

Are We Really Dead to Sin?

By Paul Anderson

Paul seemed to think so. He writes, *"We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?"* (Romans 6:2). Sure sounds dead to me. *"We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death..."* (v. 4). You only bury dead people. *"...in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection"* (v. 5). According to Paul, Christ's death was my death, and His new life is my new life. I can believe it if I want to.

He goes on: *"For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin"* (v. 6,7). So who died? The sinner, Paul Anderson. Then who got raised up? The new man, Paul—in Christ. A man once knocked on the door of Martin Luther's house. When he answered, the man asked to see Luther. He responded, "He doesn't live here anymore. Christ lives here." It appears that Martin had gotten the message.

No one is freer than a dead man, and Paul affirms that: *"Anyone who has died has been freed from sin"* (v. 7). So if this is true, my job is to believe it, just as believing is my part in every area of my life. What I believe, I become. Said a different way, I behave my beliefs. If I believe that I am alive to sin, I prove it in my behavior. If I believe that I am truly dead to sin, that finds expression in the way I live. Paul writes, *"Count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus"* (v. 11). The Greek word for

"count" (also translated "consider") is an accounting term. It means to chalk it up as true and act upon it.

Paul doesn't argue his case by looking at his experience to see if it is proving true, which is what we are tempted to do: "Oh, I just stretched the truth. I must not be dead to sin," or "I just lusted in my heart. It doesn't work for me." My death to sin has everything to do with the death of Christ and nothing to do with my experience. If we choose to believe in the power of the death of Christ, it will impact our experience in an ever-increasing way. If we do not, we will not see it lived out in our behavior. We live by faith! If you want, you can declare that you are alive to sin because you sin often—and then prove it by your experience. Or you can believe what the Scriptures consistently say about you. There's been a death in the family—I died.

This is not simply positive thinking or a healthy psychological twist. It is confessing what is true in all cases and for all time—the absolute efficacy of the cross of Jesus Christ. It is declaring the Word, which is forever settled in heaven. Jesus Himself used the Word against Satan. When we are armed with something objective and outside ourselves, the Sword of the Spirit, we win against the devil. When we fall back on how we feel or what we are experiencing, we are walking on quicksand.



**"We live by
faith."**

2 Corinthians 5:7

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A phrase I heard often at seminary was “both sinner and saint.” On the positive side, it keeps us from thinking we are hot stuff. On the negative side, it sets the bar low on what the cross of Christ means for our daily life. In effect, we are saying, “Don’t believe that the cross eradicates sin. Jesus died to sin’s penalty, so you can be forgiven every time. The power of sin remains though, so don’t expect to get victory over gossip or worry or pornography.” We make a big deal of forgiveness (which we should) and a little deal of transformation (which we should not!). God’s goal for His children is not only that they learn to know His forgiveness but that they learn to obey.

Paul goes on to say in chapter 6 that *“Sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace”* (v. 14). He fully expects Christians to get the upper hand over sin. Two chapters later he calls us “more than conquerors,” not just conquerors. Make that a part of your identity beliefs and see what happens! Paul says nothing about forgiveness in chapters six through eight of Romans, because he is making the strong point that the cross has dealt a deathblow to sin itself. Christ-followers are freed both from the penalty and the power of sin. The cross gives us both grace when we sin and grace to overcome sin. Christians who live by grace are not subject to the power of sin. John would agree: *“I write this to you so that you will not sin [the issue of power]. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks*

to the Father in our defense [the issue of penalty]...” (1 John 2:1). Are we making too much of ourselves? No! We are taking the cross seriously. And when we do, Jesus will see *“the fruit of the travail of his soul and be pleased”* (Isaiah 53:11).

But didn’t the same apostle also say that he was the worst of sinners? Yes, but look at two things. The context shows Paul is speaking of his past, not his present. And the law of preponderance overwhelmingly sides with our having died to sin. It is like saying that the Scripture doesn’t teach healing because Paul left



Trophimus sick at Myletus. If that were the case, we are ignoring the thousands of healings done by prophets, Jesus, and the apostles that build a solid case for healing in the Bible.

