

Christ's death was concerned with sin: it was a sacrifice by which sin was put away. (cf. Hebrews 9:26) Christ died in the stead of the sinner. Our sins nailed him there. "No man has the right just to look at Golgotha; through his sin he is a participant in what happened there." (Henry) Therefore we join with Paul in saying, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2:20)

"The cross once seen is death to every vice."

Positively - Resurrection (new life).-- Christ's resurrection cannot be separated from His death and burial. To share in His death is to share in His resurrection. "...Old things have passed away; all things have become new. The old man is slain, the new man lives. It is not merely the old life retouched and made more comely; defects struck out, roughness smoothed down, graces stuck on here and there. It is not a broken column repaired, a soiled picture cleaned, a defaced inscription filled up, an unswept temple whitewashed. It is more than all this; else God would not have called it a NEW CREATION." (H. Bonar)

1. I Peter 2:2 "New-born babes"
2. Galatians 6:15 "New creatures"
3. Ephesians 2:15 "New man"
4. Revelation 2:17 "New name"
5. Romans 7:6 "Newness of spirit"

B. Death of the old sinful self (verses 6 and 7).

Paul further elaborates on the same theme. "Old man" refers to the old sinful nature. "The body of flesh" refers to the body ruled by sin, not the body itself.

Note:-- We must not make the mistake made by the Gnostics, thinking that the body is evil in itself. This heresy was passed on to certain early Christians. Men got the idea that true holiness was living apart from all social relationships. In the middle ages it was thought that one must enter a monastery in order to lead a holy life. This tendency is still prevalent in the Roman Catholic Church. However, this is not the Biblical concept of holiness. True holiness means to allow God to sanctify our lives and all our relationships. Life was meant to be wholesome and well-rounded with Christ at the center.

C. Christ's Victory over death (verses 8-10).

"Once for all." Christ died unto sin once, an act never to be repeated. (cf. Heb. 7:27; 9:12, 26, 28; 10:10; I Peter 3:18) By Christ's all-sufficient sacrifice, He gained complete victory over sin. Sin has no more dominion over Him. Not only does Christ's "once for all" sacrifice reveal his victory over sin, but "life unto God" reveals the fact that sin has no dominion over Him. This means that Christ is separated from the burden of our sin. He has finished the redemptive work.

II. "Reckon." Romans 6:11.

The word translated "reckon" is a mathematical term meaning to reckon, count, compute, calculate, count over. It can also mean to determine, purpose or decide.

Calvin paraphrases this verse as follows: "Take this view of your case -- that as Christ once died for the purpose of destroying sin, so you have once died, that in the future you may cease from sin; yea you must daily proceed with the work of mortifying, which is begun in you, till sin be wholly destroyed: as Christ is raised to an incorruptible life, so you are regenerated by the grace of God, that you may lead a life of holiness and righteousness, in as much as the power of the Holy Spirit, by which ye have been renewed, is eternal and shall ever continue the same."