “our inward man is being renewed day by day”; “I

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crucified with Him”; “He that *hath died* is righteously released from sin”; “Reckon ye yourselves *dead* unto sin.”

Paul indeed says he desired to be “*conformed unto*” Christ’s death (Phil. 3:10); but as one who *had federally shared it*: and not as one who sought to approximate, or imitate, Christ’s death! This last is Romanism. But Paul was a *believer*,—in the work of the Cross!

\* The Greek word is *sumphutoi*—used only here. It was confounded by the King James translators with *sumphuteuo*, translated in Rom. 6:5, “planted together,” whereas the proper word means to be actually enlived together with.

was crucified with Christ; Christ liveth in me... the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God.”

Of course this fifth verse may look on, also, to that day when our bodies will share this resurrection-life,—as we have seen in the verse before; but the context here shows Paul is speaking of our “walking about in newness of life” in Christ today!

We reap the exact effect of what Christ did. Did Christ *bear our sins* in His own body on the tree? He did. Then we hear them no more. Was Christ made *to be sin* on our behalf and did He die unto sin? Truly so. Then Christ’s *relation to sin* becomes ours!

Verse 6: **Coming to know this, that our old man was crucified with Him, in order that the body of sin might be annulled, that we might no longer be in slave service to sin.** The word translated “coming to know,” means, in the Greek, coming into knowledge,—a discriminating apprehension of facts. See note below.\*

**Our old man**—This is our old selves, as we were in and from Adam. It is contrasted with the new man (Col. 3:9, 10)—which is what we are and have in Christ. The word *our* indicates that what is said, is said of and to all those who are in Christ. The expression “our old man,” of course is a federal one, as also is “the new man.” The “old man,” therefore, is not Adam personally, any more than the “new man” is Christ personally.

Also, we must not confuse the “old man” with “the flesh.” Adam begat a son in his own likeness. This son of Adam, as all since, was according to Adam,—for he was in Adam; possessed of a “natural” mind, feelings, tastes, desires,—all apart from God. He was his father repeated. Cain is a picture before us of the meaning of the words, “the

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\* The Greek word for “know” (*gignōskō*) here, means to *get* to know, come in the knowledge of, become acquainted with the fact. It is an entirely different word from the one translated “knowing” in verse 9 (*eidō*), meaning “a clear and purely mental conception, in contrast both to conjecture and to knowledge derived from others” (Thayer). In this latter verse the fact spoken of is a matter of common knowledge. We, by God’s word here, *come to know* (verse 6) that our old man *was crucified* with Christ; whereas we know as a necessary thing that Christ, being raised, dieth no more (verse 9). This is not a fact we “*come* to know,” as in the matter of our vital connection with His death, verse 6. The manner in which we “come to know” our old man was crucified is by faith in God’s testimony to fact!

old man.” Moreover, since man’s activities were carried on in and through the body, he is now morally “after the flesh.” Inasmuch as his spirit was now dead to God, sin controlled him both spirit and soul, through the *body*. And thus we read a little later, in the Sixth of Genesis, upon the recounting of the horrible lust and violence that filled the earth, God’s statement: “In their going astray, they are *flesh!*” (R. V. marg.) What a fearful travesty of one created in the image of God, and into whose Divinely formed body God had breathed the spirit of life, so that he was “spirit and soul and body” (I Thess. 5:23); and with his innocent spirit able to speak with his Creator! with his unfallen soul-faculties, and with body in blessed harmony.

When we are told, for instance, in Colossians, that we have put off the old man, we know that we are being addressed as new creatures in Christ, and that the old man represents all we naturally were,—desires, lusts, ambitions, hopes, judgments: looked at as a whole federally: we used to be that—now we have put that off. We recognize it again in the words “Put away as concerning your former manner of life the old man” (Eph. 4:22).

1. First, then, our old man was crucified (Romans 6:6). That is a Divine announcement of fact.

2. Those in Christ have put off the old man.

3. He still exists, for “the old man waxeth corrupt after the lusts of deceit” (Eph. 4:22).

4. He is to be put away as belonging to our former manner of life: for we are in Christ and are “new creatures; old things are passed away; behold they are become new” (II Cor. 5:17).

Now as regards the flesh:

1. While our old man has been crucified, *by God*, with Christ at the cross,—the *federal* thing was done; yet of *the flesh* we read, “They that are *of Christ Jesus* have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof” (Gal. 5:24).

2. The flesh has passions and lusts.

3. It has a *mind* directly at enmity with God.

4. As we shall see in Chapter Seven, the flesh is the manifestation of sin in the as yet unredeemed body. “Our old man,”

therefore, is the large term, the all-inclusive one—of all that we were federally from Adam. The flesh, however, we shall find to be that manifestation of sin in our members with which we are in conscious inward conflict, against which only the Holy Spirit indwelling us effectively wars. Our bodies are not the root of sin, but do not yet share, as do our spirits, the redemption that is in Christ. And as for our souls (our faculties of perception, reason, imagination, and our sensibilities),—our souls are being renewed by the indwelling Holy Spirit. Not so the body. “The flesh,” which is sin entrenched in the body, is unchangeably evil, and will war against us till Christ comes. Only the Holy Spirit has power over “the flesh” (Chapter 8:1).

**Our old man was crucified**—The matter of which we are told to take note here is the great federal fact that our old man was crucified with Christ. Perhaps no more difficult task, no task requiring such constant vigilant attention, is assigned by God to the believer. It is a stupendous thing, this matter of taking note of and keeping in mind what goes so completely against consciousness,—that our old man was crucified. These words are addressed to faith, to faith only. Emotions, feelings, deny them. To reason, they are foolishness. But ah, what stormy seas has faith walked over! What mountains has faith cast into the sea! How many impossible things has faith done!

Let us never forget, that this crucifixion was a thing *definitely done by God at the cross*, just as really as our sins were there laid upon Christ. It is addressed to faith as a revelation from God. Reason is blind. The “word of the cross” is “foolishness” to it. All the work consummated at the cross seems folly, if we attempt to subject it to man’s understanding. But, just as the great wonder of creation is understood only by faith: (“By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the Word of God,”—Heb. 11:3) so the eternal results accomplished at the cross are entered into by simple faith in the testimony of God about them.

No, it is no easy or light thing that is announced to you and me, that all we were and are from Adam has been rejected of God. Scripture is not now dealing with what we have *done*, but with what we *are*.

And really to enter spiritually into the meaning of this awful word, **Our old man was crucified**, involves, with all of us, deep exercise of soul. For no one by nature will be ready to count himself so incorrigibly bad as to have to be *crucified!* But when the Spirit of God turns the light upon what we are, from Adam, these will be blessed words of relief: “Our old man was crucified.”

Now here is the very opposite of the teaching of false Christianity about a holy life. For these legalists set you to crucifying yourself! You must “die out” to this, and to that. But God says our old man, all that we were, has been already dealt with,—and that *by crucifixion with Christ*. And the very words “with Him” show that it was done back at the cross; and that our task is to believe the good news, rather than to seek to bring about this crucifixion ourselves.

The believer is constantly reminded that his relation to sin was brought about by his identification with Christ in His death: Christ died unto sin, and the believer shared that death, died with Him, and is now, therefore, dead unto sin. This is his relationship to sin—the same as Christ’s now is; and believing this is to be his constant attitude.

Difficulty there will be, no doubt, in taking and maintaining constantly this attitude: but faith will remove the difficulty, and faith here will grow out of assiduous, constant attention to God’s exact statements of fact. We are not to go to God in begging petitions for “victory,”—except in extreme circumstances. We are to set ourselves a very different task: “This is the work of God, *that ye believe*” We may often be compelled to cry, with the father of the demoniac, “Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief!” But it is still better to have our faces toward the foe, knowing ourselves to be *in Christ*, and that we have been commanded to reckon ourselves dead to sin, no matter how great and strong sin may appear. Satan’s great device is to drive earnest souls back to beseeching God for what God says has already been done!

“Our old man *was* crucified with Christ.” This is our task: to walk in the faith of these words. Upon this water God commands us to step out and walk. And we are infinitely better off

than was Peter that night, when he “walked on the water to come *to* Jesus”; whereas we are *in* Christ. And our relationship to sin is His relationship! He died unto it, and we, being in Christ Risen, are in the relationship Christ’s death brought about in Him, and now to us who are in Him: whether to sin, law death, or the world.

If I did not die with Christ, on the cross, I cannot be living in Him, risen from the dead; but am still back in the old Adam in which I was born!

Christ died once—once for all, unto sin. He is not dying continually. I am told to reckon myself dead—in that death of Christ. I am therefore not told to do my own dying, to sin and self and the world: but, on the contrary, to reckon by simple faith, that in His death I died: and to be “conformed unto His death.” But, to be conformed to a death already a fact, is not doing my own dying,—which is Romanism. If you and I are able to reckon ourselves dead—in Christ’s death: all will be simple.

**That the body of sin might be annulled**—The word for “annulled” is *katargeo*. See note on Chapter 4:14. The meaning is, to “put out of business.” The “body of sin” refers to our bodies as yet unredeemed, and not delivered from sin’s rule; as Paul says in the Eighth Chapter: “If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin.” Now we shall find that we have no power to deliver our body, our members, from “the law of sin” (See Chapter 7:8-24). But since our old man has been crucified with Christ, all the rights of sin are gone; and the indwelling Holy Spirit can **annul** “the body of sin”; thus delivering us from sin’s bondage. We know the Spirit is not mentioned here (as He will be constantly in Chapter Eight); but inasmuch as it is His work to *apply* all Christ’s work to us, we speak of His blessed *annulling* of the power of indwelling sin. It is blessed to know that we do not have to crucify the old man: that was done in Christ’s federal death at the cross. Nor do we have to “annul” the “body of sin”: that is done by the blessed Spirit as we yield to Him.

