

**Simply Christ**  
Gospel Newsletter  
*Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ*

July 8, 2022

## **Death Before Life**

What if one event in the Biblical account of Jesus' resurrection was changed? The angel still appeared to Mary and said, *"He is not here: for he is risen."* Jesus still appeared to the disciples and said, *"Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."* Luke 24:39.

Peter also still stood on the day of Pentecost and spoke of Jesus, saying, *"Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."*

Acts 2:24. What if the only difference in the story of Jesus' resurrection was that Jesus never died? The answer is obvious. Without the death of Christ there could not have been a resurrection.

If Jesus did not die on the cross, then the evidences of his resurrection were only an illusion. Of course, Jesus did die on the cross. The Apostle Paul tells us, *"Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."* I Corinthians 15:3. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead was God's confirmation that his crucifixion had accomplished its divine purpose.

When Jesus said, *"...because I live, ye shall live also"* John 14:19, he was telling us what would be accomplished for us through his resurrection. Simply put, his resurrection would give us life. Paul relates to this connection between Christ's resurrection and our receiving life when he says, God has *"...quickened (reanimated) us together with Christ..."* Ephesians 2:5. It is only through being joined to Jesus Christ in his resurrection that any person has the life of Christ within them. This is the reason Paul says, *"...nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:"* Galatians 2:20.

Peter also confirms this connection, saying, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath **begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.**"* I Peter 1:3. The reality of being *"born again"* is given to us through the power of Jesus' resurrection. The resurrection is even the cause and power of our new walk in Christ. Paul says, *"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into 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."* Romans 6:4.

Perhaps a lesser understood part of our redemption involves the power of Jesus' crucifixion. It is in his death that we are delivered from the power and presence of sin. This message is clearly articulated by the Apostles. Paul told us *"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.**"* Romans 6:6. The sin

nature of those who are “*crucified with Christ*” Galatians 2:20 is destroyed through the power of Jesus’ death and they are thereby “*made free from sin.*” Peter reminds us of this, saying, “*Who (Jesus) his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness...*” I Peter 2:24. This deliverance from sin becomes our reality when we through faith are “*crucified with Christ.*” The cross of Christ is not the beginning of your struggle with sin. It is the end of the struggle because it is where sin is destroyed for those who trust in Christ. The cross is where our “*old man*” died.

Somehow, almost universally, the church has confused the order of these two vital parts of redemption. People come to a place of repentance and/or confession. Someone instructs them on “how to be saved” and then tells them they are now born again but will also continue to be sinful as long as they live in a fleshly body. What is forgotten is there can be no new birth through resurrection with Christ if there has been no death to sin through crucifixion with Christ. Crucifixion comes before resurrection!

In redemption, no one lives with Christ who has not first died with him. Paul reminds us of this important truth of the gospel, saying, “*It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:*” II Timothy 2:11. Paul again reminds us of this gospel “order” as he exhorts us to seek heavenly things. He says, “*If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are*

*above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. ... **For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.***” Colossians 3:1-3. Consider his statement: **If you are in fact risen with Christ, you are dead!** Those who are risen with Christ are already crucified with him!

Paul instructs us to recognize and acknowledge this very important fact concerning our union with Christ. He says, *“For in that he (Christ) died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. **Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.**”* Romans 6:10-11. If you truly know Christ, then you are both dead to sin and alive unto God. You need to recognize this powerful truth of the gospel! Because Christ died, you are in fact dead to sin with him! Because Christ lives unto God, you are also made alive unto God through him! This is not a mere confession. This is the reality of those who know Jesus Christ. This is why sin has no dominion over them! Romans 6:14.

What does your profession of faith acknowledge? Does it agree with the multitudes which say “I am a child of God, but also still a sinner who will continue to sin until I lay aside this mortal body? Or, does it agree with Paul and the other Apostles who say, “We are in fact dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ”? The first is a fallacy which will keep you in darkness. The latter is the truth of the gospel, which Jesus said, *“**Shall make you free!**”* John 8:32.