

## Living the Resurrected Life (Part 1) *By Jim Hollandsworth*

Imagine for a moment the state of Christianity if Christ had not risen from the grave.

1. Our sins would not be forgiven.
2. The serpent would have crushed Messiah's head, not the other way around.
3. Satan would be the victor, along with sin and death and hell.
4. There would be no life after death.
5. Life would be meaningless and hopeless.
6. Trusting Christ for salvation would be of no avail.
7. Testifying of Christ would make us deluded, intolerant fanatics – indeed, it would make us liars.
8. The Word of God would be fraudulent.
9. Our preaching would be useless, for the gospel would be powerless to save.

*But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 1 Corinthians 15:20-22*

Glory! Hallelujah! Adam brought sin and death into this world. Jesus brought forgiveness and life, and because Christ was resurrected, we will one day be resurrected. The resurrection of Jesus Christ was the watershed event of world history.

What many born again believers fail to realize is that the resurrection demands a choice on our part. It is a very critical choice to live the resurrected life. For what you do with the resurrection determines whether or not Christ is glorified in your life – both now and eternally. In other words, there are serious consequences to your decision.

Let's consider four prerequisites for living the resurrected life from Colossians 3:1-4:

*If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory*

### **Prerequisite #1: Reckon your position in Christ**

*For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.* This is Romans 6, packed into one verse. So let's go to Romans 6 and unpack this marvelous truth.

*Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 6:11*

The word "reckon" is an accounting term. It means to take inventory and then regard it as accurate. To reckon yourself as dead indeed unto sin but alive unto God through

Christ is to be convinced of this truth. But it's not mere intellectual assent. That is where multitudes of Christians fall short of finding true victory in their spiritual lives. They have read this truth and know it to be truth because it is in the Word of God. But they don't take it by faith.

Perhaps that applies to you. You are trying to make this truth a reality by doing things. You try to die with Christ by eradicating those things from your life that displease the Lord. You try to rise with Christ by doing those things that please Him. Nevertheless, you have been unsuccessful or you have convinced yourself of a substandard definition of success. Perhaps you have rationalized your spiritual condition as normal when in reality God calls it abnormal. You have missed the key to unlocking this truth!

If you are born again, you are *already* dead. Indeed, you died with Christ. A transaction occurred in your spirit the day you were saved. Furthermore, you are *already* risen with Him. That transaction also occurred in your spirit when you were saved. Thus, you are *already, officially* dead to sin and alive unto God through Christ. It's a done deal. You can't get any "deader" or any "aliver" (excuse the English, but you get the idea).

What, then, are you to do? Not merely understand it as a fact – believe it! Reckoning is the idea of not only understanding it intellectually but also embracing it in your affections and choosing to depend on this truth!

Notice in particular what you are dead *to* and alive *to*. You are dead *to* sin, which means that sin is no longer your master. You are alive *to* God – which means that Jesus is now your master. Now consider the marvelous benefits.

*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*

When Christ died, you died with Him. It is as if you were buried with Him by baptism – not referring here directly to water baptism, although water baptism is a wonderful picture of this spiritual transaction. The word *baptism* simply means immersion. You have been immersed in His death and then raised with Him in His resurrection. Because of that, you have two benefits, according to this text.

### **Benefit #1: You walk in newness of life**

Verse 4 above is clear. You have been raised up together with Christ so that you might walk in newness of life. The old master of sin and death is gone, never to return. The new master of righteousness and life is here, never to leave. That wonderful transaction happened in your spirit at the moment of your salvation. There is nothing you need to do to get it. You already have it! According to 1 John 3:9, God's seed (Greek, *sperma*) remains in you and you do not continue sinning in the realm of your spirit because you have been born of God. You have been justified – made completely righteous (2 Cor.

5:21) – in your spirit, and you have been positionally sanctified – made completely holy in your spirit (Heb. 10:10).

*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. Romans 6:6*

Your old man – your old master – is dead. You are a completely new creature in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17). Because of that, you have a second benefit.

## **Benefit #2: Sin is powerless to rule over you**

Notice the phrase “body of sin” in the verse above. It is not referring to your physical body, and it is not referring to your old man. Your old man died, and dead things can’t come back to life unless Christ enlivens them (and He’s not about to enliven your old man). The body of sin is the flesh principle that continues to dwell in your soul (as distinct from your spirit). It is the power of sin in your life that keeps tugging on you to pursue evil rather than righteousness.

*I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me ... But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. Romans 7:21,23*

It is also described by Paul in v. 20 as “sin that dwelleth in me.” This is not the same thing as your old man or old master in the realm of your spirit. He died; that’s what crucifixion with Christ did to him. This is the flesh principle or power of sin that continues in your soul even after you are saved. That is why you still sin.

But the glorious benefit is that the flesh principle is no longer powerful to rule you. It has been *destroyed*. The word does not mean “annihilated.” It means “rendered powerless.” It is the same word used in Heb. 2:14. Jesus *destroyed* him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. Jesus didn’t kill Satan and annihilate him. He rendered Satan powerless through the crucifixion and resurrection. In like manner Jesus rendered the flesh principle within you powerless to control you.

*For he that is dead (he who has died) is freed from sin ... For sin shall not have dominion over you. Romans 6:7,14*

Sin is powerless to rule you! You are free from sin’s power. But you may wonder: why then do I keep sinning? Because you are allowing sin to rule you. It may be that you have not reckoned the truth of Romans 6. When Jesus died, you died with Him. When He rose, you rose with Him. Thus, your old man, your old nature, is dead – and he’s not coming back to life. Your spirit is now completely righteous, and your new master now lives there. His name is Holy Spirit. Your spirit is completely new, for it has been saved, justified, and sanctified by Jesus.

But your soul still has vestiges of the old life – does it not? When you got saved, your thoughts were not completely erased and made new. Your feelings were not re-gearred and made new. No, in your soul, you have the same propensities to sin because of the flesh principle or the power of sin. But the truth to be understood and believed is that it has been rendered powerless because the old master is gone and the new master has moved in. Now that you are saved, you have to learn to submit to the new master, not to indwelling sin.

In Part 2 we will discover how to put this truth into action in our everyday lives.