Verse 7: **For he that hath died hath been declared righteous from sin!**

We must seize fast hold of this blessed verse.

Let us distinguish at once between being justified from *sins*—from the guilt thereof—by the blood of Christ, and being justified from *sin*—the thing itself.

“Justified from sin” is the key to both Chapters Six and Seven and also to Eight! It is the consciousness of being sinful that keeps back saints from that glorious life Paul lived. Paul shows absolutely no sense of bondage before God; but goes on in blessed triumph! Why? He knew he had been justified *from all guilt* by the blood of Christ; and he knew that he was also justified, cleared, from *the thing sin itself*: and therefore (though walking in an, as yet, unredeemed body), he was *wholly heavenly* in his standing, life and relations with God! He knew he was as really justified *from sin itself* as from *sins*. The conscious presence of sin in his flesh only reminded him that he was *in Christ*;—that sin had been *condemned judicially*, as connected with flesh, at the cross; and that he was *justified* as to sin; because he had died with Christ, and his former relationship to sin had *wholly ceased*! Its presence gave him no thought of condemnation, but only eagered his longing for the redemption body. “Justified from sin”—because, “he that hath died is justified from sin.” Glorious fact! May we have faith to enter into it as did Paul!\*

It is the deep-seated notion of Christendom that *gradually* we become saints,—*gradually* worthy of heaven: so that sometime,—perhaps, on a dying bed, we will have the right to “drop this robe of flesh and rise.”

But Scripture cuts this idea off at once, by the declaration that we *died*, and that we are now, here, *justified from sin*!

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\* “Justified from sin” does not mean “sinless perfection,”—but something utterly different, and infinitely beyond that! It is different, in that it does not refer to an “experience” of deliverance from sin, but a *passing beyond*, in *death with Christ at the cross, the sphere where the former relationship to sin* existed! We are justified, accounted wholly righteous, with respect to the thing sin itself! This, therefore, is infinitely beyond any state whatever of *experience*. It is a newly-established relationship to Christ, which the saints have because they died with Christ: in which they stand in Christ as *He is* toward sin. They are “meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” They are heavenly. Their old relation to sin is over *forever*. They are justified *from* it. They rejoice, indeed, and have a most blessed “experience.” But they do not say sin is gone from their flesh: but that they, having died, are *declared righteous* from it; that they are *cleared*, before God, of all condemnation because of sin’s presence in this unredeemed body; and delivered from all sin’s former rights and bondage over them.

“Giving thanks unto the Father, who *made* us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” The saints in light are those in glory, and they are there *for one reason alone*: the work of Christ on the cross.

How unspeakably sad is our little faith! And I am speaking of true believers, certainly.

1. Many have turned truly to God, but not knowing the finished work of Christ, that is, that He actually bare their sins and put them away, are never sure of their own salvation.

2. Many have appropriated gladly Christ’s finished work, as respects the guilt of their sins, and they no longer have apprehensions of judgment, knowing that He met all God’s claims against them on the cross. But as to their relation to sin itself, it is an “O-wretched-man” life that they live, for they see honestly their own sinfulness and unworthiness, but have never heard how they are now *in a Christ who died to sin*, and that they share His relationship now, dead to sin and alive to God (6:10, 11).

3. Thank God, there are some who have seen and believed in their hearts that their relationship to sin itself was completely changed when God identified them with Christ in His death. Their relationship to sin was broken forever; and they present themselves unto God as *alive from the dead*, and, through an ever increasing faith, walk about on earth *in newness of life*; knowing that the same God who declared them justified from the guilt of their sins through Christ’s shed blood, has now declared that, in being identified with Christ in His death to sin, they are themselves *declared righteous\* from sin itself!*

As we have elsewhere remarked, relief from guilt and danger, through the shed blood of Christ, comes first. And the conscience concerning judgment being relieved, the heart ever rests in the blood of Christ. But to have God tell us further, that we, having died with Christ, are declared righteous *from sin itself*, is a new, additional, and glorious revelation, which sets us in the presence of God not only declared righteous from what we have done, but declared righteous from what we were—and as to our flesh, still are! We should have no more dejection and

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\* The Greek word is the perfect tense of the verb *dikaioō*, to *declare righteous*.

self-condemnation when we see our old selves; for we have been *declared righteous* from that old state of being, as well as from what we had done! Very excellent and godly men, not recognizing this blessed fact, have spent much time before God “bemoaning the sinfulness” of their now revealed old nature. But this was really not to recognize the Word of God that we have been *justified, declared righteous, from the old state of being, from sin itself!*\*

If Gabriel, the presence angel, were to appear before you, your natural thought would be. He is holy, sinless; and I am unholy, sinful. Therefore, I am not worthy to stand in his presence. But this would be completely wrong. If you are in Christ, you stand *in Christ*,—in Christ alone,—even as He!

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\* The author many years ago edited a little book called *Extracts from the Journal of David Brainerd*—the wonderful missionary to the Indians in New Jersey in the eighteenth century, whose prayer-life has inspired hundreds; whose devotion to Christ was sublime. But many, many pages of his diary were found to be occupied with bemoaning (often alone on the room-floor, or in the forest, before God) his sinful *state*.

For example, “May 13, 1742. Saw so much of the wickedness of my heart, that I longed to get away from myself. I never before thought there was so much spiritual pride in my soul. I felt almost pressed to death with my own vileness. Oh what a body of death is there in me! Lord, deliver my soul.

“May 15. Indeed I never saw such a week as this before; for I have been almost ready to die with the view of the wickedness of my heart. I could not have thought I had such a body of death in me.

“June 30. Spent this day alone in the woods, in fasting and prayer; underwent the most dreadful conflicts in my soul that ever I felt, in some respects. I saw myself so vile, that I was ready to say, ‘I shall now perish by the hand of Saul.’ I thought, and almost concluded, I had no power to stand for the cause of God, but was almost afraid of the shaking of a leaf. Spent almost the whole day in prayer, incessantly. I could not bear to think of Christians showing me any respect.”

God forbid that we should disparage in the least such a very saint as Brainerd, whose Memoirs draw out our hearts with their sincere godliness as do almost no other uninspired writings. Yet Paul’s attitude is the Divine example. He believed what he wrote—that he had been justified from sin itself. So that all struggles from self-condemnation were over. He knew that in him was “no good thing”; but that he had been justified from even indwelling sin.

George Whitefield used to say, “When I see myself I seem to be half devil and half beast,” and again, as he passed through great crowds on his way to preach: “I wondered why the people did not stone so vile a wretch as myself.”

You may say, This is just the Seventh of Romans, and Paul had that experience. Yes, Paul had it; and found that in him, in his flesh, there was no good thing. But, having come to this vision of himself, and agreeing with God as to the evil of the flesh, he found deliverance in Christ and afterwards rejoiced in Him alway. There is no hint in his epistles of a continued struggle, nor of the slightest consciousness of Divine condemnation because of the presence of the flesh within. He walked in the consciousness of justification not only from guilt, but from sin itself! Therefore, the Risen Christ, rather than ill thoughts of his old self, filled his vision! The trouble with most of us is, we do not believe we are *utterly* bad. Or if, like Brainerd or Whitefield, we see and own it, we do not see ourselves where God sees us, *only in Christ*.

The presence of sin in the flesh has no more power to trouble your conscience, than have your *sins*: for both were dealt with at the cross! Your old man was crucified, sin in the flesh was *condemned* (8:3) at the cross. And Paul definitely declares that we have *now come* “to the innumerable hosts of angels,” as well as that we have been made meet to be “partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light”!

One of the most astonishing things (and yet, why astonishing?) that came to us in the study of the book of the Revelation was, that once the apostle John had “fallen as one dead” at the feet of the glorified Christ, in Chapter One, and the Lord had “laid His right hand” upon him, saying, “Fear not, I am the First and the Last, and the Living One, and I became dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades” (Rev. 1:17, 18)—after that, John, all unconsciously, but really, fears nothing, and no one! Not even the vision of the glorious throne in heaven before which the four living ones and the four and twenty elders are falling down, crying, “Holy, Holy, Holy,” stirs John with the least emotion of fear or shrinking. In fact, he is found weeping because no one can take the sealed book. Not once is he concerned about his own moral or spiritual condition. He goes boldly up to the mighty angel in the Tenth Chapter, requesting according to Divine direction, that he give him the little book in his hand. Twice he falls at the feet of the angelic messenger that is revealing these glorious things to him, but it is not on account of a sense of moral or spiritual unfitness, but rather a being enraptured, overwhelmed with the glory of the scene.

Now why is this? Or how could Paul be caught up to the *third heaven*, into Paradise, and hear *unspeakable words*?

Simply because the work of the cross was complete! Not only were sins put away by the blood of Christ, but our connection with Adam was ended, our old man was crucified, we died to sin; our former history was completely over, before God. Thus it is written, as we quoted, “Giving thanks unto the Father who made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light” (Col. 1:12).

Now as to the *fact*, all this is as true of us here on earth, as it will be in the ages to come. Our realization of the truth may be small; yea, sad to say, our faith may be weak; but the fact is the same!

