

# Talk 4 : Paul the Apostle's letter to the Romans

- Introducing the book “The Normal Christian Life” by Watchman Nee
- Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2012

# What we cover today

- Sin & Death from Adam, Life Through Christ • 5;12-21
- Death & burial & resurrection through Christ • 6;1-14
- Being Slaves to God • 6;15-23

# Sin increased, grace increased

- <sup>17</sup> For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more **will those who receive** God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!
- <sup>19</sup> For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.
- <sup>20</sup> But where **sin increased**, **grace increased** all the more, <sup>21</sup> so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

# Crucified , Dead and buried with Christ

- <sup>1</sup> What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?
- <sup>2</sup> By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?
- <sup>3</sup> Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup> We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.
- <sup>5</sup> For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his.
- <sup>6</sup> For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— <sup>7</sup> because anyone who has died has been set free from sin

# Raised to life with Christ

- <sup>8</sup> Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.
- <sup>9</sup> For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him.
- <sup>10</sup> The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

# Opportunity for your participation now !!

- *Chapter 5*<sup>20</sup> But where **sin increased, grace increased** all the more
- *Paul asks in Chapter 6*<sup>1</sup> What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?
- *Paul answers in verse 2*<sup>2</sup> By no means! .....how can we live in it any longer ?
- *But I ask you all here today* , “give me good reasons why we should stop sinning ?? “

# Do you **know** ??, well do you **know** why we should stop sinning ???

- <sup>1 & 2</sup> Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?
- <sup>3</sup> Or don't you **know** that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?
- <sup>6</sup> For we **know** that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with
- <sup>9</sup> For we **know** that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him.
- <sup>16</sup> Don't you **know** that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? <sup>17</sup>

# From the “Normal Christian life”

- But we must now go a step further in the plan of God to understand how He deals with *the sin principle in us*.
- *The Blood can wash away my sins,*
- but it cannot wash away my 'old man'.
- It needs the Cross to crucify me.
- The Blood deals with the *sins,*
- *but the Cross must deal with the sinner.*
- We are apt to think that what we have done is very bad, but that we ourselves are not so bad. God is taking pains to show us that we ourselves are wrong, fundamentally wrong.
- The root trouble is the **sinner**; he must be dealt with.
- Our sins are dealt with by the Blood,
- but we ourselves are dealt with by the Cross. The Blood procures our pardon for what we have done;
- the Cross procures our deliverance from what we are.



# Conditions for living the “normal christian life” as indicated by Watchman Nee

- KNOWING • Chapter 6
- RECKONING or COUNTING • Chapter 6
- PRESENTING YOURSELF TO GOD • Chapter 6
- WALKING in THE SPIRIT • Chapter 8
- TH not Watchman Nee`if God had absolutely perfected you so that you would not sin when he made within you a new creation, then there would be no need for the 4 conditions above

# The testimony of Watchman Nee : knowing

- I remember one morning -- that morning was a real morning and one I can never forget -- I was upstairs sitting at my desk reading the Word and praying, and I said, `Lord, open my eyes!' And then in a flash I saw it. I saw my oneness with Christ. I saw that I was in Him, and that when He died I died.
- I saw that the question of my death was a matter of the past and not of the future, and that I was just as truly dead as He was because I was in Him when He died.
- The whole thing had dawned upon me. I was carried away with such joy at this great discovery that I jumped from my chair and cried, **‘Praise the Lord, I am dead!’** I ran downstairs and met one of the brothers helping in the kitchen and I laid hold of him. `Brother', I said, **‘do you know that I have died?’** I must admit he looked puzzled. `What do you mean?' he said, so I went on: `Do you not know that Christ has died? **Do you not know that I died with Him?** Do you not know that my death is no less truly a fact than His?'
- Oh it was so real to me! I longed to go through the streets of Shanghai shouting the news of my discovery. From that day to this I have never for one moment doubted the finality of that word: "I have been crucified with Christ".

