

The Local Church That God Blesses - the Functional New Testament Christian

by Peter Brandon

The sermon emphasizes the transformative power of understanding our identity in Christ and living out the implications of our baptism as believers.

Duration: 58:48

Scripture: Romans 1:16, Romans 5:1, Romans 6:1-14, Romans 8:11

Topics: "Identity in Christ", "Living in Righteousness"

Description

Peter Brandon emphasizes the transformative power of being a functional New Testament Christian, as outlined in Romans 6. He explains that through baptism, believers are united with Christ in His death and resurrection, symbolizing their death to sin and new life in righteousness. Brandon stresses that justification comes through faith and grace, not by works, and that Christians are called to live in the reality of their new identity in Christ. He encourages believers to reckon themselves dead to sin and alive to God, yielding their lives as instruments of righteousness. The sermon highlights the importance of understanding one's position in Christ to live a victorious Christian life.

Transcript

Romans 6, reading from verse 1. 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 into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 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. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is, or as it should be rendered, was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, meaning annulled, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

For he that is dead is freed or justified from sin. Now if we believe, 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.

For in that he died, he died unto sin was, 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. Let not sin

therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lust thereof.

Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under law, but under grace. Now that will do for our initial reading.

When we study the book of Romans we are actually studying the subject of a functional New Testament Christian. And a New Testament Christian should be one that's empowered, because the key verse in this particular book is in the first chapter and it's verse 16. For I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it's the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes.

And the operative word there is power. And therefore there is in Christian living a definite element of divine power. Now when you look at the book of Romans at least the first eight or nine chapters you will find it's divided into two.

And first of all it's the subject of justification or righteousness and that is seen from chapters one to three. When we come to the fourth chapter it is a matter of the principle of justification which is by faith. And there are two leading actors David and Abraham.

But when we come to the fifth chapter it's not the matter of justification it's how justified people should live. And therefore notice the change. Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now the key word in Romans is righteousness and that is mentioned thirty-one times. And the word has nothing basically to do with a white garment placed on dirty body. That may be figurative but that is not the meaning of the word.

The word righteousness basically means the right way in which God makes us right with himself. Can I repeat that? The right way in which God makes us right with himself. And therefore the twin brother to the word righteousness is justification.

And that is mentioned sixteen times. Now what does it mean to be justified? First of all note the problem. If a person is in a court and he is rendered guilty by the judge there is no judge in the world unless he is immoral that can justify a guilty man.

He can render him innocent, he can pronounce a forgiveness but he cannot pronounce him just. When a judge pronounces a man just it simply means he hasn't done the crime that he's been accused of. Now how is it possible for a holy God first of all to find us all thoroughly guilty for by the law is the knowledge of sin and then he goes on to show that through the law it was given that every mouth may be stopped and all the world might become guilty before God.

How then can a holy God render guilty people just? You see that's a problem. Now there is only one way in which he can render us just and that is by substitution. Let me explain by illustration and then we get to a point.

In the old days before the war when a man was guilty of murder he was hung and in some of the British prisons when a man was hung for murder they used to put over the calendar of the prison words like this. John Brown was guilty at 9.30, at 9.31 he was pronounced just. Nice way of putting it.

Now what did they mean? He was guilty, he bore the full weight of his guilt and died and therefore the law had nothing to say to him and therefore it pronounced him just. But poor man, he couldn't come back to enjoy it. Now my dear friends, through the death of Christ every single believer has died and we have died by substitution and because we have died God now can pronounce us just.

But here is the difference. Through the infusion of the Holy Spirit, meaning the resurrection life has been given to us, we have come alive and therefore we have died to Adam and we are alive to Christ and therefore he can declare us and pronounce us just. So when he uses that term it simply means that we have all died, we have all been buried, we have all been resurrected and we are pronounced completely just.

Now that is what we are going to learn tonight and once we grip that fact we are going to be blessed. Now Paul shows to us that we are not justified by the works of the law, that condemned us, but we are justified purely and solely on the principle of sovereign grace. We didn't deserve it, we deserve judgment.

But through his love and grace we have been justified. Now he is going to answer a problem and this was the problem that many Jewish people would raise. But listen Paul, you are only encouraging sin.

