

Psalm 51

For the director of music. A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.

- ¹ Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your unfailing love;
according to your great compassion
blot out my transgressions.
- ² Wash away all my iniquity
and cleanse me from my sin.
- ³ For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is always before me.
- ⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight;
so you are right in your verdict
and justified when you judge.
- ⁵ Surely, I was sinful at birth,
sinful from the time my mother conceived me.
- ⁶ Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb;
you taught me wisdom in that secret place.
- ⁷ Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
- ⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones you have crushed rejoice.
- ⁹ Hide your face from my sins
and blot out all my iniquity.
- ¹⁰ Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.
- ¹¹ Do not cast me from your presence
or take your Holy Spirit from me.

- ¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.
- ¹³ Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
so that sinners will turn back to you.
- ¹⁴ Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God,
you who are God my Savior,
and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.
- ¹⁵ Open my lips, Lord,
and my mouth will declare your praise.
- ¹⁶ You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it;
you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.
- ¹⁷ My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart
you, God, will not despise.
- ¹⁸ May it please you to prosper Zion,
to build up the walls of Jerusalem.
- ¹⁹ Then you will delight in the sacrifices of the righteous,
in burnt offerings offered whole;
then bulls will be offered on your altar.

Romans 6:1-23

Dead to Sin, Alive in Christ

6 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? ³ Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we

should no longer be slaves to sin— ⁷ because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. ¹⁰ The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

¹¹ In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³ Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

Slaves to Righteousness

¹⁵ What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means! ¹⁶ Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. ¹⁸ You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

¹⁹ I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness. ²⁰ When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. ²¹ What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! ²² But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to

holiness, and the result is eternal life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

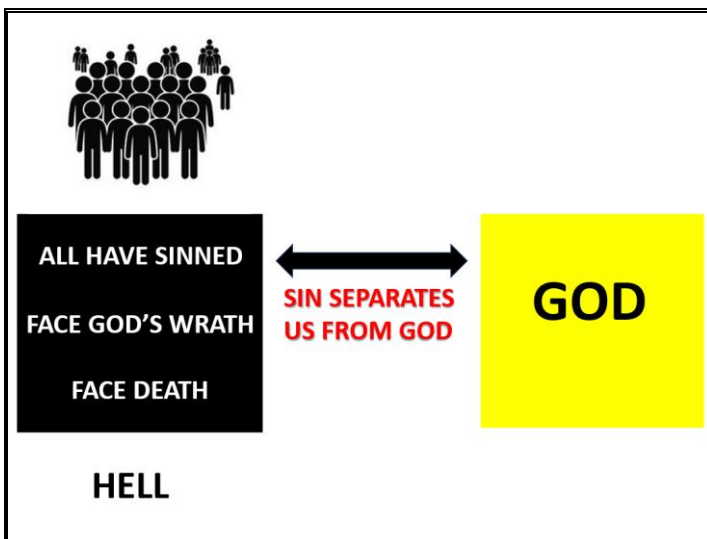
Sermon: United to Christ and Slaves to God

Please have your Bibles opened at **Romans 6** – starting at **verses 1** – then we'll look at **Psalm 51 at the end**. There is an outline if you would like to take down some notes!

Let me **pray** first...

Intro/Context

[Slide-Separated]

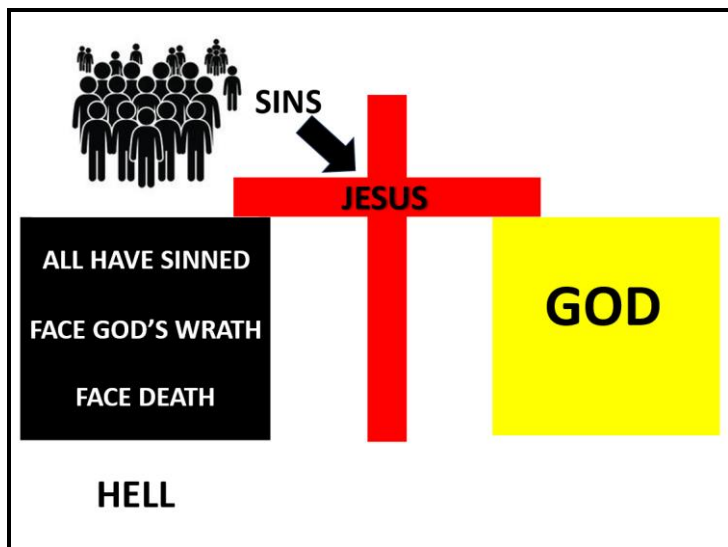


So far - in the **first five chapters of Romans**

The Apostle Paul has shown us that **all people have sinned** (Romans 3:23) and **face God's wrath** [righteous anger] and are **separated from God** – and **face the punishment for sin** – which is **death** – and ultimately **Hell!**