How utterly marvelous, then, to know that we have been justified *from sin itself*. Not only has it lost all right and power over us, but we are declared righteous from the hideous thing itself; we are standing with God, in Christ, outside the region of sin, “children of light,” yea, even called “light in the Lord” (Eph. 5:8).

Verse 8: **But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also be living with Him** [in this world].

Here we *take it for granted* that we died; that our old man was crucified *with* Christ. And we go on to the expectation of a blessed life *in* Christ. For it is not only that we shall “live with Him” in resurrection glory when He comes, but even now we walk in newness of life in Him, as verses 10 and 13 set forth. This is no uncertain confidence, because “Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more.” The brief lordship of death over Him is ended forever, and it is His death and life we share.

Meyer well paraphrases: “Whosoever has died with Christ is now also of the belief that his life, i.e., the positive, active side of his moral being and nature, shall be a fellowship of life with the exalted Christ; that is, shall be able to be nothing else than this.” And Rotherham: “If we jointly died with Christ,—we believe that we shall also jointly live with Him.” And Conybeare: “If we have shared the death of Christ, we believe that we shall also share His life.”

This word, **shall also be living with Him**, must finally include, doubtless, the consummation of our salvation at the coming of Christ, and the fashioning anew of our mortal bodies. But the word refers directly to that expressed by Paul in Galatians 2:20: “I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me.” Here in Romans Six it is called a living *with* Him, as over against our death with Him. Hodge well says: “The future tense is used here, referring not to what is to happen hereafter, so much as to what

is the certain consequence of our union with Christ.” And Alford: “The future (‘we shall also live with Him’) as in verse 5, is used, because the life with Him, though here begun, is not here completed.”

And now the reason for this assurance that we shall keep on sharing the risen life of Christ, is given:

**Verse 9: Knowing that Christ having been raised from among the dead dieth no more: death over Him no longer hath dominion.**

**Knowing**—“This participle justifies the ‘we believe’ of verse eight.” We know (*eidotes*) both that our present spiritual participation in Christ’s risen life will continue, and also that our mortal bodies will be finally delivered, in view of the fact we are conscious of, that Christ has been once and irrevocably raised; that God “loosed the pangs of death”; that “He raised Him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption,”—for it was written, “Thou wilt not give Thy Holy One to see corruption.” Sin *never* had dominion over Him; and death could have had no dominion except that our sin was transferred to Him! Death, therefore, the “wages,” had a brief dominion, but now that is *ended forever*; and we are in Him,—*also forever!* Therefore death with its dominion is for the believer forever passed away. Our identification with Christ in death at the cross made possible of fulfillment His wonderful promise in John 8:51, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my word, *he shall never see death.*” If a believer falls asleep (God’s word for a believer’s physical death) his spirit goes to be with Christ: there is no “dark valley.” On the tomb of an early Christian were these words: “I sinned, I repented, I trusted, I loved; I slept, I shall rise, I shall reign!”

It is a terrible thing to contemplate—that death once held the Prince of Life, the Lord of all. Yet behold the Lord of Life, under the dominion of death! But He is not making atonement during those three days and nights,—that was all *finished* on the cross.\* And now, praise God, we read,

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\* Our Lord’s last words were, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” As Peter writes: “Being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which [quickenened spirit] He went and preached unto the spirits in prison,” etc. (1 Pet. 3:18, 19). Christ’s human spirit, we know, from His own word, was to be “three days and three nights (Matthew 12:40) in the *heart* of the earth.” This of course does not refer to His body, which lay in Joseph’s tomb on the surface of the earth.

**Death no more hath dominion over Him.** He liveth unto God, in a glad resurrection life which shall never end. This is the life that we share, for we shared His death.

Verse 10: Therefore we must go on to verse 10 and read God's statement of Christ's death *unto* sin: **For in that He died, unto sin He died once for all; but in that He is living, He is living unto God.**

Now we beseech you, do not change God's word "UNTO," here! Do not confuse with this passage those other Scriptures that declare that Christ died FOR our sins. For this great revelation of Romans 6:10 is that Christ died UNTO sin! There is here, of course, no thought of expiation of guilt. That belongs to Chapters Three to Five. Here, the sole question is one of relationship, not of expiation. Christ is seen dying *to* sin, not *for* it, here.

What is meant by that?

In II Corinthians 5:21, God declares: "Him who knew no sin God made to *be* sin on our behalf; that we might *become* the righteousness of God in Him." Christ is made to be what we were, that we might become, in Him, what He is! Might not Christ, the Sinless One, bear the *guilt* of our sins and that be all? Nay, but we were connected federally with Adam the first—with a race proved wholly unrighteous and bad. And that we might be released from that Adam-state, there must be not only our sins borne, but we ourselves released from the old-Adam headship,—all we had from Adam: which involved the responsibilities we had in him—responsibility to furnish God, as morally responsible beings, a perfect righteousness and holiness *of our own*.

Now God's way was, not to "change" the old man, but to send it to the cross unto death, and release us from it. *No one who remains in Adam's race will be saved!* "Ye must be born again!" should sound the tocsin of alarm, yea, terror, to every one not yet *in Christ*. For God's method was to set forth a Second Man, a Last Adam,—Christ; (with whom indeed all God's eternal plans were connected), whom God would not only set forth to make expiation of guilt,

but would make *to become sin itself*: thus to get at what we *were*, as well as what we *had done*. Our old man would thus be crucified with Christ, so that all the evil of the old man, and all his responsibilities also, would be completely annulled before God for all believers. For they must righteously be released from Adam, before they are created in Christ, another Adam! And this must be by *death*.

Thus God would say to believers, to those in Christ, “Your history now begins anew!” just as He said to Israel at the Passover: “This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.” So Paul triumphantly writes, “If any man is in Christ, he is a *new creature*: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new.” What a day was that when Christ, made to be *sin itself*, died *to* it, and was forever done with it! So that now He lives *unto God* in light and joy eternal without measure!

Verse 11: Therefore the eleventh verse becomes a necessity: God must say to us: **Thus** [because of the facts of the preceding verse] **do ye also reckon, yourselves dead, indeed, to sin, but living to God, in Christ Jesus!**\* Your relationship to sin is exactly the same as Christ’s! Why? Because Christ is now your only Adam: you are *in Him!* His act of death unto sin involved all who are connected with Him.

Thus, in His death, all Christ’s connection with sin was broken, ended, forever. Not only did He no longer bear sin; but He had died *unto* sin. When He was raised, it was as One who lived unto God, in an endless life with which sin had nothing to do,—resurrection-life, newness of life!

And, because believers were united with Him in His death, they too died to sin in and with Him. And their relationship to sin is now exactly His relationship: they are dead to it. They are also “alive unto God” in Christ Jesus.

This is not a matter of “experience,” but of *fact*. The truth about believers is, that they are dead to sin and alive to

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\* The A.V. translation, “*through* Christ Jesus,” is unfortunate, as it does not, as does God’s Word, emphasize the *place* of blessing in which we now are—in (Gr. *en*) Christ Jesus. It is not, in this verse, what shall be done *through* Christ for us; nor only what has been done through Him; but *the place of federal blessing in which we now are*, that is in view: we are *in* Him who died to sin, and His death was ours.

God, *being in Christ!* And they hear it said by God, and are asked to reckon it so! Their path of faith is plain: “Reckon\* ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God, in Christ Jesus.”

John Wesley truly counselled:

“Frames and feelings fluctuate:

These can ne’er thy saviour be!

Learn thyself *in Christ* to see:

Then, be feelings what they will,

Jesus is thy Saviour still!”

Lay to heart the very words of the eleventh verse: **Reckon yourselves dead indeed to sin, but living to God, in Christ Jesus.** There are two words signifying death in this passage. The word for dead (*nekros*) here in verse 11, does not refer to the act or process of dying, but to the state or effect produced by death. The other word (*thnēsko*) signifies the act, and occurs in verses 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10; and is used when Christ’s dying, or our dying with or in Him, is set forth. It is, therefore, with the *already accomplished death* unto sin of our great Substitute and Representative, Christ, that believers—those now in Christ—find themselves connected; and as we said above, the believer is to reckon himself dead (*nekros*) unto sin, but alive unto God,—*because* he is in Christ Jesus, who died unto sin once for all; but now, in resurrection life, is living unto God. You will realize anew the meanings of these two words for death, when you notice, in verses 4 and 9, that Christ, having died (*thnēsko*) was raised “from among *dead ones*” (*nekroi*). Christ’s body lay in Joseph’s tomb. He was not now dying: that was over. He was dead. And so we are not told to die to sin:

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\* This word “reckon” is a favorite word of Paul’s in Romans, where he uses it 19 times, and only 16 times in all his other epistles. The Greek word (*logidzomai*) might be called both a court word and a counting-room word. Paul uses it as a court word as to God’s action in accounting the believer righteous. In this sense it is used 11 times in Romans Four alone—where it should be studied: see verses 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24.

Again, this word *logidzomai* is used to express man’s belief and consequent attitude as illustrated in Romans 14:14: “To him that reckoneth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.” Here, we repeat, an expression of belief, and of an attitude in view of that belief, is included in this word. This is its meaning in Chapter 6:11: “Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin.” The belief of the fact and the attitude in view of the belief, are both involved in the word “reckon” in this verse. (Consult note on Chapter 4:3.)

because we are in Christ who did die to it; and therefore we also are *dead* to it, in His death; and reckon it so.

