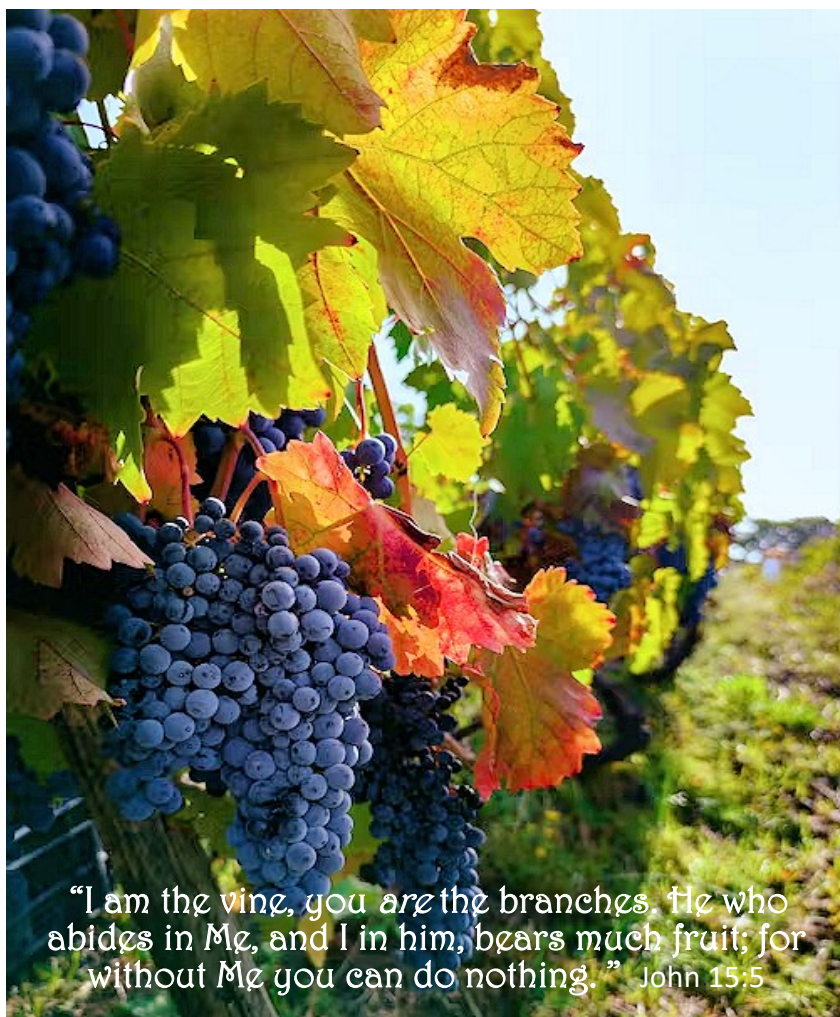


To Be Like Jesus

Another Way to Look
at the Christian Life

Book 3

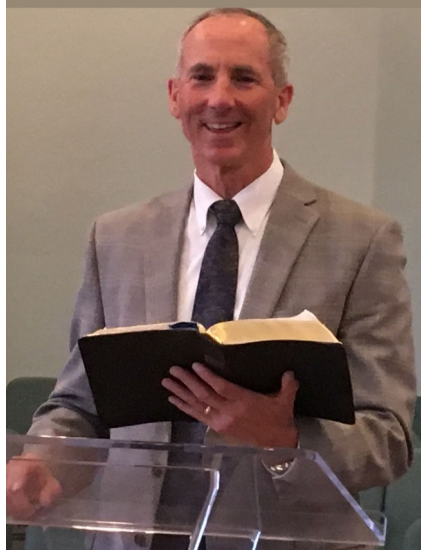


"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." John 15:5

Alaska Christian Ministry to Seafarers

Foreword

I have observed two places where it would seem God's people err. First, there are those who are so focused upon the content of spiritual growth, that they forget there is meant to be a practice of the Christian Life which is compelling to others. Then there are those who seek to live a *saintly* life, apart from the actual knowledge of what God intends for that to be!



I do not mean to be critical. Rather, my simple goal, in teaching a series entitled *To Be Like Jesus*, is that the rich content we regularly enjoy in our studies would lead to the result that the lost in our periphery would see the life of Jesus—in us. And, I do indeed mean His actual life, and that they really do see it on display right in the midst of our tragic and fallen world. I trust such a lofty goal is more than enough reason to read on!

In His grace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Redig". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "K" and "R".

Kevin Redig

All Scripture quotes have been taken from either the NIV (1984 edition) or the NKJV (1982 edition).

Vistoso Community Church
Publication: November 2024

Introduction

Now as we continue in our study of what it means to *Be Like Jesus*, I am going to take us in a new direction. There are, of course, many more examples of Jesus' actions and demonstrated character that we could study, but I feel like you now have the understanding to deal with every example you might come across in Scripture. Specifically, any time you find some new example of what it means to *Be Like Jesus*, you simply understand it to be something the Spirit of God desires to manifest in your life as another way to put on display the *Life of Christ* to a watching world. Our job is to simply *abide in Christ* and trust the Spirit of God to do what only He can do, as we are guided by the Word of God. As always, we need more of Him as we turn from self.

Dead to Sin and Alive Unto God

As a means to move deeper into our study, consider with me the Communion Remembrance.

For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

I Corinthians 11:26

Paul reminds us that our regular celebration of Communion is a looking back to all that the Lord Jesus accomplished at His First Advent in anticipation of His certain and glorious Second Coming! As we remember what He accomplished at His First Advent, our minds should be drawn to such things as:

... God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8

He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree ...

