

What Sort of New Life? – I Peter 2:24

I. Introduction:

- A. Let's put you into what I hope is a familiar picture.
1. You are an 8-year-old boy, living with your parents and two sisters.
 2. Your father works 14 hours a day as slave labor, laying brick, and you started several months ago making those bricks, baking them under the hot Egyptian sun.
 3. One day, at dusk, your father comes home with an extremely cute yearling lamb.
 4. Instantly you & your sisters fall in love with the little animal. In your poverty you've never had a pet before.
 5. Then your father explains that in four days he will have to kill that animal in order to save your life.
 6. The prophet Moses has told the people of Israel that Jehovah's angel will be sweeping over the land of Egypt to kill every first born son – children, just like you, but also teenagers and even adults, like himself.
 7. But if the blood of that little lamb is properly painted over and around the door to your slave quarters, your life will not be taken.
- B. Not only is that lamb utterly loveable, but as you think about your father's words, your attachment to him grows deeper than your sisters' love for him.
1. Then on the 14th day of month, while your father kills the animal, and you hold the bowl which catches its blood, you are thoroughly hit with the fact that this lamb is taking your place in death.
 2. Off and on for the next 40 years, you think about that lamb who died that you might live.
 3. And as silly as it sounds, you ask yourself, whether or not that lamb would think you were worthy its death.
- C. The Apostle Peter has been reminding us of the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.
1. *"Christ, also suffered for us, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."*
 2. *"Ye know that ye were... redeemed... with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot."*
 3. *"Who is own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness."*
 4. *Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God..."*
 5. There is no doubt that the Passover lamb, for thousands of years, has been a picture of Christ's sacrifice on the cross.
 6. But there is also no doubt that the illustration falls short of telling the whole story.

II. Salvation is not just about forgiveness for sin; it includes union with the Saviour.

- A. We have eternal life because the Son of God is life itself, and He is eternal.
1. We possess righteousness, because God the Father sees us as in His righteous Son.
 2. And *"there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."*
- B. In **John 14**, Jesus was speaking to His disciples when He said,
1. *"Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me; because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."*
 2. At the day when our salvation is complete, you will fully understand that you are in Christ, and He is in you, just as Christ is in the Father and the Father is in Him.
 3. It is a difficult principle for some people to grasp, but salvation is ultimately Christ in us and we in Him.
 4. We will probably not be able to fully understand the idea until we are glorified and we see our Saviour face to face.
- C. Please turn to **Romans 6**, where Paul says, *"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"*
1. **How** did we die to sin? **When** did we die?
 2. In that special union with the Saviour which we call *"salvation,"* God's elect died when Jesus died on the cross.

3. After pointing to the illustration of baptism, Paul went on in **verse 9**: “*Knowing this, that **our old man is crucified with him**, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*
 - a. *For he that is dead is freed from sin.*
 - b. *Now if we be **dead with Christ**, we believe that we shall also live with him:*
 - c. *Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.*
 - d. *For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.”* And so do we.
 4. At this point Paul’s subject intersects with Peter’s: “*Likewise **reckon** ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*
- D. I had to smile as I was reading one of my old theology books on the subject of salvation.
1. The man said, “*Though **surgery has never yet joined members to the human body, that idea is employed in the New Testament as an illustration.***”
 - a. When the man wrote, no one ever had a severed hand reattached to his body, but the man could see it coming.
 - b. The Bible talks about the grafting branches taken from one tree onto the trunks of other trees.
 - c. It talks about Gentiles being grafted into the blessings of some of God’s covenants with Israel.
 - d. And the Bible speaks about the sinner’s union with Christ in salvation.
 2. The man went on to say, what if a very honorable person lost his hand in an accident, and an executed murderer no longer needed his hand?
 3. If surgeons were able to take the murderer’s hand and attach it to the arm of the good man, then that hand would then become good.
 4. He said, “*after being joined to the new organism, that hand, as a member, not only loses its former evil association & dishonor, but is invested at once with all the virtue of the new organism to which it is joined.*
 5. *No member could be joined to Christ without partaking of that which Christ is – the righteousness of God.*
 6. *If difficulty arises when contemplating this marvelous truth, it will be from the inability to recognize the absolute union to Christ which [salvation] accomplishes.”*
- E. When that 8-year-old Israelite was holding the basin beneath the slit throat of the Passover Lamb, he may have pictured the substitution which was being made.
1. But it is highly unlikely that he could envision that he became one with the sacrifice.
 2. The New Testament, however, teaches God’s saints that they are vitally and eternally united to Christ.
 3. Paul wrote to the **Colossians**, “*I am made a minister... [of] the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery... which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory**” – **Colossians 1:25-27**.*

