

# Forgive Us: The White Flag

Romans 6:1-14 (June 13, 2021)



## Begin with Prayer

In silence, invite the Holy Spirit to guide you. Pray: *Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts.*

*See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." (Ps. 139:23-24).*

## Reconnecting and Debriefing

Take a moment to check in with one another (2 minutes each).

1. *What is one thing you're looking forward to doing again as COVID restrictions loosen?*
2. *If you're able, share about a season in your life when you felt deeply satisfied in God.*

### Introduction

Whether we gather in person or online, our goal remains the same: to be a people apprenticed to the life of Jesus. His life and teaching is our example and our source of truth. Remember the commitments we make to each other to foster safety and freedom as we pursue spiritual growth together:

- Whenever possible, please listen to the sermon prior to gathering (Sunday or online).
- While we are meeting (even online), commit to focussing rather than multitasking. Be all here.
- Give every person an equal opportunity to share, even if it takes time to form or finish their thoughts.
- Be respectful and non-judgmental.
- Honour sharing boundaries (only what you have permission to share, no gossip) and guard confidentiality (what we share here stays here).
- Don't try to fix, problem-solve or rescue; keep pointing one another to the truths of the gospel for our lives.

## Listening to God's Word

This Sunday we rejoiced as six people expressed their faith in Jesus through baptism. Water baptism is a sign of a person's journey through confession, repentance, and freedom. It's a surrender – a "white flag" – to the One we confess as Lord and Saviour.

Watching others walk through the waters of baptism gives those who are baptized a chance to reflect again on the meaning of their own baptism. It also challenges those who have not yet taken that step to consider it for themselves. Today we will look at one way that Scripture explains the deep meaning of this simple sign.

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## Small Group Discussion

**Read Romans 6:1-14.** Then discuss together:

- ***What is your first thought when you read through this passage?***
- *What modern versions of the opening question (v 1) have you heard people make?*

To respond to this question, Paul calls the Roman Christians to remember their baptism, something that most would have experienced soon after they expressed their faith in Christ.

- *According to Paul, what difference does it make in a Christian's present experience to be "baptized into Jesus' death"? How does this "death" liberate us?*
- *How does a person who "lives to God" differ from one who is "slave to sin"?*

Reflect on your own spiritual rebirth (becoming a believer and apprentice of Jesus), and if applicable, your baptism.

- *What are some ways in which you experienced the "death" of your old self in this time? What "came to life" for you in this time?*
- *What causes us to forget our "baptismal" identity, so we need the reminder to reckon ourselves "dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus" (6:11)?*
- *How are you tempted to offer parts of your body to the reign of sin as an instrument of wickedness? How has our series given you tools to resist those temptations?*
- *What practices help you consciously, daily "offer every part of yourself to God as an instrument of righteousness"?*
- *If you have placed your faith in Christ, but have never been baptized, what is standing in the way of you taking that step?*

### **Baptism:**

*Often people hold back from being baptized because they don't feel "worthy," and fear not being able to live up to the standard of holiness they envision a "baptized Christian" needs to exhibit. Baptism, however, does not express a person's intent to "always do the right thing." Rather, it is a confession that apart from Christ, such an achievement is impossible. Because we fall short and cannot be "righteous" in our own strength, we place our confidence and find our identity completely in Christ. Baptism does not express that we have "arrived," ("achievement unlocked"), but that we have surrendered ("game over"), and at the point of failure, discovered a Saviour who can make us righteous .*

- *Celebrate the work of transformation (death to self, new life in Christ) that each of you has experienced. In prayer, give thanks to God for his grace to you in Christ Jesus.*
- ***How is the Holy Spirit calling you to respond to or act on what we have discussed?***

### **Series Practice: Apprentice Groups**

Now that you've learned the importance of confession and repentance, not only as an individual practice between you and God, but in community with others, it's time to form an Apprentice Group. This is 2-5 peers of the same gender who want to be intentional about growing and enduring as apprentices of Jesus. Walking closely with 2-3 fellow apprentices...

- provides a confidential space to be honest about the challenges of following Jesus.
- Gives us a few spiritual friends who know and support us in our deepest hopes and struggles, and who help us understand the power of grace to change us.
- keeps us accountable to persevering through distraction or temptation in our apprenticeship to Jesus.

The best way to start an Apprentice Group is to ask two or three of your friends or fellow Life Group members to form an A-Group together. Use the resources provided on our website and the principles learned during this series as a guide.

<https://www.nlcc.ca/programs/apprentice-groups>

### **Caring for One Another**

- ***Do you or your family have a need that the Life Group can help meet?***

Using **Psalm 73:25-26** as a guide, based on what you've shared together, spend time listening to God and praying for one another.