

# Sermon Growth Guide

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## Like Him We Rise | Romans 6:1-11

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**Key Verse:** Romans 6:5. “If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.”

**Big Idea:** If you believe in Him, your life is hidden in Christ.



### Foundations

This week we continue in our theme of Like Him We Rise.

This passage comes after talking of death through Adam, and life through Christ. The juxtaposition is continued in today's passage, of how we are dead to sin, and alive in Christ. Today we celebrate Easter. At Easter we celebrate Christ's resurrection and triumph over death. Death came into the world through sin. As Pastor Tim said, “new life comes after you let your old life die.” Like Him we rise.

In this passage, Paul sets up the dichotomy between living in death and life, and the completion of Christ's death and resurrection. We put away completely our old selves that were steeped in sin and death. Christ put away our old selves as well - ‘he died to sin once for all.’ If Christ has put away our old selves, how dare we return to them?

Throughout this passage and leading up to it, Paul dissects what it means to be united with Christ. We've been united with Him in death, as we turn our backs on our sin. But more importantly, we're united with Him in new life, as our righteousness comes from God (3:22), we believe the promises of God and give glory to Him (4:20), we have peace with God (5:3), we have been given His love (5:5) and the overflowing gift of grace from God (5:15). This is the life in Christ we can now live because we have been freed from sin.

### Understanding God's Word

Together, read Romans 6:1-11. This passage comes after talking of death reigning because of Adam. How do we see death reigning in our world? What does it mean to be buried with Christ, united with him in his death? Discuss what a new life in Christ looks like.

### Applying God's Word

For many, today is the most invigorating, meaningful, crucial day in the Christian calendar. Today we celebrate Christ's resurrection and that like Him, we rise as well. What does it mean for you today to put off your old life? To put it on the cross? Your life is hidden in Christ. Pray about this new life in Christ - what does He have for you now?

### Witnessing God's Word

As we throw off our old lives, others see the change in us. They witness Christ's transforming work. We truly become alive when we are alive in Christ. How can we witness to others about Jesus' transforming work in us? Our world aches to see a people that reflects the life Jesus gives. How might you go about reflecting life and being a new creation?

“Made like him, like him we rise.” Every Easter, we sing that. Do you know what it means? What happened to Jesus happens to us. We feel this. If my kid loses the game, I feel like I lost the game. If my friend goes through surgery, its like I went through surgery. My wife and I have four kids. When she gave birth, it was like I gave birth. Dads, you with me? Okay, a little different. Truly the most painful and beautiful thing, a mother bringing a child into the world. Respect. We have these plastic eggs. Every Easter I say, “Easter is not about chocolate bunnies and plastic eggs.” Well, this year, Easter is about plastic eggs. It’s an illustration. What happens to the egg happens to what’s inside. If the egg sits in the sun, the chocolate inside sits in the sun. If the egg is lost under a bush for a year, the candy is lost for a year. If the egg gets thrown in a river and floats down to Pueblo... you get the point. If the egg is glorified, set on a golden pedestal, honored and adored, the candy inside is the same. Whatever is the egg’s, is the content’s. Here is the wild claim of Christianity—when you put your faith in Jesus, your life is hidden in him. You are in Christ. All that is his is yours. What happened to Jesus happens to us. Made like him, Like Him We Rise. In the book of Romans, today, on Easter day, we come to this passage. Like him we rise.

Charles Wesley grew up in church and went to Oxford. His college produced a lot of pastors. In that time, you could make a good, steady income taking up the profession, taking a church and preaching morality and philosophy and vague ideas about God and King. It made Charles feel nauseous. He wanted real faith. He wanted a real life with Jesus. He was sick of fake Christian lifestyle—he wanted Christ. He started

a prayer group with some guys. They decided to get serious. They held each other accountable. Every day we will read the Bible. Every day we will pray. Regularly we will fast to suppress the tyrannical desires of our flesh. We will kick out the toxic trash. They had a rule of life, and they met to confess to one another where they had fallen, or slipped, or chosen disobedience. Their classmates made fun, called them Bible Moths, the Holy Club, or Methodists. Charles’ older brother John joined in; that’s the Methodist Church. Get serious. Charles wrote around 9,000 hymns. One of them we sing every Easter: Christ the Lord is Risen Today!

We need that passion again. We need to get serious. I know young men and women who want it. Call me to something real, something that matters, something that costs me and is worthy of the sacrifice. We are starting 40 days of prayer with weekly fasting next week. Enough fakery. We live by grace. God forgives our sins, but does that mean all we want is a fake, half-Christian life? “What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?” (Romans 6:1-2) Enough half-measure, milquetoast, lukewarm faith. Yes, you can allow sin to fester. Yes, you can rely on God’s grace to forgive you again and again. Why not press into Jesus deeper? What is on offer in Christ is new life. New life comes after your let your old life die. “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.” (Romans 6:6) We don’t want fakey, Christian-ish activity. We need passionate devotion to Jesus.

