

Romans 6:8-11

Romans 6:8 states that “...we...*died with Christ*...”:

Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, (Romans 6:8)

Paul has made it extremely clear that our old self (Adamic nature, old man, dead spirit, or sin nature) died (was crucified and eradicated) on the cross with Christ—as was explained in our study of Romans 6:1-6. Verse 8 states that “...*we shall also live with Him.*” What thoughts run through your mind when you consider living with Jesus? Thinking about our eternal home can assist us immeasurably while facing the trials in the here and now.

Verse 9 is inundated with encouraging news as well:

knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. (Romans 6:9)

Jesus was “*raised from the dead*”! We know that this miraculous event was not a fabrication of the apostle’s imagination because Jesus appeared first to a woman. If the Gospel writers were attempting to perpetrate a hoax, they would have avoided such an arrangement because the oral law restricted what women could say in a court of law. Therefore, the fact that Jesus first appeared to a woman (Mark 16:9) makes the resurrection even more believable in that, from the Jewish perspective, the testimony of a woman concerning such matters would have been rejected. Anyone desiring to fabricate a hoax would have had the fake Jesus appearing to a man—never a woman! As it was, Mary’s testimony concerning Christ’s resurrection was disbelieved by even the disciples (Mark 16:10-11; John 20:18).

Christ’s second appearance was to women as well (Matthew 28:9). Thus, Jesus’ resurrection was not make-believe.

Paul’s words from 1Corinthians 15:3-8 verify the reality of Christ’s resurrection:

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; and last of all, as it were to one untimely born, He appeared to me also. (1Corinthians 15:3-8)

Jesus appeared to the eleven apostles on an appointed mountain in Galilee (Matthew 28:16; 1Corinthians 15:5). (Note that the eleven apostles are referenced as “*the twelve*” in 1Corinthians 15:5.) Upon seeing Him the apostles worshipped, but some of them were doubtful (Matthew 28:17). He also “*appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time*” (1Corinthians 15:6). Many people who saw Jesus at this time (in 30 AD) and

believed in His bodily resurrection were still alive when Paul wrote First Corinthians, probably about 55 AD—further verifying the validity of the resurrection account. Had a hoax been involved, the twenty-five years between Jesus resurrection and the writing of First Corinthians (30 AD to 55 AD) would have been ample time for some to recant—but their stories remained steadfast. This fact substantiates the reality and validity of Jesus' resurrection. However, the most important proof is His indwelling presence in our hearts. Truly, what a Friend we have in Jesus!

How important is Christ's resurrection to our faith? Paul recorded the answer in 1Corinthians 15:12-19:

Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we witnessed against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied. (1Corinthians 15:12-19)

Paul emphasized Christ's resurrection in Acts 17:8, 23:6, 26:8, and Romans 1:4. Is it any wonder that God's enemies so desperately attempt to discredit this miraculous event? In fact, prove that Jesus remained in the grave and Christianity becomes extinct.

Romans 6:9 also states that Christ will “never...die again.” This truth confirms forgiveness is complete when Christ's blood is initially applied to a New Testament believer; all past, present, and future sins are forgiven at the point of justification/salvation.

Due to the resurrection, “death no longer is master over Him [Jesus]” (Romans 6:9). Because Jesus lives in us, and we have received His type of life (Colossians 3:4), “death” no longer is “master over” us (Romans 6:9). Thus, Paul recorded in 2Corinthians 5:8:

we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord. (2Corinthians 5:8)

The moment the body dies we are ushered into God's presence in heaven. Therefore, the writer of Hebrews penned:

Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. (Hebrews 2:14-15)

The New Testament believer can walk in freedom from the fear of death due to only one reason: Jesus exited the grave and ascended to the right hand of the Father. What a magnificent gospel!

