

## Spiritual Procrastination

We've all done it—put off that paper or that long-term assignment until the last minute, staying up all night to finish just before it's due. Maybe we even miss the deadline and turn it in late. We receive the just penalty for our procrastination, and then move on to the next assignment, probably making ourselves promises to never do this again. However, I'm afraid that many of us have gotten into the habit of procrastination when it comes to spiritual things.

God has given us enough assignments on this earth to last a lifetime, and we're commanded to fill our lives with these things—we are to "take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress will be evident to all" (1 Timothy 4:15).

By Stephen Rouse Unfortunately, it's incredibly easy to put off these spiritual tasks day after day, until we've become more or less useless in God's service. Perhaps this is because we're not thinking about the deadline. No one except God Himself knows when that deadline will come (Matthew 24:36), and I'm afraid many times we scarcely even give thought to the fact that that *today could be that deadline*. So what now? We must get to work!

Honestly, if you have stop reading this to go accomplish something that you know God wants you to do, *do it now*. Stop spiritually procrastinating—because God doesn't accept late work.



The North Charlottesville church of Christ

**We Meet at the Piedmont Family YMCA**  
442 Westfield Road, Charlottesville 22901  
Email: larryrouse@cvillechurch.com  
Internet: www.cvillechurch.com

Ask About Our... **FREE** Bible correspondence courses  
**FREE** personal home Bible studies  
Daily Devotional Message - 975-7373.

**SCHEDULE OF SERVICES**

**Sunday**  
Bible Class (children and adults).....10:00 AM  
Morning Worship Service.....11:00 AM  
Afternoon Worship Service ..... 3:00 PM

**Thursday**  
Bible Class (children and adults).....7:35 PM

See You There! Please call for directions.  
227-6919

If you know someone who would like to receive this publication, please let us know.  
**Dial-A-Bible-Study**  
975-7373  
Available 24 Hours a Day!



North Charlottesville church of Christ  
3445 Seminole Trail #132  
Charlottesville, VA 22911

Place Stamp Here

---

---

---

---

---

# Charlottesville Beacon

A weekly publication of the North Charlottesville church of Christ

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

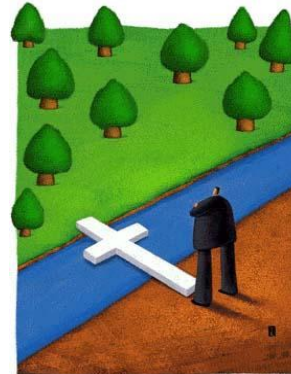


Volume 3, Issue 14

December 23, 2007

## Are You Living the New Life?

By Mark Larson



### Thoughts To Ponder

In the natural world it is impossible to be made all over again, but in the spiritual world it is exactly what Jesus Christ makes possible.

**Dial-A-Bible-Study**  
975-7373  
Call Anytime!

**Inside This Issue...**  
**Editorial - Pages 1-2**  
**Are You Living the New Life?**  
**Page 3**  
**The Bible's influence on Our Language**  
**Page 4 - On the Back**  
**Spiritual Procrastination**

Larry Rouse  
Evangelist & Editor

Being a Christian is supposed to be about living a new life, a better life, even the best life there is. Yet, some brethren have unwittingly returned to the old one! How can this be? Just like the Christians at Rome in the first century, there are many today that have forgotten the kind of life they were **meant** to live after their baptism. "*Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life*" (Rom. 6:4, NASB).

"Do you not know"? The brethren at Rome *should* have known, but evidently they had forgotten and needed a strong reminder. The fact is every Christian needs to be reminded of the great spiritual significance of their baptism. Baptism means *so much more* than having our sins forgiven (Acts 2:38; 22:16), it is also the beginning of something very special and wonderful - a **new** life in Christ! Every person would do well to review their baptism, exam-

ine their life, and then ask the question: Am I living the new life?

### The New Life" Begins at Baptism!

There is most definitely a *spiritual* connection to Christ at baptism (Rom. 6:4). No Christian should ever forget just how special their baptism was. Baptism is a real spiritual connection to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ! (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12) Just as a real burial involves a **real death**, so does baptism (which is also a burial or an immersion in water; BAPTIZO = immersion), result in a **real death to sin**. And just as a genuine resurrection results in an **actual resurrected life**, so does the spiritual resurrection out of the "watery grave" of baptism result in a **real new life!**

The teaching of Romans 6 demonstrates that baptism is a serious act for people who can and will take it seriously. Baptism is **not** for infants or small children or for people who treat baptism as a mere ritual or just a way to show the church that they are *al-ready* saved (which is a falsehood). Baptism is for penitent believers only (Acts 2:38; 8:36-38). The person who **chooses** to be baptized has decided to repent of his sins (or crucify the

(Continued on page 2)

**Check Us Out On The Internet: [www.cvillechurch.com](http://www.cvillechurch.com)**

(Continued from page 1)

“old man”) and, as a person “dead in sin,” be buried with Jesus through baptism. Clearly, Romans 6 shows that baptism represents the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Therefore, baptism is for people who understand that this is the **only** way to enter into a union with Christ and receive the blessings found in Him. *“For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ”* (Gal 3:27; cf. Eph. 1:3).

Again, baptism is **not just** about being saved (1 Pet. 3:21), but about the start of a “new life”! Our baptism into Christ is not an event *merely* to be affectionately remembered for our salvation, but an event that is meant to **alter our future for life!** It is God’s desire that once we are raised from our baptism, we would live a new life in service to Him.

