November 22, 2026 - Small Group Questions with Leader Notes

Joined to Jesus

Romans 6:1-11

This baptism Sunday we considered Romans 6:1-11 and the fundamental question: What does it mean to be a Christian? Read the whole passage through together and discuss the following questions.

Discussion Questions

1. **Verses 1-2. What question does Paul anticipate in verse 1? How does he respond in verse 2? What reasons does he give for rejecting the idea that we should continue in sin?**

Leader Notes:

- Paul anticipates the objection: “if God's grace increases in response to sin, perhaps we should continue sinning so that grace may abound.”
- His response is emphatic: "By no means!" The idea is unthinkable.
- His reasoning is significant: "How can we who died to sin still live in it?" Paul doesn't begin with a moralistic appeal to try harder. He begins with something that has already happened to believers.
- The logic of grace is not that sin doesn't matter, but that God's grace has fundamentally changed our relationship to sin and brought the Christian into a new reality in Christ.
- This new reality has a profound impact on how we live.

2. **Verses 3-4. What has happened to those who have been baptized into Christ? Identify the different ways Paul describes our relationship with Jesus in these verses.**

Leader Notes:

- Baptized into Christ's death: Baptism signifies *participation* in Christ's death.
- Buried with Christ: Burial emphasizes the decisive character of death. Something of the old life has come to an end. Baptism signifies an “exodus” from the old life/self.
- Raised to new life: Just as Christ was raised through the glory of the Father, we are now called to walk in newness of life. Baptism signifies and seals our entrance into new creation.

What connection does Paul make between Jesus' death and resurrection and the new life we are now able to live?

This question is optional. Explore how Christian identity and ethics begins with our union with Christ. We are not simply people who admire Jesus or try to imitate him; we have been joined to him.

3. **Verses 5-7. What does Paul say has happened to our "old self"? What does he say has been accomplished through this?**

Leader Notes:

- Verse 5 uses the language of being united or plantes together with Christ. The image suggests a profound sharing in his death and resurrection.
- In verse 6, Paul says our old self was crucified with Christ.
- The purpose is that the body ruled by sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.
- Verse 7 speaks of the person who has died being *freed from sin*.

It's important to distinguish between being freed from sin's dominion and being entirely free from the presence or temptation of sin. Paul isn't suggesting Christians no longer struggle with sin. He's saying that sin is no longer their master. Something decisive has happened through their union with Christ.

4. **Verses 8-10. What does Paul say about Jesus' resurrection? Notice the contrast between Jesus' death and his life. What does this tell us about the kind of life we now share with him?**

Leader Notes:

Explore the relationship between Christ's resurrection and the new life of believers. Notice the movement in Paul's argument:

> Christ died once for all.
>> Death no longer has dominion over him.
>>> Christ now lives to God.
>>>> Those united to Christ share in the hope of resurrection (v. 5) and are already called to live in newness of life (v. 4).

There is both a present and future dimension to Christian life.

What is the relationship between the new life we experience now and the future resurrection Paul speaks about in verse 5?

This question is optional.

5. **Verse 11. What does Paul now command his readers to do? Why do you think he tells them to "consider" or "reckon" themselves dead to sin and alive to God, rather than simply telling them to stop sinning?**

Leader Notes:

This is an especially important verse because Paul moves from describing what is true of believers to commanding them to live in light of that truth.

- "Consider" or "reckon" translates a word that can mean to count, calculate, do the sum.
- Paul is calling Christians to see themselves in accordance with what God has accomplished in Jesus.
- This isn't positive thinking or pretending that sin and struggle don't exist.
- It is an act of faith: learning to see ourselves as God sees us, in light of our union with Christ.

The order matters. Paul doesn't say, "Stop sinning so that you can become alive to God." He says, in effect, "You are alive to God in Christ – now live in light of that reality."

6. **What difference does it make to understand the Christian life as being united to Jesus, rather than simply trying to believe the right things or behave in the right ways?**

Leader Notes:

Leave ample space for personal reflection and thoughts on application. Consider the implications of this passage for Christian discipleship. Encourage the group to identify the difference between two ways of approaching the Christian life:

Behaviour-based identity:

- I need to get my life together to be acceptable to God.
- My failures define me.
- My standing with God depends on how well I'm doing.

Identity-based behaviour:

- God has welcomed me and joined me to Christ.
- My identity rests in Jesus, not in my performance.
- I am called to live in a way that reflects the new life I've been given.

This doesn't diminish the importance of holiness, obedience, repentance or the pursuit of justice. It gives them their proper foundation.

Close in prayer