



Text: Romans 6:1-14

Series: Right Living: God's Righteousness Transforming Our Lives

Title: Part 7: *WANTED!* Christians, Dead AND Alive!

Place: First Baptist Church, Olds, AB

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You might remember those old "Wanted" posters we saw in western movies –
"WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE."

God is looking for people – who are "Dead **AND** Alive."

The secret of Christian living is learning how to be dead **AND** alive -- dead to sin but alive to God in Christ.

"So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus." Romans 6:11

In Romans 6:1-14, Paul outlines three crucial steps in learning how to live so that God can use us. To help us remember these three steps I want to give you three key words by which to remember them.

The Christian life is based on facts. In Paul's letters you find a consistent format: doctrine (teaching) is followed by application (obedience). These verses in Romans are a mini-example of Paul's approach.

Step One: We need to establish the facts in our minds. Know what God has done for you.

Step Two: We need to apply the facts to our hearts. Determine who you are in Christ.

Step Three: We need to act on the facts with our wills. Choose to live the life God has given you.

First of all, we need to understand that the Christian life is based on facts -- unchangeable facts of what God has done for us. The **key word** is ...

Know...
Know what God has done for you
Romans 6:1-10

Someone once said: "If Satan can keep us ignorant, he can keep us powerless."

"Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" Romans 6:3



Three times Paul addresses our minds and challenges us to remember what we “know”...

- Verse 3: “Do you not know that....”
- **Verse 6: “We know that....”**
- **Verse 9: “We know that....”**

The Christian faith is based on facts about Jesus that we cull from the study of God’s Word, the Bible. Last week we talked about some “warm” words in Romans chapter 5: peace, love, hope and joy. The Christian faith has a strong “feeling” dimension to it, but we must always remember that those “sense” words are grounded in the facts of our faith. Last week I told you that peace, love, hope and joy are all established in the solid ground of the doctrine of justification by faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus. Our experience of the faith must be based on the solid foundation of our knowledge of the faith.

Paul points to Christian baptism as a kind of summary of the crucial facts of our faith. Baptism is a picture of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Please understand this: Baptism doesn’t save; faith in Christ is what saves. Paul wrote...

“if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” Romans 10:9

BUT baptism is not an unimportant “extra.” It was the common act of initiation into the church of Jesus Christ everywhere in the ancient world. Even though Paul had never visited the church in Rome, when he wrote the believers there he assumed that they were baptized when they put their faith in Jesus. That’s why he appeals to their memory of their baptism experience. (cf. v.3 “all of us”)

**Under the water...
...when Christ died, we died with Him to our old life**

In baptism, we are identified with Jesus’ death: “**united** with him in a death like his” (v.5)

The word “united” is drawn from the medical world. It’s a word that is used to describe the process of two sides of a wound healing together. That’s the picture of union that is presented in baptism – through faith in him, we are bound with Jesus is a bond that makes us one with Him. What happens to him, happens to us. Paul emphasizes our union with Jesus over and over again in these few verses...

- “**into** Christ” – 2 times (v.3)
- “**with** Christ” – 6 times (v.4, 5, 6, 8)
- “**like**” Christ’s – 2 times (v.5)
- “**in** Christ” – v.11



In speaking with his disciples, Jesus spoke of the death he was about to die as...

“The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized...” Mark 10:39

Paul is merely following Jesus’ lead when he points to our baptism and sees in it a union with Jesus in his death for us.

Death is sin’s “trump card” over us but it’s a card that can only be played once! Death played its card on Christ. Once someone has died, death is finished – we can’t die again. (v.7)

Paul tells us that when Jesus died, he died in our place. “Our old self” (v.6) was crucified with him. Our “old self” is everything we were before we became new creations in Christ.

Because of my faith in Jesus, I can say...

- The day Jesus died, Brent Reilly died.

Because of their faith in Christ, our baptism candidates this morning this morning can say...

- **(First service)** The day Jesus died, **Dave** died.
- **(Second service)** The day Jesus died, **Felisha, Miles** and **Karisse** died.

If you’re a believer in Jesus Christ, you can say...fill in the blank with your name...

On the day Jesus died, _____ died.

Christ’s death for us freed us from the power of sin and “death no longer has dominion” over us. (v.9) Death and sin no longer are our masters – we are no longer sin’s slaves!