III. What does this union with Christ mean?

- A. We’ve already seen in **Romans 6** that the child of God is dead to some things and alive to others because Christ Jesus died and arose from the grave.
1. For example the saint is **dead to SIN**.
 2. “*Our old man is crucified with [Christ], that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.*”
 3. Then in the next chapter of **Romans**, Paul says that we are **dead to the LAW** as a means of salvation.
 4. “*Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”* – **Romans 7:4**.
 5. He added in his letter to the **Galatians**: “*I through the law am dead **to the law**, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but **Christ liveth in me**; and the life I now live in the flesh I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of of God, who lived me, and gave himself for me”* – **Galatians 2:19-20**).
 6. And then later in **Galatians** he said, “*God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, **by whom** the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world”* – (Galatians 6:14...)

7. In Christ and His crucifixion, we are dead to the law, dead to Satan's world, and dead to sin.

B. But more importantly we are alive.

1. Why did the God of life give us eternal life?

- a. Was it so that we might continue in our earthly joys, worldly pursuits and sins?
- b. Was it so that might feel good about ourselves?
- c. Was it because there were already too many reservations for rooms in hell?

2. No. The Lord gave us life – eternal life – for purposes all His own. For His glory.

3. As Peter puts it: *“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, **that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness...**”*

C. Now return to **Romans 6:9** – *“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

1. *For he that is dead is freed from sin.*

a. *Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:*

b. *Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.*

c. *For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.*

2. *Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.*

a. *Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, & your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.*

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

3. *What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.*

a. *Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?*

b. *But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.*

c. *Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”*

D. Paul said to the **Philippians**: the Christian is to be *“filled with the fruits of righteousness, **which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.**”*

1. The purpose of our salvation is to bring praise and glory to God.

2. And how can we do that? By being filled with the fruits of righteousness.

3. But how can we do that? Only through Jesus Christ who is in us through the Holy Spirit.

E. John says in **I John 3:7** – *“Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he [Christ] is righteous.”*

1. All the children of God are righteous in the Lord's sight. They have been justified by His grace.

2. And those children of God live, more or less, righteously, because they are in Christ.

F. The sad fact is: despite our union with the Saviour, we are also still in the flesh.

1. That is why Peter has to say, *“we... **SHOULD live unto righteousness.**”*

2. And this is why he said in **chapter 1**, *“As obedient children, [don't fashion] yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, be ye holy for I am holy.”*

3. This is why Paul spends a chapter in **Romans** expounding on the question: *“How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?”*

G. Let's close with another quote from Peter – *1 Peter 4:1* –

1. *“Forasmuch then as **Christ hath suffered for us** in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;
 - a. *That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.*
 - b. *For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:*
 - c. *Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you:*
 - d. *Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.”**
2. In other words, you are not the same people you were before your conversion.
3. You are now in Christ; saved by the grace of God; new creatures in Christ.
4. So don't listen to your former friends when they tempt you to return to the sins you committed together before your conversion.
5. And don't listen to them when they ridicule you for your faith and for your new righteous way of life.
6. Both you and they will have to stand before the Saviour when He judges the quick and the dead – the saved and the lost.

H. Christ Jesus, the Lamb of God, *“his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, **that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness...**”*