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BIBLE STUDY.**LETTER TO THE ROMANS. — NO. 10.**

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The sixth chapter of Romans commences with a continuation of the argument that is contained in the fifth chapter. That argument is that the life of Christ is given to us for our justification. Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. Grace is favor, and the psalmist tells us that in his favor there is life; and so "being justified freely by his grace," is simply the bestowal of the life of Christ upon us. That life is a sinless life. Christ in us obeys and by his obedience we are made righteous.

"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? Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized unto Jesus Christ were baptized unto his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."

Now this chapter shows us how we make the connection with Christ, and what that connection does for us. In the preceding chapter we learned that judgment had passed upon all men unto condemnation, and that the sentence of death had gone forth upon every man in this world. The death sentence has been pronounced, and death works in men. Why does death work in men? What is the peculiar power of death? It is sin! "The sting of death is sin." Therefore sin working in men is simply death working in them. Men who are sinners are stung by death. Death is in them already, and it is carrying on its work in them, and it is only a matter of time till it shall hold them in its grasp forever. But while probation is continued, there is a possibility that men may escape that sting, and the execution of that penalty. Nevertheless God must be just, even while he is the

justifier of them that believe on him. Sentence of death has been pronounced upon every man, and that sentence will be executed. Every man must die, because that all men have sinned.

But there is given to every man a choice as to when he will die. Christ died for all men. We can acknowledge his death and die in him and thus get his life; or on the other hand we may, if we wish, refuse to acknowledge him and die in ourselves. *But die we must.* Death has passed upon all men, and all men must die. The life of every man is forfeited, of ourselves we have no life at all.

The Scripture plainly says, "He that hath not the Son of God hath not life." 1 John 5:12. Now seeing that we are in that condition, when death claims her forfeit, what are we going to do? Don't you see that we are left lifeless? If I owe a thousand dollars, and I have just exactly a thousand dollars in my possession, when I pay that debt, I am left penniless, am I not? So it is with this life of ours. We all have a life here in our possession, but it does not belong to us. *It is forfeited to the law.* It does not belong to us at all. When the law exacts that forfeit, and that life of ours is gone, then there is nothing left to us but eternal death.

But Christ, the Son of God, has so much life in himself, that he can give life to every man and still have as much life left. He was not under any obligation to come to earth and go through the experience that he did. He had glory in heaven; he had the adoration of all the angels; he had riches and power: but he left them all, and even emptied himself of his glory and his honor; came to earth as a poor man, took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in all things like unto those whom he came to save.

He worked out righteousness here in the flesh. What did he do it for? For himself? No, he did not have any need of it. He had riches to begin with. He had everything that he could have when he was in heaven. But here on earth, as a man, he worked out righteousness and eternal redemption *that he might give them to us.* That is the sole reason that brought him into the world. He has all that righteousness he wrought out here, and he will and does give it to men. So he paid the penalty of the law,—for himself? No! He had no sin, consequently the law had no claim upon him.

In the second letter to the Corinthians, chapter five, and verse twenty-one, the apostle Paul says: "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." So it was that He suffered the penalty, not for himself, but for us. When we by faith lay hold on Christ, and become united with him, so that we are *identified* with him, then we have that life which he has to bestow.

But pay the penalty, suffer the forfeit, we must; for the law will exact the forfeit. But as I said before, we have the choice as to whether we will wait, and let the law take the forfeit from us, at a time when we will have nothing left after it is gone, or whether we will give over the forfeited life when we can take the life of Christ, and have it left after we have paid the forfeit.

Now how do we get hold of Christ? How do we get the benefit of that righteous life of his?—It is in the act of death. At what point is it that we touch Christ, and make the

connection? At what point in the ministry of Christ is it that he touches us, and affects the union?—It is at the lowest possible point where man can be touched, and that is death. In all points he is made like his brethren, so He takes the very lowest of these,—the point of death,—and there it is, when we are actually dead, that we step into Christ.