“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.” Romans 6:6

**Out of the water...
...when Christ was raised, we were raised to new life**

When Paul turns to consider Christ’s resurrection he repeats the truth of our “spiritual union” with Jesus: we are **“united** with him in a resurrection like his.” (v.5)



“We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.” Romans 6:4

The "newness of life" (v.4) in which we live is not a new version of the old life it's a completely different life that has it's origin in God's work in our lives. The Christian life is full of miraculous newness that is the product of God's intervention in our lives. **In Jesus we have...**

- The promise of life in **a new heaven and earth** without sin and sorrow (Rev. 21:1);
- The hope of **a new name** written in heaven (Rev. 2:17) where we'll sing **a new song** (Rev 5:9);
- **A new covenant** of salvation (1 Cor 11:25) in which to live and a **new commandment** to obey (Jn 13:34).
- The gift of **a new nature** (Eph 4:24) and **a new attitude** (Eph 4:23) because we are **new creations** in Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 5:17).

In Jesus Christ, everything has been, is being and will be made new! (Rev 21:5)

And that includes your life! It was new the moment you put your faith in Christ and it will continue to be new until you are with him in resurrected glory in heaven!

When Jesus rose from the dead, Brent Reilly rose to live a new life!
And the same can be said for...

- (First service) Dave
- (Second service) Felisha, Karisse & Miles

And for you if you've been united with Christ by faith. You can fill in the blank...

When Jesus rose from the dead, _____ rose to live a new life!

The facts we need to know...

- 1) We **died with Christ** to the power of sin – **sin no longer is in control of us!**
- 2) We were **raised with Christ** to live a new life for God – we've been given a **new life** in Christ.

The **second key word** for Christian living is...

Determine...
Determine to apply these facts to our lives
Romans 6:11



Paul wrote...

“So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.” Romans 6:11

“The thought is father to the act.” – the way you think will affect what you do.

The unchangeable facts of His-story need to be applied by faith so that they become my story.

“Consider” is NOT “pretend” you are dead to sin and alive to God in Christ but to change the way you see yourself – what God has done for you has actually made you a new creation (2 Cor 5:17).

Do you believe it?

Will you accept his declaration of your real situation?

Will you allow His Word to become your truth?

To “consider” (6:11) is a **commercial term** which can mean “to credit to one’s account.” In Romans 4:3 it says: **“Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.”**

To “consider” ourselves dead to sin and alive to God, means that we take the spiritual facts of Jesus’ death and resurrection and apply them to our lives as our death and resurrection. It means to understand that when Jesus died, we died; when he rose to a new life, we rose to new life.

But to “consider” is also a **process of reasoning that results in action.**

It’s the kind of reasoning that Abraham engaged in when God challenged him to put his son Isaac to death. The writer of Hebrews tells us that...

“He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.” Hebrews 11:19

Abraham took his only son, Isaac, and in obedience to God, was prepared to put him to death because he reasoned that God could raise him from the dead. Can you imagine the kind of faith-based determination it requires to reason like that? That’s the kind of challenge that Paul gives us if we want to live new lives for the glory of God.

We need to see ourselves the way God sees us – new creations in His sight – and we need to act on that insight and we need to do it again and again. The verb the Paul uses is a **present imperative** – it’s a command of God’s Word and it’s **an ongoing process of determining what we will do for God based on the facts of what God has done for us.**



We must determine that we are dead to sin as a way of life

Paul wrote...

“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” Galatians 2:20

Sin no longer controls us – **unless we choose to give it control!**

Preach to yourself: “Sin is NOT my master!” – because Jesus died to sin!

Before his conversion Augustine, the great Christian bishop of the late Roman period, had a mistress named Claudia. Shortly after he found Christ, Claudia saw him on the street in the city. "Augustine! Augustine!" she cried after her old paramour [lover]. Augustine paid no heed. "Augustine! Augustine!" she cried out again. "It is Claudia!"

"But it is no longer Augustine," he replied, as he continued on his way. © 2008 PreachingToday.com William M. Greathouse, Romans: Beacon Bible Expositions (Beacon Hill Press, 1975), p. 103; submitted by Steve Eutsler

Augustine had died – and Augustine was alive to that fact!

