

ROMANS 6:1-11

UNITED WITH HIM

“What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? 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.

“For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. 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. For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.”¹

When you were baptised, you made a statement reflecting your understanding of the Faith. Of course, I am assuming that you were baptised; however, if you have not been baptised, please do not tune out, as the message will address an issue of greatest significance. Assuming that you have been baptised, precisely what did you say through the act of baptism? Baptism pictures one's belief concerning Christ and expresses the candidate's relationship to Him. Because this is true, baptism speaks of what the one baptised holds to be true. While multiple images might be suggested as being portrayed through baptism, the Word of God informs us that we make a definite statement of what we accept as true through baptism. Whether the declaration of baptism is in unison with the Word of God, or whether it merely reflects a pious mythology, in no small measure determines the validity of the rite.

To be certain, many people do not remember the rite they called baptism. Perhaps they have seen pictures or heard accounts of the event, but they were infants and their parents or some other adult answered questions concerning the Faith in their behalf. Though others were perhaps older when they were baptised, the motive for receiving baptism has dimmed with the passage of time and they are unable to state with precision why the ritual was performed.

Some people were baptised in order to join a church. Others were baptised out of fear of judgement; they sought to ensure that God accepted them; they felt that through the ritual they could coerce God. Others were baptised because, well, because their friends were baptised or because they calculated that it would advance a career or open the door to a coveted relationship. I trust that most sought to honour the Saviour through choosing to receive baptism.

Undoubtedly, the motive for receiving baptism is important. In a similar manner, the mode of baptism is important. If baptism is neither an act to compel God to accept the candidate nor a means by which an individual joins the church, then of necessity the rite must convey some significant truth. According to Paul, baptism does convey multiple truths that are interrelated. Join me in study of the words he wrote to the Christians in Rome while providing instruction concerning the salvation we have received.

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BACKGROUND — The Letter to the Christians of Rome would not be mistaken for a treatise on ecclesiology; the primary instruction provided in the letter revolves around the issue of salvation. This does not mean that other doctrines are ignored—after all, all theology is interrelated. Whichever doctrine happens to be studied, we realise that it ultimately derives from the relationship of God to His redeemed saints. Consequently, there is no teaching of the Word that is unaffected by our understanding of salvation.

In the case of the text for this day, the Apostle is focusing on a philosophy that theologians have described as antinomianism. Like an untreated infection, antinomianism has resided among the churches from earliest days. The word “antinomian” is derived from two Greek words that are roughly translated “against law.” The concept of antinomianism expresses the view that since the believer is saved by grace, she is free from moral law. Antinomianism could be described as a sort of Christianised Epicureanism or Christianised hedonism. Antinomianism promotes the idea that because one is saved by grace, he need not submit to the righteous expectations of the Word. After all, the redeemed individual is forgiven all sin. Since the sins forgiven were future at the time of Christ’s sacrifice, therefore there is no requirement to live according to the righteous decrees of the Bible. The antinomian would argue that since good deeds do not promote justification, neither do evil deeds hinder justification.

You can see the logic of the position and readily understand the appeal of the doctrine. Likewise, you can look at the life of much of contemporary Christendom and see how the doctrine has insinuated itself into the life of the people of God. In far too many instances, there appears to be scant difference between the professed people of God and those in the world. The tendency is to swing to one extreme or the other; either we Christians are burdened down with multiple regulations that we have invented to keep us from sinning (though they never work) or we have jettisoned righteousness, adopting an attitude that whatever brings us pleasure is the summum bonum of existence. Extremes are seldom conducive to righteousness, however.

Though the Apostle is not focused on the problem of artificial standards, it is obvious that he is concerned lest the believers to whom he is writing should slip into a wanton, self-centred or unrestrained lifestyle. Let’s remember that Paul has just spent quite a bit of time addressing the truth that our standing before God is the result of faith. We come to the Risen Christ, believing that He died because of our sin and believing that He was raised to give us a right standing in the presence of the Father. As Paul would teach in another of his letters, we are complete in Christ.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

“In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory” [EPHESIANS 1:3-14].