But what about Romans 7, in which Paul says that he does what he doesn’t want to and doesn’t do what he wants. Paul is confirming what I am addressing. He shows that desire and grit are insufficient to overcome the power of sin. He

goes on to say in chapter eight that the Holy Spirit within can accomplish what a stiff upper lip fails at. We can choose to live in Romans 7 or Romans 8, but to make the confession that we are both saint and sinner tips the scale in favor of Romans 7. Paul uses the phrase “sinner” to describe those not yet in Christ (Romans 5:8,19).

Paul didn’t just have an overly optimistic moment in Romans chapter six. He said the same thing in other letters. *“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God”* (2 Corinthians 5:21). The more we believe this the more we become what we believe. *“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me”* (Galatians 2:20). *“For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God”* (Colossians 3:4). And Paul’s friend Peter wrote, *“He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed”* (1 Peter 2:24).

Jesus instructed His disciples to take up their cross and follow Him. They understood the cross as an instrument of death—not as a piece of jewelry. Crosses were for killing and the one that carried a cross died on it. So consider yourself dead, just like the apostle did, and just like Martin Luther did. When we went to the funeral of a friend, he was given an award because of his outstanding service as a deacon. When the pastor pinned him in the casket, my daughter said, “If they stuck him, it wouldn’t hurt, right?” I said, “No.” Then I thought, “And he wouldn’t get offended if we told him we didn’t like his suit or his body odor. Dead men don’t take offense.” How liberated can you get!

“I write this to
you so that you
will not sin...”

1 John 2:1

Paul declares that we are dead to sin by virtue of the death of Christ. He does not say, "I don't sin anymore." There's a difference. Only Christ is sinless. But by walking in His victory, we sin less!

When we sin, we don't punish ourselves or dwell on our sin. That will only dig our hole deeper. We confess what we have done, acknowledge the truth that this is not who we are in Christ—and move on. If we concentrate on our sin, we become sinners. If we concentrate on the power of the cross, we live victorious over sin.

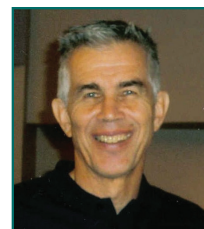
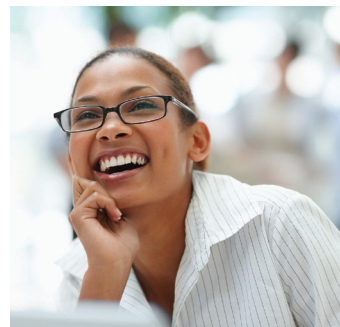
So what do we say to someone who learned from parents how to worry and has been practicing for thirty years? Is it automatic? I would urge such a person that indeed Christ died to that worrisome

way of life. It may take months and months of affirming the power of the cross, but trusting in Christ's completed work will begin to overtake a negative outlook. Keep in mind

that you must take control of your thoughts, not

let them drift at will. The Holy Spirit gives us the mind of Christ so we can choose which thoughts to agree with and which thoughts to dispel. This requires diligence, consistency, and a sanctified imagination, so we picture ourselves as God sees us—holy, clean, and more than conquerors.

If you continue to say, "I'm just a worry-wart" or "I can't overcome lust," your affirmations prove you a prophet indeed. What you believe is how you behave. Your creed becomes your conduct because identity drives behavior. The way you view yourself is the way you live. If you see yourself as someone who can't ever succeed—congratulations, that is just where you land. But if you consistently announce, "God is giving me freedom from worrying about my future," bingo—that is what God is working into your experience. Thanks to Jesus, we are more than conquerors!



Paul Anderson


"But, we have the mind of Christ."

1 Corinthians 2:16


Holy Spirit Conference • August 1-4, 2012

To the Ends of the Earth


Acts 1:8




Diane Brask
GlobalSeedPlanters.wordpress.com



Bill Davis
BillDavisMin.com



John Paul Jackson
StreamsMinistries.com



Steve Sjogren
SteveSjogren.com

Programs
for nursery, children and teens!
Fee and registration required.

Pastors' Day
"Leading Outwardly"
with Steve Sjogren
Wednesday, August 1 • 9:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m.
\$25 per person • Includes gourmet lunch
Deadline: July 19

All General Sessions are Free!