The ceremony of baptism is simply the symbol of Christ's death and resurrection. Says Paul in Gal. 3:27, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." In Romans he says: "As many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death." But if we died with Christ, we are bound and certain to live again; for Christ is alive. Here we can forcibly apply the words of Peter in Acts 2:24: "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: *because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.*" It was utterly impossible that death should hold Christ. Therefore if we die with him, and in our death are united with him, *we shall also live with him.* The great thought around which the whole Bible clusters, is death and resurrection with Christ. IF WE DIE WITH HIM, WE SHALL LIVE AGAIN.

We die with Him,—when? Now! When we acknowledge our life forfeited, and give up all claims to that life, and everything that is connected with it, that very moment we die with Christ. Now what is this giving up of our life? Life stands for everything that a man has. It stands for everything that pertains to life. What is it, then, that pertains to the life that we naturally have in ourselves? It is sin! It is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. It is envy, malice, evil speaking, and evil thinking,—all these things make up the natural life, because we see that every man that has the natural life, has these things. They are a part of his life. They enter into the life of every man on earth.

When we come to that place where we see that we have those things, and are ready to give them up, and pay the forfeit, then it is that we can die with Christ, and take his sinless life in their stead. In yielding up that life of ours, we give up all these things, and when they are all given up, then we are dead with Christ. But just as surely as we give them up and die with Christ, just so surely must we be raised again, for *Christ is risen*, and we then walk in newness of life. That new life,—that newness of life which we have, is the life of Christ, and it is a SINLESS LIFE. Knowing this, "that our old man is crucified with him, that the *body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we might not serve sin.*"

Here is the secret of all missionary effort. When a man comes to the point, where in very deed he reckons that he has no life of his own, and he gives up the forfeited life which he did have in his possession, and the life he lives in the flesh he lives by faith in the Son of God; then Christ is his life, and his life is "*hid with Christ in God.*" He has been raised to newness of life by faith in the operation of God. What will he fear of what men will say of him? He will say to himself, It is not I, but Christ that liveth in me.

What will it matter to him if he is called to go to an unhealthful locality? His life has already been yielded up, so that death has no terrors for him. He goes willingly, "*not taking his life in his hand,*" but leaving it in the keeping of Christ in God. If Christ, in whom his life is hid, wishes to allow him to sleep for a while, it is all right. Moreover he is

not discouraged by difficulties in the work to which Christ has assigned him; for he has practical knowledge of the power of Christ and he knows that he who cast down the high things that had exalted themselves in his own heart against Christ, is able to subdue all things unto himself. The life that he lives is the life of Christ, provided only, that every moment of his life he yields himself and is as thoroughly consecrated as he was at the time he died.

It is necessary that we die continually, and that we continually know the power of God, and of the resurrection of Christ. For "we are saved by his life." We must know and experience the same power that God wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. We take that power,—How? "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."

It is simply a matter of making the resurrection of Christ a practical thing in our lives. It is simply believing that what God could do for Christ, as he lay in the grave, he can do for us. That power which brought forth Christ from the dead can keep us alive from the dead. If we have the life of Christ, and it is working in us, it must do for us all that it did for him when he was in Galilee and Judea.

What a precious thought it is that our lives are not our own. We have but the life of Christ. It is this thought that makes a man triumph even in death. Why? The sting of death is gone! Death does not sting the righteous man, because he is freed from sin. It was the knowledge of this that enabled the martyrs like Jerome and Huss to go to the stake, singing songs of triumph and victory. "Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him that is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

Our lives are hid with Christ in God, so that we fear not the power of wicked men, or of the devil himself. When we have given ourselves to Christ, and our life is hid with him, what matters it whether this life be cut off soon or not? We walk with Christ, and he controls our lives. Wicked men or devils can no more touch our life than they could hold Christ in the grave.

