



Aldersgate
United Methodist Church
St. Louis Park, MN

DEVOTIONS FOR LIFE

Aldersgate United Methodist Church ~ St. Louis Park, MN

Sunday, May 21, 2023

Scripture: Romans 6:1-14

Memory Verse ~ Romans 6:11: ... "So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus."

Context: This week we continue in Romans. At this point in Paul's epistle, he makes a little shift as he digs down deep into the complexities of grace vs. law. Our Lutheran siblings often refer to this as "Law/Gospel". Because our culture is saturated in binary thinking (though thankfully this is changing!), we often lose the complexities of what Paul is getting at in this passage when we look at in binary terms like "grace vs. law" or "law/Gospel (even though Lutheran theology does not intend that to be understood in binary terms).

Contextually there is not much else to say about this passage that has not already been said in previous weeks. But it should be said that this is a very complex passage. It is one we should wrestle with. And while it is loaded with metaphor, complex theology around life, death, resurrection, and baptism, there is a way in which it's also very practical, getting at the question Paul poses in verse 1. Enjoy the rastlin'!

Questions for Personal Devotion & Small Groups:

1. What is "sin"?
2. How of you understand "grace"? How is it similar and different than forgiveness?
3. What does the Apostle Paul mean by being "dead to sin"? What does it mean to "live in sin"?
4. What is being "baptized into his death" all about?
5. When have you experienced resurrection in your life?
6. What do you think is the connection Paul is making between sin and the body?
7. What does it mean to present our bodies as "instruments of righteousness" versus "instruments of wickedness"?
8. How have you changed/grown over your life? Would you say you have some kind of pivot point from an "old self" to a "new self"?
9. What does it mean to live fully as your truest self? Or to live in a sense of a false self?

Prayer for Personal Devotion & Small Groups:

Living God, maker of all there is, we praise you in the wonder of creation: the immensity, the order, the beauty, the power all lift our hearts to hear again your declaration of goodness woven through.

Loving God, redeemer of the world, we praise you in the generosity of renewal: the patience, the mercy, the grace, the forgiveness all lift our hearts to hear again your unconditional love working through.

Abiding God, inspirer for all, we praise you in the gift of life: the diversity, the complexity, the potential, the hope all lift our hearts to hear again your intention for all breathing through.

Amen.

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Grace:

Grace

She takes the blame, She covers the shame, Removes the stain, It could be her name

Grace

It's the name for a girl, It's also a thought that changed the world

And when she walks on the street, you can hear the strings

Grace finds goodness in everything

Grace

She's got the walk, not on a ramp or on chalk, She's got the time to talk,

She travels outside of karma, karma

She travels outside of karma

When she goes to work you can hear her strings

Grace finds beauty in everything

Grace

She carries a world on her hips, no champagne flute for her lips

No twirls or skips between her fingertips

She carries a pearl in perfect condition

What once was hurt, what once was friction, what left a mark no longer stings

Because Grace makes beauty out of ugly things

Grace finds beauty in everything

Grace finds goodness in everything

(Adam Clayton / Dave Evans / Larry Mullen / Paul Hewson, AKA: U2)

