

IDENTIFICATION (8)

As our thinking moves along from the Substitutionary (birth) truths, on to the Identification (growth) truths, it might be good to consider briefly what leaders, honored of God through the years, have to say about identification, as centered in Romans six.

Evan H. Hopkins: "The trouble of the believer who knows Christ as his justification is not sin as to its guilt, but sin as to its ruling power. In other words, it is not from sin as a load, or an offence, that he seeks to be freed -- for he sees that God has completely acquitted him from the charge and penalty of sin -- but it is from sin as a master. To know God's way of deliverance from sin as a master he must apprehend the truth contained in the sixth chapter of Romans. There we see what God has done, not with our sins -- that question the Apostle dealt with in the preceding chapters -- but with ourselves, the agents and slaves of sin. He has put our old man -- our original self -- where He put our sins, namely, on the cross with Christ. 'Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him' (Romans 6:6). The believer there sees not only that Christ died for him -- substitution -- but that he died with Christ -- identification" (Thoughts on Life and Godliness, p.50).

Andrew Murray: "Like Christ, the believer too has died to sin; he is one with Christ, in the likeness of His death (Romans 6:5). And as the knowledge that Christ died for sin as our atonement is indispensable to our justification; so the knowledge that Christ and we with Him in the likeness of His death, are dead to sin, is indispensable to our sanctification" (Like Christ, p.176).

J. Hudson Taylor: "Since Christ has thus dwelt in my heart by faith, how happy I have been! I am dead and buried with Christ -- ay, and risen too! And now Christ lives 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.' Nor should we look upon this experience, these truths, as for the few. They are the birthright of every child of God, and no one can dispense with them without dishonoring our Lord" (Spiritual Secret, p.116).

Wm. R. Newell: "To those who refuse or neglect to reckon themselves dead to sin as God commands, we press the question, How are you able to believe that Christ really bare the guilt of your sins and that you will not meet them at the judgment day? It is only God's Word that tells you that Christ bare your sins in His own body on the tree. And it is the same Word that tells you that you as connected with Adam, died with Christ, that your old man was crucified, that since you are in Christ you shared His death unto sin, and are thus to reckon your present relation to sin in Christ -- as one who is dead to it, and alive unto God" (Romans, Verse by Verse, p.227).

Lewis Sperry Chafer: "The theme under consideration is concerned with the death of Christ as that death is related to the divine judgments of the sin nature in the child of God. The

necessity for such judgments and the sublime revelation that these judgments are now fully accomplished for us is unfolded in Romans 6:1-10. This passage is the foundation as well as the key to the possibility of a 'walk in the Spirit'" (He That Is Spiritual, p.154).

Ruth Paxson: "The old 'I' in you and me was judicially crucified with Christ. 'Ye died' and your death dates from the death of Christ. 'The old man,' the old 'self' in God's reckoning was taken to the cross with Christ and crucified and taken into the tomb with Christ and buried. Assurance of deliverance from the sphere of the 'flesh' and of the de-thronement of 'the old man' rests upon the apprehension and acceptance of this fact of co-crucifixion" (Life on the Highest Plane, Vol. II, pp.78,79).

Watchman Nee: "Our sins were dealt with by the blood, we ourselves are dealt with by the cross. The blood procures our pardon, the cross procures deliverance from what we are in Adam. The blood can wash away my sins, but it cannot wash away my old man: I need the cross to crucify me -- the sinner" (The Normal Christian Life).

L. E. Maxwell: "Believers in Christ were joined to Him at the cross, united to Him in death and resurrection. We died with Christ. He died for us, and we died with Him. This is a great fact, true of all believers" (Christian Victory, p.11)

Norman B. Harrison: "This is the distinctive mark of the Christian -- the experience of the cross. Not merely that Christ died for us, but that we died with Him. 'Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him' (Romans 6:6)" (His Side Versus Our Side, p.40).

F. J. Huegel: "If the great Luther, with his stirring message of justification by faith, had with Paul moved on from Romans 5 to Romans 6 with its amazing declarations concerning the now justified sinner's position of identification with his crucified Lord, would not a stifled Protestantism be on higher ground today? Might it not be free from its ulcerous fleshiness?" (The Cross of Christ, p.84).

Alexander R. Hay: "The believer has been united with Christ in His death. In this union with Christ, the flesh, 'the body of sin' -- the entire fallen, sin-ruined being with its intelligence, will and desires -- is judged and crucified. By faith, the believer reckons (counts) himself 'dead unto sin' (Romans 6:3-14)" (N. T. Order for Church & Missionary, p.310).

T. Austin-Sparks: "The first phase of our spiritual experience may be a great and overflowing joy, with a marvelous sense of emancipation. In this phase extravagant things are often said as to total deliverance and final victory. Then there may, and often does, come a phase of which inward conflict is the chief feature. It may be very much of a Romans seven experience. This will lead, under the Lord's hand, to the fuller knowledge of the meaning of identification with Christ, as in Romans six. Happy the man who has been instructed in this from the beginning" (What Is Man? p.61).

Jesse Penn-Lewis: "If the difference between 'Christ dying for us,' and 'our dying with Him,' has not been recognized, acknowledged, and applied, it may safely be affirmed that the self is still the dominating factor in the life" (Memoir, p.26).

Wm. Culbertson: "Who died on the cross? Of course, our blessed Lord died on the cross; but who else died there? 'Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him' (Romans 6:6-8)" (God's Provision for Holy Living, p.46).

Reginald Wallis: "God says in effect, 'My child, as you reckoned on the substitutionary work of the Lord Jesus Christ for your salvation, now go a step farther and reckon on His representative work for your victory day by day.' You believe the Lord Jesus died for your sins because God said so. Now take the next step. Accept by faith the further fact that you died with Him, i.e., that your 'old man was crucified with Him'" (The New Life, p.51).

James R. McConkey: "Because He died 'death hath no more dominion over Him,' and because of our union with Him 'sin shall not have dominion over you,' even though it is present in you. Our 'reckoning' ourselves dead to sin in Jesus Christ does not make it a fact -- it is already a fact through our union with Him. Our reckoning it to be true only makes us begin to realize the fact in experience" (The Way of Victory, p.16).