I Peter 2:24

... He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed.

Isaiah 53:5

Notice that based upon the passage in Romans on the previous page, while we were oblivious in our rebellion, God initiated His plan of salvation. It wasn't in response to our request, it was His action to meet our need.

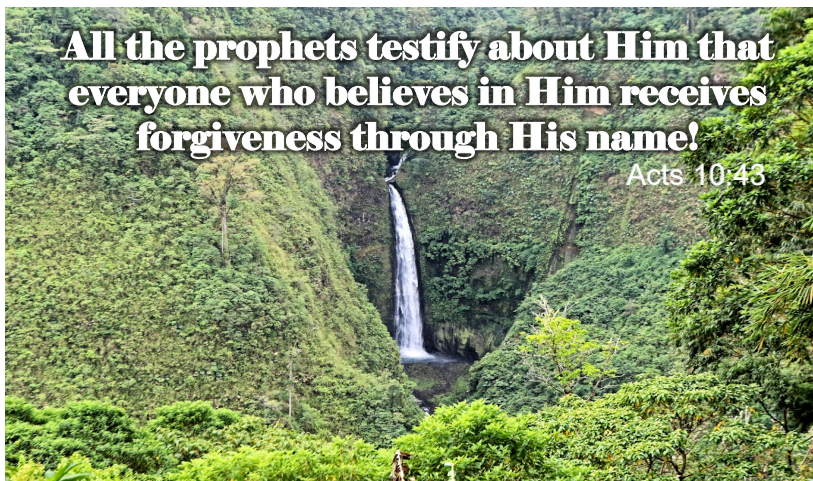
Then, consider that there are a whole list of things that are supernatural in nature that only God could do, such as forgiving sin and exacting spiritual punishment. What was the result?

All the prophets testify about Him that everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His Name.

Acts 10:43

But now the righteousness of God ... is revealed ... even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.

Romans 3:21-22



Through Him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses. Acts 13:39

God has acted to resolve an otherwise insurmountable obstacle: For the child of God our sins have been paid for and removed forever as an issue of condemnation before our holy God! Jesus did this by dying in our place and receiving God's wrath for sin upon Himself. His payment perfectly satisfied the righteousness and justice of God, so that the love of God could now save us for all eternity! Thus, we stand before God with a share in Christ's life, His righteousness, and His eternal home. Our eternal destiny is changed forever!

As you ponder the glory of these truths, ask yourself, "Is there any part of saving lost mankind from sin where we find a call to *Be Like Jesus?*" I am asking, are we called to *Be Like Jesus* in bearing the sin of another or receiving the wrath of God as payment for the sin of another? I hope you realize that our responsibility for these things is nowhere to be seen. That is because the Communion Remembrance is a time of concentrating on what Jesus accomplished for us. It was something only He could do, without any involvement from us or any kind of call to follow His example. When we look at the cross as the place where Jesus our High Priest made *propitiation* (satisfaction) *for the sins of the people* (Hebrews 2:17):

There is nothing more to be done on our part but to receive, by faith, a completed work, a sufficient work, an efficacious work!

We must understand that the work of Jesus on the cross is a completed work, for He Himself declared our sin debt was "*Paid in full!*" (John 19:30). It is a sufficient work because the Father was so satisfied with its perfection that He raised Jesus to His right hand—the place of

greatest honor in the universe. It was an *efficacious* work because it is adequate to save any and everyone who believes! And, all of this is as true today as it was some 2000 years ago! Now that's a *so-great* salvation!

There is nothing here calling us to *Be Like Him*. Salvation is just a call to respond in faith to what He has done, a work we could never do and have no part in! Perhaps the question has already popped into your mind, "*What does this discussion of salvation have to do with our study?*" It has been preparation for you to consider the sixth chapter of Romans beginning in Verse 10.

For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

Romans 6:10

Something Different

This text, and the sixth chapter of Romans in general, is talking about something far different from the Communion Remembrance. Let me walk you through it:

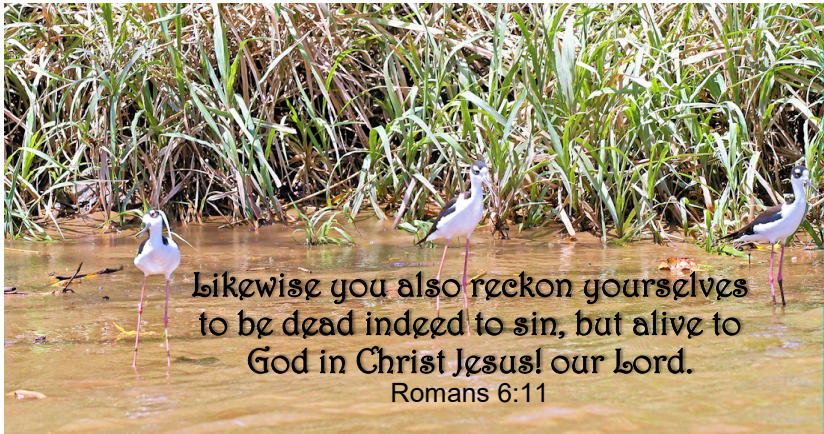
- Jesus is no longer dying for sins (plural), but for sin (singular). This refers to sin as a principle. He died to the principle of self-seeking to exalt itself, all that comes from our nature to sin, and all that this Satan-ruled world seeks to promote.
- His death to the principle of sin is a one-time thing, never to be repeated. For the principle of sin has been judged forever.
- Now the resurrected Christ lives to satisfy the will of the Father!

