

Crucified and Raised to Life with Christ

DARRELL DELANEY

We spent six weeks of Lent looking at the many facets of Jesus' cross: the curse, the shame, the paradox, the complete sufficiency, and the gospel stories that describe the awful details of Jesus' crucifixion. As we come to the climax of the Christian year, it is time to ponder the fullness of Jesus' death and resurrection and discover why the Bible says we participate in it when it says we are crucified and raised to life with him. Stay tuned.

SCOTT HOEZEE

Welcome to *Groundwork*, where we dig into scripture to lay the foundation for our lives. I am Scott Hoezee.

DARRELL DELANEY

And I am Darrell Delaney; and we are finishing up our seven-part series on the cross. We have covered a lot of ground, as you know, and today we want to talk about how we participate in the crucifixion death of the cross and how we benefit from the resurrection and that perfect work.

SCOTT HOEZEE

Exactly; this, in many ways, connects Good Friday and Easter. So, this program is probably going to be heard by a lot of people on Good Friday, on Holy Saturday, on Easter...maybe on Easter Monday, the day after Easter; but this is where we really want to connect the message of the cross with the message of Easter and of the resurrection; and after everything we have looked at, this is now really where we definitely see our personal connection. So, we can think about the Apostle Paul in the letter to the Philippians, Chapter 3. Paul says:

¹⁰I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

DARRELL DELANEY

Scott, I don't think people really consider the fact that we participate in the sufferings *with* Christ. They understand it to be *for* us, but I don't think they understand what Paul is saying here, where he wants to become *like* him. In the participation of his sufferings, the power of the resurrection, and becoming like him in his death, I don't think that we see the significance of how our lives are actually intertwined in that moment; and that actually is the reason why he is the substitutionary death for us, and resurrection that inherits eternal life for us. We actually benefit from that with him.

SCOTT HOEZEE

And there are kind of two parts to that, Darrell; and we maybe think about...ponder...reflect on...meditate on the first part better than the second. So, the first part is, yes, we died with Jesus on the cross. He took our place so we can identify with him. Yes, okay; but there is a second thing that comes up that you just mentioned as well, Darrell, that Paul mentions a lot. Several different times in the thirteen letters Paul wrote in the New Testament...several different times, he will talk about his own suffering, that he has been flogged, that he has been arrested, that he has had stones thrown at his head, that he has been whipped; and he responds to that in a way that most of us wouldn't respond today or ever. He says: You know, I like that because I am identifying with Jesus when I suffer; he suffered so I suffer. So, we like the spiritual idea that we died with Jesus on the cross; we are not so crazy about the idea that when we suffer in this life, that is part

of it, too; that that is part of entering Jesus' suffering by connecting our suffering for Jesus today with the suffering of Jesus on the cross. Paul did both. We tend to prefer just the spiritual side of it.

DARRELL DELANEY

Yes; we like that power of the resurrection thing, but we don't like the fellowship of the suffering thing.

SCOTT HOEZEE

Right, yes.

DARRELL DELANEY

Suffering is hard, suffering is agonizing, suffering is inconvenient, and we don't want that; but really, it is the best place to identify with what Christ has been through. I mean, he's got wounds so we have wounds as well. I think Paul also picks it up here in Galatians 2:20, where it says;

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.

So, Paul says he has been crucified with Christ. Of course, it is not a physical thing, but it is a spiritual connection with Jesus, who has done this thing for us; this wonderful exchange of how we receive life out of the death situation. We actually are participants with him in that, spiritually speaking.

SCOTT HOEZEE

We get to Easter through Good Friday. You cannot have one without the other...

DARRELL DELANEY

You cannot leapfrog it.

SCOTT HOEZEE

No, you cannot leave Good Friday out as just sort of an odd blip. No; we don't get to rise with him unless we also died with him, and Paul makes that very clear; and again, that gets back to a previous episode in this series: the paradox of the cross, that life came from death. The cross was the most horrible symbol of death that anybody could imagine in the Roman world. Now today, we wear it as jewelry and decorations, and put it on steeples and wedding programs, because now the cross is good news for us in a way that nobody could have predicted back in that day.

DARRELL DELANEY

I think, too, it is important to note that there is a uniting that happens at that moment where Christ is crucified...where he has died...where he is buried...where he is resurrected...there is a unification factor that happens, because we know that Christ is the second Adam. So, the first Adam represented humanity and he sinned and we incurred what he gave us; and then, Christ is the second Adam, and he won salvation for us through his perfect work in his person. On his behalf, we receive salvation and grace and faith; but you know, it is not easy, Scott, because if it was easy, then everybody would just live perfectly and live a life of sinlessness; but because Galatians 5 shows us that we are going to constantly be in battle with our old self and our flesh, we have to depend on God for the strength to resist temptation...we have to.