We must determine that we are alive to God in Christ Jesus

Over the last couple of weeks I've been part of a group that is preparing a few songs for the Easter season. I've been amazed at the way in which the words of one of the songs have worked their way into my mind. The song speaks about the truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the phrase that I keep hearing in my mind are the simple words...

“You are alive and you're living in me.”

(“Hallelujah to My King” by Shannon Wexelberg © 2006 McKinney Music, Inc.)

The phrase is repeated in the chorus of the song and it's been imbedded in my heart and mind. But what I'm amazed at is the way in which these words come to the forefront of my thinking whenever I'm tempted to sin. Whenever I'm tempted to think or act in a way that reflects the rule of sin, those words challenge me to choose to live according to the new life I've been given in Jesus. Those words speak the truth that Paul declared in Galatians 2:20...

“It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.” Galatians 2:20

And leads me to the third step. If we want to be used by God in the building of his kingdom we need to make a choice.



The key word is...

Choose...

We must choose to act on the facts with our wills

Romans 6:12-14

Paul wrote...

“Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.”

Romans 6:13

The word “present” means “to put at someone’s disposal, to place beside.” The NIV translates it as “offer,” the KJV translates it as “yield.” The point is that we have a choice to make. We have the choice to use our abilities to serve either God or sin.

This is a choice based on the knowledge of what God has done for us and on our determination of who we are in Christ. We’ve changed the way we see ourselves (v.11), now we need to change the way we live to correspond to who we really are.

On the one hand, Paul tells us, “**do not present**” our abilities for the use of sin.

The way in which Paul expresses this thought carries the sense of **an ongoing refusal** to yield ourselves to sin. It has to be an ongoing resistance because sin is constantly trying to regain control of us – we must constantly deny it access to our lives! Through faith in Christ, sin’s rule in our lives has been broken. We now have a choice to make: submit to the rule of Christ in our lives or allow sin to control us.

On the other hand, Paul encourages us to “**present [ourselves] to God**” for his use. The way in which Paul uses the word “present” in this instance has the sense of **a decisive turning** over of ourselves to God for His use.

What we have here is an ongoing decision to serve God and not sin, a decision that needs to be made decisively and repeatedly. We can either be “instruments” for sin or righteousness. We must make a choice. The word that is translated as “instrument” is most often translated as “weapon.” J.B. Phillips translated the phrase...

“put yourselves in God’s hands as weapons of good for his purpose.”

Paul’s use of the word “weapon” is so appropriate here. This contest we find ourselves often feels like a war. We’re in a war for our hearts and minds and the battle is fought in will.



The mind is the battle ground where many spiritual victories are either won or lost in our lives. One of the most powerful examples of the power of the will is story of Nobel laureate, mathematician John Forbes Nash, Jr. His life was portrayed in the movie, *A Beautiful Mind*, which starred Russell Crowe in the role of Nash. Nash was a brilliant mathematician but he was tortured all his life with paranoid schizophrenia.

Nash was a genius mathematician studying at Princeton, [and he] eventually earned ... the 1994 Nobel Prize in Economics. Long before this, while a student at Princeton, Nash began to experience paranoid schizophrenia. Several delusional characters left him unable to discern reality from hallucination.

His paranoia climaxed while Nash worked as a professor in the early 1950s at M.I.T.'s Wheeler Defense Labs. Nash was recruited to decipher Soviet codes for the U.S. government, but following his initial experiences with code breaking, he descended into a delusional world where he continued to work for government agent William Parcher (Ed Harris).

During this time, Nash's wife, Alicia (played by Jennifer Connelly), admitted him to an institution that diagnosed and treated his disease. After shock therapy and medications left him unable to think through math problems, care for his young son, or be intimate with his wife, Nash determined to get off the medications and reason his way through his severe mental illness. His determination to overcome his illness led him to re-establish his relationship with Princeton and eventually to resume teaching.