Oh, that we might feel the power of that life and know that we are His! When we do get it, the power of God will accompany the message, as we go forth bearing it. What difference if men bring reproaches on us,—we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God; and the life we live, we live in him, and through faith in him. This is the power of the gospel, and the hope that makes the Christian triumph even in death. It is the hope of the resurrection; for when the man is called to lie down and sleep, he sleeps in Jesus. His life is just as sure, and even surer, then, than if he were alive upon the earth. His probation is sealed; he has fought a good fight; he has finished his course, and kept the faith. Well might the apostle say that he did not sorrow for those who slept, as for those who had no hope.

When the church of God, and the ministers of God have died indeed, giving up everything that has pertained to their own life, then they will belong to Christ in deed and in truth. If Christ is willing to entrust us with some of these things; if we are to be spared on earth for a while, it is all right. If on the other hand he thinks best to take us

away, that is all right too. Whether sleeping in the grave or working for the Master on the earth, matters not, for it is Christ all the time.

When we get hold of these ideas, and make them ours, and we may have them as soon as we please, they are precious to us. Having counted the cost of giving up all those things that have been dear to us, if we are prepared to count them all but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord, then we can yield ourselves wholly to Christ. Just as soon as we are willing to count the cost, and to let ourselves be crucified with Christ; by giving up the pride of life, the lust of the flesh, and all those things, which have pertained to our old life, making no provision for the flesh, then the power of Christ comes upon us. But we are living yet on earth! Yes, but we have given up our life, and all there is to us is Christ working in us.

The very moment that a man denies everything pertaining to the flesh, that very moment he can say that Christ is his, and that he has the life of Christ. How does he know it? Through faith in the operation of him that raised Christ from the dead!

"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. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him."

Christ's life is an eternal life. He voluntarily went under the dominion of death. By doing this he demonstrated his power over death. He went down into the grave to show that right there, while bound by the chains of the prison house of the grave itself, he had power to burst those fetters asunder, and come forth free and a conqueror. Therefore since he dies no more, and we take that sinless life of his, then we can reckon ourselves dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. As death can have no dominion over him, so sin, which is the sting of death, can have no dominion over us.

A questioner may say, "You make it out that we ought never to sin any more,—you leave no room for sin." But is not that what the Bible says? "For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." We belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. How? By death, we make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof. There is such a thing as a complete surrender to Christ,—when we give up everything, and then trust to his power to keep us in that state. And I thank God that he is able to do it.

Men start out on dangerous expeditions,—some to conquer a country, and when they reach that land, they burn the boats they came in, so they cannot go back if they desired to. It is right for us to count well the cost. There is no use to make a headlong plunge into the battle. Look over the whole ground. Here is this pleasure, and that indulgence; can I give them up? They have been very dear to me, they have become entwined around my very life itself. They are identified with me, so that they show themselves in my very countenance, they are imbedded in my very character and are a part of myself. I have clung to them as I have clung to life itself. But Christ was not in

them, they do not savor of the life of Christ at all. For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross. *Can I, for the sake of sharing that joy, ENDURE THAT cross?* Can I give up the pleasures of sin for a season, in order to share the riches of Christ, and the joy of his salvation? These are the questions we must ask ourselves.

Look up, and place your eyes on Christ and the joy of present salvation. They form the opposite side of the picture. There is the joy of having an infinite power working in us. For that joy which we can have now, are we willing to give up everything, and to become sharers of the sufferings of Christ, and to be made partakers of his death, and the power of his resurrection? This is a joy that will last forever, so let us burn the boats and the bridges behind us! Can we give up all these things that have been so dear to us, can we give them up *forever*? That is the hard part.

Says one, "I have tried to give up these things before, and I have fallen again, now how do I know but what I shall fall again?" Ah no, you are not making a new resolution this time, you are not turning over a new leaf, and saying that you are going to do better. You are merely letting the old life and all the resolutions go. Simply say, I know that there is power in God. And that same power which spoke the world into existence, that same power which brought Christ forth from the tomb,—into the hands of that power I will yield myself, and let it sustain and keep me in the new life. And day by day as we do that, our hearts will go out in thankfulness to God for his wonderful power.