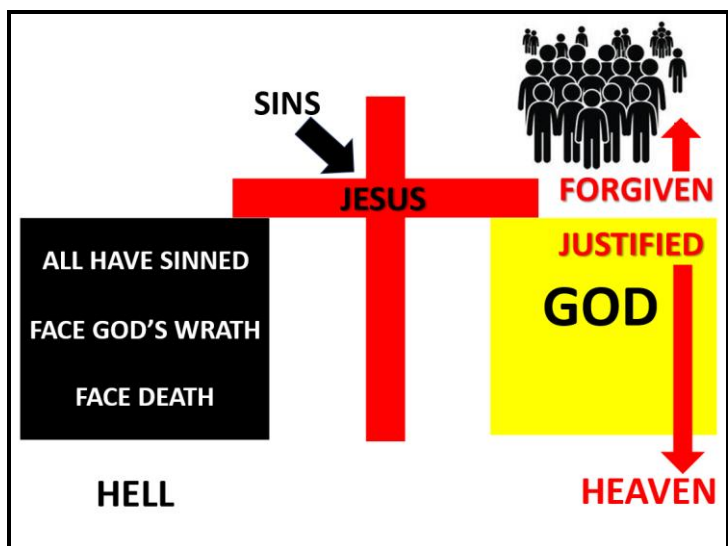
But then Paul goes on to say – **there is a way** – that people can be declared right with God. He calls that “*being justified by faith*”.

[Slide-Sins on Jesus]



Justified by faith means – people can be declared not guilty of their sins and be freed from the punishment of their sins – **by Jesus taking their sins off them and dying for their sins on the cross.**

[Slide-Forgiven-Heaven]



If people **believe** – have **faith** - Jesus did that for them – they are **forgiven** – and **justified** – that is – they are - **right with God** and **approved by God**

And because Jesus didn't stay dead but rose again – those who faith in Him – **can also get to have eternal life in heaven**

(pause)

This is only possible – Paul says - because **God showed us grace** – by sending His Son Jesus to do this

[Slide-Grace Definition]

Grace is: *God's undeserved and unearned favour on us in sending the gift of forgiveness and eternal life through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus*

[Slide-5:20]

And so, we finished up last week by Paul - saying in 5:20 – *where sin increased – so God's grace increased all the more!*

As we hit chapter 6 – Paul anticipates **some people might get the wrong end of the stick** and think as Paul says in verse 1

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?

Paul's saying – some people might think: *"I'll just keep sinning – because God's grace means – He'll just keep forgiving me"*

So, Paul's **simple question** this morning is:

[Slide-Shall we go on sinning]

"Shall we go on sinning...?"

[Slide-Answer]

And Paul's answer at the beginning of verse 2 is "*By no means!*"

NLT says "*Of course not!*"

KJV says "*God forbid!*"

GNT says "*Certainly not!*"

So, the answer is an emphatic **NO!**

[Slide-2 Reasons]

Paul gives two main reasons why *we should not go on sinning*

1st reason – we are "*united to Christ*"

2nd reason – we are "*slaves of God*"

United to Christ (vv2-14)

1st then - what does it mean to be "*united to Christ*"?

Well – Paul uses a number of **pictures** to describe it...

V2 says "*we have died to sin; so how can we live in it any longer*"

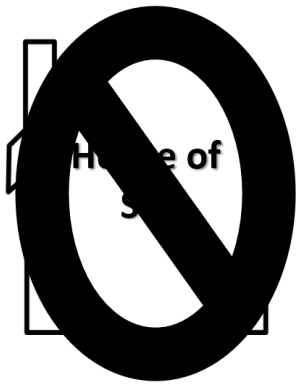
[Slide-House 1]

So, it's like we've been living in a **house of sin**

[Slide-House 2]

United to Christ

We have died to sin and no longer live in it!



And now that we believe in Jesus and are united to Him – we’ve moved to a **new cleaned-up house** – and the **old house of sin** has been **demolished** – so why would we move back there?

And note: “**Died to sin**” does not mean we don’t sin anymore.

