



Dying to Live | UALC Sermon Series Study Guide

"Dying and Rising in Christ"

Primary Text: Romans 6:1-11

Sermon Focus:

This week's message emphasizes the fundamental truth that as Christians, we are united with Christ in both His death and resurrection. Being "in Christ" becomes the most fundamental truth of our identity, giving shape and direction to everything else.

Discussion Questions:

1. Opening Reflection:

- What stood out to you most from the sermon on dying and rising with Christ?
- How does the idea of being "in Christ" shape your view of yourself and your identity?

2. Scripture Study:

- **Read Romans 6:1-11.**
 - What does Paul mean when he says we "were therefore buried with him through baptism into death" (v. 4)?
 - In verse 6, Paul writes, "For we know that our old self was crucified with him." What does it mean for your "old self" to be crucified with Christ?
 - What does it look like for you to "live a new life" (v. 4)? How is this new life different from the old life?
 - In verse 10, Paul says, "The death he died, he died to sin once for all." What does this mean for the believer's relationship to sin?
 - How does Paul's teaching in this passage reshape your understanding of the Christian life?



3. Personal Connection:

- **Quote from Dietrich Bonhoeffer: "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die."**
 - How does this quote resonate with your experience as a follower of Jesus?
 - In what ways do you struggle to "die" to your old self? What makes it difficult for you to live out this truth in daily life? What can we do as Christians when we are struggling with dying to self?

4. Application:

- **Personal Application:** In light of Romans 6, what practical steps can you take this week to die to your old self and live more fully in Christ?
- **Group Application:** As a group, how can we support each other in living out our identity in Christ? Are there specific areas where you can encourage one another to embrace the new life in Christ more fully?
 - For example, is there a behavior or attitude within the group that needs to be "put to death" collectively, such as gossip, judgment, or negativity?
 - How can the group hold each other accountable to embrace the new life in Christ this week?

5. Closing Prayer:

Pray for strength and guidance to fully embrace your identity in Christ, asking the Holy Spirit to help you live out the reality of being crucified and raised with Jesus, both personally and as a group.



"Hope in Affliction"

Primary Text: 2 Corinthians 1:1-11

Sermon Focus:

This week, the sermon focuses on finding hope in suffering. Paul encourages believers that even in our affliction, we share in the fellowship of Christ's suffering, and God uses our hardships to draw us closer to Him and to others.

Discussion Questions:

1. Opening Reflection:

- How do you define what "hope" means? How would you explain what hope feels like?
- What struck you most from the sermon about finding hope in affliction?

2. Scripture Study:

- **Read 2 Corinthians 1:1-11.**
 - In verses 3-4, Paul describes God as "the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort." What do these descriptions tell you about God's character? Why is it hard for us to believe that when we face suffering?
 - Why do you think Paul says that our comfort is meant to be shared with others (v. 4)? How does this connect to the concept of fellowship in suffering?
 - In verse 5, Paul says, "For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ." What do you think it means to share in Christ's sufferings? How does this bring about comfort? Do you find an answer to this in the text, or in another part of Scripture?
 - How do verses 8-9 challenge our perspective on suffering? What does it mean for our hope to be "set on God" who "raises the dead" (v. 9)?



3. Personal Connection:

- **Quote from C.S. Lewis:** "God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our consciences, but shouts in our pains: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world."
 - How does this quote challenge or affirm your understanding of suffering in the Christian life?
 - Have you experienced a time when God's voice was clearer in the midst of suffering? Share that experience.

4. Application:

- **Personal Application:** How can you invite Christ into your afflictions, trusting that He will bring comfort and redemption?
- **Group Application:** As a group, how can we collectively comfort one another in our afflictions? Is there someone in the group going through a difficult time who might need extra prayer or support?
 - How can we serve and encourage one another during times of suffering, making sure no one in the group feels isolated or forgotten?
 - Consider setting up a way to follow up with members who are going through tough times, offering prayer, meals, or other forms of practical support.

5. Closing Prayer:

Close in prayer, asking God to bring comfort and hope to those in the group who are suffering, and for the grace to share that comfort with others in need. Pray that your group will be a place where Christ's presence is felt even in times of hardship.