So we have a declarative statement describing something new: Not just Jesus paying for our acts of sin, but also His dying to the principle of sin. Death always

speaks of separation, and so in His resurrection life the Lord Jesus is separated from all that is contrary to the will of God. Here is the tremendously important connection found in the very next verse:

Likewise, you also reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:1



Likewise, you also ...

Take note, we have arrived at a call to *Be Like Jesus!* It couldn't say it any more clearly! For *likewise* is telling us that whatever came before, we are to do the same!

Follow closely and you will see a new aspect of what it means to *Be Like Jesus!*

... reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God ...

Just as Jesus died to the principle of sin, we too are to see ourselves separated from sin as a principle. That means separated from our nature to sin and separated from the world. Further, we are to see ourselves as once and for all separated from the principle of sin and

from all that seeks to draw us away from abiding in our Savior! That's not all. We are also to reckon ourselves as those now spiritually alive, with the very life of Jesus and just like Him, living in devotion to the will of the Father!

To be absolutely clear, our separation from sin and the taking up of the new life in Christ is not something we do by force of will. Rather, it is an act of faith in what God has already done, and that brings us to the little word—*reckon*.

This word has a connection to proper accounting procedure. Let me give you an example. Twice each month I get a text from the bank, notifying me that my paycheck has been electronically deposited. What am I to do with this information? The answer: I am to properly record it in my checkbook—that would be to *reckon* upon the fact of the deposit that has just occurred! Let me ask you, if I am a little short of funds, can I mark down a larger amount? Of course not. To keep the books straight, the only amount I can *reckon* is the exact amount that was deposited.

Here is the spiritual connection: God is telling us to mark something down in the ledger of our soul—and to do so, we need to get it exactly right. What we are to mark down is that we are *dead to sin* because we were crucified with Christ, and we are *alive unto God* because we were raised up with Christ and now share in His life. This isn't something we do; this is something God has done. He wants us to believe it and then stand firm upon it by faith.

The grammar associated with the verb *to reckon* also tells us something. First, it is an imperative, which means it is a command. It is also in the present tense, so we are to do it right now. And, it is in the middle voice, which

means to reckon is something we apply to ourselves as we trust in the truth of God's Word. In short, in telling us to *reckon* upon the truth of our death and resurrection with Christ, God is telling us in a very strong way to respond by faith—exactly as God has declared it and then stand firm!



1 CORINTHIANS 16:13

*Watch! Stand firm
in the faith! Be
courageous! Be
strong!*

I would be remiss if I did not draw your attention to the very last portion of Romans 6:11: ... *in Christ Jesus our Lord*. There is one, and only one, place we are dead to sin and alive unto God—in Christ Jesus.

We have just added to our store of positional truth. In Christ we died to sin, are raised to newness of life, and are seated with Christ in the heavenlies at the right hand of the Father.

For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

Colossians 3:3

I trust you see we have just added to what it means to *Be Like Jesus*. We are to be like Him in His death to sin once and for all, and like Him in His resurrection to new life! This is to be a life which we put at the Father's disposal in order to accomplish His will. To reject this call is to reject *Being Like Jesus!*

It is going to take time for this truth to become clear in our thinking. Just keep returning and rereading the text in Romans 6:10-11 in order to saturate yourself with the

truth. Then it is going to take even more time to allow the Holy Spirit to bring this to fruition in your daily life as part of your walk of faith. Though you may fail along the way, do not give up. Keep reckoning, and keep trusting God to do what only He can do.

Where the Difficulty Lies

Along the way, it is quite natural to become discouraged with this new aspect of our call to walk by faith. It is not uncommon for those seeking to *reckon* to exclaim:

This just isn't working in my life! Rather than being dead to sin, I seem more alive to it than ever. This sounds so appealing; why is my experience such a failure?

I can tell you exactly where the difficulty lies! First of all, the Bible says we are dead to sin, not that it is dead to us. Both the world without and the flesh within are seeking to control the soul. This is why we must constantly be engaged in *reckoning* as part of our walk of faith. Reckoning is not something we do once and then never have to deal with our nature to sin again. On the contrary, this is God's provision to daily and moment-by-moment separate from the power of the flesh until we are finally free of it in our resurrection bodies to come!

Second, the most common reason to fail is that we are trying to separate from our sin nature by force of will rather than by faith in our co-crucifixion with Christ. When we try to deal with our sin nature from the source of self, it is akin to self wrestling with self! Who is going to win? Why, self has to win, and this is not the source from which to live the Christian Life. We need to see ourselves as dead to sin by virtue of having died with Christ positionally, and then alive from the dead in Him.

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.

Galatians 2:20

As we have seen, the Christ who lives in each born-again child of God died to the principle of sin once and for all, and now lives unto the will of the Father. This we must believe and this we must trust the Spirit to make real in our lives if we are going to *Be Like Jesus!*

The Context

Until now, I have focused our attention on Romans 6:11:

Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

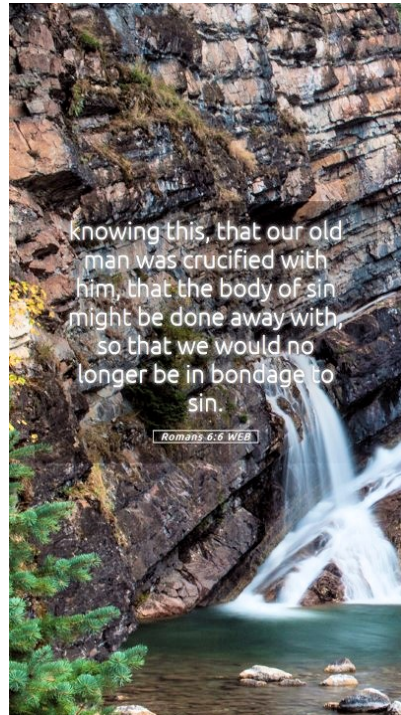
Romans 6:11

But this is not a stand-alone verse; it is part of a very carefully developed pattern of thinking by the Apostle Paul. Let me share some of the detail with you in order to firm up our understanding.