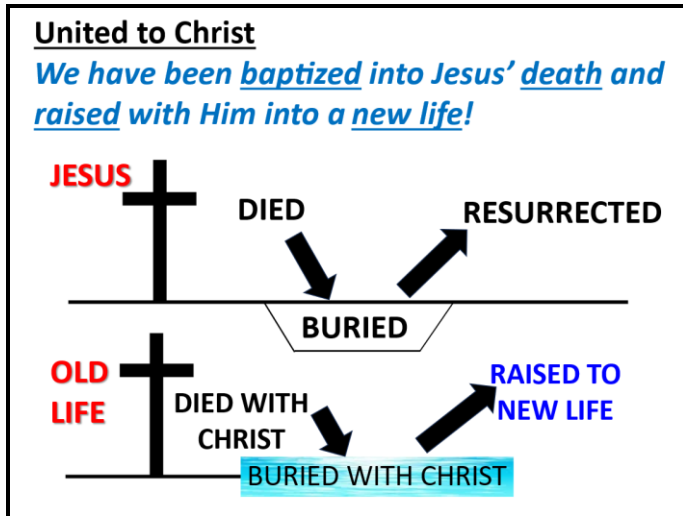
It means we are no longer under the “reign” – or the ruling power – of sin – we’re under the ruling power of Jesus.

“**Died to sin**” also means we are **no longer under God’s wrath** (righteous anger) **for our sin** – Jesus has satisfied God’s wrath on the Cross.

(pause)

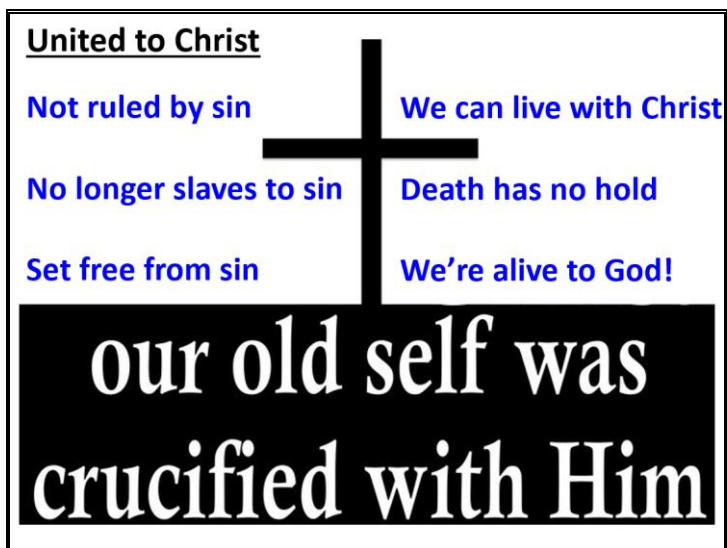
[Slide-Baptism]

The next picture Paul uses – is to say that being united to Christ – means – vv3-5 – we are baptized into Jesus' death – and also raised with Him – so we have a new life.



Paul is saying just like Jesus died on the cross – was buried – and then resurrected
 Likewise – when we are united to Jesus - our old life dies – when we are a
baptized – and our old life is buried – and we are raised to a new life in Jesus!
 (pause)

[Slide-crucified]



In fact, Paul says – v6 – it's like our old-self was crucified with Jesus (see Galatians 2:20)

[Slide-set free]

And so, we're not ruled by sin – we're no longer slaves to sin. V7 – being united to Jesus – means we died and were **set free of sin**.

Paul continues with **more benefits for us** – because we are united to Christ – in vv8-11

[Slide-life]

V8 – if we died with Christ – **we will also live with Him**

Because v9 - Christ didn't stay dead – He was raised from the dead – and death has no hold over him – and therefore death has no hold over us – and we don't need to be afraid of dying!

And v10 – Jesus' death for sin was a once and for all sacrifice for sin. And now He's raised - **He lives His life to God** – and we do the same (v10).

This means – v11 - we can count ourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus!

(pause)

If we are indeed – **united to Christ** – and have a new life in Him

[Slide-corrective action]

Paul suggests some corrective action...

V12 — we don't give sin the time of day - in our lives

V13 — we don't offer any part of ourselves to wickedness — but offer ourselves to God — because we've been brought from death to life — and as we said last week — we're on Jesus' team now — and it's the winning team!

The bottom line for Paul is in v14 - *sin is not our master anymore* — because *we are not under the law but under grace*

What does Paul mean by “*you are not under the law but under grace*”?

Again, another picture might help

[Slide-Law]

Under the Law — we have the **10 commandments** — we can't keep them perfectly — so the law can't save us — it just shows us our sins!

[Slide-Grace]

<u>THE LAW</u>	<u>GRACE</u>
1. Worship God only	We have Jesus!
2. No idols	Keeps commandments!
3. Don't blaspheme	Died for us!
4. Keep Sabbath	Gives forgiveness!
5. Honour parents	Defeated death!
6. Don't murder	Rose again!
7. No adultery	Offers eternal life!
8. Don't steal	He saves us!
9. Don't lie	
10. Don't covet	
We can't keep it!	
It can't save us!	