"The Way of Love and Obedience"

Primary Text: Colossians 3:1-14

Sermon Focus:

The sermon focuses on the transformative power of dying to the old self and being raised in Christ to live a new life characterized by love and obedience. We are called to put to death our earthly nature and live in the way of Jesus.

Discussion Questions:

1. Opening Reflection:

- Obedience to God - what thoughts do you have when you hear that phrase? What emotions?
- What did you hear in this week's sermon that stood out as either challenging or helpful?

2. Scripture Study:

- **Read Colossians 3:1-14.**
 - In verse 3, Paul writes, "For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God." What does it mean for your life to be "hidden" with Christ?
 - What does it look like to "set your hearts on things above" (v. 1)? How does this contrast with setting our hearts on earthly things?
 - In verses 5-9, Paul lists several behaviors to put to death. What are the "earthly things" in your life that you may need to put to death in order to live more fully in Christ?
 - Verses 12-14 focus on virtues to "put on." How do love, compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience shape your relationships with others?
 - What does it mean to "forgive as the Lord forgave you" (v. 13)? How can this guide you in your relationships, particularly with those you find hard to forgive?



3. Personal Connection:

- **Quote from John Stott: "The Christian life is a life of obedience, and it is the outworking of the new life given to us by God."**
 - How does this quote challenge your understanding of obedience in the Christian life? Is your experience of Christian obedience more about duty or about responding to the new life God has given you?

4. Application:

- **Personal Application:** What area of new life in Christ do you want to grow in obedience? What might be keeping you from that obedience? What could help you experience more of the new life that Christ has for you?
- **Group Application:** As a group, how can we help one another put on the virtues of compassion, humility, patience, and love? Are there specific ways we can hold each other accountable to live these virtues out in our relationships with one another?
 - For example, how can the group support one another in practicing forgiveness, especially when there are relational tensions within the group?
 - Can you commit to checking in on each other and encouraging one another in these virtues during the week?

5. Closing Prayer:

Close in prayer, asking for the strength to live out the new life in Christ and to be obedient to His call to love and forgive others. Pray that your group would be a place where love and obedience are cultivated together.

Answers for Group Leaders

Dying to Live | Sermon Series Study Guide Answers

"Dying and Rising in Christ"

Primary Text: Romans 6:1-11

Scripture Study Questions & Facilitator's Brief Answers:

1. What does Paul mean when he says we "were therefore buried with him through baptism into death" (v. 4)?

- **Answer:** This passage teaches that to be "in Christ" is to be joined to Christ, especially his death and resurrection. Baptism is a picture of this and means by which God does this spiritual work in us.

2. In verse 6, Paul writes, "For we know that our old self was crucified with him." What does it mean for your "old self" to be crucified with Christ?

- **Answer:** The "old self" refers to our sinful nature, which was put to death on the cross. It means that, through faith in Christ, believers are no longer defined by their sinful tendencies or past mistakes. The power of sin has been broken, and we are called to live a new life free from the control of sin. In the following verses, Paul also taught the Roman Christians to align their thinking and acting with this truth. Christians shouldn't expect to experience total instant transformation. It's a lifelong journey.

3. What does it look like for you to "live a new life" (v. 4)? How is this new life different from the old life?

- **Answer:** Living a new life means living according to the Spirit, aligning one's life with Christ's values and teachings, and reflecting His character. It contrasts with the old life, where one's actions were governed by selfish desires and sin. The new life is marked by love, obedience to God's will, and a focus on spiritual growth rather than worldly pursuits.

Answers for Group Leaders

4. In verse 10, Paul says, “The death he died, he died to sin once for all.” What does this mean for the believer’s relationship to sin?

- **Answer:** Christ’s death to sin was a once-and-for-all act. For the believer, it means that sin no longer has mastery over them. Christ’s sacrifice paid the penalty for sin, and by faith, believers are freed from the power of sin. While they may still struggle with sin, it no longer has the same dominion over them as before they were in Christ.

5. How does Paul’s teaching in this passage reshape your understanding of the Christian life?

- **Answer:** Paul’s teaching reminds us that the Christian life is not just about behavior modification but about a radical transformation of our identity. Our union with Christ means that we are called to live in the reality of His death and resurrection, continually dying to our sinful nature and living in the power of His resurrecting life.