For we know that our old self was crucified with Him ...

Romans 6:6

Our *old self* is who we were in Adam. We were all born spiritually dead *in Adam* with his sin imputed to us. (Romans 5:12, I Corinthians 15:22) To deal with the Adamic self, God identified us with the death of Christ—here's why:



For we know that our old self (who we were in Adam) **was crucified with Him so that the body of sin** (our sin nature) **might be done away with** (rendered ineffectual) ...

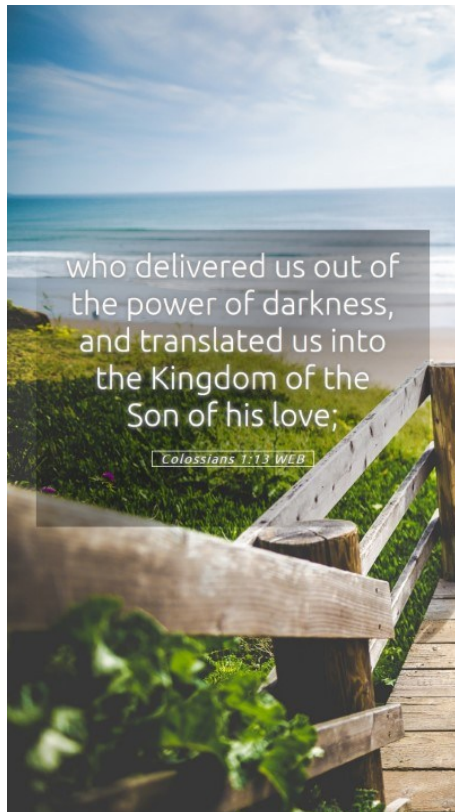
Romans 6:6

Now we begin to see the fullness of what God has done to break the power of sin in our lives. He has identified us with the death of Christ, so that the power of our sin nature might be broken—rendered ineffectual. You might wonder why I changed *done away with* to *made ineffectual*. Consider the following passage:

Inasmuch as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

Hebrews 2:14-15

Here is yet another aspect of the death of Christ: He *destroyed* him who had the power of death—Satan. The underlined word, to *destroy* is the same word as translated *done away with* in the text of Romans 6:6. I ask you, has Satan been destroyed? Hardly! That is the wrong meaning of the word in context. Instead, Christ's death nullified or rendered ineffectual Satan's grip on lost mankind. Those who believe are forcibly removed from Satan's kingdom and transferred into the kingdom of Jesus Christ. (Colossians 1:13)



Here is the complete text of Romans 6:6-7:

For we know that our old self (who we were in Adam) **was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be rendered powerless that we should no longer be slaves to sin** (the goal)—**because anyone who has died is freed from sin** (the means). Romans 6:6-7

The depth and richness of what God has provided for us to live the Christian Life is supernatural in nature. It will require great spiritual sensitivity. But I trust you to see that God identified us with the death of Christ in order to break the sin nature's stranglehold on our lives. He did this so that we would serve our sin nature no longer—that is the Father's goal for those who come to Him in faith.

Here is the final piece: Those who have died are free from sin; death is the means of our emancipation! Now, this is going to require some explanation:

- Are we going to have to worry about our nature to sin in a resurrection body in our heavenly home? No! It is gone forever once our fallen bodies have been replaced with new bodies like that of our Savior.
- But God has no intention of waiting until we are resurrected for the power of sin to be broken in the lives of His children. Instead, He so completely identified us with the death of His Son, that we must see ourselves as dead with Christ—NOW!
- Let me ask you, do any of the things that prompt a person to sin have any impact on a corpse? None at all. So too, we are to see ourselves every bit as much separated from our nature to sin. We are dead to every lust pattern of the flesh. If we are dead, then we are separated. This is true because God identified us with the death of Christ.

We have, in fact, died with Him. Now, we must reckon it to be true!

The Crucial Portions

Much of the above may be brand new to you, and so it will take a certain amount of spiritual maturity to bring it to fruition in your life. To help that process along, let me try to connect several of the more crucial portions, in sequence:

1. ***Crucial to our desire to Be Like Jesus is to see the truth.*** I died with Christ to the principle of sin, and in Him am now alive unto God!
2. ***Can you or I make this real in our lives?*** No, we cannot! Our sinful natures will not succumb to self—they are altogether too tough. Nor can our sinful natures be rehabilitated.
3. ***If we cannot do it, who can?*** This is a question that must be asked, for it turns us to God and allows us to be receptive to His answer.

... if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live ... Romans 8:13

Walk by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. Galatians 5:16

It is the Father who positionally united us with the death of His Son. It is the Holy Spirit who is going to daily *put to death*—that means separate us from—our sin nature. Until we set aside this body of corruption, it will not be dead to us, but by the power of the Spirit we can walk in newness of life separated from it. This is not something we do, it is something we *believe* as we daily trust the Spirit to make real in our lives that which we could never do from the source of self.