Already, the one who believes is “holy and blameless” before God. The righteousness that we now enjoy does not result from our own effort; rather, the righteousness we possess is ours in Christ Jesus. At this time, we are declared holy in Him; His righteousness is imputed to us through faith. However, this does not mean that we always act as though we were holy. Tragically, some of the most unholy people can be professing Christians.

Some professing Christians act unholy because they are unholy—they have never been born from above. Perhaps they are church members, or even leaders within a congregation. Perhaps a rite has been performed and these individuals were declared to be Christians; but there is no reflection of the presence of the Spirit of God to indicate the presence of Christ in the life of such individuals. Frankly, it is possible, perhaps even probable, that many professing Christians are religious, but unsaved.

Again, it is possible that the absence of holiness results from ignorance. We pastors are responsible to teach the Word of God, instructing listeners how to live righteously; however, those who listen are responsible to apply the truths that are taught. Each Christian is charged with the responsibility of seeking to understand the will of God and then he is to do that will. Because we are living in a world that is largely marked by biblical ignorance, many people do not know the will of God. However, if the Spirit of God lives within the individual, there exists a divine restraint when the believer attempts to live solely for herself.

A colleague used to say that though a sheep may fall into the mud, it will never lay down in the mud. It was a picturesque description of the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. Jesus, speaking of the work of the Spirit, taught us, “When [the Spirit] comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged” [JOHN 16:8-11].

Alternatively, it is conceivable that the child of God has been taught errant doctrine. Christian teaching is both didactic and by example. The Faith of Christ has elevated the sermon to a high position in worship. It is fair to say that worship is incomplete without exposition of the Word of God. Though worship can entail singing, observing dramatic presentations, engaging in dance, and assuredly includes prayer, worship that neglects the command to “preach the Word” [see 2 TIMOTHY 4:2] is incomplete. However, it is also vital to realise that instruction is clarified and animated through observing the life of the one declaring the truths of the Word. Thus, it is possible that many professing Christians have been mistaught because he sat under errant preaching, or even because he observed the preacher living an egocentric life. The Word of God cautions against living as though God will ignore sin—He will not! The conscientious Child of God accepts the warning delivered through the Apostle. “Whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil” [2 CORINTHIANS 5:9, 10].

Before penning the words found in our text, Paul had made a significant point. He wrote, “Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous. Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” [ROMANS 5:18-21].

Anticipating that some would distort the truth that, “as sin reigned in death, grace also [must] reign through righteousness,” Paul moved smoothly into the matter of our text. Though the instruction he gives is incidental, it is not inconsequential. For those who are inclined to excuse sinful behaviour or who are prone to justify disobedience, Paul simply challenges them to reflect on what was stated through their baptism.

There were not multiple modes of baptism in the New Testament. The Apostle could argue, fully anticipating that those reading the encyclical we have received as Ephesians would understand what he asserted, “There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all” [EPHESIANS 4:4-6]. There is one baptism! Paul is not arguing that there are multiple forms of baptism, or multiple expressions witnessed in baptism—he says, anticipating that there will be no argument, there is one baptism. If there is one Lord, and if there is one God and Father of all, by the rules of language there is but one baptism.

Baptism among the early churches was very important. The act signalled a break with the past life and union with the Son of God. Baptism spoke of death to sin and of being made alive to the new life of Christ the Lord. Each Christian had shared the experience of baptism. We often forget that those who were unbaptised were not considered Christians among the early churches. Catechumens were learners, and thus were excluded from participating at the Lord’s Table and debarred from leading in worship. Catechumens were to observe, to learn, not lead. Until they had openly received baptism, their commitment was questionable.