This should make the believer's task simplicity itself. The only difficulty lies in *believing* these astounding revelations! That we should be dead to sin, and now alive unto God as risen ones, sharing that newness of life (verse 4) which our Lord began as "the First-born from among the dead," is at first too wonderful for us. We see in ourselves the old self-life, the flesh—and straightway we forget God's way of faith, and turn back to our "feelings." We say, Alas, if I could escape from this body, I would be free. But that is not at present God's plan for you and me. We wait for the redemption of our body. This body is yet unredeemed. Nevertheless, we are to *reckon* ourselves dead unto sin and alive unto God. Not dead to sin, notice, through prayers and strugglings, nor dead to sin in our feelings or consciousness; but *in that death unto sin which Christ went through on the cross*, and which we *shared*, and *in that life* which He now lives in glory!

Indeed, when we come down to verses 12 and 13, we shall find Paul's definite directions to us to present ourselves unto God "*as those that are alive from among dead ones.*" (All out of Christ are of course "dead ones," in God's sight.)

This is really the heart of the struggle in the matter of our walk,—of our having our "fruit unto sanctification." It is hard to reckon and keep reckoning that we shared Christ's death to sin, and that we are alive unto God *in Him*. Yet, *there is no establishing of our souls along any other line!* To turn back from this sheer faith that we died with Christ and now are alive to God in Him, is to turn back—to what? to the weary, hopeless struggle Paul tells us in Chapter Seven he "once" went through to make the flesh obey God; or else back to groanings before God, begging Him to give us personal deliverance. And all the time God is saying, *The word of the cross is the power of God*. It is God's word as to what was there done that will establish your heart. God says you died with Christ. *Reckon it so*. "If ye will not *believe*, surely ye shall not be established" (Isa. 7:9).\*

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\* On our way to the Far East, out in the Indian Ocean, our ship entered on what has always seemed to me the blackest night I have ever known. It was the dark of the moon, and the clouds had hung heavy all day, and now the very pall of darkness! One of the ship's officers invited me to the bridge. Answering the

Now if the declaration in verse 2 that we died to sin meant that sin is now absent from our flesh, there could be no exhortation in verse 11 to “reckon” ourselves dead to sin. If the fact that we died to sin with Christ means that sin is gone from these bodies of ours, there would be no thought of “reckoning.” The statement would simply have been, “Sin is absent,—no longer a present thing with you!” The word *reckon* is a word for *faith*—in the face of appearances.

The same place for faith is left in the matter of our justification. Christ is “the propitiation for the whole world” (I John 2:2). But in Romans 3:25 it is said, “God set Him forth as a propitiation *through faith* in His blood.”

So in Romans 6:2 it is said that we *died to sin*, while here in the eleventh verse we are told to “*reckon* ourselves dead to sin.” The reckoning does not *make* the fact, but is commanded in view of the fact.

It has pleased God to call for our faith, both in connection with salvation and with deliverance. Therefore, if we would obey and please God, let us follow His method! Let us learn to *reckon ourselves dead*,—that Christ’s death to sin was our death; and is the present relation of us who are *in* Christ, unto sin.

The path of faith is always against appearances,—or, if you will, against human consciousness. God says certain things; and we, obeying the “law of faith,” say the same things; like Abraham, not regarding our own body, which says the contrary thing. Facts are facts: and these are what God reveals to us. Appearances, or “feelings,” are a wholly different thing from facts! God says, “You died to sin: reckon yourself dead!”

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captain’s greeting, I said to him, “Do you know where you are?”

“Yes,” he said. “We have sailed by ‘dead reckoning’ all day, and now I will show you where we are.” And he took me into the chart room. Bending over the chart, he said, “We are within several miles of where my finger points. We have a watch aloft, of course; but the sea is very deep here; there are no obstacles. We shall sail on through by ‘dead reckoning.’”

I laid the lesson to heart. It is difficult to accustom ourselves to “dead-reckoning,”—right through the darkness, in what seems so untrue to the facts of our consciousness. But, obeying God, we reckon ourselves dead to sin, and alive unto Him in Christ Jesus. And God will bring us through!

Obedient souls do so, and enter the path of deliverance in experience. Doubting souls fall back on their “feelings,” and turn back to prayers and struggles, avoiding *faith*.

Now note carefully again: the apostle does not tell us to reckon sin dead, but *ourselves* dead to *it*. We are now in Christ, and His history becomes ours. He died unto sin (verse 10), and left the whole sphere of sin forever. It is not said even concerning Christ that He reckoned sin dead, but that being made sin, the thing itself. He *died unto it*, and now liveth unto God. It seems to us most unfortunate that some very excellent teachers fall into the manner of saying that “*sin* is to be reckoned dead” and that “our old man is counted dead and gone,” and so forth. One of the clearest teachers of Pauline gospel that I know, though generally speaking accurately, in Paul’s language, that we ourselves died to sin, and that the old man is to be regarded as having been crucified with Christ, yet sometimes lapses into such expressions as “we are to hold the old man as dead and gone.”

Yet the old man, though having been “crucified with Christ,” and having been “*put off*” by the believer, still exists; and believers are commanded to “put away, as concerning your former manner of life, the old man, that waxeth corrupt after the lusts of deceit.” We have spoken of this elsewhere. It is of course the intense desire of a saint truly exercised by the Spirit to be quit of the consciousness of the old man. This has been so in all ages. But the temptation is very strong in Christians, in times of great spiritual uplifting, to regard the old man as having disappeared.

But it is the very essence of a holy walk according to Scripture, to receive God’s testimony concerning the old man’s having been *crucified*. To *reckon* ourselves dead to sin while conscious of sin in our members, is faith indeed; and is walking according to God’s Word, instead of according to our feelings. “Those that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh and its lusts”: because they know that the federal thing, the “old man,” *has* been crucified (Gal. 5:24). It is in the power of the faith that God *has* dealt with all that we were, that we are able to deal with the manifestations of the self-life.

Nevertheless, this life in this present world, is not the Christian's place of resting. Christ will bring him rest at His second coming (II Thess. 1:7).

It is to those who are described in the opening chapters of Romans,—guilty, under Divine judgment; and also in the flesh, under the old man; far from God, without hope,—to such the gospel message has come! These statements that we belong up there, in Christ, are issued by the High Court of Heaven, itself. God says that no matter how things may seem, *we died with Christ*, and *share His newness of life*; and we are to present ourselves unto God as those alive from the dead.\*

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\* *A solemn question:*

To those who refuse or neglect to reckon themselves dead to sin as God commands, we press the question. How are you able to believe that Christ really bare the guilt of your sins and that you will not meet them at the judgment day? It is only *God's Word* that tells you Christ bare your sins in His own body on the tree. And it is *that same Word* that tells you that you, as connected with Adam, died with Christ, that your old man was crucified, that since you are in Christ you shared His death unto sin, and are thus to reckon your present relation to sin in Christ—as one who is dead to it, and alive unto God.

If we claim that this is too difficult, because we feel the consciousness of sin dwelling in us, then reflect that it is only by faith that we know that our sin's guilt was borne by Christ. And it is by faith alone that we are to reckon ourselves dead to sin.

Let us beware, then, lest we be found making a secret truce with indwelling sin, while yet hoping to be saved from the guilt of the sins we have committed by Christ's shed blood.

Again, we repeat, if we are in Christ, we are in a Christ who was made to be sin on the cross and died unto it. This, therefore, is our relationship to sin; and God expects all of us to assert by simple obedient faith this revealed fact,—*to reckon ourselves dead unto sin and alive unto God, in Christ Jesus.*

*A danger to be avoided:*

It is not as having died with Christ that we are justified from the *guilt* of sin; but it is after we have been justified by His blood, as ungodly, that we are told this second great truth,—that our old man was crucified with Christ—that we died with Him. I have seen professing Christians begin to be exercised in conscience regarding the guilt of sin, who, when they heard that those in Christ were *dead* to sin, immediately seized hold of this latter truth, and that with great relief. This false peace lasted, in some cases, a good while, and gave its possessors much complacency and sweetness of spirit, for they went on in secure Christian profession. But, not having been previously really convinced of their personal guilt before God, and consequently not having fled for refuge to the shed blood of Christ, they became finally the very chiefest targets of the devil, and were sometimes driven back into black despair itself.

God had announced, long before, their common guilt with the worst wretches: "None righteous,—no, not one"; "All under sin." But these had somehow slipped in past that message; and had taken hold of this, that they were "dead unto sin." For a true believer, this is a blessed word of deliverance. But for one who is Christianly religious, who has not really rested, as a guilty ungodly one, in Christ's shed blood, this is a truth dangerous above all. And when Satan attacks such souls, what shall they do? They cannot plead "I am dead to sin," against the *devil*! Saints overcome him only by the *blood* of the Lamb. Only the blood of Christ will avail against Satan,

The glorious promise follows: “Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace.” We have not been brought to a Sinai, to a hard, demanding master, but are under the sweet *favor* in which Christ Himself is, being ourselves in Him, yea, the very *righteousness of God in Him!*

**12 Let not sin, therefore, be reigning-as-king in your mortal body, that ye should obey the desires of it [the body].**

**13 Neither be presenting your members unto sin as instruments of unrighteousness. But on the contrary present yourselves to God as being alive from among the dead; and your members to God, as instruments of righteousness.**

**14 For sin shall not have lordship over you. For you are not under law, but, on the contrary, under grace.**

Verse 12: **Do not, therefore, be allowing sin to reign-as-king in your mortal body, that ye should obey the desires of it** (the body):—and the Greek is emphatic: “Be *not at all* allowing sin to reign!”

1. Notice first, our present body is mortal, that is, subject to physical death. We are *waiting* for the redemption of the body, at Christ’s coming.