#### “The New Life” Means a Changed Life!

**A Discontinuation of Sin:** *“What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?”* (Rom. 6:1-2) Baptism into His death is a **death to sin**. Thus, the new life is not about practicing sin. Grace in Christ is not a “license to sin” (Jude 4), but a powerful source of motivation to live a new and better life for the Lord! (Titus 2:11-12). To continue to practice sin would be a sharp *contradiction* to our “death to sin” that took place at our baptism.

**Following the Footsteps of Jesus:** *“For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection”* (Rom. 6:5). We who have been raised with Christ (after being baptized) are to imitate His resurrected life in the life we *now* live. It makes no sense to take part in Christ’s death and then live life in the same way. We are to live a *new* life that will reflect His (1 Pet. 2:21).

**Freedom from the Slavery of Sin:** *“Knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is **freed from sin**”* (Rom. 6:6-7). Jesus, by

offering His blood for our forgiveness, gives us freedom from the bondage of sin (Jn. 8:31-36; Eph. 1:7). This freedom calls us to live a new life not as slaves of sin, but of righteousness (Rom 6:17-18).

#### How Have You Changed Since You Began the New Life?

**What is the Difference between Your Former Life and the New Life You Now Live?** (Eph. 4:21-24) Are you the same person you were before? Have you changed? Are you still changing and for the better? What do you see when you look into the “mirror” of God’s word? (Jas. 1:22-25). Do you see Christ in you? (2 Cor. 13:5). Each Christian is either growing in Christ or he is digressing and getting weaker spiritually. *There is no middle ground!* (2 Pet. 1:8-9).

**What “New Things” Have Come into Your Life?** *“Therefore if **any** man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come”* (2 Cor. 5:17). “The new life” involves real spiritual change in every person who lives the life of a Christian. By faith we believe that old things have indeed passed away! With the help of Christ, the sins, bad habits, selfishness, affection for sin, etc. can all be put behind us.

Many new things should come for the Christian: A new way of thinking (Rom. 12:2); New values and priorities (Mat. 6:19-21, 33); A new purpose in life (Eph. 2:10; Eccl. 12:13); A new lifestyle (1 Cor. 6:9-11); A new perspective on marriage and family (Mat. 19:1-12; Eph. 5:22-33; 6:4); New friends (2 Cor. 6:14; 1 Cor. 15:33); And a new heavenly goal (Col. 3:1-4). The new life we have been given is meant to change our *whole* perspective in which we recognize that this world is not our home (Heb. 11:13-16), that we are just passing through as we journey on toward Heaven to be with God.

#### Have You Yet to Begin the New Life?

Remember, baptism into Christ is necessary *“in order that”* we may live a new life (Rom. 6:4). Without exception, **no one** can begin the new life in Christ *until* he has been baptized into Christ as a penitent believer. Begin your new life and be baptized today!



# The Bible’s Influence on Our Language

By Steve Klein

The Bible has influenced the English language in untold ways. Although we may not realize it, many of the common phrases we use to express ourselves are rooted in Scripture. Here are some well known sayings that actually come from the Bible:

**The skin of my teeth.** Job said, “My bone clings to my skin and to my flesh, And I have escaped by the skin of my teeth.” (Job 19:20)

**A drop in the bucket.** “Behold, the nations are as a drop in a bucket, and are counted as the small dust on the scales. . .” (Isaiah 40:15)

**The root of the matter** (or problem). “But ye should say, Why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?” (Job 19:28)

**Living off “the fat of the land.”** “And take your father and your households and come to me, and I will give you the best of the land of Egypt and you will eat the fat of the land.” (Genesis 45:18).

**At their wits’ end.** “They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits’ end.” (Psalms 107:27)

**All things to all men.** The apostle Paul said, “To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made All things to all men, that I might by all means save some.” (1 Corinthians 9:22)

The Bible’s influence on mankind has been so pervasive that most people commonly quote phrases from it without realizing it! If the speech of people of the world has been slightly influenced by the Bible, the speech of God’s children should be greatly influenced by it. Christians, who are to be constantly studying God’s word and striving to live by it, will naturally demonstrate it in speech.

The Bible's influence on mankind has been so pervasive that most people commonly quote phrases from it without realizing it! If the speech of people of the world has been slightly influenced by the Bible, the speech of God's children should be greatly influenced by it.

We will speak “the truth in love” (Ephesians 4:15)

We will speak as the oracles of God, sharing God’s word with others. “If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God.” (1 Peter 4:11)

We will speak with grace, answering spiritual questions with wisdom and solid Bible knowledge. “Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each

one.” (Colossians 4:6)

We will utter “sound speech” which promotes spiritual health. “. . . sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.” (Titus 2:8)

We will not engage in filthy talk or dirty jokes. “. . . neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.” (Ephesians 5:4)

We will not lie. “Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds.” (Colossians 3:9)

Some time ago, I met a young preacher who impressed me in this way: His every day speech sounded like the Bible. He used very few of the popular “in” phrases that you hear from most young people, very few of the catchy religious sayings that you hear from many denominational preachers, and very few colloquialisms common in his region of the country. In every day conversation, he sounded like he was reading the Bible. Isn’t that how every Christian should aspire to sound?