Let's not forget that not only is the Spirit's role to separate us from the misdeeds of the body, but also to produce fruit in our lives that we bear to the glory of God!

... the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. ...
Galatians 5:22-23

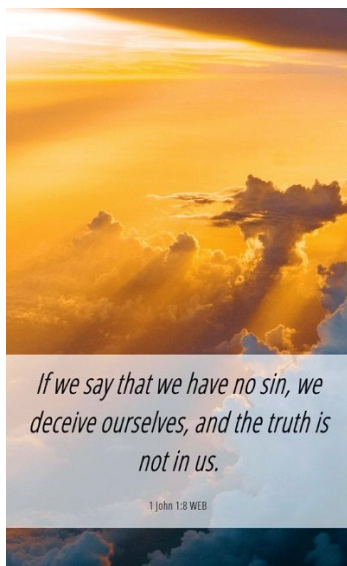
Our Role

Surely we are to do something. Yes, we are to trust! We are to *reckon* upon the truth of God's Word as part of our walk of faith, and then walk by the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. It is possible to take this too far. Am I teaching that you will never sin as a saved individual? Of course not!

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

I John 1:8

Does this mean that *reckoning ourselves dead to sin* doesn't work? Absolutely not. God has provided the means for us never to sin by means of the *Cross of Christ* and replaced who we were in Adam with the very *Life of Christ*! His provision is perfect. Failures are the result of our turning back to the flesh, rather than reckoning ourselves dead to it! We own every failure, and failures are bound to occur. Thankfully, when they do occur, sure enough the Lord has a gracious provision for our spiritual recovery as well through the Blood of Christ!



If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse to us from all unrighteousness.

I John 1:9

... If we walk in the light as He is in the light, ... the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

I John 1:7

As we close this section, you may be asking: Is it really possible to live *dead to sin and alive unto God*? That is very similar to asking the question: *Is it possible to be like Jesus*? What sayeth the Lord?

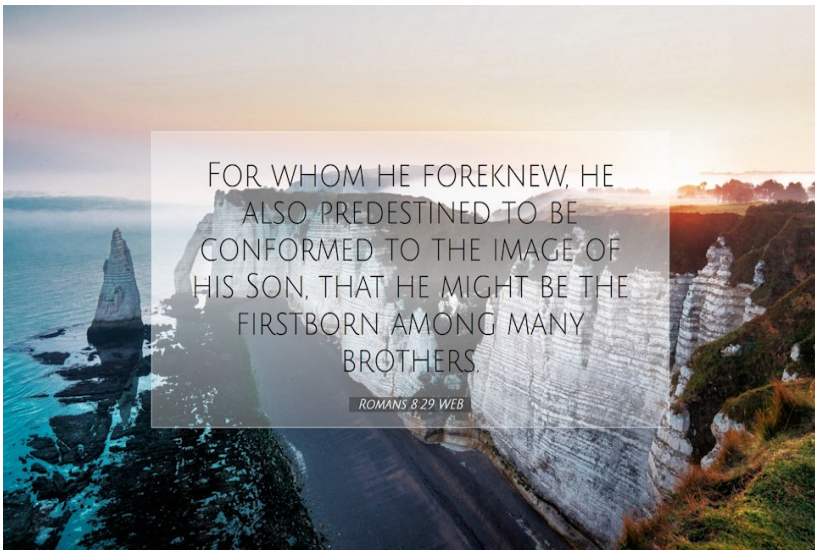
For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers.

Romans 8:29

... just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Romans 6:4

Upon the authority of God's Word, He is willing and able. Our role is to stand firm in the Faith!



Live to Glorify and Long for Glory!

My desire is that, as you continue to observe every aspect of the life of Christ as recorded in the Scriptures, you would take what you observe and gently and persistently work it through the process we have learned. I think you have the tools to do this, now it is up to you to put them to work! Specifically, let me remind you, as we observe some compelling examples of character or ministry on the part of Jesus, that instead of thinking we can by force of will manifest it in our lives, we instead turn to the One in whom our life is hidden—the Lord Jesus! We are to make being *more like Jesus* a matter of fellowship with Him and to prayerfully rejoice in what He desires to produce in our lives, so that we might bear fruit to His glory. Then we need to rest in Him, to do what only He can do as we seek to follow in the train of His triumph, trusting in His Spirit to produce His life as a sweet aroma always and everywhere!

Ours is to reckon ourselves dead to the constant effort of the sin nature to reassume control of our lives, and instead to walk in the newness of life we have in Christ. As we do so, He will produce. For:

... The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Galatians 2:20

It's NOT get out there and *do*, but stay close and *abide*!

There is one last thing we can add to our understanding. Not only is it very important, but it is also wonderfully compelling! We can find it in the High Priestly Prayer of Jesus as recorded in John Chapter 17. You might find it helpful to read the entire chapter before we begin.

Live to Glorify!

Jesus opens His High Priestly Prayer by asking the Father to glorify Him that He in turn would glorify the Father. As Jesus continues, let me draw your attention to His declaration in Verse 4:

“I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which you have given Me to do.” John 17:4

Now, to *glorify* or *bring glory* is every bit as much a challenge to understand as the many other abstract concepts which are part of the Christian Life—such things as faith, abide, and now glorify. The basic meaning of the word includes: that which illuminates, that which gives honor or value, and that which prompts praise and exaltation. So, let's ask, *“How exactly did Jesus glorify the Father during His First Advent?”* Let me suggest that Jesus glorified the Father during His time on earth by:

- Accepting the Father's mission
- Occupying Himself with the Father's plans
- Obeying the Father's will
- Entrusting Himself to the Father

There is much, much more we could add, but this will give us a place to start as we consider how this list gave honor to the Father and brought Him praise and exaltation. I want to look at each of these actions in turn, so that we might more fully understand the nature of the Son glorifying the Father.