2. Sin is present in our members, and ready to reign-as-king, if permitted. That is, our bodies have not yet been redeemed from the possibility of sin’s being king, if we permit such kingship.

3. It is through the lusts or desires of the body that sin is ready to assume control. The body has many desires not in themselves evil. Paul, speaking of foods, says, “All things are lawful for me; but I will not be brought under the power of any” (I Cor. 6:12). It is when natural desires are yielded to in self-will or self-indulgence, that sin uses the desires of the body to assert sin’s power and establish its reign.

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or as a real ground of peace, in your own conscience (Heb. 9:14). Christ made peace *by the blood of His cross*. If you have not yet learned to rest *in that only*, for eternal peace with God, and as the answer to all Satan’s power, let all else alone until you have learned this: if it be at the cost, even, of confessing openly that you have never known true peace before!

4. The believer is directed to reject this reigning of sin, which would involve our obeying the desires of the body.

5. Note the important word, “therefore.” This looks back at the first part of Chapter Six, in which our death with Christ unto sin has been asserted, our relationship to sin being now the same as Christ’s—we have done with it in death and burial. Notice that these present verses of exhortation are built wholly upon the fact that we died with Christ: we reckon ourselves dead because we participated in Christ’s death. Therefore we dare refuse sin’s dominion. We owe sin nothing. We are dead to it; justified from it, and living in another sphere!

Verse 13: **Neither be presenting your members unto sin as instruments of unrighteousness. But on the contrary present yourselves to God as being alive from among the dead; and your members to God, as instruments of righteousness.**

The moment we come to exhortation, we have to do with the *will*; whereas believing is a matter of the heart: “With the *heart* man believeth.” In learning that I am dead to sin, all I need to do is to listen to God’s marvelous unfolding of the fact that I was identified with Christ in His death, and in my heart believe it. My will has nothing to do with that. When God says, “Your old man was crucified with Christ,” that is Divine testimony. It is a revealed fact. I hear it and from my heart believe it, because God is true. I reckon myself to be “dead unto sin and alive unto God in Christ Jesus,” because God has said that I was.

But when it comes to the *application* of this stupendous fact, my will is addressed: “*Let* not sin therefore reign.” Well, some one asks, if I am dead to it, how can it still reign? We answer, By your presenting your bodily members unto sin for sin to use, as “instruments of unrighteousness.” Your tongue, for instance, which James calls “an unruly member,”—you have only to hand it over to sin, and it will talk angrily, lyingly, filthily.

Now, what is God’s way? *Present yourselves unto God*, as those in a Risen Christ, those “alive from among the dead.” Of course, this will test your faith: you will not *feel*

dead to sin. Your old man will seem anything but crucified. But the path of true faith is always one of obedience; and God has *commanded* you to reckon yourself dead unto sin and alive unto Him (as a risen one) in Christ Jesus. It is in this character, of being *alive from the dead*, that you are commanded to “*present yourselves unto God.*”

Now two things about this word “present”:

First, as to its meaning here: it does not in Chapter Six signify *consecration*: but the taking of an attitude in accordance with the facts. In Chapter Twelve, it is true, the same word is used to signify consecration to God (12:1). But here, “present” (A.V., “yield”), signifies an attitude to be taken in recognition of the facts: “Present yourselves as those alive from among the dead.” We are not here looked at as *giving* ourselves to God, but as believingly assuming the aspect toward God of those *in Christ*—those who *died* to sin in Christ’s death, and are now alive in Christ unto God.

If the colonel of a certain regiment of soldiers,—say the One Hundredth, should give notice to all his regiment to repair to his headquarters at a stated hour for review, they would “present” themselves there as members of the One Hundredth Regiment. It would be *as such* and in that consciousness that they would come. So believers are to take the attitude toward God of risen ones because they *are* risen ones. They are in Christ, they are alive from among the dead. This is the *fundamental consciousness* of a *believer*, as described in the Pauline Epistles: “If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is... For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God” (Col. 3:1, 3). If you do not have risen life, you are not in Christ; for those in Christ are all *alive from among the dead*.

Second, the command to present ourselves thus unto God is in the aorist tense, which indicates a *definite entering* upon this attitude of presenting ourselves as risen ones to God. As to sin it is, “Do not be presenting (present tense of habitual and continued action) your members unto sin.”

The exhortation is believingly to take the attitude of a risen one in Christ, and thus present yourself once for all to God. Whether in prayer or thanksgiving,

or praise or service, *you are alive from the dead*. It is not that you make yourself alive by presenting yourself unto God; but that since you are *in Christ*, you are alive to God in risen life, and you thus present yourself. And it becomes an habitual attitude,—you keep on presenting your members unto God as a habit of life. He will now use them as “instruments of righteousness”; as, before,—you well remember! your members were instruments of sin.

Then comes a glorious promise, and also a royal pronouncement:

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

Note the two “fors.” The first “for” announces the Divine decree that sin’s lordship over us shall be ended. The second reveals the happy condition of things in which such a release is possible: we are not under the legal principle,—which first demanded *duty*, and *then* offered blessing; but we are under the grace principle,—which *confers blessing first*, and, behold, fruits follow!

It is deeply significant here that even to us, new creatures in Christ, and recipients of the Holy Spirit, it is definitely announced to us that we are *not under law*,—else bondage and helplessness would still be our lot. Note, God does not say we are not under *the Law*,—the Mosaic Law: (Gentiles never were!) But, God says we are not under law,—under the legal principle. In the opening part of Chapter Seven, Paul will show the Jewish believers, (who had been under law), that only death could release them from their legal obligation; and that they had been made dead to the Law, through being identified with Christ in His death.

Only when we believe that our history in Adam, with all its responsibilities and demands to produce righteousness, ended at the cross, shall we find ourselves completely free to enjoy these words of heavenly comfort—**UNDER GRACE!**\*

\* Many honest souls cannot believe that obedience to God can be secured in any other way than by law. They say, “Set a man completely at liberty, and you cannot control him.” But consider:

1. No human being has ever been really controlled by the principle of law. Israel, whom God placed under law, and that “with marvelous and glorious manifestations of His own presence and authority,” immediately renounced the obedience which they had promised.

2. Consider the relationship of a bride and a bridegroom: it is one of love, and delighted seeking of mutual benefit. It is not a relationship of enactments of law at

Study carefully the contrast between Romans 6:14 and I Corinthians 9:21. Paul declares in the former passage, “We are not under law.” The Greek here is, *hupo nomon*. This expression evidently indicates placing one under external enactments—under that principle. Now in I Corinthians 9:21, Paul, in describing his ministry to souls, says, “To those without law (*anomois*), I became as without law (*anomos*), not at all being without law Godward, but, on the contrary, en-lawed (*ennomos*) to Christ,”—as the members of a body to the head, controlled naturally by the one spirit and will.

There is every possible difference between the two,—between being “under law,” and “en-lawed.” Israel under law, placed under the Law at Sinai, with a veil between them and God, had to think of their behavior, in all its details, as *affecting their relationship* to God. The Law was “written on tables,” by the hand of Divine authority. It was external to them: there was no union between them and Jehovah; nor was the Holy Spirit within them (although He was upon certain of them, for certain service, at certain times).

But, with us, all is different. We are in Christ, *members* of Christ. The Spirit of God’s Son, also, has been sent forth into our hearts, crying, “Abba, Father!” We are “no longer

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all. The husband does not go about the house tacking up rules for the wife to “observe”: and upon the observance of which the relationship shall continue! Such rules are for servants! Yet, you find the wife eagerly asking the husband what he would like for dinner, and how, in any other way, she can make him comfortable and pleased. And all this arises from the principle of love, not law!

3. Now God declares, and that repeatedly, that we have been removed from under the principle of law “in Christ’s death.” And now, being under grace, we bring forth “fruit to God.” We serve in “newness of the spirit”: which can only mean that, (like the wife thrilled with delight at the prospect of pleasing her husband), the very *spirit* of service, which is *personal devotion*, animates the believer.

4. But we really have no hope of any person’s willingness or ability to see the power of this newness-of-spirit plan, this love-plan of God’s, until such a one has seen and believed that he died with Christ,—that he was so bad that his entire “old man” was sent to the cross to be crucified; so that now he is married to Another, to Him that was raised from the dead, that he may bring forth fruit unto God.

That God can be a Savior-God and not be a Law-giver, is beyond the reach of the human mind to conceive, and is to be received by faith alone. That in those not under law is brought about all—and much more! than the Law demands, is foolishness to all but faith!

bondservants, but adult sons” (Gal. 4:4-7). Our relationship is settled.\*

“Walking by the Spirit,” who indwells us, takes for us today the place that observing the things written in the Law had with Israel. “Being dead to the Law, and discharged therefrom,” says Paul, “we bring forth fruit unto God”; “We serve in newness of spirit and not in oldness of letter” (7:4, 6).

When Paul says (as above) in I Corinthians that he was “en-lawed to Christ,” the Greek word *ennomos* signifies that blessed control by the Holy Spirit proceeding from Christ as the Head, which corresponds to the control of our natural bodies by our physical heads. This, of course, is the very opposite of being “under law” in the sense of verse 14. To speak of a believer’s being “under *the* Law to Christ,” would be no more true, than to say that your hand has a set of external rules by which it obeys your head and seeks to render itself pleasing to you! No, your hand is *en-lawed* to your head, in that it is one with your head; your spirit dwells in every member of your body, and the head intelligently directs every member.

