

horrors of crucifixion that Jesus endured for us and all; *those who were crucified were certainly killed!* In a similar way, God wants us to see our sinful nature as dead so that we no longer obey its sinful desires!

3. **Let's Make Some Connections *between Us and Christ*:**

- a. ⁸ **"...if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him."** In baptism we died with Him; now, *as God keeps us in Christ THROUGH HIS WORD*, let us look forward to living with Him forevermore!
- b. ¹⁰ **"The death [Christ] died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God."** Again, what happened in our baptism? We were united to Christ – *to His death, burial, and resurrection*; therefore, as He died to sin, so we *died to sin*; as He lives for God, so we *should live for God!*
- c. Paul said the same with these words: ¹¹ **"In the same way, count yourselves [it's a command; literally, "you count, reckon, consider yourselves] **dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.**"** When we do so, this will be our attitude about TEMPTATION – as stated earlier: *I'm not going to acknowledge you, think about you, or follow you!* Instead, we can say: I'm forgiven and alive in Christ, so – strengthened by Christ and led by the Word – *I will seek to honor Him in all my ways!* (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 10:31)

Conclusion: And all God's people said: *Amen!*

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Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Rd., Parma, Ohio 44134, 440-845-2230



**God Says to the Baptized:
Consider Yourselves
← Dead to Sin
But Alive in Christ →**

Based on Romans 6:1-11 NIV

**Baptism of our Lord – 2011
January 9 → 8:00 & 10:45**

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ, here at Bethlehem we usually follow the church year each Sunday. As we do so from December through May – *which is the festival part of the church year*, we cover Jesus' entire earthly life, from His conception to His ascension. Today, as we remember Jesus' baptism, we turn our attention to Romans chapter 6, *which focuses on some key realities of our baptism into Christ!*

1. **United to Christ and Living in Sin are NOT Compatible:**

- a. Near the end of chapter 5 it says: ²⁰ **"...where sin increased, grace increased all the more..."** Since we certainly want God's grace – *His undeserved love* – to increase, Paul asks this question in chapter 6: ¹ **"What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! [Why not?] We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?"** Think about **being dead** to someone or something: A *mean person* may say to someone else: **"You are dead to me!"** Which means: *I'm not going to acknowledge you, talk to you, or help you!* Can

you imagine taking a similar attitude toward
TEMPTATION: *I'm not going to acknowledge you, think about you, or follow you!* But why should we, as baptized Christians, take such an attitude?

b. Because ³ **“...all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?”** What does that mean? Lenski wrote: **“What occurred in a physical way in the case of Christ is predicated of us in whom it occurred in a spiritual way...”** (392) Therefore, spiritually ⁴ **“We were...buried with him through baptism into death...”** Let's think further about what happens in baptism:

i. Baptism is done as one person applies water in the name of the Triune God to another person; *that's what we SEE and HEAR*, but God is actually at work, *by the Holy Spirit*, to unite the person being baptized to Jesus Christ and the benefits of His finished work! Some key passages:

1. Salvation: ^{NAS} **Titus 3:5** **“I God, saved us... [then Paul told us HOW, as he described baptism] by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit...”**
2. Forgiveness: ^{NIV} **Acts 2:38** **“...be baptized...in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins [Jesus is the Lamb of God who took away all sins, so, united to Him, our sins are taken away, thus forgiven].”**
3. Righteousness: ^{NAS} **Galatians 3:27** **“...all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ [clothed with His sinless life, His righteousness].”**

4. Holy Spirit: ^{NIV} **Acts 2:38b** **“And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”**
^{ESV} **Ephesians 1:13** **“...the...Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ ...is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it...”** (1Thessalonians 5:19)

ii. Prior to God uniting us to Christ, we were
✦ united to our sins, ✦ facing His wrath, and
✦ without the Holy Spirit, but now – *because of God's loving and powerful action* – we are different in many wonderful ways! Therefore,
^{4b} **“...just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”** In the past we said: **“I know it's not quite right, but I will do it anyway!”** **But now we are God's holy children in Christ, so we desire to show that reality in all we say and do!**

2. **Life in Christ should be Controlled by Faith, Not Feelings:**

- a. ⁵ **“If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.”** Do we always feel that way; is life in Christ always easy? By no means, but – *by faith in God and His Word* – we know, *when Christ comes again*, He will raise our bodies to eternal life!
- b. Now, think about your old or sinful nature; *does it control your life?* Sometimes we probably feel that way, but God wants us – *by faith* – to know this:
⁶ **“...our old self was crucified with Christ, so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin...”** Think about the