Location:
North Heights Lutheran Church
1700 Highway 96 West
Arden Hills, MN 55112

Brochure and online registration: www.LutheranRenewal.org
For details, please call: 651-490-1517, ext. 13

Arise! Women News



Uplink Groups!
September 10, 2012-January 21, 2013

What: Learn how to hear God's voice and prophesy more clearly. You will meet in a home every other week because a small group is a wonderful size to be vulnerable and mighty at the same time.

Let us know if you would like to join an Uplink Group, host an Uplink Group, or lead an Uplink group!

Contact: Office@AriseWomen.org or 651-490-1517, ext. 10

NEW THIS FALL: Monthly Individual Prophetic Appointments

Mark these dates on your calendar! (The first Thursday each month). 6:30-8:30 p.m. On-site reservations only. Just show up.

2012:

- **October 4** at North Heights Church; 2701 Rice Street; St. Paul, MN 55113 (NOT Arden Hills campus)
- **November 1** at Community of Hope; 14401 Biscayne Avenue W; Rosemount, MN 55068
- **December 6** Location TBD

2013: January 3, February 7, March 7, April 4, May 2

Additional Locations will be posted on the Lutheran Renewal website: LutheranRenewal.org



Beloved Warrior

Anointed for the Challenge

Arise! Women's Conference • October 26-27, 2012



Judith MacNutt is a gifted speaker, an anointed minister, a prophetic voice, and a dear friend. Along with her husband, Francis, she founded Christian Healing Ministries which is dedicated to praying with those in need of physical, emotional, and spiritual healing. (ChristianHealingMin.org)



Sue Ahn', along with her husband Che', are the senior pastors at Harvest Rock Church in Pasadena, CA. Sue's passion is to bring the love of God to people and to help others discover their truest identity. (HRockChurch.com)



Denise Siemens is the Director of Arise! Women's Ministry. God has called her to bring freedom and joy into the lives of others, and specifically into the lives of women. She is a teacher who combines prophetic truth with humor and grace.

Schedule

Friday, October 26, 2012

2:00 p.m. Judith MacNutt
7:00 p.m. Judith MacNutt

Saturday, October 27, 2012

9:30 a.m. Judith MacNutt
1:30 p.m. Sue Ahn'
3:30 p.m. Denise Siemens
7:00 p.m. Judith MacNutt

Conference Cost

\$50. Deadline: October 15.
After October 15, on-site only: \$55.
The cost remains the same whether you attend one or all of the sessions. There are no free evening sessions. Check-in opens Friday at noon.

Conference Information

651-490-1517, ext. 20 or LutheranRenewal.org
(online registration available)

Prophetic Appointments

Saturday, 1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
A prophetic appointment is an individual time of personal prayer ministry where the Lord uses others in the Body to speak courage, healing, and affirmation into our life through "words of knowledge and revelation." Sign up on-site beginning on Friday at noon.

New Conference Location

Grace Lutheran Church
6931 Edinger Avenue; Huntington Beach, CA 92647

Sponsoring Hotel

Hotel Huntington Beach
\$99 (includes hot buffet breakfast)
7667 Center Avenue
Huntington Beach, CA 92647
(877) 891-0123 • (714) 891-0123

Mention: Arise! Women's Conference for the conf. rate.
Make reservations before September 25 to secure this rate.

Registration • October 26-27, 2012

- You may make copies of this form to share with others. One family per form, please.
- All sessions are open to paid registrants only. There are no free evening sessions.
- Sorry, childcare is not available.
- On-site registration is welcome.

Please print.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____

Phone (____) _____

E-mail _____

Church _____

Conference Payments

Received before October 15

_____ x \$50 = _____

After October 15, on-site registration only.

On-site cost: \$55

Lunches

Saturday _____ x \$10 = _____

Space is limited. First come, first served.

Offering _____

Grand Total _____

On-site registration welcome. Check-in opens Friday at noon.

Payment Information

Mail payment and make checks payable to:

Lutheran Renewal

2701 Rice Street, St. Paul, MN 55113-2202

Sorry, no refunds.

Online Registration:

www.LutheranRenewal.org

Credit card registration closes on October 15.

Sorry, but we cannot process phone or fax orders.

Confirmation letters will not be sent out after October 15.

On-site registration is welcome.