

DEVOTIONAL

WHEN IN ROME VI // YOU'RE DEAD TO ME
MARCH 20, 2022

GRACE
FELLOWSHIP

Discussion Starter: What do you think it means to be enslaved to sin?

Key Text: *“For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷For one who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.”* (Romans 6:5-11)

In his autobiography entitled *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African*, Olaudah Equiano (1745-1796) recounts his harrowing experience of being kidnapped and sold into slavery at age 11. He was taken from West Africa to the West Indies and finally ended up in England. At age 20, Olaudah was able to purchase his own freedom. The physical and emotional scars of the brutality he endured at the hands of slave owners motivated him to become active in the movement to abolish slavery in England. He wrote his inspiring autobiography, which was a highly unusual achievement for a former slave in that day, about all that he suffered in slavery and the glorious day he was set free.

Every Christian has a “spiritual autobiography” that recounts our past enslavement to sin and brokenness, but also reveals our glorious freedom from guilt, shame, and hopelessness through our trust in Christ. Jesus said, *“Everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. ³⁶So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”* (John 8:34-36)

Discuss: As you consider your “spiritual autobiography,” what are some highlights of the freedom you’ve experienced from sin, guilt, shame, and hopelessness in Christ?

Here are truths we learn from our text about being dead to sin and alive to Christ:

1. We are united with Christ in both His death and His resurrection.

“For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.” (Romans 6:5)

Those who trust in Christ experience a spiritual new birth. In a spiritual sense, God causes us to die with Christ, to be buried, and to be raised to new spiritual life just as Jesus physically died, was buried, and rose from the dead. Now we are spiritually alive—all because we are “united with him” (v.6). We are not the same spiritually dead people we were before!

Discuss: What are some evidences that you have died to sin and are now alive in Christ?

2. God put to death our old self and rescued us from sin the slave owner, so we are no longer obligated to sin.

“We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For one who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.” (Romans 5:6-8).

Our “old self”—the person who existed in sin and self-reliance before we were united with Christ—was spiritually crucified in the same way that Christ was physically crucified. When we placed our faith in Christ, God mysteriously and powerfully put to death our old self that was under the power and rule of sin. Our old “body of sin” (v.6) was brought to nothing—sin is not in charge of us anymore!

This does not mean that we will no longer desire to sin. The desire to sin remains, but the obligation is gone. We can never be compelled to sin again because Christ has rescued us from sin, the slave owner. The only way we can sin now is to volunteer to go back to the old master, sin.

Discuss: Why do you think a Christian who has been set free from sin’s enslavement and is no longer bound to sin might still “volunteer” to go back to the old master, sin?

Discuss: According to 1 John 1:9-10, what remedy does God provide for us when we slip back into sin?

3. Since we are resurrected and alive with Christ, we now have the same agenda as Christ: to live for God’s glory.

“We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 6:9-11)

Sin is not the boss of us any longer. Sin can no longer compel us to do things our way instead of God’s way. Now, if we sin, we are simply choosing to give in to temptations. Paul tells us that Christ is our Savior and also our role model. Now that Jesus is resurrected, He again “lives to God” (v.10). This means that Christ’s purpose is to live—and to keep living—as God and for the glory of God forever. This is His only aim; He has no other agenda. And since we now have new life in Christ and with Christ, we have the same aim and no other agenda: to live for God’s glory

Discuss: What evidence is there that you strive to live for God’s glory in your daily life?

For Further Study:

“What Does It Mean to Be Crucified with Christ?” article at www.gotquestions.org

True Identity: Finding Significance & Freedom in Who You Are in Christ by John Majors

“How to Overcome Temptation” article at www.crosswalk.com