You are telling people that they are justified through the grace of God. So shall we go on singing and take advantage of God's grace? And therefore having come to that particular problem and difficulty he is going to answer it and we are going to see that the subject is thrilling and interesting and I trust it will be a blessing to you. Now how are we going to divide these books? In Romans 5 we have two heads.

Adam, Christ. In Romans 6 a two-fold form of slavery. A slavery to sin, a slavery to righteousness.

Romans 7, a two-fold form of matrimony. Matrimony to law and being free from the law and now matrimony to love and grace. And Romans 8, a two-fold power, the power of the flesh and the power of the spirit.

In Romans chapter 6 it's the blueprint for a functional Christian life. In Romans 7 it's the workshop for a functional Christian life. And Romans 8 it's the powerhouse for a functional Christian life.

Therefore in Romans 3, please note this, it's Christ's death for us. But in Romans 6 and 7 it's our death in Christ. Now isn't this strange? Every single Christian in this room tonight will understand completely that Christ died for their sins.

But a very few will understand that we have died in Christ. And that's what we're going to learn tonight. And once this great truth grips us, I think I can say this from experience, we shall never be the same again.

When we learn this fact that we have died in Christ. Now let's look at that question, let's look at the answer and let's get on with the exposition. Now you will notice in verse 1 we have the question.

In verse 2 we have the answer to the question. And then from verses 3 right down to verses 14 we have the detailed explanation of the answer. And those who are taking notes, we find that in verses 3, 4 and 5, baptism symbolises that we have died to sin.

6, 7 and 8, the cross proves that we have died to sin. 9 and 10, the resurrection confirms that we have died to sin. Verse 11, faith appropriates the fact that we have died to sin.

And then from 12, 13 to 14, a yielded life expresses the fact that we have died to sin. Now if we can get through that before 9 o'clock we shall do well. Right, let's look at the first verse.

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abide? In other words, if I may paraphrase, shall we go on sinning and so take advantage of grace that by our sinning life we eulogise the grace of God? The answer is, God forbid. That's quite good. Mr Darby is much better.

He says, far be the thought. Such a thought should never enter the mind of a Christian. Mr Newell is a little more practical and he says, a thousand times, no.

And therefore, the paraphrase is as follows. Shall we go on sinning and so take advantage of the grace of God and by our sinning life eulogise God's grace? No. No.

No. No. No.

No What Paul is basically saying, if I may now take an elastic paraphrase, is this. Shall I go on losing my temper? Shall I go on telling lies? Shall I go on lusting? Shall I go on being irritable? Shall I go on in that private sin forever? No. No.

No. Don't you understand, he says, you have died to sin. Now notice what he doesn't say.

He doesn't say that sin is dead. If he said that sin was dead, then we could all claim sinless perfection. But there's not one verse in the Bible that teaches that.

But he says that we have died to sin. Now what does that mean? Before we were saved, we were in the Adamic family. Adam was our head.

And because we were in that family, according to Romans 5, that was the sinning family. When we were born again of the Holy Spirit, we were pronounced just by God, because we had been linked with the death of the Lord Jesus and burial and resurrection. And therefore we were put in a new family under the headship of Christ.

And therefore we left the sinning family and we moved into the righteousness family. Or if you like a better word, the family of holiness. And therefore we died to the sinning family and we now live in a family that specializes in holiness.

Let me illustrate so that this point is clearly understood. Could you ever imagine a man that has committed murder and he's guilty. And he gets a life sentence.

And he has to serve for 25 years. An awful thing really for any man. Many men would sooner go to the gallows than have to spend 25 years in solitary confinement.

Anyhow, he looks out of the window after two years in solitary confinement. And he says this as he looks at a little worm. You're a better being than me.

He sees a little robbing and he says you're freer than me. And he says something like this. You're alive to liberty.

I'm dead to it. He's in prison. Now can you imagine someone coming along and he takes a liking for this rascal.

And he says right I'm going to ransom him. And he pays \$400,000 for the ransom. And then he takes him out of prison.

But he doesn't put him on a gold queue. He brings him into his own palace where he lives. And this is what he says.

I'm going to treat you as my son. And this is your bedroom, a magnificent room. And you will come and have meals with us at the table.