# But how do you know you died with Christ ?

- You trust and believe in what Jesus did on the Cross
- You believe that He bore your sins on the cross
- You believe that your old self died as Jesus died
- You yield to what Jesus said “ it is finished ! “
- You seek the **revelation of God** in how you read Romans 6
- You believe that Satan’s grip on your life was defeated by Jesus on the Cross because Jesus said “ it is finished ! “
- Believing by faith is knowing and when you do know you died , **you thank God for this revelation into your life**

# In the same way, count yourselves.....

- <sup>11</sup> In the same way, **count yourselves** dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.
- <sup>12</sup> Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.

# Healing Streams Christian Renewal Centre Income and Expenditure Account for year ended 31 December 2011

	2011	2010
Total Income	A	B
Total Expenses	X	Y
Total Surplus / <b>deficit</b>	<b>-€5,402</b>	<b>€1,308</b>
Increase/ <b>Decrease</b> in Bank Balance	<b>-€5,402</b>	<b>€1,308</b>

# The problem of reckoning before knowing

- For years after my conversion I had been taught to reckon. I reckoned from **1920 until 1927**. The more I reckoned that I was dead to sin, the **more alive (to sin) I clearly was**. I simply could not believe myself dead and I could not produce the death.
- Whenever I sought help from others I was told to read Romans 6:11, and the more I read Romans 6:11 and tried to reckon, the further away death was: I could not get at it. I fully appreciated the teaching that I must reckon, but I could not make out why nothing resulted from it.
- I have to confess that for months I was troubled. I said to the Lord, 'If this is not clear, if I cannot be brought to see this which is so very fundamental, I will cease to do anything. I will not preach any more; I will not go out to serve Thee any more; I want first of all to get thoroughly clear here.'
- For months I was seeking, and at times I fasted, but nothing came through.

# Watchman Nee : reckoning after knowing

- I remember one morning -- that morning was a real morning and one I can never forget -- I was upstairs sitting at my desk reading the Word and praying, and I said, `Lord, open my eyes!' **And then in a flash I saw it.** I saw my oneness with Christ. I saw that I was in Him, and that when He died I died.
- The **whole thing had dawned upon me.** I was carried away with such joy at this great discovery that I jumped from my chair and cried, `**Praise the Lord, I am dead!**' I ran downstairs and met one of the brothers helping in the kitchen and I laid hold of him. `Brother', I said, `**do you know that I have died?**'
- Do you not know that Christ has died? **Do you not know that I died with Him? Do you not know** that **my death** is no less truly a fact than His?

# Knowing before reckoning or counting

- YOU MUST KNOW FIRST BEFORE YOU CAN COUNT YOURSELF OR RECKON YOURSELF
- <sup>6</sup> For **we know** that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— <sup>7</sup> because **anyone who has died has been set free from sin**
- <sup>11</sup> In the same way, **count yourselves dead** to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.
- *Give example of alcoholic*



# Reckoning : testimony of Watchman Nee

- What, then, is the secret of reckoning? To put it in one word, it is **revelation**. We need **revelation** from God Himself (Matt. 16:17; Eph. 1:17,18). We need to have our eyes opened to the fact of our union with Christ, and that is something more than knowing it as a doctrine.
- Having said, then, that revelation leads spontaneously to reckoning, we must not lose sight of the fact that we are presented with a command: "Reckon ye ...."
- There is a definite attitude to be taken. **God asks us to do the account; to put down 'I have died' and then to abide by it. Why? Because it is a fact.** When the Lord Jesus was on the cross, I was there in Him. Therefore I reckon it to be true. I reckon and declare that I have died in Him. Paul said, "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God."
- How is this possible? "In Christ Jesus." Never forget that it is always and only true *in Christ*. *If you look at yourself you will think death is not there, but it is a question of faith not in yourself but in Him. You look to the Lord, and know what He has done. 'Lord, I believe in Thee. I reckon upon the fact in Thee.'* Stand there all the day.