Accepting. Jesus glorified the Father during His time on earth by accepting the Father's mission! By accepting the Father's mission, I am referring to the Father's call upon Jesus' life:

... God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son ... John 3:16

Christ Jesus ... being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing ...

Philippians 2:5-7

... the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. ...

John 1:14

"... For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it."

John 12:47

Think through the above sequence carefully:

1. The Father sent the Son.
2. The Son didn't resist leaving His eternal place of honor, but willingly took on the humble state of a baby born in a manger in Bethlehem.
3. His mission at His First Advent was to save lost mankind as the perfect Lamb of God, who would die in our place and pay a sin debt infinitely beyond us!

Occupying. Jesus glorified the Father during His time on earth by occupying Himself with the Father's plans.

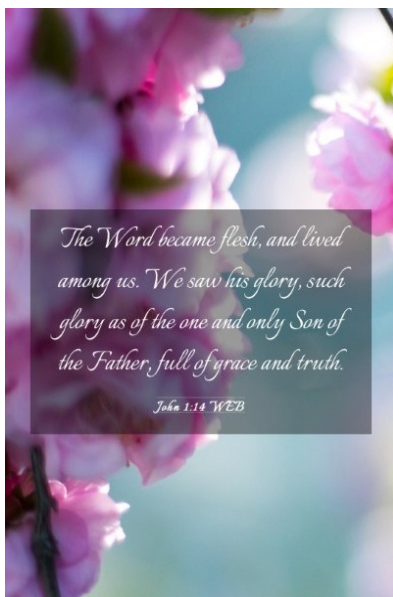
"Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner."

John 5:19

The language of this statement by Jesus is such that it would seem that Jesus intently studied the will of the Father that He might reveal it to us. No wonder Jesus could say:

"Anyone who has seen Me, has seen the Father."

John 14:9



Obeying. Jesus glorified the Father during His time on earth by obeying the Father's will.

"For I came down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." John 6:38

"... but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me."
John 14:31

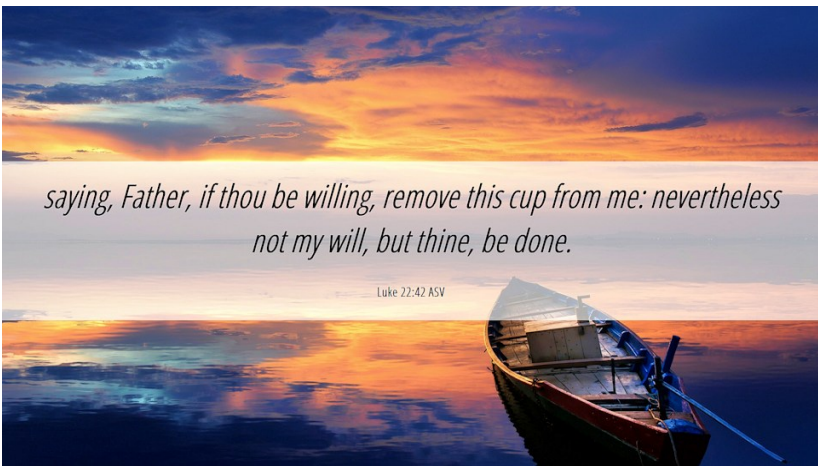
Of course, this culminated with Jesus making it ever so clear in the Garden that, even in the face of the most difficult of challenges, Jesus was steadfast stating:

"... not My will but Thine." Luke 22:42

Entrusting. Jesus glorified the Father during His time on earth by entrusting Himself to the Father.

"... Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit!"
Having said this, He breathed His last. Luke 23:46

"He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in His mouth." When they hurled their insults at Him, He did not retaliate; when He suffered, He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly.
I Peter 2:22-23



When I speak of entrusting Himself, I am really drawing your attention to the life of faith exemplified by Jesus. To do so, I have taken you to the most challenging time of His earthly ministry, and what do we find? Jesus puts His very life into the hands of the Father. In the case of a gross miscarriage of justice, He entrusts Himself to the Father. This is a life of dependent trust in the Father, which exalts the Father—that is brings glory to Him!

So I ask, did Jesus truly glorify the Father during His time on earth? Did He exalt the Father, bring Him front and center, and magnify His name through His obedience, fulfillment of His will, and dependent trust? Did He finish—to perfection—the work that God gave Him to do? It is impossible to say anything other than a resounding *Amen!* to these questions. Can we find the slightest flaw in the life the Son lived to the glory of the Father?

We Are Called to Glorify

Now in the midst of a series entitled *To Be Like Jesus*, can you guess what is coming next? Here it is:

So, to be like Jesus, it would seem perfectly clear that we too would have to say: "Father, I have glorified you while on earth and completed the work You gave me to do!"

This is to live to glorify the Father, in our case as one abiding in the Son and walking by the Spirit as the means to follow the example laid down for us by our Savior!

As reinforcement, let me ask, "How did Jesus glorify the Father?" Did we not just work our way through the answer? Jesus glorified by accepting the Father's mission, occupying Himself with the Father's plans, obeying the Father's will, and entrusting Himself to the Father.

So then how do we glorify the Father? THE SAME WAY!
Let me show you from the Scriptures.

Accepting. To glorify the Father, we too must accept the Father's mission:

Come out from them and be separate ...

