

Week 7 - Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Hopefully at this point in the season, you understand our problem as humans. We have been created to worship and serve our Creator, but we have all rebelled instead. In doing so, we have all failed in our purpose in life and have earned the punishment of death and separation from God forever. We know that there is nothing that we can do to bridge that gap to be welcomed back into a relationship with God on our own, but the last couple of weeks, we have talked about the perfect solution that He provided for us: new life through Jesus Christ.

Jesus is God Himself and came to earth as a man to suffer and die on the cross for all people to pay our punishment and then rose from the dead three days later to secure the victory over both sin and death. He now offers us a great gift if we believe in him and trust that he alone is able to take the penalty of our sins and restore our relationship with God. If we believe that, we are no longer judged by our own sins, but we are instead judged by Christ's righteousness, which is perfect.

The Apostle Paul lived much of his life as an enemy of God as he persecuted and killed Christians. He was a murderer and rejected any belief in Jesus until Jesus appeared to him miraculously from heaven and proved who he was. After that experience, Paul knew the truth about who Jesus was and he understood his need to trust in Jesus for new life. Several years after Paul had been changed, forever, and been reconciled in his relationship with God, he wrote our verse for today about his life. He says, "*I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me*" (Galatians 2:20).

Paul was trying to explain to us what it means to be a Christian. He knew he had made a mess of his life and it could not be saved. He needed new life, and we do too. When we have died in Christ and have been given new life, it is no longer about serving ourselves, but instead about serving God. In fact, the new life is not our life at all; it is Christ living through us. It is no longer about disobedience, but now obedience to what God asks of us. It is no longer living for happiness or serving ourselves, but rightly serving our Maker and Savior. It is completely turned around.

Like Paul said, Jesus loved us and gave himself for us. And he didn't do so for us to be the same. Jesus died and rose again to give us a completely *new* life that we live for him and through his power. We are incapable of pleasing God on our own, so we become His tools to carry out His purpose. When we trust in Jesus to forgive our sins and give us new life, we owe him everything. We owe our entire being because without him, we are hopeless and doomed. Only with him leading and guiding us can we serve God with the life that he has provided.

Living this new life in Christ can be difficult. We still have a sinful flesh while we live on earth, so we still make mistakes. Those mistakes can be still covered by the death that Jesus already died, but it can still be difficult to navigate our time on earth as we try to serve Him. Next week, we will talk about one specific thing we are supposed to do with our new life.

Discussion Questions:

- Why do we need new life?
- Why is the new life different than our old life?
- What does it mean that the Son of God loved us and gave himself for us?