Under Gace – we have God's gift of Jesus – He's the one we come to – the one who can keep all the commandments perfectly – He who **died for us** – so we **escape the punishment** for our sins – and gain **forgiveness**. He - who **defeated death** and **rose from the grave** – so we can **have eternal life in Heaven!**

(pause)

Being "united to Christ" – is the 1st reason why *we should not go on sinning*.

The 2nd reason why *we should not go on sinning* – is because as Christians – we are "Slaves to God" – that's verses 15 to 23...

[Slide-Slaves to God]

Slaves to God (vv15-23)

Paul's second argument is – some Christians might think – now that they are not under the law – but under grace – **this gives them freedom to ignore the law altogether** – and so they have a license to sin

So, Paul asks the question in v15

What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace?

By no means!

Paul wants to show that grace is no excuse for continuing in sin

And he wants to shows us that **we are always slaves to something**

V16 – **we are slaves to the one we obey** – we are either slaves to sin which leads to death – or we are slaves to obedience to God - which leads to righteousness

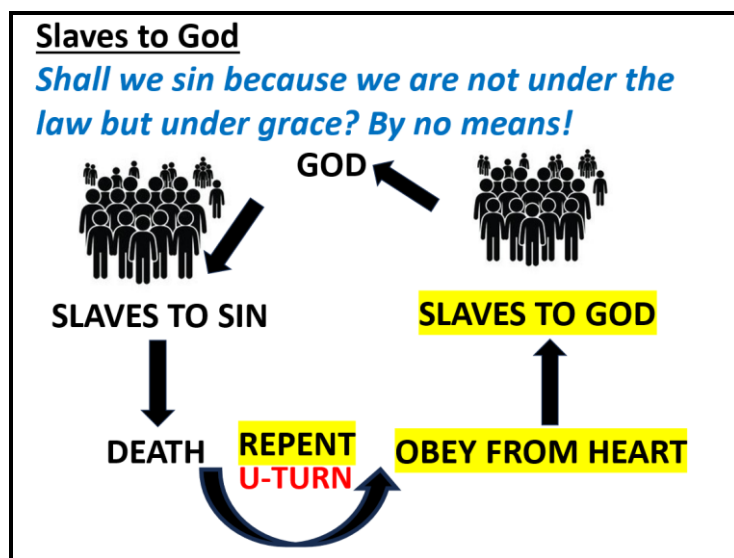
But Paul points out – v17 – that we used to be slaves to sin – but when we became Christians – we were not only baptized – but “*we came to obey from the heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance*” – in other words we made promises to follow God’s way.

[Slide-slaves to sin]

Again, a picture will help

Before we became Christians – we were **slaves to sin** – and heading away from God and heading to death and separation from God.

[Slide-repent-U-turn]



Then we **repented** [explain]

We did a **U-Turn**

We **promised from the heart** - to obey God’s commands and follow Jesus

And we became **slaves to righteousness** [that is slaves to God – who is the one who always right]

I should pause for a moment and say – if you’re some one here this morning - who hasn’t made that U-turn – today is the day! And you can talk to me after the service!

Paul goes onto describe these **two forms of slavery** – in vv19-22

[Slide-Two Forms of Slavery]

<u>SLAVES TO SIN</u>	<u>SLAVES TO GOD</u>
Impurity	Righteousness
Increasing wickedness	Holiness
DEATH	ETERNAL LIFE
HELL	HEAVEN

We can either be **slaves to sin** – and offer ourselves as slaves to **impurity** and **ever-increasing wickedness** – OR – we can be **slaves to God** - showing **righteousness** – leading to **holiness**

V20 – Paul’s argument is - we can’t be **slaves to sin** and **slaves to God** at the same time!

The only benefit of **being a slave to sin** is **DEATH** - leading to permanent separation from God – in Hell

Whereas – when we become **slaves to God** – v22 – the **benefit is eternal life** - in Heaven

That’s why Paul concludes with the great contrast in **v23**

[Slide-Romans 6:23]



“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord”

Suppose I have a job – I work in a **SIN Shop** – my job is to sin each day and break all of God’s commandments – and at the end of the week I collect my **pay slip (wages)**. When I open my pay slip – there’s no money in it – just a note saying DEATH and SEPARATION from God.

Paul is saying - why would I work in that shop?

When I get a free gift of grace in Jesus – which gives me **ETERNAL LIFE!**

Paul’s argument in this chapter – is why would you continue in sin – **after what Jesus has done for us?**

If someone saved me from drowning at Soldiers Beach.