I am more and more inclined to the belief that in order to a consistent interpretation of the New Testament, we must scrupulously regard *Israel only* as having been placed under

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\* Seven things believers enter into *since the cross*, and the *coming of the Holy Spirit* that were not true of believers before, may be stated here:

1. Sin has been *put away* on the cross. (It had been only “covered” year by year before that.)
2. Our old man has been crucified with Christ,—opening the way for complete deliverance from the power of sin, by the indwelling Spirit.
3. Christ has been glorified (Acts 1:3; John 7:39).
4. The Holy Spirit has been given, at Pentecost, dispensationally; and upon hearing and believing the gospel, individual believers are hereafter sealed by this “Holy Spirit of promise” (Eph. 1:13); who witnesses in them, as “the Spirit of God’s Son,” their adult sonship.
5. God began at Pentecost to create “new creatures in Christ Jesus” (II Cor. 5:17): “a kind of first-fruits of His creatures” (Jas. 1:18). Christ, the First-born from among the dead, is the Head of this new creation.
6. Believers were, at Pentecost and thereafter, “baptized into one Body,” the Body of Christ,—becoming members of Christ and members one of another, a marvelous thing and a new!
7. After Pentecost the “house of God” was not at Jerusalem, but “in the midst” with believers anywhere,—even of twos or threes gathered in Christ’s Name: for there He Himself is (Matthew 18:19, 20); and there the Holy Spirit is (I Cor. 3:16; Eph 2:21, 22).

The Law, though doubtless all men have moral responsibility. See Paul regarding this below.\*

Whether then it be the Jew under law, or the race of Adam under conscience, the freedom that is in Christ means deliverance from trying to “be good” to be accepted of God. Sinners are accepted freely on account of Christ’s sacrifice, and placed in Him Risen. For such, therefore, as are in Christ, the walk is one of rejoicing *faith*,—*appropriating Christ*,—and nothing else. *The Law of Moses has nothing to say to a believer!* We know the legalists and the pretenders to human righteousness will cry out at this. But God says about the Law two things that cannot be escaped:

First, that the Gentiles were not under Moses’ Law, that Law having never been given to them, but to Israel only.

And, second, that God, who gave to Israel the “foregoing commandment”—the Law—has “disannulled” the same, and brought in by another way, even simple faith in Christ, “a better hope,” through which alone all believers, Jew or Gentile, “draw nigh to God” (Heb. 7:18, 19).

Not *behaving*, but *believing*, is God’s way: behaving *follows* believing!

I know that true faith is a living thing, and has two feet, and will walk; but it will be “*walking* in works”—not *working* in works!—“Good works that God afore prepared.” Walking by faith in “prepared” works; discovering in this walk of faith, the beautiful will of God day by day; treading this fresh and living path, is the believer’s great secret! The children of Abraham all follow their father in walking by faith!

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\* “We [Jewish Old Testament saints, contrasted with Gentile [believers] were kept under the Law... The Law was our tutor to lead us unto Christ—to be justified by faith. But now that faith is come, we [Hebrew believers] are no longer under a tutor” (Gal. 3:23, 24).

“Ye are severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the Law; ye are fallen away from grace” (Gal. 5:4).

“If ye are led by the Spirit, YE ARE NOT UNDER THE LAW!” (Gal. 5:18).

“Christ abolished in His flesh the enmity [between Jew and Gentile], the Law of commandments contained in ordinances” (Eph. 2:15).

“... For there is a disannulling of a foregoing commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness, (for *The Law MADE NOTHING PERFECT*), and a bringing in thereby of a BETTER hope, through which we draw nigh unto God” (Heb. 7:12, 14, 18, 19).

The believer is not under law, not under external enactments, not under conditions; but he has already an eternal standing in grace,—that is, in already secured Divine favor, by a sovereign act of God; which has not only reckoned to him Christ's atoning work, but has placed him fully in the place of Christ's present acceptance with God!

The believer today is neither in the Old Testament with the Patriarchs, nor with Israel at Sinai; nor walking with the disciples during our Lord's earthly life and kingdom ministry! The believer lives now *after* the cross, and in the full right and power of all that Christ did there. God gave Israel at Sinai a Law,—a holy, just and good Law, but they kept it not. The Lord Jesus when on earth said to His disciples, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me"; but they all failed and fled. Why? Man was still under testing. The cross ended that; revealing, as it did, utter wickedness in man; and, also, complete weakness in the disciples,—in God's saints!

Then what? Christ is raised from the dead through the glory of the Father: that we may walk in *newness of life*. Not only are our sins forever put away by His blood, but we ourselves find our history in Adam over, we being dead with Christ, crucified with Him.

Then the Holy Spirit is given at Pentecost as the power of this new, heavenly walk. Men were then, for the first time, transferred *into* the Risen Christ. They shared His risen life; for they had been identified with Him as an Adam, a federal man, in His death, at the cross; and were now placed by God in Christ Risen: yea, they were "created," now, in Him; and even made members of His Body,—which, of course, is an additional favor, based on their identification with Him, as an Adam, at the cross.

Now Paul could say, in triumph, "I through law died to law!" "I have not [desire not] the righteousness of law; yet I know nothing against myself." "Thanks be to God, who always leadeth us in triumph in Christ"; "For me to live is Christ"; "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." And he could say this right

in the teeth of sin, and of the Law which gave sin its power! (I Cor. 15:56, 57). *Both sin and the Law had passed away for Paul, at the cross, as victors over him!*

Yet, alas, most believers are not walking on the resurrection side of the cross, and by the “new creation rule” of Galatians 6:14, 15: “Far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, *but a new creation*. And as many as shall *walk by this rule*, peace be upon them, and mercy!”

If you had been in heaven fifty years, and were then sent down by God to earth to live and witness for fifty years, then to be taken back to Heaven:—*how would you live?* Would you fall under daily doubt as to whether you should count yourself as belonging to Heaven? Would you not, rather, be a constant witness, both in walk and word, that you really belonged in and to Heaven?

Now God says He has “made us alive together with Christ and raised us up with Him, and made us to sit with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:5, 6). Are you going to try to add to that glorious heavenly calling *the Law*,—that was given to Israel down here on earth to make them know their sin? A Law under which God says you are NOT? May God forbid such folly in any of us! For we all *tend* toward it.

May Colossians 1:5, 6 be fulfilled in us all: “The word of the truth of the good news which is come unto you; even as it is also in all the world bearing fruit and increasing, as it doth in you also,—since the day ye heard and knew THE GRACE OF GOD IN TRUTH”!

**15 What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? Be it not thought of!**

**16 Do ye not Know that to whom ye present yourselves as bondservants unto obedience, his bond-servants ye are whom ye obey,—whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?**

**17 But thanks be to God, that whereas ye were bondservants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that**

pattern of doctrine [salvation by the cross] unto which you were handed over [by God in the gospel].

**18 And being set free from sin, ye were made bondservants to righteousness.**

**19 I am speaking in human terms on account of the [moral] strengthlessness of your flesh: for just as ye did present your members as bondservants to uncleanness, and to lawlessness unto [further] lawlessness, so now present your members bondservants to righteousness unto sanctification.**

**20 For when ye were bondservants of sin, ye were free in regard of righteousness.**

**21 What fruit then had ye at that time in the things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death!**

**22 But now, being made free from sin, and being put into bondservice to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end, eternal life!**

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

Verse 15: **What then? Are we to sin, because we are not under law but under grace? Far be the thought!**

Here Paul warns against the abuse of that liberty which the believer has: He shows that those who commit sin come under the bondage of sin as *master*; even as the Lord said in John 8:34: "Every one that committeth sin is the bondservant of sin."

The two questions in Chapter Six: "Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?" (verse 1); and, **Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace?** (verse 15); are distinct, but not really diverse, questions. For each considers that same lawlessness, that same independence of the Creator, which is ever the creature's great temptation. The fact that these two questions are *written down* here is the proof of this. Now Paul, with holy abhorrence, repudiates at once both these thoughts:

The answer to the first question is: We are in the Risen Christ, and we shared His death; our relation to sin is broken forever; we walk "in newness of life."

Verse 16: **Do ye not know that to whom ye present yourselves as bondservants unto obedience, his bondservants ye are whom ye obey,—whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?**

And the answer to the second question is: God has set believers free, to serve *Himself*. The only other master is sin. And bondage to sin results from serving sin. But the Word of God says to the believer. **Ye are not under law, but under grace.**

Many people who have been convicted of the guilt of sin and have relied on the shed blood of Christ as putting away that guilt, have not yet, however, seen a state of sin as abject *slavery*. The strength of sin is just as real as its guilt. No creature can free himself from the bondage of sin. Sin brought to fallen man the inability to do anything else but sin (Gen. 6:5). Although contrary to conscience, to reason, to desire for liberty; in spite of the terror inspired by the tragic examples about them,—yea, despite awful warnings and expectations of personal impending ruin, men *continue in sin* and its *bondage*.

But there is another “obedience,”—that unto righteousness. And the case turns on the words, **to whom ye present yourselves as servants**. Although we cannot free ourselves, or change our own spiritual condition, the great fact of human responsibility is plainly written here. God, who would have all men to be saved, is always ready to have them present themselves to Him. And it is by means of the gospel that we do so,—whether to take our place as sinners, in the first instance; or, after we have believed, when we present ourselves to Him and our members as instruments of righteousness.

We all know this, be our theological training what it may. We all know we are doing wrong if we do not obey the gospel of God concerning His Son. “When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will convict the world in respect of sin... because they believe not on Me” (John 16:8, 9).