And I would like you to call me father and my wife mother. We're going to bring you into the family. Now immediately he looks out of the window.

He says this. Thank God. I'm completely dead to captivity.

I'm alive to liberty. I'm a new man. Because of the grace of my new master.

And he enjoys that liberty. But if he wants. He can go back to the old prison and he can buy a convict suit.

And wear it. If he wants to. If he wants to he can bring back bars and put them out of the window.

Or he can take away the beautiful oak door and he can put up an iron door. If he wants to he can still live on stale bread and cheese. But he would be foolish to do that.

Why? He has died to a prison life. He's alive to liberty. Beloved because we have been justified.

We have died to a life of sin. And we're alive to a life of holiness. And that's what that basically means.

And we've got to discover that. Now in order to get that truth home to us. And it's all done for us by our God.

He explains that baptism symbolizes that. Now let's look at these verses together. Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ.

Or as it should be rendered in Christ Jesus. Were baptized into his death. Now when we read of the word baptism.

We mustn't imagine that it always refers to baptism in water. Here of course it is applied. But there is in scripture as most of you know a baptism in fire.

There's a baptism in the spirit. 1 Corinthians 12. There's a baptism in suffering that the Lord Jesus has.

I have a baptism to be baptized with. And how shall I be straightened until it be accomplished. So we cannot say every time we read of the word baptism.

It always refers to baptism in water. Now what does this word baptize mean? It comes from a very strong word which means to dye a garment. Now once we can see this.

We shall see that here it has two meanings. First of all it has the meaning of unification. And what they used to do in the time of the apostle.

Especially certain people that lived at Philippi. They used to take some white cloth. And they would dip it into a purple dye.

And they would leave it in that dye for 48 hours. And when they pulled that white garment out of the dye. It would be purple.

And when it was dried. You could take that garment and you could pull it to pieces. And you would not find one speck of the original color.

But what had happened. It had been placed right into the dye. So that it became one with it.

Complete union. Absolute identification. Now what the apostle Paul is saying is this.

Since you have been rendered justified. You have been linked inseparably with a risen Christ. And you have been dyed right into him.

And you are inseparable. And because you have been placed right into Christ Jesus. You have been baptized into his death.

What does that mean? When he died upon the cross. You died with him. You died by substitution.

In other words. All your sins. And all the judgment of your sins.

And all the root of that judgment. Was all laid upon him. And in God's sight.

When he died. Not only you died. But the whole church of Christ died with him.

Furthermore. God saw you dead in Christ. Before the foundation of the world.

And therefore the moment you were saved. You were born crucified. You died.

Completely. Judicially. In his death.

Now that word judicial. Needs an explanation. Theologians use it over and over again.

But it can puzzle young men. I used to go to bible readings in London. When I was about 16.

And they used to say of course that is judicial. And I got hold of the word. And anything I couldn't understand.

I would say that is judicial. Now we must explain these terms. And make them clear.

Now what does it mean. A judicial state to be in. Well in London.

There was an old lady. And she used to sell flowers. On the corner of the street.

There where we used to live. And she sold beautiful flowers. And she had been selling them for years.

And everybody knew her. And loved her. We were all loves.

And ducks. And darlings. Well a new priest man came along.

And he apprehended her. And little did he realise. That this woman was an old cockney lady.

But she had her wits about her. So being a very wealthy woman. And she was.

Because she had a right roaring trade. On the corner of the street. She hired a very brilliant Jewish solicitor.

And she went to Bow Street. And all the time she was there. She was getting a little nervous.

And her solicitor was saying this to her. And he was a typical Jewish man. Alright.

I'll get you off mum. And she was wise. And this is what she said.

Listen mate. Don't pacify me. Pacify all pigs up there.

And I'll be satisfied. Now have you got it? Don't pacify me. Pacify all wigs up there.

And I'll be satisfied. In other words. I want you to do it judicially.

Now what we mean by a judicial state. Is being right before God. And in God's sight.

Every single one of us. Whether we understand it or not. We have died substitutionally in the Lord Jesus.

And that's why he says. Know ye not that so many of us. As were baptised into Jesus Christ.

Were baptised into his death. And we have all died substitutionally. But then he goes on.

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death. Now what does that mean? That speaks of the finality of death. When you bury someone.