It is not ours to make provision for the flesh in the lusts thereof; but we must step out and take hold of the life of Christ, and feel that the power of God is working in us. When we feel that power working,—that miracle which is wrought in us,—the temptations to which we have yielded so often, the sinful practices to which we have given way, will be overcome, and we will rise superior to them. Then we can go out into the world, in the power of Christ, and carry the message, as we never have done before.

How is it that we will have more power? Because we know that if God can work that miracle for us, he can do it for any one. Our work from a human standpoint is an impossible one; difficulties arise on every hand; but we have a knowledge of what the power of God can do, and therefore go forth in faith that he who can cast down imaginations in our hearts, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and can bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, can do that same work for others, since he has done it for us. It was that same power which caused the walls of Jericho to fall down before the people of God. I am so thankful that the God who has called us to be his servants is a God of infinite power. Take hold of that power and prove it for yourselves.

"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." "Likewise"—Like what? *Like as Christ was raised from the dead to be dead no more, so likewise reckon yourselves to be dead unto sin to sin no more.* Is that true? Note it carefully,—that sin shall have no more dominion over you. That is what the Bible says. We are no longer under the law, but under grace. We are no longer under condemnation, but the grace of God resteth upon us. The spirit of glory and of grace is present with us.

There is power in Christ. What is that power? Notice. Grace is favor! In the favor of God there is life. Then what is the power of the grace of Christ? It is the power of an endless life. If men really believe that Christ is risen from the dead, they can believe that they are dead unto sin, but alive unto God, and free from sin. Does the apostle mean free from sin? It is a solemn, but a glorious thought. How thankful ought men to be that they can have that confidence in the power of God through Christ that they can without any mental reservation take this chapter and believe it. Yes, believe these very words, "He that is dead is freed from sin . . . reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ."

But is it true that man can live without sin? In the last part of the chapter we read, "For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness." We all know what that means. Our past experience is not so pleasant to look back over. In it we see no good. Now why was it that we were free from righteousness?—Because we were the servants of Satan. "But now, being made free from sin, we are become the servants of righteousness." Christ is the author of righteousness. The service we render is his. Which are we, the servants of Christ or the servants of Satan? When we were the servants of Satan, we did not do any righteousness. But now we are the servants of God. "Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." "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?"

There are just two services. The service of Satan, which is of sin unto death, and the service of Christ, which is of obedience unto righteousness. A man cannot serve two masters. All believe that. Then it is impossible to serve sin and righteousness at the same time. Now we call ourselves Christians. That means—what? Followers of Christ! But in all our Christian experience we have left little loopholes along here and there for sin. We have never dared to come to that place where we would believe that the Christian life should be a sinless life. We have not dared to believe it or preach it. But in that case we cannot preach the law of God fully. Why not? Because we do not understand the *power* of justification by faith. Then without justification by faith it is impossible to preach the law of God to the fullest extent. Then to preach justification by faith does not detract from or lower the law of God but is the only thing that exalts it.

Now can we be the servants of Christ while we are committing sins, and making provision for the flesh to fulfill the lust thereof? Is Christ the minister of sin? Whose servants are we while we are committing sin? We are the servants of sin, and sin is of Satan. Now if a Christian (?) is committing sin part of the time, and doing righteousness the rest of the time, it must be that Satan and Christ are in partnership, so that he has only one master, for he cannot serve two masters.

But there is no consort between light and darkness,—between Christ and Belial. They are in deadly antagonism, they are opposed to each other, and they have fought a fight even to the death. There is no quarter on either side. Then it is utterly impossible for man to serve these two masters. He must be on the one side or the other. "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?" We know *enough about being servants of sin*. We have yielded ourselves as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin.

