

**Welcome to the
Common Ground Café!**



Sunday, July 30, 2017

**Wanted: Dead *and* Alive!
A Study of Romans 6:1-14**

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Do you get angry when the flag of your country is burned by a protester, or do you get a lump in your throat when they raise the flag at the Olympics? Why does the flag provoke such strong emotions?

A wife may get upset to see her husband not wearing his wedding ring, or a widow may find it hard to quit wearing hers. Why does a ring provoke such strong emotions?

In Romans 6:1-14, what “symbol” did Paul discuss (see verses 3-4)? (We put “symbol” in quotes because we know that this act is *more* than a symbol, but it is not *less* than a symbol.)

What did he say this act signified (see verses 3-4)?

When people become dissatisfied with their lack of discipline, or their fears and anxieties, or the consequences of their addictions, they may look for ways to improve themselves. However, in the sermon, Pastor Tom said that any self-improvement that isn’t understood in light of Romans 6:1-14 will only lead to either pride or despair.

- ❖ Why would it result in pride?
- ❖ Why would it result in despair?

When Paul said that we are buried with Christ and raised with him ***through baptism***, he meant (pick the best answer):

___ Baptism is how we are united with him. You must be baptized to be truly united with him.

___ Baptism puts on display that we’ve united with him. It is an act of obedience in response to the faith that saves us.

Read Romans 6:11. To advance in holiness, we are told we must “count” or “reckon” that we have actually died with Christ and have been raised with Christ.

First, Paul wrote, “Count yourselves dead to sin.” Imagine a man saying to the business partner that had embezzled the company funds and ruined their business, “You are dead to me!” Answer the following questions:

- ___ Does this mean the man thinks his former business partner is dead, or that he plans to *regard* him as dead?
- ___ Make a list of the practical actions that would result from the man regarding his former business partner as dead. (First item: He would no longer consult him in making future business decisions. Now name a few more.)
- ___ How is this similar to the Christian’s relationship to sin? In other words, what would result if we said to our unwanted way of life, “You are dead to me!”?

Second, Paul wrote, “Count yourselves alive to God.” We have the same power in us that raised Jesus from the dead! What implications does that have for the following:

- ___ overcoming bitterness
- ___ breaking an addiction
- ___ fixing a marriage
- ___ starting a new God-pleasing habit
- ___ turning away from the pull of sin
- ___ anxieties and fears
- ___ Other: _____



So, we are **wanted dead and alive!** If we only thought of the pursuit of holiness as a “putting to death” and not also a “living to God,” what problems would start showing up?

Why is it so hard to “count” or “reckon” this truth as a reality? In other words, why don’t we always feel that sin can be overcome or that new habits can be formed?

Read Romans 6:12-14 and answer the following questions:

- ___ Describe how sin is like a slave master
- ___ What does it mean to present our bodies as instruments of sin or instruments of righteousness?
- ___ When restaurants change owners or personnel, they sometimes put up a sign that says, “Under New Management.” If you had quit going to that restaurant, what would you expect to be different if you saw a sign like that? How is this a good analogy of Romans 6:12-14?

One conclusion from today’s text is: “If I fall into sin, it is because I do not realize who I am.” So, make a list of at least 5 ways that we can remember who we are in Christ. (First: Gospel-centered music. Now list 4 more.)

Some people claim that there’s a state of Christian experience in which sin no longer pulls at the believer. In this passage, though, Paul does not say sin is *impossible* for a Christian but rather sin is *illogical* for a Christian. Why is it actually more effective at overcoming sin to understand it as illogical instead of as impossible?



Close with praise reports and prayer requests