I have related this information to bring us to the matter at hand. Professed believers who chose to live a life that was self-centred or unrestrained, or a life that could be described as unrighteous, were pointed to their baptism. In effect, the Apostle asks, “What did you say?” The question stands to this day. What did you say when you were baptised? What was the testimony given through your baptism? Apparently, if we follow the apostolic argument, the mode of baptism was important to his argument. If the one who had been baptised was wetted on the forehead, the argument of burial and resurrection would be meaningless. If the one who had been baptised had water poured over her head, the argument presented becomes confusing. It is apparent that those reading Paul’s words were in substantial understanding of a shared testimony, or the argument is senseless. If baptism was optional among the early churches, the shared testimony was absent. However, those reading Paul’s letter understood what he intended.

THE OLD SELF HAS BEEN CRUCIFIED WITH HIM — “Do you not know that all of us who have been baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death... 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. For one who has died has been set free from sin.”

I iterate a significant truth—baptism does not equate to salvation; baptism neither secures salvation nor disposes God to grant salvation. Salvation is the gift of God received through faith in the Risen Son of God. However, those who are saved are commanded to be baptised. It is significant to note that in Scripture, we find not one saved individual who rejected baptism. Those who received Christ as Master immediately identified with Him in baptism. Moreover, the baptism these redeemed individuals received pictured the truth they had received concerning the Good News of Jesus. Baptism pictured His death, His burial and His resurrection; the one who was baptised identified in such a way that she or he confessed that the old nature was dead with Christ and that they were now walking in a new life.

When I say that we insist on immersion as baptism while rejecting sprinkling or pouring, it is not because we are obstreperous or bellicose; neither do we seek to be truculent or argumentative in standing firm on principle. Rather, we accept the clear teaching of the Word that baptism pictures the great truths that have been accepted by the one who is twice born. If these professed truths are a lie, then the apostolic argument presented in the text is pointless. If the ordinance is performed in order to make the baptismal candidate a Christian, the argument is invalidated because the ordinance could simply be administered a second time. If the symbolism of the ordinance is of secondary importance or if it is even somehow unimportant, then the argument Paul presents is specious—it is unfounded. Frankly, if the ordinance symbolises something other than a burial and a resurrection, the argument is absurd.

In the text, the Apostle speaks of being baptised into Christ's death and of burial with Christ. He also says we are "united with Him in a death like His." We might ask how this can be. In order to answer this question, it will be helpful for us to review the language used throughout the New Testament. When He gave His disciples the Great Commission, Jesus said, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" [MATTHEW 28:19, 20]. The command to baptise is a command to immerse—*eís*—"into" the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The baptism commanded is to be seen as identification with the Triune God—it is affirmation that the one baptised accepts the reign of the Triune God over her life.

The imagery is the same that is used in COLOSSIANS 2:12-13. There, Paul writes that we "Hav[e] been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses." Look at the imagery: we were dead in trespasses, but we have been made alive together with the Risen Master. His death was because of our sin—He identified fully with us in our weakness; He took upon Himself our sin and suffered death in our place [see HEBREWS 2:9]. Therefore, when we speak of being buried with Him, we acknowledge that our sin was the reason He gave His life. Thus, baptism is intended to be a very personal testimony of identification with God; and in particular, it is designed to be a testimony of identification with Christ in His death.

Whenever a worshipper brought an animal to be sacrificed under the Old Covenant, the one presenting the animal—whether a lamb, a ram, a bullock or a dove—would lay his hand on the animal, confessing his own sin. This was a powerful reminder that the animal was presented as the substitute for the one presenting the animal. In a similar manner, when one is baptised, he is confessing his faith that Jesus died because of his own sin and not merely for the sin of others. Moreover, the confession is delivered in a most personal fashion. Each candidate for baptism would be required to make this affirmation for himself or for herself. There can be no proxy to give the testimony.

Again, in GALATIANS 3:27, the Apostle says, "As many of you as were baptised into Christ have put on Christ." Here we have the same little preposition that we met in MATTHEW 28:19—*eís*. However, here the translators have rendered the word into English as "into." They did this because that is the normal meaning of the word and because it makes the best sense. There has been identification with Christ through baptism—and the identification is identification with His death and burial. It is acknowledgement that He died because of our sin. It is our testimony that we accept God's statement that our sin caused the death of His Son.