You are burying a person who has died. And burial is the finality of the act. But there's a difference.

When you bury a loved one. That is the finality of death. And you do so with tears.

And bitter tears. And the Lord Jesus wept. But if you were in Africa.

And you were being plagued by three man eating lions. And if you buried three of those. You would be jubilantly happy.

Therefore you are not burying something that you love. You're burying something that you hate. And when Jesus Christ died upon the cross.

Your old life substitutionally died in him. And when he was buried substitutionally in God's sight. That old life was buried with him.

Therefore it's all in the past. Therefore he goes on. 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.

Now in Romans 1. The resurrection expresses the power of God. In Romans 6. The resurrection expresses the glory of God. You see when he raised the Lord Jesus from the dead.

He expressed the full manifestation of his power. When he raised the Lord Jesus from the dead. He revealed the majesty of his glory.

It's all in the resurrection. Therefore he says. Even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Now go on. Don't stop there. For if we have been planted.

The word is grafted together. In the likeness of his death. We shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.

Now what does that mean? The same power that raised the Lord Jesus from the dead. Is the same power that comes into your life. Romans 8 teaches.

If the spirit of him that raised up the Lord Jesus from the dead dwelling you. Therefore the same glorious Holy Spirit. That raised him from the dead.

According to Romans 1. Comes into a believers life. And he is born of God. And he links him with a risen head the Lord Jesus.

So every Christian is taken completely out of Adam. And he is placed in Christ. And Hallelujah is there forever.

And that's how God sees you complete in Christ. Now when you are baptised. It will take you just 5 seconds to be baptised.

But it will take you a lifetime to live it out. Hundreds of people have been baptised. Only a few live it out.

Now what does baptism mean? It means that you first of all are submerged right under water. What does that speak? That you have died in Christ to a life of sin. And no longer are you related to Adam.

And then you are buried. You are totally immersed. That speaks of the finality of your death once and for all.

Then the brother brings you out of the water. And that speaks of emergence. To show that you are linked with a new man in the glory.

And therefore you walk in newness of life. Now what Paul is saying is simply this. You mustn't continue in sin.

Why? That's the main teaching of baptism. Can I ask a very difficult question? You've been baptised. Are you living it out? Is to sin a lie unto God? If we live that out.

We would live in perpetual revival. But then go on. Look at persons.

Knowing this or coming to know this. That our old man is crucified or was crucified with him. Now what basically is the old man? The old man is the person you were before you were saved.

Your old unconverted self. In fact as you read Romans 6 it's divided into two. It's a biography of your past life.

It's a biography of your new life. And your old man was the person you were in Adam. And hallelujah that person you're now not.

And really it's a wonderful thing when we can look back and see that all that we were in Adam. Our sins, the evil things that we did. Our sin, the root that came from our flesh nature.

Was all judged completely at the cross. And therefore we can say the person that I was in Adam. My old man has been crucified with Christ.

And who did that? The Lord Jesus. Can I say it again? That's a judicial state of every Christian before God. And that's how God saves you.

Well go on. Knowing this that our old man was crucified with him. That the body of sin might be destroyed.

Now unfortunately the word destroy is too harsh. When we think of the word destroy it's always associated with annihilation. Well that's not the meaning of the word.

Mr Darby is more correct when he renders it annulled. And Mr New is much more practical and he says rendered unemployed. And I like that.

I really feel that that gets to the root of the word. Now what is the body of sin? The body that you have now. But instead of sin reigning.

You give that kind of body where sin reigns. It's cards and money and sad. And now your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

And we're going to see in a few moments. It's a body that's yielded up to God because it's a body that's alive from the dead. So then in our body there should not be the reigning of sin.

Let's go on. That henceforth we should not serve sin. Now please if you're fond of underlining your Bible.

Underline the word serve. Now I am not a serious Greek reader. I have to really work hard on my lexicon.

But the word serve in this chapter is always associated with bondage. It comes so the scholars tell me of that brilliant Greek word Eulos. And it means a slave.

Therefore what he is basically saying is this. Because now your old man has been crucified. And the Lord Jesus has done this for you substitutionally.

And the body of sin has now been sacked. And it belongs to a new master. You should not be under the bondage of sin.

