

## ***Eleutheros Newsletter***

July 2019

### **News of Interest**

In recent days Eleutheros Books has come into contact with Ken Mitchell, a Christian businessman from Texas. He intends to begin a 24 hour per day blog radio ministry that potentially can reach people all over the world.

Eleutheros Books is planning to become involved in this outreach ministry and asks the readers to pray for this.

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### ***Continued Thoughts on the Resurrection of Jesus Christ***

**Romans 5:10**. *For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.*

Paul's epistle to the Romans is the most complete explanation of the Gospel in Scripture.

The Holy Spirit led the Apostle to explain in great depth what happens when a believer is saved by God's grace.

"But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him ([Romans 5:8-9](#)).

In this great passage Paul writes about mankind's sin, Christ's great love in spite of our sin, His death which involved the shedding of His blood, the deliverance from wrath because of the salvation He so graciously offers, and the fact that we shall be saved by His life.

Although the word "resurrection" does not appear here, it is certainly described. The One Who died now lives!

One of the great results of His resurrection is that our salvation is “in Him,” a concept often repeated in Paul’s epistle to the Ephesians. Because we are in Him and He is in us we can be sure that our salvation is eternal: “we shall be saved by His life” which is an eternal, resurrected life!

[Romans 6:4-5](#). *Therefore, we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.*

We have another multi-faceted passage here.

Paul writes first about death and burial ([Romans 6:4](#)). This pictures the natural state of an unbeliever.

There is a tendency abroad today to minimize the desperate condition we all face before receiving Christ as Savior, but we do well to consider what the Scriptures tell us:

Jesus told Nicodemus, “Ye *must* be born again” ([John 3:7](#)). The word “must” literally means “it is binding.” Thus, it is clear that our Savior insists on the necessity of the new birth (regeneration).

Why is man in such need?

First, we are all sinners who have disobeyed the sovereign Creator ([Romans 3:23](#)). In fact, a good definition of sin would be “anything that fails to glorify God.” This is the obvious meaning of “and come short of the glory of God” in this verse.

Second, we are without strength to change our situation. “For when we were yet *without strength*, in due time Christ died for the ungodly ([Romans 5:16](#)).

Religion basically says, “Do something!” The Scriptures say we are “without strength.”

Third, God considers man to be following Satan. “The field is the world, the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are *the children of the wicked one*” ([Matthew 13:38](#)). “In this the children of God are manifest, and *the children of the devil...*” ([1 John 3:10](#)). “And said, O full of all subtlety and all mischief, *thou child of the devil*, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord” ([Acts 13:10](#))? See also [John 8:44](#).

Fourth, God considers man to be “*dead* in trespasses and sins” ([Ephesians 2:1b](#)). Unfortunately, there are many who seem to feel that all unsaved man needs is a “dose of the right medicine,” and all will be well. The new birth is much more than that! It is a *miracle* that comes only from God! To Him be all the glory forever!

The reference to His resurrection (“was raised from the dead”) has two important ramifications. 1. Jesus *did* rise from the dead. 2. When we are saved an amazing miracle takes place. Just as Jesus died and His body was not accomplishing anything for a time, He was revived. Something very similar happens at the moment we are saved. We were

dead spiritually, but because of a new birth, based on His death and resurrection, we are now alive!

Paul speaks of walking in “newness of life.” Perhaps a rather silly illustration will help to explain this. Imagine we were allowed to observe a cat being changed into a dog, all in a single miraculous moment.

The animal that once ate cat food, occasionally spoke “meow” or “purr,” chased after mice, and had an amazing curiosity about things now eats dog food, speaks “ruff-ruff” and barks, sometimes chases after cats, and is generally a protector of men.

Nobody would argue that the animal that was once a cat is still a cat. The same applies to what happens when a hell-bound sinner becomes a saint! The believer now Has God as his heavenly Father. He is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. He is destined to spend eternity in heaven. His identity is with Christ. He has an appetite for spiritual things.

Clearly, he is not the same as he was before! Here are four Biblical descriptions of the change:

First, a believer receives power to overcome temptation. “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin: for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God” ([1 John 3:9](#)).

The words for “sin” in this verse are in the present tense in the Greek, which means that the action would be continual. The implication is that a believer is, with God’s help, about to withstand temptation in this life. Yes, we all sometimes stumble into sin ([1 John 1:8, 10](#)), but God provides a way to gain victory and forgiveness when we ask Him for it ([1 John 1:9](#)).

Second, a believer loves his fellow believers. “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth Him that begat *loveth him also that is begotten of Him*” ([1 John 5:1](#)). “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost” ([Romans 5:5](#)) so we can love both God and our fellow man, especially believers, as we ought. This is what Paul meant when he wrote, “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith” ([Galatians 6:10](#)).

Third, a believer is obedient to God. “By this we know that we are the children of God, when we love God, and *keep His commandments*” ([1 John 5:2](#)).

Fourth, a believer loves God’s Word. “As newborn babes, *desire the sincere milk of the Word*, that ye may grow thereby” ([1 Peter 2:2](#)).

These four manifestations are found in believers who are *walking* in “newness of life” ([Romans 6:4](#)).

This passage should cause us to think about our *association* with Christ. What does this mean?

We need to appreciate what He has done for us and by His grace live the same kind of life. We should come to an understanding that our salvation has changed everything: “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new” ([II Corinthians 5:17](#)).

Paul writes about being “buried with Him by baptism” and “buried with Him by baptism into death” in this passage. Important point that needs to be made is that baptism does NOT save: “For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel” ([I Corinthians 1:17](#)).

The word “but” here is a very strong adversative, making a contrast between “preaching the Gospel” and baptizing believers.

Jesus did command that believers be baptized ([Matthew 28:19](#)), but He never taught that this ordinance saves a soul. Baptism, properly understood, is a step of obedience for those who have accepted Christ as Savior.

Now we come to the symbolism of baptism and how to apply it.

While there are many in Christian circles who have differing views of the *mode* of baptism, the emphasis on our association with our Lord’s death, burial, and resurrection in these verses certainly make a strong case for immersion.

Finally, let it be said that it is the *resurrection* of Jesus Christ that not only saves souls but also provides the power to live a godly life in this present evil world! These are clear teaching from this important passage.

We will continue these thoughts in the next newsletter.