In Romans 6:10 we find that Jesus “*died to sin*”:

For the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. (Romans 6:10)

Jesus died for the sin of all mankind. His blood was the means through which our sins were forgiven once we repented and exercised faith while depraved. (We will confirm later that His body was the means through which our sinful nature was eradicated. When Jesus submitted to the cross, He also died “*to*” the power of sin (Satan’s agent) that attacked Him in the process. In fact, throughout His First Coming He considered Himself dead “*to*” the power of “*sin*.” Had this not been the case, He would have sinned and in the process aborted His mission as Savior. Thus, He, as our “*high priest*,” can understand our weaknesses (Hebrews 2:17-18; 4:15)—having been tempted by the same power that entices us daily.

Jesus was born void of a sin nature. He was the Father’s Son—not Joseph’s son (as addressed in Romans 1). He also possessed a brain free of sinful habit patterns—for He never sinned. Yet, had he sinned, He would have walked according to the flesh.

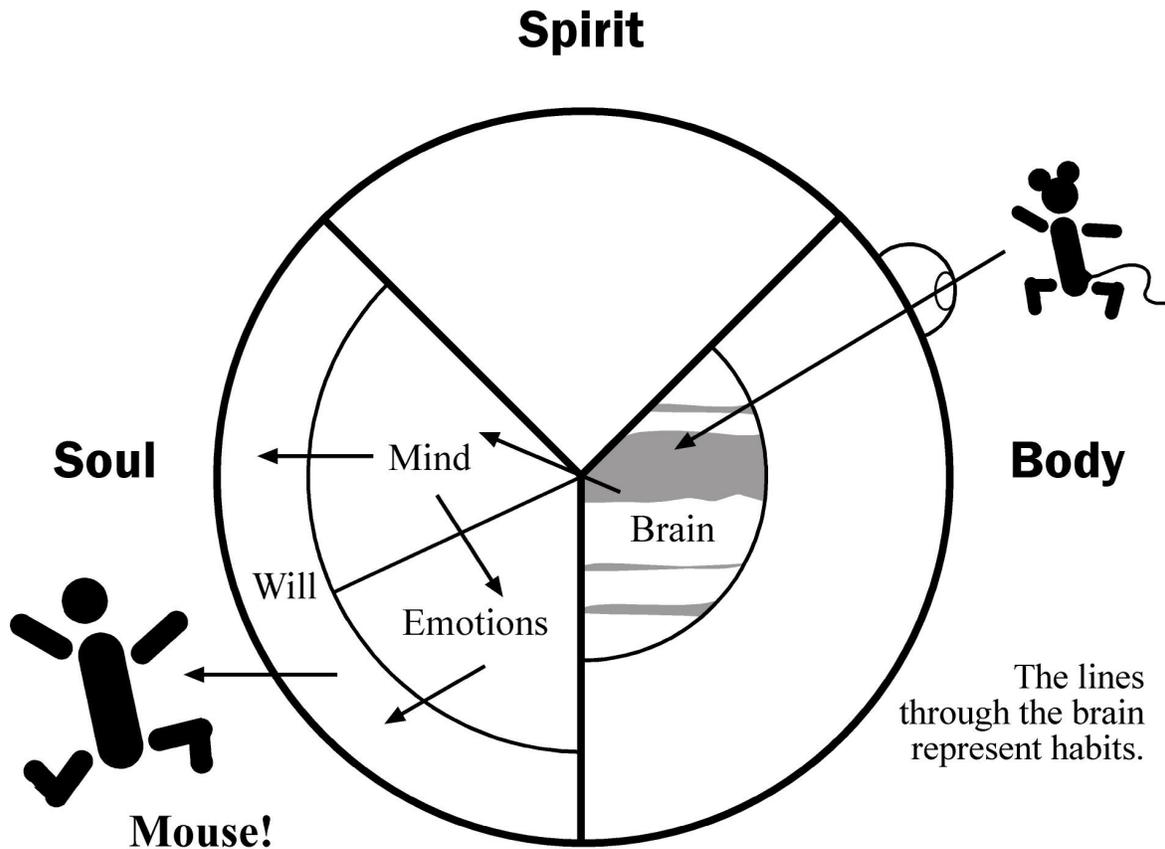
The New Testament believer walks according to the flesh when he believes the power of sin’s lie sent into the mind by means of a sinful habit pattern in the brain—the brain being a piece of flesh (reference Circle Diagram 7). However, new sinful habit patterns have developed in our brains (the brain being a piece of flesh) since becoming part of God’s family. They were established by listening to the power of sin’s lies in new areas of temptation. Hence, we are capable of walking according to the flesh in areas where sinful habit patterns have not yet been developed. Thus, Jesus would have walked according to the flesh had He sinned, even though He possessed no sinful habit patterns in His brain. He can understand our weaknesses, having been bombarded with the power of sin’s lies beyond anything we could imagine.