It doesn't say you mustn't sin. But you mustn't be under the bondage of sin. That means a Christian should not perpetually have a bad temper.

Or constantly lie. Or be constantly loving. There will always be a time of the occasional sin.

Because we've got to be practical. But it's the idea of being in bondage to it. And that's the idea here.

So you can see the cross confirms it. Now look at verse 7. For he that is dead is justified from sin. Now I know that translators and expositors will expand this in various ways.

But what I believe he is basically doing is this. He gives us the fact. The cross proves that the old man has been crucified with Christ.

Then he gives us an illustration. He that is dead is freed from sin. For instance.

If a man commits an awful crime. And the police surround the house. They can apprehend a living man.

But if that man commits suicide. They can't apprehend a dead man. You can't bring a corpse into a courtroom.

The moment he's dead. He's freed from sin. Ah, but someone might say.

Brother Peter. As some said here when Paul wrote this. But surely, surely.

When you're dead that's a fact. This idea of a substitutional death is an effect. What a terrible accusation.

Note. The death of Christ is the greatest reality in history. And my dear friends.

You have died substitutionally. As far as God is concerned. Far more when a person dies physically.

For having given us the illustration. Showing that when a man is dead. He is freed and justified from sin.

He applies it and says. Now if we be dead with Christ. We believe that we shall also live with him.

Therefore he gives us the fact. He gives us an illustration of the fact. And then he applies the fact.

That we have died in Christ. Now isn't it strange. In the western world.

We find this hard to understand. And yet in the eastern world. Especially in China.

They have gripped this truth beautifully. Let me give you a case in point. I was ministering on Colossians 3. And your life is hid with Christ in God.

And I was explaining to the congregation. That judicially we have all died. And I went up to a man I knew very well.

And I said to him. And I hadn't seen him for three years. Brother John.

I heard that you died. Oh dear he said. When did you hear that? I said I've heard that you've died.

Oh dear he said. What authority do you have? I said I have very good authority. Oh dear dear dear.

He went white. He said what do you mean? Well I said I've just been propounding. You're dead.

And your life is hid with Christ in God. Oh he said you mean that? Now can you see the point? The substitutional death wasn't really important. Physical death was essential.

And factual. Beloved. The Lord Jesus calls physical death sleep.

And a believer will never die. His body will sleep. We've already died in Christ.

And what we call death. The Lord calls sleep. And when the Lord Jesus comes.

He'll swallow it all up in victory. And isn't it lovely to lay hold on that fact. Now if we be dead with Christ.

We believe that we shall also live with him. In resurrection power. And then nine and ten.

The resurrection confirms it. Let's look at these verses. Because they are tremendous.

But ye are not in the flesh. Oh I'm sorry I'm reading the eighth chapter. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead.

Dieth no more. Death hath no more dominion over him. That means.

When the Lord Jesus died upon the cross. He became so obedient to the will of God. That he submitted himself to death.

For us. Apart from the coming of the Lord Jesus. Physical death that the Bible calls sleep.

Will be a necessity. But for the Lord Jesus it wasn't a necessity. He became obedient unto death.

And he died unto sin once. And in the fact that he died unto sin once. He now lives unto God.

And therefore the question of death. Has no more authority over him. He has tasted death.

Death for every man. For in that he died. He died unto sin once.

Now that means two things. First of all it has to do. With the completeness of his testing.

When he was on the cross. He became obedient unto death. And there was never a time.

When the Father loved him more. As when he was in that cross. And brought glory to God.

And when he had gone through that testing. He brought glory to God. And that was the finality.

And that was the end of all the testings. On the Lord Jesus. Now the testings were not to show.

Whether the Lord Jesus could sin or not. The testings were to show to us all. The utter proficiency of the Son.

There are two ways. In which you can test a new aeroplane. You can test it.

To see whether it will break to pieces. Under pressure. And when you have tested it in that way.

You go to a certain place at Farnborough. Where there is an international showing. Of the aircraft.

And there the testing is to show. To all the international customs. And customers.

The utter proficiency of that plane. Now when the Lord Jesus was being tested. It wasn't to see whether he would sin or not.

But it was to show to the whole universe. The absolute perfection of Jesus Christ. On the cross.