Let us remember then, that the obedience unto righteousness of verse 16, is “the obedience of *faith*,” always.

Verses 17, 18: **But thanks be to God, that whereas ye were bondservants of sin, ye became obedient from the**

**heart to that pattern of teaching** [salvation by the cross] **unto which ye were handed over** [by God in the gospel]. **And, being set free from sin, ye were made bondservants to righteousness.**

Now, our becoming obedient from the heart to the Word of the cross involves a work of Divine wisdom and power far beyond that involved in the creation of the world! For how shall a creature remain, and behold his utter judgment on the cross? How shall he despair eternally of himself, and yet find hope? How shall he continue a free being and yet consent to be bound forever,—“with cords of a Man, with bands of love”? How shall he walk with confidence into the Court where very *thoughts* come into judgment? Moral and spiritual impossibilities are greater than physical impossibilities. It was impossible that where nothing at all existed the physical universe should leap into being—out of nothing but God’s word! Man, having sinned, ran from God. Men yet sin and flee from God. Now God’s holy nature. His infinite righteousness, bar the way back. But Christ comes, sent of the Father. And there is the blood of the cross. And from the North and South, and East and West, men, women,—and children, too, come, *obeying from the heart* this impossible news: of peace by the blood of His cross,—peace for those ‘whose sins slew Christ! They come to be gladly bound with the unbreakable “bands of love, the cords of a Man”—Christ Jesus! (See Hos. 11:4.)

And we see that mighty work of response to *grace* in such hearts abide and endure. We see God’s willing “bondservants” pouring out their lives in glad service, in all lands, to all limits!

Now, this becoming **obedient from the heart to that pattern of doctrine** of salvation by the blood of the cross, and the freedom from sin that goes with it, may be enjoyed even in this life, “without stint or limit.” For “all things are possible to him that *believeth*.”

Note that the Old Version misses the entire sense of this seventeenth verse in translating: “that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you,” whereas the true rendering is, **that form of doctrine unto which ye were handed over**

(or, delivered). For the verb is in the plural—**ye were delivered over!** This statement instructs us deeply in the Divine arrangements. The Israelites, for example, were *delivered over* to Moses and the Law. It was not only that the Law was delivered by Moses to them; they were themselves delivered over to a legal dispensation—to a “mold of doctrine,” which had the Ten Commandments as the foundation, and the “ten thousand things of the Law” spoken in accordance therewith. The Jews knew they were *under* the Law. They had been handed over to it, to its demands, and to its whole economy. Likewise, believers now are *delivered over* to a form or pattern of teaching. Summarily, this is *the Gospel*,—particularly, *the work of Christ on the cross*. Believers have been handed over by God to the mighty facts, not only that their guilt was put away on the cross, but that they, as connected with Adam, died with Christ; that their history in Adam is thus entirely ended before God; and that they now share the risen life of Christ, and are before God as risen ones (Romans 6:10, 11). And all believers are comprehended in these great truths, whether they apprehend them or not! It is the first duty of every teacher of God’s saints to open to them the glorious *facts* already true *about* them, and unto which great mold or form of doctrine, they have been “delivered over” by God.\*

Now in verse 17 we see that these Roman believers had **become obedient from the heart unto this mold of doctrine**,—that of salvation by Christ on the cross. They had yet much to learn concerning their salvation, (and Paul was coming to “establish” them). But they had seen and

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\* The word “delivered” is the word constantly used, for instance, of our Lord’s being handed over to His enemies (Matthew 20:18, 19; John 19:11, 16); and of the disciples’ being delivered over to councils (Matt. 10:17, 19). It is used of the Jews’ being “delivered over to serve the host of heaven,” in Acts 7:42 (most significant as to its force in Rom. 6:17); and I Corinthians 11:23 contains the word in both its significances: Paul *delivered over* to the Corinthians directions concerning the Lord’s supper; Christ *was delivered over* to His enemies. It is the same Greek word in both cases.

This distinction is vital, because people conceive of the Gospel as something delivered to them to “live up to,” or to lay hold of by their own wills, rather than as of a body of truth *unto which they, as believers, have already been blessedly handed over!* “Obedience of faith” can be nothing else than walking in the light of *facts Divinely revealed*.

accepted redemption by the blood of the despised Lamb of God: which involved *everything*,—of separation from a sinful world, as well as of safety from Divine judgment.

Verse 18: **Being set free from sin, ye were made bond-servants to righteousness.** It will help us to note carefully that in this verse is the first description of “experience” in this Sixth of Romans. But it is the result of that “obedience of faith” in which these believers had received the good news of their salvation by Christ crucified; for lo! they found themselves thereby “set free from sin,”—sin was no longer their *master*.\*

Verse 19: **I am speaking in human terms on account of the [moral] strengthlessness of your flesh**—Paul here explains why he is using this word “bondservants” throughout this passage. He declares the “infirmity of our flesh” to be such, that we *must* necessarily be *in bondservice*—either to sin or to God. Rome was full of slaves,—indeed, many of the Christians to whom he was writing were slaves, as seems to be indicated in Chapter Sixteen (which see). In the Roman Empire, freedom was a most difficult thing to secure (Acts 22:28). So Paul speaks **in human terms**, “after the manner of men,” and he says that we are strengthless naturally, that we must be servants, either of God or of sin.

Man hates this fact. He boasts his independence, whether it be in the realm of intellect—“free thought!” in the matter of private wealth—“independent!” or in the manner of government—“free!” But it is all really a delusion. We indeed rejoice at the intellectual shackles thrown off at the Renaissance, and at liberty of thought and expression, wherever found among men. We also honor those who, like Boaz, are “mighty men of wealth,”—for God has permitted it to be so;

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\* To make the words “free from sin” of Chapter 6:18 denote what is called “eradication of the sin-principle,” a sinlessness in the flesh, is a terrible perversion. Paul constantly preached and testified the contrary. Our bodies will not be redeemed (no matter how much we may be blessed or filled with the Holy Spirit) until “the redemption of the body” at Christ’s second coming. Till that time, sin will be in the flesh, although those who “obey from the heart” in simple faith that word of the cross unto which they have been delivered, will find themselves in a state of blessed relief from sin’s bondage. For Scripture does teach *heart*-cleansing, a “pure heart,” as we have elsewhere shown.

and we rejoice at that relief from governmental tyranny which is yet found in some parts of this earth.

But what we most earnestly assert is that not only Paul here, but our Lord Himself, and Scripture generally, sets forth that *only those that know the truth and walk therein, are free*. The Jews (in John 8:33 *ff*) horribly rebel against our Lord's saying: "If ye abide in My word, then are ye truly My disciples: and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall *make you free!*... Every one that committeth sin is the bond-servant of sin... If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." There is no freedom out of Christ. "Whose service is perfect freedom" is the beautiful expression of obedience to God.

We must see this necessity of service to God or service to sin for our own lives. When John wrote to believers, "We know that we are of God, and the whole earth lieth in the evil one" (I John 5:19),—what a revelation was *that!*

These Roman Christians had formerly, like the pagans among whom they lived, **presented their members bond-servants to uncleanness** [in every inward thought], **and to lawlessness unto** [further] **lawlessness** [in outward practice]. A blacker page of iniquitous abominations history does not write than that of the Roman Empire of Paul's day. And out of these fearful states of sin, God had delivered these believers! Compare I Corinthians 6:9-11.

Verses 20 and 21: **For when ye were bondservants of sin, ye were free in regard of righteousness. What fruit had ye at that time in the things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death!**

And in those former evil days, they had been, as Paul says, **free in regard of righteousness**. They were altogether given to iniquity, without any check whatever.\* And those were **fruitless days of which they were now ashamed**. Free and fruitless! what a pair of words to describe the life of one who is going on daily toward eternity! Let each believer look back to those days when God was

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\* "There seems to be a grave but cutting irony in this allusion to their old condition, when the only freedom they knew was in respect to righteousness! They were slaves of sin, and had nothing to do with righteousness!"

“not in all his thoughts.” The pleasures and treasures of sin we sought—free in regard of righteousness, like the beasts which perish. What saved one can say of his unsaved life, I can treasure this or that as fruit? of any particular iniquity, I cherish good results from it? **What fruit had you? Shame, only: things of which ye are now ashamed.** Furthermore, we were going on steadily in that path unto the end, which was death, and that eternal. Remember the relentless but true description of sin’s horrid birth and end, in James 1:14,15.

Now from all this, God has in sovereign grace rescued us, and should we not, do we not, gladly enter upon the path of loving service, yea, bondservice, to Him?

Verse 22: **But now**, having been freed from the fearful Master, Sin, and brought into a sweet, willing bondservice to God, there was not only the daily delightful fruit, which those given over to sanctification were ever bearing; but there was the consciousness that every day brought nearer, the full realization of that blessed **eternal life**,—which they already possessed, but the full enjoyment of which was **the end** of the path of God’s saints!

They were now and would be forever under the domination of that motive which is the strongest of all,—LOVE. Their service to God would be no longer one of seeking to fulfill certain enactments by Him (as under law) but a glad willingness, such as Christ expressed toward His Father in the prophetic words of Psalm 40:8: “I delight to do Thy will, O my God!” There is no relief comparable to this surrender to the all-wise and all-loving *will* of God! Our Lord prescribes for those “laboring and heavy-laden,” first, to come to Him, and He will *give* them rest (that is, salvation); and then, having come, to *take His yoke upon them* (the yoke of Him who is meek and lowly in heart) and they shall *find* rest to their souls (that is surrender)!