Now the question comes: How am I going to become a servant of Christ, so that I will be able to die to my old life? "*To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are whom ye obey.*" The word rendered "servant" really means a "bond-servant." Just the moment that I yield myself to Christ to become his servant, that very moment I am His bond-servant. That very moment I belong to him. How do I know that Christ will accept my service if I do give it him? Because he has bought that service and paid the price for it. And in all those years that I yielded myself a servant to sin, I have been defrauding him of his right. But all this time that I have been keeping back my service, he has been going about searching for me, and seeking to draw me to him. And when we say, "Here, Lord, here I am, I give myself to thee," that very moment Christ has found us, for he has been seeking for us, and we are his servants.

But how do we know that we are going to continue in his service? How do we know that we can live the life of Christ? Just in the same way that we know we have lived the life of sin. When we take this matter into account as to whose servants we will be, we want to take into account the power of the two masters. When we were the servants of sin, we were *free from righteousness*, because Satan swayed us, and used us in whatever way he would, and we were at the mercy of his power.

Is sin stronger than righteousness? Is Satan stronger than Christ? No! Then as Christ has proved himself to be the stronger of the two, and just as surely as when we were the bond-servants of sin, it had power to keep us free from righteousness; so when we yield ourselves as bond-servants unto Christ, he has *power to keep us from sin*. The battle is not ours; it is God's. I said that Christ and Satan were not in partnership, but that there is the bitterest antagonism between them.

All are familiar with the words, "The Great Controversy between Christ and Satan." It is a household phrase among us. What is the controversy over? It is over the souls of men, and the place of their abode. Who shall have your service and mine, is the question that they are fighting over. The controversy is between Christ and Satan. They are not only the principal ones in the controversy, but the whole controversy is between them, and them alone.

We have this much to say,—neither one of them can take our service against our will. Of ourselves we have no power to stand against Satan; we have tried that. We have no power to meet him; we cannot face him and conquer him. We have no power at all; but at the same time we know that we do not want to be his servants. Yes; and we will not only say, I do not want to be his servant, but, I *will not* be his servant. So instead of putting our strength against Satan, we *yield* ourselves to Christ, and repeat over and over again, like David the psalmist, "O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds." Ps. 116:16.

What? I was a bond-servant of Satan's, but just the moment I said to Christ, "I will be your servant," he loosed my bonds, and took upon himself the responsibility of defending me against Satan, who has no right to me. So when Satan comes to take me back and make me his bond-servant again, Christ meets him, even as he met him when he was here upon the earth. So simply tell your own heart, and Satan, that you are Christ's, and that he has loosed your bonds. Then you are loosed indeed. You have counted the cost, and now you can take the words of David and repeat them over and over.

Your life is no longer your own, it is the life of Christ. His life, his very existence, is pitted against Satan. The battle goes over our heads, for we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God. Says the psalmist, "Thou shalt keep them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues." The battle between Christ and Satan is being waged over our heads, and we are hid in the secret pavilion. This is the victory that overcometh the world, for Christ has gained the victory over Satan, and by grasping the promises of Christ by faith, and laying hold upon the life of Christ, the victory over Satan is ours.

Does not Christ say that all power is given him in heaven and in earth? Note the precious words in Eph. 1:19-21: "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named."

That same power which placed Him in that exalted position which is far above all principality and power,—what *has it done* for us? "Quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Where is it that we are placed? "Far above all principality and power."

Then the *victory* is ours in Christ, and he has gained the victory already. He has conquered a peace for us. Just as surely as he gives His peace to us, just that surely has he gained the victory for us. So in the hour of trial we have a victory that is already gained. Well may we say that the battle goes over our heads, and great is our peace. There is peace all the time.

The strength of the Christian lies in submitting,—the victory in yielding to Christ, so that he may keep us in his presence, and cover us up in his pavilion from the strife of tongues. Then it does not matter how great the trial may be, if we have Christ, there will be peace in our hearts.

O that every one in this house may be filled with a desire to have Christ and his righteousness, that this very night we may take his word and be inspired by its inspiration, and then we shall have and shall be able to live the life of Christ. Then we can go about as missionaries for Christ and do good. When we take that power which we have by faith in him, it will not be long till the work will be cut short in *righteousness*, and we shall see him, who not having seen, we love.

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