SCOTT HOEZEE

And now, we can throw out a couple big theological terms, although they are somewhat familiar to most people: Justification and sanctification.

DARRELL DELANEY

Yes.

SCOTT HOEZEE

Justification, we believe, in our baptisms happens all at once and just once. Our sins are put away. We are justified, we are made right with God. Sanctification is the process...

DARRELL DELANEY

The process.

SCOTT HOEZEE

It is not all at once. I mean, there is a sense in which it is all at once because God does regard us as clothed with the righteousness of Christ, but in the actual working out of this life yet before we die, it is a process; and you know, there is a word that was traditionally associated with sanctification, Darrell, that I don't know that we hear much of in our churches today, and that is *mortification*...

DARRELL DELANEY

Okay.

SCOTT HOEZEE

The idea that we are killing, day by day, our sinful tendencies—our old self. We have to put it to death. Mortification. We have to do whatever we can to root out the old person, so that the new person can come to life; and that is a process, right? But, you know, people don't often like to think about mortification these days, but that is what we are called to do. We just have to keep kind of whacking away at that old person and slapping his hands away from us, to keep us from committing sins.

DARRELL DELANEY

This is the mortification process. It is a slow death of the old self; the strength that it had over you, the power that it had over you to give into lust and to temptations. The more you say no to those things by the power of God's Spirit, the more you have the ability to say yes to the things that you are supposed to be doing—the things that he wants us to instill so we look more like him. That is a process. It is not overnight, but God is in the act of persevering his saints and preserving us and helping us each and every day. We just need him to help us with that.

SCOTT HOEZEE

Exactly; we looked some time ago at a passage from, I believe it is in Titus. Paul writes to Titus, the pastor working on the island of Crete, that ¹¹the grace of God has appeared to us... (he says there; it is epiphanied to us, really) the grace of God has appeared to us...and the first thing Paul says there in Titus 2 is ^(verse 12) and it gives us the power to say "No" to sin, right? So, years ago, Nancy Reagan had the antidrug campaign: Just Say No...

DARRELL DELANEY

Right.

SCOTT HOEZEE

And a lot of people said: Well, it is not quite that simple; and that is true, it is not quite that simple. On the other hand, Paul says it *is* that simple because you have been given the grace that lets you say no to sin, and that is the process we are in; and that is part of the daily dying and rising with Christ. Mortification and vivification in the old terms.

DARRELL DELANEY

Yes.

SCOTT HOEZEE

But let's delve deeper into how that happens. So, stay tuned.

Segment 2

DARRELL DELANEY

You are listening to *Groundwork*, where we dig into scripture to lay the foundation for our lives. I am Darrell Delaney.

SCOTT HOEZEE

And I am Scott Hoezee; and we are talking about here in this sort of Good Friday/Easter episode of *Groundwork*, how we actually participate in the crucifixion...the death...but also the resurrection of Christ; and Darrell, let's go right to Romans Chapter 6. We have read this in an earlier part of this series, too, but it bears repeating, because we are going to give it a little different emphasis this time. Paul writes:

¹What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning that grace may increase? ²By no means! We are those who died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? ³Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We 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.

DARRELL DELANEY

Man, I love this. Paul is saying here it doesn't make any sense for us who are believers to continue sinning for two reasons: 1) We died to sin so we don't need to live there anymore; and 2) We have been baptized into the death of Christ. This baptism into death language...I wonder what that means? There is a lot to it. It is like God's plan of redemption is included and connected to Christ in such an intimate way, and we get to participate in that as Christ is dying, as he is buried, and as he raises. The union piece is really important to us.

SCOTT HOEZEE

Years ago in a sermon on baptism I heard Dr. John Timmer use what I thought was a brilliant image, Darrell. He mentioned that in the old days, in like Ireland and England and Scotland, in seafaring communities where men made their living going out on the seas back in the day to catch fish and stuff, it was always known that there was a danger of living on the sea. Your ship could sink, right? So, every sailor...every man...every fisherman in any given village always wore a very distinctive sweater with a very distinctive pattern unique to that particular man, because if they ever fell overboard or if their ship went in those cold, brackish waters, a body can get unrecognizable quickly. So, when a body would wash ashore, you would identify it by the sweater; and John Timmer said: In other words, these men walked around every day with a mark of death on their bodies—a reminder they could die; and Timmer said that is what it is like to be baptized. We remind ourselves we are dead to sin. We carry around a reminder of Christ's death with us every day so that we can do what we talked about in the previous segment: Continue to put to death our old self because we already drowned with Jesus—our old self drowned with Jesus.