Can you imagine that? Putting your old life on a cross? This is the glorious offer and horrible cost of following Jesus for real. “Then Jesus said to his disciples, ‘Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.’” (Matthew 16:24-25) The offer Jesus has for you is an offer to take your old life away and give you a new one. That means laying your old life down on the floor. That means putting your own life on the cross, just like Jesus put himself on the cross. That old life is a slave. It isn’t free. Sin is a master and when you give in to it; it makes you a slave. Is a smoker free? Is an alcoholic free? Are you free when you vape, then you can’t not? Not that those are the worst sins in the world. Addictions bind you and strap you down. Sin is like that. Will you put all that on the cross? Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, “When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.” This is the cost of discipleship.

Baptism is a picture. Whether you kneel down and have water put on your head, or you are immersed where all your senses go dark then you come back up into the light, this is symbolic. The old life is gone, like Israelites passing through the Red Sea from slavery to freedom. We have a baptism service next week at 1:00 pm; you can still be a part of it if God calls you. But if you want new life, you give your life away. “Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 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.” (Romans 6:3-4)

On Sunday morning, the women went to the tomb to find Jesus’ body. They wanted to give it more care than they had been able to after the crucifixion when he was quickly buried before the sun went down on Passover sabbath. But the tomb was empty. The body was gone. Jesus was alive. He was risen from the dead. This is the Easter victory. Christ is risen! “Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia! All creation join to say, Alleluia! Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia! Sing, ye heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!” But before the tomb was empty, before new life, Jesus died. On Friday, Jesus died on a cross. On Saturday he lay silent and cold. This was the price Jesus paid, the price God had to pay on our behalf through his Son, to remove the penalty for our sin. Christ died for us. This was the redeeming work. If you want to buy someone out of slavery, you have to pay. “Love’s redeeming work is done, Alleluia! Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!” But death could not hold Jesus down. He rose again from the grave. “Death in vain forbids him rise, Alleluia! Christ has opened paradise, Alleluia!”

Now here’s the thing. If you want to follow him, you have to go that same way. It is time to hide your life in Christ, and that means to walk through the cross—to die so that you can live. “For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.” (Colossians 3:3) It says in Colossians. You are hidden, like chocolate in a plastic egg. Your life is hidden with Christ in God. I have sat with friends who suffered terribly as children in abusive households. I ask, how did you survive that? “I hid my life in Christ,” they say. I know a woman who grew up in Iran with a Muslim father who was terribly abusive. She

hid her life in Christ right there in rural Iran. She felt Christ protect her and shelter her. One day her father came to Christ and life was different from then on. I know a chaplain who served in Desert Storm and couldn't explain how the barrage of bullets and ordinance did not land on him. "I truly know the meaning of the Psalm now," he said, "You have made a table in the presence of my enemies." Hidden in Christ. Christ lived. Christ died. Christ rose again. If you believe in him, your life is hidden in Christ. It doesn't mean protection from all harm, but it does mean all that is his is yours.

"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." (Romans 6:5) It is not easy to lay your life down before Jesus. Not easy at all. Many men and women resist it, thinking, "Now wait a minute. I'm about to get this all together. Next week I'm trying a new work out plan. This year I'm investing differently. Around the corner, life isn't going to feel as bad as it does today. I'm just about to fix this thing." Augustine said he had a time when he wanted the good things of God, he wanted a godly life, but not quite yet. "Give me chastity and continence, but not yet." Something inside knows there is a better life meant for you. The old self is not the self you were truly meant to be. There is a new self, a new life, on the other side of the cross. Soren Kierkegaard said, "And now, with God's help, I shall become myself." Are you ready? It is time to hide your life in Christ.

Romans 6:23 declares, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23) Sin earns a debt that must be paid.

Jesus paid it on your behalf. For our sin, he died. For our forgiveness and eternal life, he lives. "Lives again our glorious King, Alleluia! Where, O death, is now thy sting? Alleluia! Once he died our souls to save, Alleluia! Where thy victory, O grave? Alleluia!" Death stings. It hurts. But it is not a forever pain. The gift is eternal life. Are you ready? Everything that is the egg's is the chocolate's. Faith in Christ means a life hid in Christ. And where is Jesus now? One more line from that old hymn: "Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia! Following our exalted Head, Alleluia! Made like him, like him we rise, Alleluia! Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!" Made like him. Hidden in him. Jesus came down to earth so you and I could rise to heaven. What happened to Jesus happens to us.

And where is he now? We are the body, if we trust in him. He is the head. Where is he now? The head, our head, is already up there—past sin, past death, past the horrible evils and trials of this present darkness, poking up into the eternal light of everlasting day. Made like him, like him we rise. Hidden in Christ, we already look up. Set your mind on things above. If you are in Christ, you have passed through the cross, the old self is dead, you have died to your slavery to sin, and, now, like him, you rise. Let's pray and put all our faith and hope in him.