The Apostle's language is precise. If we have been baptised, we were baptised into (*eís*) Christ. If we have been baptised into Christ, we must know that we were baptised into (*eís*) His death. It was through baptism that we pictured being buried with Him into (*eís*) death. What did you say when you were baptised? Did you testify to your faith that the Master died because of your sin? Did you confess that He died because of you, and therefore He died for you, taking your place in receiving the punishment you deserved?

WE SHALL BE UNITED WITH HIM IN A RESURRECTION LIKE HIS — “If we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his... Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.”

Of course, the Good News is good news precisely because it does not focus on death. It is true that Christ the Lord gave His life because of our sin. There are few verses more comforting for the one who is born from above than that found in Paul's Second Letter to the Christians of Corinth. “For our sake [God] made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” [2 CORINTHIANS 5:21]. Never forget that this is comforting to us precisely because Jesus conquered death, rising from the dead.

A sacrifice, however noble it might be, could not change anything permanently. However, Jesus presented His life as a sacrifice for sin and rose from the dead after three days in the tomb. If He has not been raised from the dead, we are deluded and without hope in the world. Paul boldly confronts this very point when writing the Corinthians Christians in the first letter. “If Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that 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 futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.”

Then, in a triumphant note, the Apostle exults! “But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive” [1 CORINTHIANS 15:12-22].

We think of eternal life as something we shall one day possess. However, the language of the New Testament makes it evident that eternal life is a present possession. Perhaps it is because of our mortality, but we tend to think of the concept of eternal life in chronological terms. I don't deny that the life we receive from God is without end. However, eternal life is so much more than length of days; it is a new quality of life lived on a spiritual plane.

Jesus makes a glorious affirmation when he says, “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life” [JOHN 5:24]. By His statement, Jesus makes it apparent that eternal life is a present possession because the one possessing it has already passed from death to life. Consequently, the one possessing eternal life will never come into judgement—he is born again and no longer under condemnation.

I have frequently stressed the truth that the one who believes is now declared righteous before the Father. The reason for this declaration is that the believer is “in Christ.” This is the message trumpeted by the Second Corinthian Letter. “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation” [2 CORINTHIANS 5:17-19].

I do not deny that we are being saved, than is we are being changed into the image of God’s dear Son. After all, we who believe are “predestined to be conformed to the image of [God’s] Son” [see ROMANS 8:29]. Indeed, we are convinced that “Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like His glorious body, by the power that enables Him even to subject all things to Himself” [PHILIPPIANS 3:20, 21]. Paul speaks of we who believe as those who are “being saved,” contrasting us with those of this world who “are perishing” [see 1 CORINTHIANS 1:18]. This ongoing process is the result of the gospel of Christ. This is the reason the Apostle wrote as he did to the Corinthian Christians. “I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you” [1 CORINTHIANS 15:1, 2].

Nor do I deny that we shall be saved out of this world and into the presence of Christ Himself. The Apostle of Love looks forward to that transformation by penning a powerful testimony. He writes, “Little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming. If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him.”

Then, he continues in anticipation of what shall be when Christ appears. “See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is” [1 JOHN 2:28-3:2].

However, the process of conformation to the image of Christ that is now taking place in the believer’s life, and the transformation that shall be complete at His return, is made certain because we who are believers already are “in Christ.” Just as we shared in His death, so we also share in His resurrection. In baptism, the one who believes testifies that he died with Christ as he is lowered into the watery grave. Then, just as Christ was raised from the dead, so the one who is baptised testifies that he has been raised to new life in Christ. The transformation has already taken place by faith when the candidate is baptised; the baptism is the testimony that points to the work that God has performed in giving life in His Beloved Son.