DARRELL DELANEY

It is a beautiful thing. He is the second Adam; he represents all of humanity. So, when Christ goes, we all go; when Christ dies, we all die; when Christ raises, we all raise; and it is really powerful how we are connected there; but I was thinking about, too, how in some Catholic traditions there is the tradition of stigmata, where the sufferings of Christ and his actual scars end up on a physical body. That is not what we are referring to here. We are living vicariously through his experience, and we reap the benefits of his experience. It is more of a spiritual connection than it is a physical, tangible connection; and we have that connection with Christ because we benefit from his experience. If the bride and groom are married, the groom experiences something; the bride is there with him, living that life with him, experiencing that in a union sort of way; and that is what we actually experience.

SCOTT HOEZEE

Exactly; yes, that stigmata tradition, where certain saints...they say St. Francis of Assisi had this, where now and again...it wasn't all the time...but now and again, like the nail holes would appear on their hands, where they would literally bleed. It is very mysterious. There are a lot of people I know who take it very seriously as sort of an extra-spiritual gift some people get; but of course, only some people. If it happens at all, it is

rare; but right; the idea that we bear the marks of Christ's death every day, that is true for all of us. You know, you don't have to have a hole in your hand. You are supposed to, you know, carry that with you every day because, when you die with Christ, you also rise with Christ. You get to the good news with that piece of bad news. We were buried with him, Paul says, in baptism. That is what *baptiz?*, I think, means, right? It means to go down under—to dunk under, right?

DARRELL DELANEY

And that is beautiful because in the Baptist tradition, where I was saved, that is exactly what happens. The profession of faith and the baptism are not separate events in the Baptist tradition. They happen one at a time, right in the same moment. So, at the age of accountability, I was 11 years old, and I went down in the water and came out of the water; and when I went in the water, the preacher said: You are going down in the likeness of his death; you are coming up in the likeness of his resurrection. So, I love that they are teaching there that we actually have an immersion experience that teaches us what the baptism union is actually happening; and before that moment happens, I profess to believe and live and dedicate my life to living for Jesus right there; and that is something that I think the Baptist brothers and sisters really can bless us with to help us to understand what the scripture is teaching.

SCOTT HOEZEE

Although, if you have never done it, you could go to YouTube, search for an infant baptism in an Orthodox church, because if you have ever seen this, they baptize babies, like we do in the Reformed tradition as well; but they have a decent-sized font, and the Orthodox priest literally dunks the kid all the way under. I mean, the baby is usually naked or just in a diaper, and they literally submerge the kid for a second. They come up sputtering and all the rest, but they get the idea; and I know that even though in our tradition...my Christian Reformed tradition...we sprinkle...

DARRELL DELANEY

Yes.

SCOTT HOEZEE

But I use as much water as I can; and people in my church got to know that whoever is holding the baby is going to go home with wet shoes, because I scoop as much water in my hand and pour it over the baby...and the little kids at my church used to know that. If they stood close enough to the font, they were going to get a little wet, and they thought that was pretty cool, right? Use as much water as you can because that is the symbol of drowning with Christ so that you can also rise with Christ.

DARRELL DELANEY

It is similar at our church. We had an elder who would pour the font, and he would let it go all over. He just wanted to show how God's love was abundant. It is like overflowing—his *rav chesed* is overflowing; and the grace and mercy is also overflowing. It is really powerful to see that an image; and we understand that is a cleansing as well; so, we are being cleansed from the old life; we are being cleansed from the way we used to do things; we are being cleansed from the old practices; and so, we get to participate in this new life; and that union piece that happens when Christ dies for us, that is something that changes us forever. It is a beautiful thing.

SCOTT HOEZEE

The writer, Flannery O'Connor, who was known for using very strong symbolism has a short story called *The River*, and it is about a little boy who had a religious awakening and came to Jesus, but his parents didn't believe, or something; I don't remember how it all goes; but I know that at the end of the story, he decides he is going to baptize himself, and so he baptizes himself in a river, but it goes wrong and he slips and he drowns. I mean, he literally dies; and it is terrible, right? And so, people asked Flannery O'Connor: Why did you write that terrible story? And she said: Because people have forgotten how radical baptism is. I needed to wake them up. In the land of the nearly blind, you have to draw really big caricatures to get their attention. So, she has a little boy literally drown in a river to remind us that is what baptism is spiritually. Our old self

is supposed to drown; and we kind of sanitize baptism, we kind of make it like the six-month portrait at Walmart, you know, and it is just kind of cute; but it is a little more radical than that.

DARRELL DELANEY

It definitely is. It changes everything; and we get a brand new life, and we get a new opportunity to bless God and to live a way that we couldn't live before. So, we want to look toward that. As we conclude this series, we want to talk about the practical applications of this. So, stay tuned.