So he died unto sin. And then he died once and for all for sin. And he dealt with it once and for all.

And as far as God is concerned. Sin has been put away once and forever. And therefore he says.

For in that he died. He died unto sin once. But in that he lives.

He lives unto God. And now he lives unto God. Having dealt with sin once and for all.

And that's how you live. You have died. Judicially.

You have been buried. You have been raised again. You are seated with Christ in the heavenlands.

And therefore God pronounced you as just. And that's how he sees you. And that's how he is going to see you forever.

It would be lovely dear friends. If we could float out of our bodies. And if we could get where God is.

And if we could see ourselves as God sees us. I think some of us would say this. That's not me.

I'm wrapped in Christ. Can't be me. You see all the time I'm saying.

Oh wretched man that I am. That can't be me. And then the almighty God would say something like this.

Do you think I could have your flesh life. And just. And judged.

In my presence. Oh no. Go back to the cross.

And there on the Lord Jesus. You would see. Every single sin.

That you would ever commit. Judged. And you would see the seat of your.

And you would realise in God's sight. You have gone down into death. And you would quietly say.

Oh thank you. And then you would see yourself. A completely new creature.

Much more new. Than you could ever appreciate. And the almighty God would say to you.

Now look. You're a saint. I've made you a saint.

You're holy. I've made you holy. Now live a holy life.

Now live a saintly life. What I've done for you. Judicially.

Now you live out. Experimentally. But then you will say.

How can we do that? Now look at verse 11. Faith reckons it. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves.

To be dead indeed unto sin. But alive unto God. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now this is a practical. And it's an operative verse. The word reckon has three meanings.

First of all. It has to do with correct calculations. In the old days.

We used to say. He was a good reckoner up. In other words.

He was good at maths. And what the word really means. Is to get your theological accountancy.

Right. Shall we do that? Shall we get our spiritual maths. Correct.

We have left the Adamic family. Through the death of Christ. All that's associated with Adam.

Has been judged. Whether we know it. Or whether we don't know it.

That's the fact. All that we were in Adam. Has been buried.

Finally put out of the way. In God's sight. We are completely new creatures.

More new than we shall ever realise. And therefore we have a new head. We have a new society.

And therefore we all have a new life. We are complete in Christ. That's how it is.

So let's get our maths right. Secondly. The word has to do with total commitment.

Now unfortunately. We are taught. That faith is like stepping on a platform.

And putting faith in the platform. We are taught. Faith is like getting on a bus.

And putting faith in the driver and the bus. Faith is like sitting on a form. And putting our faith totally.

In the form. Or I've heard it. Faith is like getting on an aeroplane.

And putting our faith completely. In the pilot and the plane. Well my dear friends.

That is not faith. In the realm of logic. That is mathematical probability.

You do it by instinct. Well you say what is faith? It's seen in the fourth chapter of Romans. And I'm going to take Abraham.

He was a man about 99. And he was longing for a child. That came from himself through Sarah.

He realised that really. All her productive organs were dead. He realised that he was quite sterile.

At that age. And God came to that man. And simply said.

If I may paraphrase his language. Abraham. You're going to have a mighty nation.

And it's going to be so multifarious. And multitudinous. It's going to be like the stars of heaven.

And like the sand of the desert. And he hadn't got a baby. Sarah was well over 90.

He was 99. Now note this. The law of nature must have said to him.

Abraham. You're a fool to believe that rubbish. Biologically your wife cannot have a child.

But the law of faith said all things are possible. Only believe. And this is what he did.

He stepped out of the law of nature. He stepped into the law of faith. He implicitly trusted God.

He implicitly trusted his word. And this is what the scripture says. Against hope he believed in hope.

And staggered not at the promises of God. But were strong in faith. He didn't stand on his feelings.

He didn't go by visions and revelations. He believed God and his word. Now there comes a moment in your experience.

When God takes you back to the cross. And intelligently he wants you to apprehend. That you have died in Christ.

Intelligently he wants you to apprehend. That you're alive in Christ. You're a new creature.

And intelligently he wants you to apprehend. That you have died to the reign of sin. And you're alive unto God.

And all of the glory of God and his power is open to you. So that daily you reckon yourself dead to sin. And alive unto God.

And as you're doing that. You can live a holy life. I think I can say this.

