

## If You Would Live, You Must Die!

Ponder: Dying to live

Scripture: “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:4, NKJV).

Ordinarily we think of death as the end of life. A person was alive yesterday; today he’s dead. What happened? He died. It’s a no-brainer, right?

But things work differently in the spiritual realm. Before you can have spiritual life, you must die! Does that sound absurd? Perhaps not to most readers here, because you are familiar with the Bible. But think how unreasonable it appears to one who is new to the Scriptures. Even to a mature Christian it’s a bit complicated, so let’s look at it carefully.

When we choose to sin, we become spiritually dead – separated from fellowship with God. Paul wrote that before we knew Jesus, we were “dead in (our) trespasses and sins” (Col. 2:13). Being dead, we were appropriate subjects for burial. After all, isn’t that what you do with a dead person? Of course it is! But here is where it gets complicated. While Paul describes baptism as a burial, he says we were “buried with Him through baptism into death” (Rom. 6:4).

Question: What death is he talking about? Into what death are we buried? The next verse explains that we were “united together in the likeness of His death” (v. 5). So, we are buried into the death of Christ. That is tremendously important because “the death that He died, He died to sin once for all.” Yes, the death of Jesus was a “death to sin,” and in baptism we are buried into that death to sin. Jesus “died to sin” in that He took the world’s sins upon Himself and died as the supreme atonement offering, never to be repeated. That being done, “death no longer has dominion over Him” (6:9).

Let’s review: Before coming to Christ, we were dead IN sin. In baptism, we die TO sin. Then, as Jesus came forth from the tomb, we come forth from baptism in a type of His resurrection. We must not continue to live in sin, but rather walk in newness of life.

Have you been buried into Christ’s death to sin? Before you can live, you must die!

Song: “Buried With Christ”

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we praise You for the way You have provided for us to have spiritual life by dying to sin in baptism. We thank You for Him who atoned for our sins with His own blood. Help us, we pray, to walk in newness of life. In Jesus’ name, Amen.