Verse 23: For sin, which they had once served, was a *terrible Paymaster*’ **Sin’s wages was death**,—appointed so by God Himself. What a hideous employer—Sin! What a horrid service! What hellish wages! Yet sin is the chosen

master of all but Christ's "little flock"! Of sin's flock, it is written: "Death shall be their shepherd."

Death, as we read in verse 23, is the "wages of sin." Men speak of it lightly. But it is indeed "the king of terrors" for the natural man (Job 18:14). A well-known writer says: "Man finds in Death an end to every hope, to every project, to all his thoughts and plans. The busy scene in which his whole life has been, knows him no more. His nature has given way, powerless to resist this master (death) to which it belongs, and who now asserts his dreadful rights. But this is far from being all. Man indeed, as man alive in this world, sinks down into nothing. But why? Sin has come in; with sin, conscience; with sin, Satan's power; still more with sin, God's judgment. Death is the expression and witness of all this. It is the wages of sin, terror to the conscience, Satan's power over us, for he has the power of death. Can God help here? Alas, it is His own judgment on sin. Death seems but as the proof that sin does not pass unnoticed, and is the terror and plague of the conscience, as witness of God's judgment, the officer of justice to the criminal, and the proof of his guilt in the presence of coming judgment. How can it but be terrible? It is the seal upon the fall and ruin and condemnation of the first Adam. And he has nothing but this old nature.

"But Christ has come in. He has come into death—O wondrous truth, the Prince of life! What is death now for the believer? 'Death is ours,' says the apostle, as all things are. By the blessed Lord's entering into it for me, death,—and judgment too, is become my salvation. The sin, of which it was the wages, has been put away by death itself. The judgment has been borne for me there."

**But the grace-bestowal (*charisma*) of God**—here is the same dear word as in Rom. 5:15 and 16. It is the expression which describes what is behind God's gift,—his *grace* (Greek, *charis*). And what is, here, God's grace-bestowal? **Eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord!** What a bestowment of grace is this! Sins borne, pardoned, gone,—and more! A welcome in Heaven,—and more! Life granted to a lost soul dead in sins,—and more! *Eternal* life,—to last as long as

God its Giver. But more,—life in Christ Jesus our Lord Himself! Sharing His life, who is the Well-Beloved of the Father, sharing “the love wherewith God hath loved Christ.” Life, eternal life, in Christ Jesus,—God’s grace-gift!

**The wages of sin** as over against **the free gift of God!**

Mark this, that God will *keep the contrast constantly before us*, even at the end of this chapter, between what is *earned* and what is *given*. In verses 21 and 22, “the end” of two paths is seen: one, **death**; the other, **eternal life**. But it must finally be said here, at the chapter’s close, that while death is earned wages, ***eternal life is a FREE GIFT!***

And also note the blessed Sphere of this Eternal life: **In Christ Jesus our Lord**. Every advance in the glorious truth of salvation is marked by Christ’s own Name!—from His being “set forth” by God as “Christ Jesus,—a propitiation through faith in His blood (3:24, 25); raised as Jesus our Lord from the dead (4:24); our exulting in God through our Lord Jesus Christ (5:11); and grace reigning through righteousness and eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (5:21); reckoning ourselves dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus (6:11); and now the gift of God, eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (6:23). And victory will come, in Chapter 7:25: “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” And, at last, no separation “from *the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*”! (8:39).

## A FEW WORDS ABOUT GRACE

### I

#### *The Nature of Grace*

1. Grace is God acting freely, according to His own nature as Love; with no promises or obligations to fulfil; and acting of course, righteously—in view of the cross.

2. Grace, therefore, is *uncaused* in the recipient: its cause lies wholly in the *GIVER*, in *GOD*.

3. Grace, also is *sovereign*. Not having debts to pay, or fulfilled conditions on man’s part to wait for, it can act toward whom, and how, it pleases. It can, and does, often, place the worst deservers in the highest favors.

4. Grace cannot act where there is either *desert* or *ability*: Grace does not *help*—it is *absolute*, it *does all*.

5. There being *no cause* in the creature why Grace should be shown, the creature must be brought off from *trying to give cause* to God for His Grace.

6. The discovery by the creature that he is truly the object of Divine grace, works the *utmost humility*: for the receiver of grace is brought to know his own absolute unworthiness, and his complete inability to attain worthiness: yet he finds himself blessed,—*on another principle, outside of himself!*

7. Therefore, *flesh has no place* in the plan of Grace. This is *the great reason why Grace is hated* by the proud natural mind of man. But for this very reason, the true believer rejoices! For he knows that “in him, that is, in his flesh, is no good thing”; and yet he finds God glad to bless him, just as he is!

## II

### *The Place of Man under Grace*

1. He has been accepted *in Christ*, who is his standing!

2. He is not “on probation.”

3. As to his life past, *it does not exist* before God: he *died* at the Cross, and *Christ is his life*.

4. Grace, once bestowed, is *not withdrawn*: for God knew all the human exigencies beforehand: His action was independent of them, not dependent upon them.

5. The failure of devotion does not cause the withdrawal of bestowed grace (as it would under law). For example: the man in I Cor. 5:1-5; and also those in 11:30-32, who did not “judge” themselves, and so were “judged by the Lord,—that they might *not* be condemned with the world”!

## III

### *The Proper Attitude of Man under Grace*

1. To *believe*, and to consent to be *loved while unworthy*, is the great secret.

2. To refuse to make “resolutions” and “vows”; for that is to trust in the flesh.

3. To expect to be blessed, though realizing more and more lack of worth.
4. To testify of God's goodness, at all times.
5. To be certain of God's future favor; yet to be ever more tender in conscience toward Him.
6. To rely on God's chastening hand as a mark of His kindness.
7. A man under grace, if like Paul, has no burdens regarding himself; but many about others.

## IV

*Things Which Gracious Souls Discover*

1. To "hope to be better" is to fail to see yourself *in Christ only*.
2. To be *disappointed* with yourself, is to have *believed* in yourself.
3. To be *discouraged* is *unbelief*,—as to God's purpose and plan of blessing for you.
4. To be *proud*, is to be *blind!* For we have no standing before God, in *ourselves*.
5. The lack of Divine blessing, therefore, comes from *unbelief*, and not from *failure of devotion*.
6. Real *devotion* to God arises, not from *man's will* to show it; but from the discovery that blessing *has been received* from God while we were yet *unworthy and undevoted*.
7. To preach devotion first, and blessing second, is to reverse God's order, and preach *law, not grace*. The Law made man's blessing depend on devotion; Grace *confers undeserved, unconditional* blessing: our devotion may follow, but does not always do so,—in proper measure.

*Baptism in Romans not Baptism by the Spirit*

As to the Holy Spirit's "baptizing us all into one Body" (I Cor. 12:13): we are said indeed to be baptized by Him into the Body,—but only *after* we died with *Christ made sin*:—a theological distinction, no doubt, but a most necessary one.

Christ as Head of the Body, the Church, comes after Christ as the Second Man, the Last Adam, It would not be accurate, or indeed, possible, to speak of Christ as the Head of the Body bringing about our death with Him, any more than to say that Christ as the Head of the Body had borne our sins. The Body, the Church, came *after Christ*, as the Last Adam, had put away our sin, and by His “one act” constituted us righteous; and after we had died with *Christ made sin*.

In a man’s history before God, he is not made a member of Christ’s Body before he has died with Christ made sin! Let us trace this:

1. An ungodly man, as such, believes on God about Christ, and is justified,—declared righteous.

2. His justification, however, involved the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was “delivered up for his trespasses, but was raised for his justifying” (Rom. 4:25).

3. His justification, therefore, becomes what is called in Chapter 5:18 “justification *of life*.”

4. Now, it is not as a member of Christ’s mystical Body that we can assert justification of him. Doubtless he *is* made member of Christ Risen, but,

5. When he is told to reckon himself dead unto sin and alive unto God in Christ Jesus, it is not as a member of Christ’s Body that he is thus to reckon, but as one who was in Adam, on whose behalf Christ was made to be sin and died unto sin.

6. Doubtless by one Spirit we are all baptized into one Body, and are made to drink of the one Spirit; but this truth of I Corinthians 12 is not *fundamental* truth, but *positional* truth, A man cannot say, Because I am a member of Christ’s Body, therefore I am made dead to sin, But he can say, I was in Adam the First, guilty, a man “in the flesh,” in “the old man.” But by God’s grace I am now in *Christ*, the Last Adam. This is *fundamental* truth, And it is fundamental truth that Romans contemplates. As we state elsewhere, there will be saved Israelites, and others, besides Church saints, who will partake of the benefits of Christ’s death and resurrection; but who will not be of the Body of Christ.

7. Therefore, in carrying out the believer's walk as directed in Roman's Six to Eight, we must go back of and beyond our consciousness of the Body of Christ, to *Christ as an Adam*, a *federal, representative Man*. Our *standing* is in Christ as the Last Adam; our *membership*: in that blessed corporate company called the Body of Christ, Christ being the Head.

In other words, we had no right to be put into Christ the Head of the Body until we had died with Christ made sin, died to our position in the other Adam. You will notice when Paul describes his personal manner of life, he says "I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me." This is not Body truth, but federal truth, which is fundamental, Body truth comes after federal truth, Federal truth has to do with our relationship to God. We are either in Adam or in Christ, before God.

Only in Romans 12:4, 5 is the Body of Christ referred to; for Romans is fundamental, and deals with our relation to God,—as in Adam or in Christ; and therefore does not deal with the corporate character of the Church as such.