Answers for Group Leaders

"Hope in Affliction"

Primary Text: 2 Corinthians 1:1-11

Scripture Study Questions & Facilitator's Brief Answers:

- 1. In verses 3-4, Paul describes God as "the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort." What do these descriptions tell you about God's character in the midst of suffering?**
 - **Answer:** These descriptions emphasize that God is deeply compassionate and actively involved in comforting His people. In the midst of suffering, God does not remain distant or passive but comes near to bring comfort, encouragement, and hope. He understands our pain and offers His comfort, especially through Christ and the Holy Spirit.
- 2. Why do you think Paul says that our comfort is meant to be shared with others (v. 4)? How does this connect to the concept of fellowship in suffering?**
 - **Answer:** Paul emphasizes that the comfort we receive from God is not just for us alone but is to be shared with others who are suffering. This is part of the fellowship of suffering, where believers can encourage and strengthen each other by sharing the comfort they've received. It's a way of showing Christ's love and care through practical support and empathy.
- 3. In verse 5, Paul says, "For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ." What do you think it means to share in Christ's sufferings? How does this bring about comfort?**
 - **Answer:** Sharing in Christ's sufferings means identifying with Christ's experience of pain, rejection, and sacrifice. It's a part of following Him, where believers may face trials and hardships as He did. Through this, they experience a deeper fellowship with Him, which brings comfort because it reminds them that Christ is present and has overcome suffering. Our comfort in suffering comes through the presence of Christ, who strengthens and sustains us.

Answers for Group Leaders

4. How do verses 8-9 challenge our perspective on suffering? What does it mean for our hope to be "set on God" who "raises the dead" (v. 9)?

- **Answer:** Verses 8-9 challenge us to trust in God, even when suffering feels overwhelming. Paul recounts the despair he faced, but ultimately, his hope was in God who can raise the dead, highlighting that God has power even over death itself. This encourages believers to place their hope in God's ultimate power and sovereignty, trusting that He can bring life out of the deepest suffering.

Answers for Group Leaders

"The Way of Love and Obedience"

Primary Text: Colossians 3:1-14

Scripture Study Questions & Facilitator's Brief Answers:

1. In verse 3, Paul writes, "For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God." What does it mean for your life to be "hidden" with Christ?

- **Answer:** To be "hidden with Christ" means that our true identity is found in Him and secured in God's presence. The world may not recognize or understand the spiritual reality of our lives, but our true worth, purpose, and security are in Christ, where nothing can threaten or diminish it. Our lives are anchored in His resurrection and protected by God.

2. What does it look like to "set your hearts on things above" (v. 1)? How does this contrast with setting our hearts on earthly things?

- **Answer:** Setting our hearts on things above means prioritizing spiritual values, eternal truths, and Christ's kingdom over worldly pursuits. It involves a mindset focused on what God desires rather than what the world offers. It contrasts with living for temporary pleasures, wealth, success, or approval, which ultimately fade away.

3. In verses 5-9, Paul lists several behaviors to put to death. What are the "earthly things" in your life that you may need to put to death in order to live more fully in Christ?

- **Answer:** The "earthly things" Paul mentions include sinfulness, greed, sexual immorality, anger, rage, malice, and deceit. These behaviors reflect selfishness and idolatry. Believers are called to put these things to death, meaning they must be consciously rejected and replaced with Christlike virtues. Each person's earthly things may vary, but they all stem from a desire for control or satisfaction outside of God's will.

4. Verses 12-14 focus on virtues to "put on." How do love, compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience shape your relationships with others?

Answers for Group Leaders

- **Answer:** These virtues shape our relationships by making them more Christlike. Love, compassion, and kindness help us to serve and care for others selflessly, while humility, gentleness, and patience allow us to handle conflicts and challenges in a way that honors God. These virtues create unity in the body of Christ and promote peace within relationships.

5. What does it mean to “forgive as the Lord forgave you” (v. 13)? How can this guide you in your relationships, particularly with those you find hard to forgive?

- **Answer:** Forgiving as the Lord forgave us means offering forgiveness freely and completely, just as God has forgiven us through Christ. This kind of forgiveness is not based on the other person’s deserving but on the grace that we have received. In relationships, this challenges us to forgive even when it’s difficult, understanding that Christ’s forgiveness of us is the model and source of our ability to forgive others.