Romans 6:10 also states that Jesus “*lives to God*.” As was the case during His First Coming, Jesus “*lives*” by the Father’s life, allowing the Father to do the work through Him rather than expending excessive amounts of energy performing the work Himself (John 14:10). Paul understood this principle well, verified by the combination of Romans 12:1 and 1Corinthians 15:10.

The practical side of how we function as believers can be examined by building on the foundation of Circle Diagrams 1 through 4 with Circle Diagram 5, *How We Operate*, which depicts that man consists of three parts: body, soul, and spirit. The soul includes the mind, emotions, and will—you think with your mind, feel with your emotions, and make choices with your will. The brain is part of the body, and the brain houses our habit patterns. Lines drawn through the brain represent these habit patterns. Some habit patterns are larger (stronger) than others, which explains the differences in their widths.

Diagram 5

How We Operate



Using Circle Diagram 5 as a visual aid, suppose you are fearful of mice. If these ferocious little monsters should petrify you, a habit pattern that can cause you to respond irrationally in their presence will be formed in your brain, which is a piece of flesh (meat). In fact, when your eye spots one of these fierce creatures, the information will travel up the optic nerve to the brain. The brain will then process this data and signal the mind. Because a large, negative habit pattern regarding mice is stored in the brain, the outgoing information enters the mind as a catalyst for action in the soul. In fact, when the mind receives this information from the brain, the emotions are automatically aroused. Both the mind and emotions give input to the will. At that point the will chooses to operate the body in high gear and move it as fast as possible from the impending danger. Finally, it is safe!

Believe it or not, individuals are alive and well who have no fear of mice. They simply do not possess a large habit pattern that causes them to respond negatively to these “cute” little creatures. In fact, such persons can grasp a mouse by its tail and place it in a safe environment—totally out of harm’s way from those who view these “furry friends” as life threatening.

We can be greatly controlled by what we see, touch, taste, hear, and smell. Therefore, we should guard our senses from ungodly influence.

Circle Diagram 6 titled *How the Power of Sin is Defeated*, illustrates how the power of sin (Satan’s messenger, or agent) is defeated when you walk in God’s Spirit. Paul says to “consider” yourself “*dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus*”:

Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. (Romans 6:11)

You are forgiven of your acts of sin and released from the penalty of those sins if you are born again. Now that you live “*in Christ*,” the power of “*sin*” can be overcome as well. In fact, because Jesus overcame sin’s power and you now live in Him (2Corinthians 5:17) and He in you (Galatians 2:20), you can also “consider” yourself “*to be dead to sin [dead to the power of sin], but alive to God in Christ Jesus*” (Romans 6:11) and walk victoriously.

This situation can be experienced in a practical sense if, for instance, you struggle with depression, especially on cloudy days? In such cases, a habit pattern will have been formed in your brain (probably prior to your believing in Christ) relating to this behavioral issue. This habit pattern was formed through repeatedly believing the power of sin’s lie. Therefore, “*sin*” will use the stimulus (clouds) in an attempt to ruin your day (Circle Diagram 6) by sending messages to your mind such as, “I always feel depressed on cloudy days. I think I will just lie in bed until this feeling subsides,” or, “I don’t think I can make it through this day.” The pronoun “I” is prominent in these statements because sin’s goal is to deceive you into believing that the thought, which is a lie, is the truth. In fact, by sending the message into your mind through the ungodly habit pattern etched in your brain, sin’s lie enters your mind sounding like you generated it. Consequently, the voice you hear is identical to your voice, including accent and dialect. At this point Romans 6:11 comes into play. Sin’s lie can immediately be replaced with the truth by considering yourself “*dead*” to what you have just heard. You can do so only because the being who consistently believed sin’s lie to be truth, the “*old self*,” has been eradicated (Romans 6:6). Yes, because the old self has been replaced with the new self, you, the new self, have been “*freed from [the power of] sin*” (Romans 6:7). (Reference Circle Diagram 6 for assistance in understanding this life changing truth.) The power of sin cannot enter your mind now that you are a believer; it is sin’s thoughts that enter your mind. It sends messages to your mind through the avenue of the ungodly habit patterns lodged in your brain.