# Temptation And Failure, the Challenge To Faith

- For us, then, the **two** greatest facts in history are these: that all our **sins are dealt with by the Blood**, and that **we ourselves are dealt with by the Cross**. But what now of the matter of temptation? What is to be our attitude when, after we have seen and believed these facts, we discover the old desires rising up again? Worse still, what if we fall once more into known sin?
- Now remember, one of the Devil's main objects is always to make us doubt the Divine facts. ....
- The crucial test is just here. Are you going to believe the tangible facts of the natural realm which are clearly before your eyes, or the intangible facts of the spiritual realm which are neither seen nor scientifically proved?
- But whereas we know that, in dealing with sins committed, God's method is direct, to blot them out of remembrance by means of the Blood, when we come to the principle of sin and the matter of deliverance from its power, we find instead that God deals with this indirectly. **He does not remove the sin but the sinner**. Our old man was crucified with Him, and because of this the body, which before had been a vehicle of sin, is unemployed ( *example of alcoholic* )

# Therefore .....offer yourselves

- <sup>11</sup> In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.
- <sup>12</sup> **Therefore** do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.
- <sup>13</sup> Do not **offer** any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather **offer** yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and **offer** every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.
- <sup>14</sup> For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

# Offering yourselves as slaves to God

- <sup>15</sup> What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means!
- <sup>16</sup> Don't you know that when you **offer** yourselves to someone as obedient **slaves**, you are **slaves** of the one you obey—whether you are **slaves** to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?
- <sup>17</sup> But thanks be to God that, though you used to be **slaves** to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance.
- <sup>18</sup> You have been set free from sin and have become **slaves** to righteousness.

## Result of slavery

- <sup>19</sup> I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations.
- Just as you used to **offer** yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness.
- <sup>20</sup> When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. <sup>21</sup> What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death!
- <sup>22</sup> But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.
- <sup>23</sup> For **the wages of sin is death**, but the **gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord**.

# Offer (*present*) yourself to God

- <sup>13</sup> Do not **offer** any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather **offer** yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and **offer** every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.
- <sup>16</sup> ....when you **offer** yourselves to ..*God* ..as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the *God* whom you obey ..., which leads to righteousness?
- <sup>19</sup> .....just as you used to **offer** yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now **offer** yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness.

# Presenting what ??

- offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, i.e you are **offering the new creation**
- **The old self was crucified ,**
- **therefore the old self is not being offered.**

# Presenting “what” from Watchman Nee

- Paul says: "Present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead". This defines for us the point at which consecration begins. For what is here referred to is not the consecration of anything belonging to the old creation, but only of that which has passed through death to resurrection. The 'presenting' spoken of is the outcome of my knowing my old man to be crucified. Knowing, reckoning, presenting to God: that is the Divine order.
- .....When this point is reached, giving myself to Him follows. In resurrection He is the source of my life indeed He *is my life; so I cannot but present everything to Him, for all is His, not mine.*
- But without passing through death I have nothing to consecrate, nor is there anything God can accept, for He has condemned all that is of the old creation to the Cross. Death has cut off all that *cannot be consecrated to Him, and resurrection alone has made consecration possible.* Presenting myself to God means that henceforth I consider my whole life as now belonging to the Lord.



# What happens when you offer yourself to God

- When the Galilian boy brought his bread to the Lord, what did the Lord do with it? He broke it. God will always break what is offered to Him. He breaks what He takes, but after breaking it He blesses and uses it to meet the needs of others.
- After you give yourself to the Lord, He begins to break what was offered to Him. Everything seems to go wrong, and you protest and find fault with the ways of God. But to stay there is to be no more than just a broken vessel -- no good for the world because you have gone too far for the world to use you, and no good for God either because you have not gone far enough for Him to use you.
- My giving of myself to the Lord must be an initial fundamental act. Then day by day I must go on giving to Him, not finding fault with His use of me but accepting with praise even what the flesh revolts against.

# Conclusion

- We must **know** that our old self was crucified with Christ
- We must **know** that we were raised from the dead with Christ
- Therefore we must **count yourselves** dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus
- Therefore we must **present** or **offer** ourselves to God , for his purposes.
- Therefore we must also **walk in the Spirit of God** (talk no.6)