

Sermon 1-13-19 Seeking a New Life Romans 6:1-11

Dear Seekers of the new life in Christ:

Why did they leave to come to America?

If one does a study of immigrant groups or nationalities that comprise Americans one will find many, many different nationalities. It may be impossible to come up with a complete list of what our ancestry lineage is with many of us being perhaps parts of many different nationalities. But among Americans today these are the largest groups that most of us claim as our ancestry past:

- Germans 49 million
- African-Americans 41
- Irish 35
- Hispanic 31
- 26 English
- 17 Italian
- 10 Polish
- 9 French
- 6 Scottish
- Under 5 million: Dutch Norwegian and Wels, etc

Why? Do we know what prompted these groups of our ancestors to leave the old country behind?

One man who left his home behind for America said: “There was talk of a land across the sea, a new world where it was said everybody was welcomed and where all the streets were paved with gold.”

Another wrote: “Dazzling stories of limitless fertile lands across the sea in far off America, free for the taking, lit up the immigrants of the young Scandinavians.”

It wasn't just the promise of a better life that led these immigrants to make the journey across the seas. Many of these people were leaving behind an old life of poverty and persecution.

It was a big decision for these people to make. Coming to America they were leaving behind family, friends and the only home they knew. Many times they came with only the clothes on their backs and maybe a suitcase they could carry.

They came seeking a new life!

In a spiritual sense we believers in Christ have a new life.

The Old has given way to the New

In Romans 6 the Apostle Paul is speaking to us about the old life of sin that we left behind. We left this old life behind when we came to Christ. We now live a new life. The Apostle Paul in essence is saying that if we left behind the old life of sin behind, how can we still live in our old ways.

Paul wrote this letter to the church of believers in Rome. In the opening part of this letter Paul reminds us that because of our old Adam (person) we...

- lived in the old world of sin
- lived where “sin reigned in death” Romans 5:21
- “...were dead in...transgressions and sins...gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts.” Ephesians 2:1,3

Natural knowledge

We were born with the natural knowledge of God. But this knowledge is not a saving knowledge of God. The natural knowledge of God that everyone is born with tells us that...

- there is a God that we are accountable to
- we have to do something to appease this God’s wrath
- there is a right and wrong but we are only able to choose wrong because without faith in the true God it is impossible to please him. Hebrews 6

Someone put it this way: “As a sinner, separated from God, you see his law from below, as a ladder to be climbed to get to God. Perhaps you have repeatedly tried to climb it, only to fall to the ground every time you have advanced one or two rungs. Or perhaps the sheer height of the ladder is so overwhelming that you have never even started up.”

Many people today are looking up at heaven at God and they are saying...

- See, I am trying the best I can to be approved of by You
- Look, Lord I am not as bad as the person next to me
- Lord, do you notice all the good things I am doing with my life
- Yes, Lord, I have done bad, but my good far outweighs the bad I have done
- Won't you please accept me, Lord, on the basis that I am a pretty good person?

Who believes this...Who teaches this way of thinking?

- Every religious group or belief system except true Christianity believes that one must do something to be approved of by God.
- Every faith group's writings teach a salvation that requires something that man must do.

The Bible makes it clear when it comes to our salvation:

- "God saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit." Titus 3:5
- "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith...not by works." Ephesians 2:8-9

This is how we have arrived in the New World spiritually....We have New Life in Christ.

Declared Not Guilty

Since we have now been "declared not guilty" by God because of Jesus' blood and righteousness, we are now called to live as new people in a new world --- God's world.

We are motivated to live new lives in our new land of God's world by His love.

"What a relief to see Jesus offering with open arms to lift you above the ladder of God's law, to take you directly to God! Once Jesus lifts you into God's presence, you are free to obey..."

- we obey out of love, not necessity
- we obey through God's power, not your own
- we know that if you stumble, you will be caught by God's grace

- we will be caught and held in Jesus' loving arms

We have a new life in Christ! We live as new people in Christ. With God's grace and motivated by His love we desire to...

- Be faithful to our spouse
- Be the one at the office who refuses to cheat
- Be the neighbor who acts neighborly
- Be the employee who does the work and doesn't complain
- Do our part and enjoy life
- Have our words match our way of life

People are watching the way we act more than they are listening to what we say. We live by grace and are saved by grace not by works. However, may we never take cheapen God's grace.

In Paul's day he had to deal with a question that arose once people realized that they are freely forgiven by God's grace and the truth that God's grace covers all their sins. Yes, it is true as Paul wrote in Romans 5:20

"Where sin increased, grace increased all the more..."

The more we see our sinfulness, the more we see God's abounding grace forgiving us. But some in Paul's day posed this question: "If God freely forgives us, does that mean we can just go on sinning?"

Paul knew this argument some in his day were making. He says in Romans 3:7-8 "If my falsehood enhances God's truthfulness and so increases his glory...why not say...let us do evil that good may result?" In other words, the more I sin, the more God forgives, right?

How does Paul deal with this argument? What is Paul's answer?

Romans 6:1 "Shall we keep on sinning so that God can keep on showing us more and more kindness and forgiveness?" Paul says...

By no means...of course not!

- verse 2 "By no means...of course not!"

- “We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Sin’s power over us was broken when we became Christians and were baptized to become a part of Jesus Christ.”
- “Your old sin-loving nature was buried with him by baptism when he died and when God the Father with glorious power, brought him back to life again, you were given his wonderful new life to enjoy.” v4 Life Application Bible

We have a new life in a new land...a new world – God’s world.

- We are united with Christ in His death and His resurrection v5
- Our old sinful self was crucified with Christ v6
- We are no longer slaves to sin...we have been freed from sin’s control over us vv6-7
- We have a new life...in a new land...with Christ v8

Jesus died once and rose again once to end sin’s power over us! vv9-10

Count yourselves DEAD to sin but ALIVE to God

Therefore, Paul says in v11 “Count yourselves DEAD to sin but ALIVE to God.” The word “Count” means

- Determine
- Purpose
- Decide
- Meaning: A decisive end to that sin miserable life.

“So look upon your old sin nature as dead to sin, and instead be alive to God, alert to him...Do not let sin control your body any longer; do not give in to its sinful desires.”

Romans 6:11-12 LAB

We must never take “lightly” the price Jesus paid for our sin. Our old way of life has been put to death and buried by Christ. In Baptism we have a new life. We live by the Spirit not by our flesh.

“If we think of our old sinful life as dead and buried, we have a powerful motive to resist sin. Not wanting the ugly old life to come back to power again. We can enjoy our new life in Christ because we have joined him in his death and resurrection.”

Our evil desires, our bondage to sin, our love of sin died with Christ.

Yes, we still sin in this life because we still live in the flesh. But we are different now as believers.

- In our old sinful flesh before conversion we were slaves to sin
- Now, in our new life in Christ we are free to live and say “No” to sin’s control and domination
- Paul says in Titus 2:

“For the grace of God...teaches us to say “NO” to ungodliness...”

We still have to deal with sin but it’s different now as God’s children. A young woman who became a Christian once said: “Before I was a believer I was a sinner running after sin, now that I am a believer and under the power of the Holy Spirit, I am a sinner running away from sin.”

This fellowship we have with the Lord will have an effect upon our...

- work and worship
- free time and Bible study time
- quiet times and times of caring for others

“You get impatient with your own life, trying to master a habit or control a sin...Dwell on the fact that God lives within you. The realization that God is dwelling within you may change the places you want to go to and the things you want to do today...and remember God saves you with His grace.”

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

When we know we are free from death’s power, we will experience a new vigor in life. We have a new life in Christ.