Segment 3

SCOTT HOEZEE

I am Scott Hoezee, along with Darrell Delaney, and you are listening to *Groundwork*; and we are wrapping up a seven-part series for the season of Lent meditating on the cross of Christ; and Darrell, we have been talking about how we are active participants in Christ's suffering and death. We die with him, and that is the only way we get to be resurrected with him. We were just talking about how baptism is that symbolic moment that we drown. Our sins are washed away? Yes; but a sinful self drowns, and even though it drowns in baptism, it still has some kicks, and we are in a process our whole life of sanctification—of getting more like Jesus by putting to death...continuing to put to death...that old self that began drowning in the waters of baptism.

DARRELL DELANEY

And that is an ongoing thing that we need to do, Scott. I think that Paul makes it clear that since we have a new life in Christ that we have been raised to, we have a responsibility to live a certain way. I love how he gives us practical application right after he gives us a theological truth, so that we don't get the motive mixed up, so that we don't get the practices mixed up; and here, he picks it up in Romans 6, at that verse we read earlier. It says:

⁸Now, if we died with Christ, we believe we will also live with him. ⁹For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. ¹⁰The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹²Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³Do 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. ¹⁴For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law but under grace.

SCOTT HOEZEE

So, don't let sin reign in your mortal bodies; and it is interesting, Darrell, that here, as all over the place in Paul's letters, but you can find it in Peter and John and the rest of the New Testament, despite the fact that we have been baptized, despite the fact that we have been justified—our sins are washed away—despite the fact that our old self was drowned in those waters and is in a continual process of dying, still, Paul has to use the imperative: Don't...

DARRELL DELANEY

Yes.

SCOTT HOEZEE

Don't let sin reign in your mortal bodies...and he wouldn't have to use an imperative...a command...he wouldn't have to give us a direct order here if that weren't a possibility. It is possible to give sin a foothold...it is possible for us to slip and to let sin gain a foothold and reign in our mortal bodies, as he puts it here. So, he says don't; remember the Holy Spirit, remember *who's* you are, and remember *who* you are...

DARRELL DELANEY

Yes.

SCOTT HOEZEE

That is Paul's advice all through. He basically says you have been baptized, now act like it, okay; you know, just don't behave to make God love you, he already loves you. He loved you while you were a sinner. We looked at that verse earlier in this series. But you are a new person, so act like it; remember who you are and act like it.

DARRELL DELANEY

And it is interesting because we have to understand that even though Christ has done the heavy lifting on the salvation work, we have a choice to make: Either we are going to offer ourselves to sin as wickedness goes, or we are going to offer our instruments as instruments to God so that he can use them as instruments of righteousness. We have a choice to make; and Paul picks this up, too, in 1 Corinthians. In Chapter 15, Paul talks about the importance of the resurrection, and we see here in verse 12, it says this: But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴And if Christ is not raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. ¹⁵More than that, we are found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. ¹⁶For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. ¹⁷And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. ¹⁸Then those who are fallen asleep in Christ are lost. ¹⁹If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

SCOTT HOEZEE

So, we don't have time to go into all of the reasons why in a Greek culture like in Corinth, people found the idea of resurrection embarrassing...

DARRELL DELANEY

Ridiculous.

SCOTT HOEZEE

Yes; so, some in the Corinthian congregation had sort of, just to kind of, you know, not look weird to their neighbors they said: Yeah, there is probably no...yeah, who would want to get their body back, right? And so, Paul is saying: Well, you cannot say there is no resurrection because then Jesus is dead and did not get raised; and if he is dead then we are dead. The resurrection, Paul says, is that central. If it didn't really happen to Jesus, it won't really happen to any of us. End of story.

²⁰But (he goes on to say in verse 20) Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. ²²For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. ²³But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits, then, when he comes, those who belong to him.

So, it all comes down to Easter; it all comes down to the resurrection. Yes, Jesus' death on the cross was important, but if it had ended there, it ended there. Death would have won again. But no; God the Father raised Jesus to show that death is now defeated.

DARRELL DELANEY

And the fact that Christ died and that we participated in that death...

SCOTT HOEZEE

Yes.

DARRELL DELANEY

And then the fact that we are united with him in his resurrection, and because he is alive, we are now alive in a new life—we have drowned that old lifestyle—we have the gratitude to understand that that is our hope, and that we actually...you know, we get to tell people about that as well; because sin is no longer our master. It says that in Romans 6:14, that sin shall no longer be your master because you are not under the law but under grace; and since we live under that grace, we now have a new life to live each and every day, and we

give thanks to God for that.

SCOTT HOEZEE

And to that we say a happy and a blessed Easter, for it is our very life indeed; thanks be to God.

Well, thanks for listening and digging deeply into scripture with *Groundwork*. We are your hosts, Scott Hoezee and Darrell Delaney, and we hope you will join us again next time as we continue to dig deeply into scripture to lay the foundation for our lives.

Connect with us at groundworkonline.com to share what *Groundwork* means to you, or tell us what you would like to hear discussed next on *Groundwork*.

DARRELL DELANEY

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