*In 1994 Thomas King (Austin Pendleton) from the Nobel Committee met with Nash to assess his mental state and determine if he would be a suitable Nobel laureate. In their conversation, Nash said to King tongue in cheek, "I am crazy." Then more soberly, **"I take the newer medications, but I still see things that are not here. I just choose not to acknowledge them. Like a diet of the mind, I just choose not to indulge certain appetites."*** (© 2007 PreachingToday.com)

Elapsed time: This scene begins at 2:08:00 and lasts approximately 30 seconds. Content: A Beautiful Mind is rated PG-13 for profanity and adult content. A Beautiful Mind (Dreamworks, 2001), rated PG-13, directed by Ron Howard, written by Akiva Goldsman; submitted by Todd Dugard, Ontario, Canada)

"Like a diet of the mind, I just choose not to indulge certain appetites." I don't want to ruin the movie for those who have never seen it, but the film draws us into Nash's delusional world with such skill that it isn't until almost the story's end that we learn which characters have been real and which were the products of his delusion. I can only imagine the kind of will-power required, as Nash put's it, to "just choose not to indulge certain appetites." Nash held tenaciously to the choice for reality rather than delusion. That is the kind of decisive choice imbedded in Paul's challenge to us to "present" ourselves to God.

It's a choice that touches every area of our lives.



France Ridley Havergal created a check-list of some of the choices we need to make. In her hymn, "Take My Life and Let It Be," Havergal inventoried the "members" we are to offer to God for his use. She wrote...

"Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of Thy love...

The story is told that when the Germanic tribes were baptized, they held their sword arm out of the water. What they were saying was that their commitment to the Christian faith wasn't going to be allowed to stop their warlike activity. We need to ask ourselves: is there anything that we refuse to offer to the Lord for his use?

"Take my feet and let them be swift and beautiful for Thee...

"Take my voice and let me sing always, only for my King....

"Take my silver and my gold, not a mite would I withhold....

Some years ago when I was performing a baptism I forgot to take my wallet out of my pants pocket. Afterwards I realized that that wasn't such a bad thing – my debit card and credit card got baptized! It was a declaration that my "silver and gold" belong to the Lord, too!

"Take my intellect and use every power as You choose....

"Take my heart, it is thine own....

What we do; our "hands." Where we go; our "feet." Our words, our possessions, our minds, our affections – everything we are and have. Finally, Havergal reaches to include everything she hasn't already listed...

**"Take myself and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee."**

Everything ... every ability ... every resource ... every part, all for Christ.
How can that happen?

First, have you got the facts straight? Do you **know** that...

- When Christ died, you died – sin's power was broken!
- When Christ was raised, you were given access to resurrection power in him – a new life was begun!

Second, have you **determined** to see yourself as God does?

- Have you applied these facts to yourself?
- You are a new creation in Christ – sin's power is broken, Christ is alive in you



Third, are you **choosing** to give control of your life to God?

- Is there anything you are holding back? Take an inventory of yourself: every part belongs to God

A few months ago I asked a question: **How is your baptism going?** Our baptism is a pledge to follow Jesus Christ for the rest of our lives.

Do you need to renew your baptismal vow?

Take a stand and declare: "I belong to God and sin cannot have me!"

Do you need to make a vow in baptism? The act of baptism is a declaration of our union with Christ – have you made that declaration?

From his hospital bed on the eve of open heart surgery, Pastor Bruce McIver asked his cardiologist, Dr. Dudley Johnson, "Can you fix my heart?"

The physician, known for being short and to the point, said, "Sure." Then he quickly turned and walked away.

Following the 12-hour surgery, McIver asked Johnson, "In light of the blocked arteries that I had when I checked into the hospital, how much blood supply do I now have?"

"All you'll ever need," replied the terse surgeon, who again ended the conversation by walking away.

Upon his discharge from the hospital, McIver's wife, Lawanna, asked the doctor, "What about my husband's future quality of life?"

Johnson paused and then said, "I fixed his heart; the quality of his life is up to him." © 2008 PreachingToday.com Bruce McIver, "Stories I Couldn't Tell While I Was a Pastor" (Guideposts, 1991), p. 244-247; submitted by Hugh Poland, Kingwood, Texas

Jesus Christ has "fixed our hearts" but the quality of our Christian lives is held in our application of that truth to our lives. Our spiritual quality of life depends on applying to our lives what he had done for us in dependence upon the Spirit.

Know...

Determine...

Choose...

- **Prayer for Baptism candidates** (Invite family & friends to the front)
- **Distribution of certificates & Prayer of Blessing**
- **Final Song:** Take My Life & Let It Be
- **Benediction**