The power of sin’s mission is to trick you into responding to its lies. These thoughts (lies) can be overcome only through the truth of God’s Word. Matthew 4:3-11 validates this fact, for Jesus processed evil thoughts without committing sin. After all, to respond to Satan as He did, He was required to process Satan’s lies—proving that a thought does not become an act of sin until we believe it to be truth and act accordingly.

We can respond to the power of sin in a similar fashion. When evil thoughts bombard our minds, we must immediately appropriate truth. The first thing required is to remember “...our old self was crucified...” (Romans 6:6), for it serves as a reminder that sin is no longer a natural act. Although we will commit acts of sin so long as we dwell in earthly bodies, sin is an unnatural response because of our new nature—remember the cat illustration. Second, we must “consider” ourselves “dead” to sin’s thoughts “...but alive to God in Christ Jesus” (Romans 6:11). To respond in this manner we simply say, “I am dead to this lie floating around in my mind, and I take authority over it in the name of Christ.” At that point we should yield to the truth sent into our minds by means of the Spirit, truth that relates to our particular situation. This truth, empowered by the Holy Spirit, overrides the evil thought and we are immediately delivered through Jesus’ indwelling presence (a subject addressed in more detail in Romans 6:13).

As you probably realize, this godly response is much easier to talk about than to experience in daily living. We will have ample opportunity to use what we are learning, for God doesn’t teach so truth might lie dormant. He is preparing us for spiritual warfare, so remain alert.

Reference Circle Diagram 6 titled *How the Power of Sin is Defeated*. When the power of sin attempts to stimulate depression (by sending negative thoughts into our minds through the ungodly habit patterns in our brains), the emotions respond immediately. We will begin to feel depressed, especially on cloudy days, as indicated by the diagram. The key at such times is to “consider” ourselves “dead” to these thoughts (Romans 6:11) and “alive” to the truth, truth such as Psalm 118:24:

“This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.”
(Psalm 118:24)

Through faith, which is an element of the mind, we can choose to set our minds on the absolutes of God’s Word. The mind can also force the will to accept its input and reject the input from the emotions, even when the emotions are totally out of sync with reality—meaning that as we walk in the Spirit we will many times act in one way while feeling another. In other words, if we refuse to allow our emotions to control our behavior, we will frequently find ourselves responding in an obedient manner while feeling depressed. The great news is that the emotions will eventually settle, and the habit patterns that once derailed us will become manageable. In fact, the Lord greatly reduces the strength of these negative habit patterns as we mature in the faith. Life is bliss when the emotions line up with reality, but these seasons are typically short in duration and cannot be expected to remain.

Emotions can’t always be trusted, especially during times of intense spiritual warfare. If we choose to walk opposite of how we feel, the power of sin will attempt to convince us that we are nothing more than hypocrites playing an imaginary game. To stand, we must realize that many times we will respond positively to truth while feeling like doing just the opposite. This emotional battle is what Jesus faced in Luke 22:44. At Gethsemane, His emotions were out of control, even to the point that “...His sweat became like drops of blood....” But, He set His mind on truth, told His will to disregard His emotions, and walked to the cross in the Father’s strength. Was He a hypocrite by

responding in this manner? Of course not, but we can rest assured that the power of sin was telling Him otherwise.

If we can grasp what we are studying here, through the assistance of the Holy Spirit, we will be amazed at the difference it will make in our ability to persevere in God's strength. We will study more about this topic shortly, so don't be discouraged if understanding is lacking. This subject matter will come together very soon.