“The death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God,” is the testimony of the one who is baptised. However, just as the testimony concerning that one’s death to sin is personal, so the testimony of the one who is baptised is very personal. For that individual testifies that she has received the life of the Risen Saviour who now dwells in her. She says that she has so identified with Him, that she has surrendered the rule over her life to Him. In a practical sense, this speaks of the presence of the Spirit of Christ in the life of the believer. Therefore, the practical import of what is testified is that the believer is now responsible to live out the life he has received; he must no longer live as he desires, but rather, seek to discover the will of the Saviour and boldly fulfil that will. Therefore, the Word declares, “So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.”

WALKING IN NEWNESS OF LIFE — “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.” A Christians is expected to live a righteous life. No child of God should ever live as though her life was hers alone. How the child of God lives reflects on what is professed as true; and a congregation has every right to challenge those who walk in an unruly manner, calling them to remember what was professed in baptism.

Baptism is a testimony of the effective work of God in an individual’s life. Baptism speaks of death to what once held sway over a person’s life, just as it speaks of Him who gives life. Consequently, the one who has been baptised is called to “walk in newness of life.” If a baptised individual does not obey the call of righteousness, the congregation to which that believer is united is expected to hold him accountable. If churches no longer hold members accountable to the standard of the Risen Saviour, it may be because we no longer have a testimony of His effective work in the life of the membership. And if He has not worked in the life of the membership, then “Ichabod” has long since been written over the church.

Let me be very practical at this point. As a congregation, we cannot hold to account individuals who have made no commitment to Christ or to the assembly. We are courteous toward all, but we have no commitment to those who hold themselves aloof from identifying as followers of the Living Son of God. We are pleased to present the Word, inviting all who wish to hear the message of life to listen. However, we have no jurisdiction over those outside the Faith nor are we able to exercise discipline for those who make no commitment. We do not question the testimony of any who say they have faith in the Son of God; we accept that those who say they love the Master actually love Him. However, we must wonder at the lack of obedience. Why would one count disobedience as evidence of love? Why would one profess love for the Master and yet hold himself apart from union with the Body of Christ? Admittedly, I am unable to provide an answer.

What I do know is that when one is baptised, that one has fully identified with Christ in His death, in His burial and in His resurrection. The one baptised identifies with Him who lives forever, confessing through the act that she counts her old nature as dead—as the reason for the Master’s death. Through her baptism, the candidate confesses that by the power of the Living God she has been raised with Christ to walk in new life. Thus, in baptism, the candidate testifies to the presence of new life and eschews the rule of the self-life. For this reason, we have every expectation that she who is baptised will walk as the Master walked.

This is evident from the admonition John gives in his first letter. “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says ‘I know him’ but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked” [1 JOHN 2:1-6].

Is baptism important? Jesus walked well over forty miles through desert country to be baptised by John. When John demurred because he confessed himself unworthy to perform the rite on the Messiah of God, Jesus insisted, saying, “This is the way it has to be now. This is the proper way to do everything that God requires of us” [MATTHEW 3:15].²

² GOD’S WORD Translation (Baker, Grand Rapids, MI 1995)

Now the question must be asked yet once again, what did you say through your baptism? You were obedient to the Master, were you not? You have openly embraced Him, have you not? You do confess that He is Master and that you love Him by living a life marked by obedience do you not. If not, why not? If you are disobedient to the command and the example of the Master, is it because you have not received Him as ruler over your life? Are you more concerned with your relationship with others—family members, friends or colleagues—than with the Master? Are you disobedient because you have failed to do the first thing, which is believe in the Christ?

Jesus died because of you; He gave His life as a sacrifice in your place, taking in Himself the punishment you deserved because of your fallen condition. Then, having given His life, He was raised from the dead on the third day to ensure that you could enjoy a right standing with the True and Living God. For this reason, the Word of God promises, “If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ believing in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be free. It is with the heart that one believes and enters into a right standing with the Father, and with the mouth one confesses and is freed.” The promise of God to you is, “Everyone who calls on the Name of the Lord shall be saved” [**ROMANS 10:9, 10, 13** AUTHOR’S FREE TRANSLATION].