II Corinthians 6:17

"Abide in Me and I in You ..."

John 15:4

This is the will of God, even our sanctification.

I Thessalonians 4:3

"... You will be My witnesses ..."

Acts 1:8

Note carefully that although our mission is not exactly the same as that of the Lord Jesus, the principle is the same. As those redeemed from the dominion of darkness, we are called to leave all that behind, to abide in our Savior, to set apart our lives to the Father, and to bear witness to the One who saved us. To glorify the Father requires a steadfast acceptance of what the Father has called us to do!

Occupying. To glorify the Father, we too must occupy ourselves with the Father's plans.

Blessed is the man ... his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on His law He meditates day and night.

Psalms 1:1-2

... we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

II Corinthians 10:5

In order to occupy ourselves with God's plans, we are told by the Scriptures to live:

- As citizens of a place we have never seen. (Philippians 3:20)
- As aliens and strangers in the only place we have ever known. (Hebrews 11:13)

We know His plans through the revelation He has given to us. That is why we are to daily *delight ourselves* in His Word and *meditate on it day and night!* This will allow us to bring every thought and pattern of thinking into conformity with His revealed truth. Only then can we be heavenly representatives among the earthly lost, who are subjects of Satan's kingdom whether they know it or not.

Obeying. To glorify the Father, we too must obey the Father's will. To illustrate this point, consider this paraphrase of Romans 2:1-2:

I am pleading with you brothers, by the mercies of God, that you put yourselves under orders to God, as a living sacrifice—one that would be holy as He is holy, and fully acceptable to Him, which is how we rightly worship! And of this you can be sure, the world will never help you with this. Instead, turn to the Word daily, allow it to renew your mind and guide your thinking that it might transform you so that you can prove—put on display to the watching world and your heavenly Father—what it means to be a living sacrifice under orders to Him!



You will not understand the selection of Romans 12:1-2 as an example of the Father's will, unless you understand the flow of the Book of Romans. For it is the will of the Father that we understand our justification as the result of faith in the finished work of Christ, leading to sanctification by understanding and applying the spirituality of Romans 6-8.

Then comes the real test! Have we matured to the point we can put ourselves under orders to God, as living sacrifices and as an act of worship? Further, can we do all this not thinking too highly of ourselves and leaving no debt outstanding but to love one another? This is to bring to fruition the grace that He has provided in terms of the Christian Life, and it greatly glorifies Him because it can be found nowhere else but among those who are *Like Jesus!*

Entrusting. To glorify the Father, we too must entrust ourselves to Him. It is not about what we do, it is about how we steadfastly trust our heavenly Father to be our one source of truth, to meet our every need, and to do through us what we cannot do ourselves. Not only is this to *Be Like Jesus*, it is also a return to that for which we were created.

"My righteous ones will walk by faith." Romans 1:17

**This is the victory that has overcome the world,
even our faith.** I John 5:4

... without faith it is impossible to please God ...
Hebrews 11:6

Points of Application

As you consider the discussion we have just completed, let me give you a few points of application.

1. Jesus' prayer in John 17 is a compelling summation:

"I have glorified You on the earth. I have completed the work which You given Me to do." John 17:4

And notice, Jesus provides this summation right at the close of His earthly ministry.

2. How did Jesus reach this point? He reached it by steadfastly and daily occupying Himself with the Father's will, His plans, and purposes. He walked in dependent trust every step of the way.

3. Is it really possible for us to say the same thing: that we have glorified God and completed the work He has given us to do?

One of the more famous statements of the purpose of redeemed man is as follows:

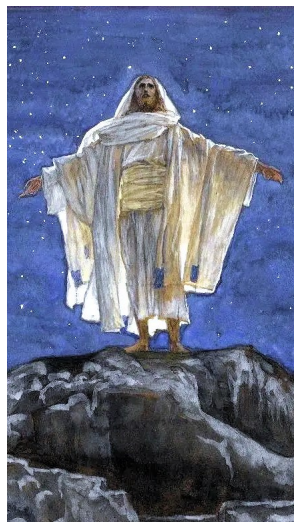
Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever!

As wonderfully compelling as I find that to be, at the same time I find it to be a daunting impossibility! How do I achieve this on a daily basis?

4. Let me suggest that we focus on the steps, rather than the outcome. In other words, as we *abide in Christ*, day-by-day, we will *write* a life that can have the same summation!

To abide in Christ is to:

- *By faith see myself in Him where He is and by faith know He is in me where I am.*



- *To think His thoughts, share His affections, engage in His purposes by means of knowing "His mind"—the Word of God.*
- *By faith, to trust the Spirit of Christ to put to death the misdeeds of the body, while, at the same time, manifesting the fruit of the Savior's life in me.*
- *To stand firm, unwavering in the One and only source of life as a new creation such that every failure is a reminder ... I need more of Jesus and less of self!*

We will be manifesting the life of Christ always and everywhere and achieving God's chief end for man as we simply live in light of our position in Christ, are guided by His Word, and walk by the Spirit that we would separate from our nature to sin and instead bear the fruit only He can produce. As we grow into this as our daily passion, then one day we too will be able to say:

I have glorified you on earth, and completed the work you have given me to do! Now draw me to Yourself!

There is nothing else like the plan of God for the child of God!



Long for Glory

After stating He has accomplished the Father's work and brought glory to Him, here is the very next verse in Jesus' prayer to the Father:

"And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was."
John 17:5

As the text of Philippians 2:5-8 so powerfully declares, Jesus set aside His glory in order to accomplish the will of the Father. Now He is asking to be brought back into the fullness of His status as a member of the Trinity.