Would I ever forget them?

Would I be forever grateful to them for the rest of my life?

How would I show my gratitude?

By ignoring them?

By not being their friend?

By not spending time with them?

By not showing how grateful I am?

By not wanting to please them?

By turning my back on them?

(pause)

In His grace and mercy - Jesus has saved us for Heaven.

Does it make sense to ignore His commandments?

Does it make sense to go on sinning?

Shouldn't we be living a life of heartfelt gratitude for what Jesus has done for us
and live a life that pleases Him?

Didn't Jesus say: "*If you love me, keep my commands*" (John 14:15)

(pause)

The message is clear in this chapter – Paul is saying - we must not continue in sin.

What about the sins we commit now or in the future (Psalm 51)

So, what if we DO sin - now or in the future?

Because Paul's not saying we can stop sinning – but that sin doesn't rule us
anymore.

[Slide-Question]

What do WE do – when we sin?

That's where our **Old Testament reading** from Psalm 51 comes in [[Please turn to Psalm 51](#)]

The **writer of this Psalm is King David** – the **best King Israel ever had** – and described as “[a man after God's own heart](#)” (1 Samuel 13:14)

But David fell into a **grave sin one day**.

He had an **adulterous affair** with a woman called **Bathsheba**.

Bathsheba became **pregnant**, so David **tried to cover it up** by having Bathsheba's husband, **Uriah**, transferred to the **frontline of battle** – **so that he would be killed in battle** – and **Uriah was killed**. Then **David took Bathsheba as his wife** and tried to make out he only took Bathsheba once her husband had died. **Eventually the truth came out**. And we can pretty much say that **David broke all ten commandments** with this episode of his life!

What did he do next?

He **confessed** – and wrote this Psalm - **Psalm 51** – it's a **stellar confession!**

We haven't got time to cover all of the Psalm now.

So let me just pull out **4 key verses**:

¹ ***Have mercy on me, O God,***

according to your unfailing love;

according to your great compassion

blot out my transgressions.

¹⁰ *Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.*

¹² *Restore to me the joy of your salvation
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.*

¹⁷ *My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart
you, God, will not despise.*

We're not like David.

We have **our own sin**

And sometimes we stand by and **tolerant our sin** or the **sin around us** – and **become immune** to it.

[Slide-Answer]

This morning is a good time - for us – to **examine our hearts** – and repent of the sin in our lives – and make a **sincere heartfelt confession** – like David.

I don't know what sin there is in all our lives – but here's some suggestions to get the ball rolling...

***Dishonesty:** such as lying, cheating, or deceptive behavior*

***Gossip and slander:** speaking negatively about others behind their backs or spreading rumours about people.*

Unforgiveness: Holding onto grudges or refusing to forgive others for past offenses – leading to bitterness.

Pride: Arrogance, self-centeredness, and an inflated sense of one's importance which hinders healthy relationships and leads to conflict.

Addictive behaviour: such as substance abuse, gambling, or excessive consumption of technology, which can have detrimental effects on physical, mental, and emotional well-being – as well as destroying relationships around us.

Injustice: Turning a blind eye to injustice or oppression which allows these harmful practices to continue

Immorality: Acceptance of behaviors that go against moral or ethical standards, such as adultery, promiscuity, pornography or sleeping around

Hate and prejudice: Tolerance of hatred, bigotry, or discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion or gender.

Whatever sin we confess – we should remember – that **our attitude towards sin in our lives** – is a **great witness** to others around us!

Conclusion (Remember who we are!)

[Slide-Conclusion]

To finish up then, **let me leave you with this thought:**

King Edward VIII – in his memoirs – recalled his childhood as the Prince of Wales and said “***my father, King George V, was a strict disciplinarian; sometimes when I had done something wrong, he would admonish me saying: ‘my dear boy, you must always remember who you are’***”

After his sin with Bathsheba – David remembered who he was – God’s anointed King of Israel – the one who was supposed to set a godly example to the nation!

As Christians, *we are ambassadors of Jesus* (2 Corinthians 5:20)

[Slide-remember]

Our Heavenly Father says to us each day “*My dear Christian child, you must always remember who you are!*”

We’re united to Christ and slaves to God!

[Slide-Gal 3:20]

As Paul puts it in Galatians 2:20:

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

Let’s pray...

Father God, thank you for the precious gift of Jesus – who saves us for Heaven. Help us to live our lives in faith in Jesus. Help us to be remember who we are – people who are united to Jesus and slaves to you, Father. Help us to live for you and not for ourselves. Help us to be great ambassadors for Jesus!

In His name, we pray. Amen.