I would not really like this to be repeated. I know this is going to be recorded. But they can rule this out.

Every morning before I meet my dear wife. And she's here now. I go through a death, burial and resurrection service.

Otherwise I'm a rascal. And I tell the Lord that wicked, corrupt Peter Brandon. Has died in Christ.

And I let out a little hallelujah. Praise the Lord. And then I have a burial service without flowers.

I tell the Lord I've been buried. And that old vicious wicked man has gone. And then I tell the Lord there's only one life in me.

And that's his resurrection life. And I quietly thank him for making me a new man. And I face up to sin as a dead man.

The temptation is always there. There's no idea of eradication in scripture. The flesh has to be judged every day.

But I face up to it as a dead man. And I face up to Christ and God as a resurrected man. And whilst I'm reckoning.

I live the life of faith. And that's a life of day by day victory. But we mustn't stop there.

I'm still living in a body. Now let's look at verse 12 and with this witless. Or 13.

Neither, or perhaps I should read verse 11 again. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed under sin. But alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body. In other words don't let sin be there as a monarch controlling you. That ye should obey it in the lust the evil desires thereof.

Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. But yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead. And your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

Now we see here that faith not only appropriates it. But yielding expresses that we have died to sin and we're alive unto God. Now what does the word yield mean? Now I believe it's true to say that the best scholars inform us that the word has to do with examination.

When a member of the Imperial Guard went on parade the leading centurion would come round and he would want to see that all the soldiers were wearing the uniform and they were wearing it correctly. For instance when I went into the navy during the war I had to put off my civilian clothing once and for all. Never allowed to put it on again not in those days.

And then I had to put on a naval uniform and quite frankly I hated it. The top part was like a bathing costume. The bottom was like a lady's skirt.

And when you weren't used to it it was an awful uniform. But the Commodore used to come round every other morning and I can see him now. He was wobbly on his feet with alcohol and his nose was redder than it should have been and you could smell his breath as he passed you.

But he looked right up to see two things. That you were wearing the uniform and you were wearing it correctly. Now that's the meaning of the word.

And that means we put off the uniform once and for all that's associated with Adam and the life of Sid. And the word there for put off is always in the airest. And then we wear Christ.

We put on the very uniform of Christ. And that's what baptism's all about. You're telling the world that you're walking in newness of life.

Secondly the word has to do not only with examination but consecration. You will notice now it's a matter of yielding up yourselves to God as those that are alive from the dead. Now with consecration our motive must be pure.

Now this is what I have discovered and the discovery has brought a sense of tragedy. That people will yield themselves to God in a mission to get blessings. And when the mission is over they go back to their former life.

Now that is an impure motive. When we consecrate ourselves to God we consecrate ourselves to God for no other purpose than for the glory of Christ. And when we're there then we're fixed.

Whether we get blessing or whether we have no blessing we're going to be yielded to God. And of course he will give blessing if our motive is pure. But then you will notice we don't yield up the old members we yield up the new members.

I begin to see that I'm a new man in Christ and therefore it's no longer the body of sin it's the Holy Spirit and therefore my body as a new body with new members that belongs to a resurrected Christ is yielded up to him. Now how is that done? I take my mind and say Lord I'm yielding it up. Think through.

I take my eyes. I yield up my eyes and ask him to see through them. I take my ears and I yield up my ears that he may hear through them.

I take my lips and I yield them up for God. I take my heart and yield it up to God. I take every part of my being and yield it up to God.

New member and I want him to use each part. And what is the purpose? The whole purpose of being yielded to God is for the manifestation of the life of the Lord Jesus. So that year by year the loveliness of Christ is seen in you.

Beloved we only have one body. We live in this body approximately five seconds. In comparison and I know this is obvious the body of glory.

Would you mind if I counted that? One, two, three, four, five. And that's your life all over. We mustn't waste a second and therefore we only have a little time for Christ to be magnified in this body.

And the loveliest thing in life is to see just twelve people in one little assembly filled with the beauty of the Lord Jesus. And when you see that you see functional New Testament Christianity. And here's the secret when they were edified they multiplied.

May the Lord teach us what it means to die in Christ. What it means to be risen with Christ. So that we might be yielded unto Him.

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