Jesus' Glory

Did the Father answer this prayer? We shouldn't be the least bit surprised that He did—beyond our ability to fully comprehend!

... God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the Name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
Philippians 2:9-11

Note that it is from this exalted position that Jesus is going to return as the King of kings and Lord of lords. (Revelation 19:16) Then He is going to reign for one thousand years (Revelation 20:1-6) over an earthly kingdom that ushers in an eternal and heavenly kingdom. No wonder 100 million angels will be singing:

"Worthy is the Lamb ... to receive ... honor and glory and blessing!"
Revelation 5:12

This honor for Christ should be expected, but now I want to discuss something that may catch you by surprise!

We Share Jesus' Glory

First consider the things we have learned:

- First the cross and then the crown!
- Always being given over to death for Jesus sake ... your life is hidden with Christ in God!

Are you able to put these things together and come to the conclusion that if Jesus is glorified, then we are going to be glorified also? You see, if we have glorified the Father by completing the work He has given us to do—as the result of abiding in Jesus, allowing His Spirit to produce, following in the train of His triumph—it is going to be the delight of the Father to glorify us because we are in Jesus! This is going to be very challenging for us to grasp. I want to make sure I am being perfectly clear:

To be like Jesus is to live to glorify the Father, through the Son, by means of the Spirit—completing the work He has given us to do!

But there is more! To be like Jesus is also to long for glory—that would be to look forward to sharing in His glory!

I know that you may be thinking this is presumptuous! This is something that we don't deserve and shouldn't teach! My response: Why do you think God calls it grace, and why do you so quickly dismiss what His Word so clearly provides as our confidence for the future?

... we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is. All who have this hope in Him purify themselves, just as He is pure.

I John 3:2-3

When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

Colossians 3:4

It is quite clear that we are going to be like Jesus. We are going to be with Him in glory. An understanding of what is really coming to the child of God is meant to have a purifying effect on our lives right now! Do we not call the final aspect of our salvation *Glorification*? How can it be *glorification* apart from a share in glory—His glory?

There Is More

Ponder the absolute wonder of the following:

This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

I John 5:4

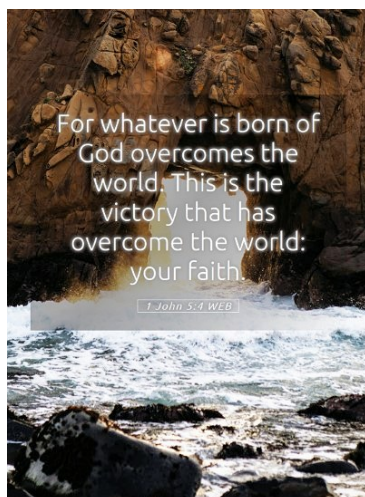
"To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with Me on My throne, just as I overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let Him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

Revelation 3:21-22

How did accomplishing the will of the Father and bringing Him glory work out for Jesus? Apparently, it will work out exactly the same for us. Do you have an ear to hear?

Then I suggest you consider very carefully the call: *Live to glorify* and *long for glory*!

To live to glorify is to *Be Like Jesus* in following His example as we have discussed. As we are conformed to His image, it would naturally follow that we will share in His glory. Should we not long for what is coming and allow it to shape us in the present—not from the source of self, but in concert with what God desires to do in us as we *abide* in the *train of His triumph*?



Glory is a more extensive topic than we have imagined, and God fully intends for it to occupy our thinking:

For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen.

II Corinthians 4:17-18

... we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in His sufferings in order that we may also share in His glory.

Romans 8:17

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

Romans 8:18

Would it seem reasonable to you if I tell you that God has provided a certain and unimaginable future glory? Would you agree that this future gift is meant to promote our completing the work that

He has given us to do in the present, by the gracious means that He has provided? Should this not be something in which we glory every day on this earth until He calls us home? I pray that I would and you would too!

... a heart that yearns and thirsts for the glory of God, that is ready to live and die for it, becomes prepared and fitted to live in it. Living to God's glory on earth is the gate to living in God's glory in heaven. Murray



2 CORINTHIANS 4:17 ASV

*For our light affliction,
which is for the moment,
worketh for us more and
more exceedingly an
eternal weight of glory;*



Two Final Thoughts

Let me conclude with two thoughts:

1. There is no point in seeking to *Be Like Jesus*, unless you first have His life as the one and only basis from which to *Be Like Him!* This would be to be born again, to be a new creation in Christ, and to be born of imperishable seed. All this happens in one and only one way—by turning from anything and everything upon which you are pinning your hopes for a heavenly future, and trusting solely in the person and work of Jesus Christ. His person, in that He is the eternally existent Second Person of the Trinity who took on humanity in order to represent you. His work, in that He went to the cross in your place, bore your sin, received the wrath of God for those sins, so that *whoever believes in Him* (who He is and what He did), *shall not perish but have everlasting life!* (John 3:16) There is no other Savior, and no other way to the Father but through Him.
2. Once saved through faith alone in Christ alone, if we think the Christian Life is something whereby we manipulate things to our advantage while simply waiting for the future, then I have failed to properly set the banquet table for you! There is no more complete package than the so-great salvation provided in Christ. It is so much better to complete the work the Father has given us to do that we might glorify Him *in time*, before we enjoy Him for an eternity.

How should we begin? Take up the call to *Be Like Jesus*—every bit of what we have learned. In this way, step-by-step, we prepare for eternity!



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