

March 11

Dead to Sin but Alive in Him

Romans 6:3-7 *“Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with Him like this in His death, we will certainly also be united with Him in His resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.”*

The language in this passage could be described as a more violent side of rhetoric’s spectrum. Our death, Christ’s death, being dead, buried, and crucified are all used as descriptions. And the wild part is, it’s a positive description.

In these days of Lent, we especially look at the cross and what Christ did there. Crucifixion was not a pleasant death. The Romans, like some previous Empires of that area, perfected the art of causing suffering and carried it out regularly. After all, Christ was hung next to two common criminals, and historians like Josephus talk about the thousands upon thousands of crucifixions carried out over the years. It was not a pleasant death. It was intended to cause maximum pain and humiliation to its victims for as long as possible.

And that’s the word Paul uses to describe what happens to us in baptism. Our baptism unites us with Christ in His death and resurrection. Our old self is crucified with Him. That’s an important note to focus on. Our sinful nature is crucified with *Christ*. He took the sin of us all on His shoulders. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says that Jesus became sin for our sakes. That’s a mysterious truth, and we’re thankful for it!

So, we die with Christ. We are dead to sin and alive in Him. Through baptism, we are united with Him and receive these great benefits. The old Adam is drowned in the waters of baptism, and we are made a new creation in Christ. But none of this would have happened if it were not for the brutal suffering and death of Jesus on our account. He took the sin of the whole world on His shoulders and suffered the ultimate punishment for us all, and now offers the benefits He won for us freely, graciously, and mercifully in the waters of Baptism. As believers, we are free from sin because we are His.

Prayer: *Dear Jesus, we thank You that You have mercifully taken our punishment on Your shoulders. We do not deserve this favor, and we daily sin and often scorn Your sacrifice and gift to us. Guide us in our lives so that we may live in this newness of life You have won for us as our old sinful nature is drowned in the waters of Baptism. Amen.*