

## INTRODUCTION

We are joyful to have six brothers and sisters receiving baptism today, five of which will be baptized in the Mandarin service. Every time when we have baptism we need to reiterate an important truth that baptism is not a means for a person to receive salvation, but it is an open expression of one's faith and an affirmation of his decision to follow Christ the rest of his life. The brothers and sisters were already Christians whether one month or one year ago when they decided to receive Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. Before we hear their testimonies I would like to encourage them and encourage everyone with the Word of God. Let us read from **Galatians 2:20** - I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. In this verse Paul tells us that in Christ we are a new person and we have a new boss. Christians have a different life.

## EXPLANATION

### 1. 我與基督同死 I Died with Christ

First of all we are a new person and we have a new boss when we died with Christ. Paul says in the **verse** that "I have been crucified with Christ..." Pay attention to the tense here. It is in perfect tense, meaning that the action were completed in the past. When did we die with Christ? It happened when we committed our lives to receive Christ. Notice Paul says that we died by crucifying with Christ. Crucifixion is a one-time, complete and irreversible action. What effects did our crucifixion with Christ have on us? Paul says in **Romans 6:6** that: For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin. Here we can find the same verb "crucified with him." Paul tells us that when we were crucified with Christ the threat of sin on us has been rendered powerless. It is like a tiger with its teeth and claws plucked. It cannot hurt us anymore. Since the effect of sin has been rendered powerless on us Paul goes on to say that we are no longer slaves to sin. Brothers and sisters, next time when temptation comes you should tell yourself that you have died with Christ. You can choose not to fall in sin by the power of God in you. This is a freedom you did not have before you knew Christ. Also, Satan will keep harassing you with your old record, telling you that you are a wretched person. Don't listen to him! Instead, you can boldly tell him that you have died with Christ. All the guilt and penalty of sin have been taken care of by Christ.

### 2. 基督在我裡面 Christ Lives in Me

In Christ we are a new person and we have a new boss. We have died with Christ. That is the first truth in **this verse**. Paul continues to say that: ... I no longer live, but Christ lives in me... When we accepted Christ we died with Him. At the very same moment we no longer live in us, but Christ lives in us and gives us a new life. Our old self that is rotten and stinks in sins is no more. But now Christ lives in us to disperse His fragrance in our new self. The results are evident in our attitude, speech and value system. In **Galatians 5:16** Paul encourages us not to live in our

old self any longer: So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. Brothers and sisters, we have a choice of whether we still allow our old self to live through us, or allow the Holy Spirit to rule over us. People around us can tell the difference. In the subsequent verses Paul lists 15 expressions of sin if we allow our old self to dominate our lives. On the contrary, Paul tells us in **verses 22-23** the kind of life that is under the control of the Holy Spirit: 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control... The contrast is obvious. An analogy I can think of is the Apps on your cell phone. If you activate particular Apps on your phone it will be enabled to perform various functions. Brothers and sisters, what “App” does you allow to activate in your life? Is it the old self that you cling onto, or Christ your Lord?

### 3. 我為基督而活 I Live for Christ

In Christ we are a new person and we have a new boss. We died with Christ and now Christ lives in us. Paul goes on to say that from now on we should live for Christ. **Galatians 2:20** reads: ... The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. The verb “live” appears in the present tense twice in this verse. It tells us that such living for Christ is a continuous action. Paul says that after we received we should live by faith. This is more than believing that God would provide for all of our needs. Paul adds that this Christ in whom he puts his trust was the one who loved him to the degree of dying for him. Christ’s sacrificial love for us should be our motivation to live for Him. Paul shares in **2 Corinthians 5:14-15** that: 14 For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. 15 And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. What Christians believe in is not only a set of doctrines. We do not live by law from the outside, but out of love on the inside. We live with love for our Lord and choose to do what pleases Him. Since we now live for Christ, whatever title we may have in the society should be prefixed by “Christian.” You may be a Christian-student, a Christian-engineer, a Christian-accountant, a Christian-scientist, a Christian-mom, etc. After you became a Christian you still hold the same profession, but now you do so for Christ.

### CONCLUSION

We died with Christ – that is the commitment we made when we accepted Christ. Christ lives in us – that is the beginning of our new life. We live for Christ – that has become the new direction for the rest of our lives.