

INTRODUCTION 引言

Most of us came to U.S. from overseas. There needs to be some adjustments when you moved to a new culture. Very often, cultural differences can lead to laughable moments. I was very excited when I bought my first house about 15 years ago. I got a taste of the so-called American dreams. One day, I saw a metal object by the front porch. I seriously believed that it is a cap-opener. I thought since lot of people like to drink beer, it is convenient to install a cap-opener by the door. When the weather is pleasant, people can sit outside, drink beer and chat. My wife quickly corrected me: “Silly goose! It is a flag-pole holder!” She was right. The opening in that metal ring is too big for any regular size bottle cap. Everyday is full of learning opportunities. When we became Christians, we had to made a lot of adjustments too.

我們大多數人都是從海外來到美國的。當你遷移到新的文化時，你需要有一些調整。很多時候，文化的差異會導致搞笑的場面。大約 15 年前，我買了第一套房子時，我感到非常興奮。我嚐到了所謂的美國夢。有一天，我在前廊看到一個金屬物體。我真以為那是一個開瓶蓋的工具。我認為由於很多人喜歡喝啤酒，因此在門旁安裝開蓋器很方便。天氣好的時候，人們可以坐在戶外喝啤酒和聊天。我的妻子很快地糾正了我：「傻瓜！那是用來給人插國旗的。」她是對的。那個金屬環的開口比一般的瓶蓋都要大。每天都有學習的機會。當我們成為基督徒時，我們也必須要有很多的調整。

Today is a baptism Sunday. There will be three sisters receiving baptism. Whenever we have baptism, I will reiterate an important truth that baptism does not lead to salvation. I put up a statement on the screen. Let us read it together. “Baptism cannot save anyone. Only Jesus can save us.” The water does not have any magical power to save a person. Jesus Christ died for our sins and He rose on the third day. Those who put their trust in Jesus Christ and accept Him as their Savior and Lord will be saved. That is the gospel from the Bible. The three sisters have become Christians the moment they committed their lives to Christ, whether it happened a few months or a few years ago. Baptism is to testify their faith in Christ. We read Romans 6:1-14 moments ago. In this passage, Paul told us that we are saved by Christ to become His slaves. That is why Christians call Jesus Lord. Salvation is a change of ownership from slave of sin to slave of Christ. Because of that change, we have been set free from the bondage of sin. We can overcome sin if we have a proper perspective of our relationship with Christ. Paul used three verbs to explain that Christians will not and should not continue to live in sins.

今天是個浸禮主日。將有三位姐妹接受浸禮。每當我們有浸禮時，我都會重申一個重要的真理，就是浸禮不能使人得救。我在屏幕上放了一句話。讓我們一起來唸：「浸禮無法救人；唯有耶穌才能救我們。」水池裡面的水沒有任何神奇的力量可以拯救一個人。耶穌基督為我們的罪而死，並且祂在三天後復活。凡相信耶穌基督並接受祂為救主和生命的主的人便能得救。那是聖經的福音。三位姐妹無論是在幾個月或是幾年前做了這個決定時，她們已經成為基督徒。浸禮是為了表明她們對基督的相信。我們剛才讀了羅馬書 6:1-14。保羅在這段經文中告訴我們，我們被基督救贖時便成為祂的奴僕。這就是為什麼基督徒稱耶

耶穌為主。救贖是擁有權的轉移，一個人從罪的奴僕變成為基督的奴僕。由於這個變化，我們已經擺脫了罪的束縛。當我們正確理解自己與基督的關係時，我們就能勝過罪。保羅用三個動詞來說明基督徒不會也不應該繼續活在罪中。

EXPLANATION 解釋

1. Know 知道

The first verb is “know.” Paul said we have to know that we have a new life when we accepted Christ. **Verse 3** reads: Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? The next verse states that Christ had a new life when He came back to life. Likewise, Christians also receive a new life when Jesus is in us. The regular mode of baptism we use is called immersion. The sequence of going into and coming out from water symbolize our identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. God gives us a new life the moment we made a decision to become a Christian. It happened way before a person goes into the water. Let us think of an analogy. Nowadays, a guy proposes to his girl-friend before he marries her. The man buys an engagement ring with the biggest rock he can afford. If the lady says “yes,” she will put the ring on her finger. She cannot wait to show off the ring to everyone. Although a wedding ceremony has not taken place, the future bride has made a decision to marry the man. The ceremony is a public testimony to affirm her commitment to the groom. Similarly, a baptism ceremony affirms that the candidates have already committed to follow Jesus when they received Him. I was baptized more than two years after I became a Christian. No one explained the meaning of baptism to me and no one urged me to do it. But once I accepted Jesus, I was very sure that I was a Christian. Any moment I left this world, I would be with Jesus forever. Then Paul gave us the second “know” in the passage. We must also know that we are no longer slaves to sin. Paul said in **verse 6**: 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. Our “old self” who used to sin has died with Christ. In Christ, we are a new person. The result is that “the body of sin might be done away with.” It means that the power of sin on us has been made ineffective. Think of it like a flu shot. Do you know that the vaccination actually contains the virus? But it is a weakened form of the bugs so that it is ineffective to make you sick. If Christ is in you, then the power of sin has been made ineffective on you. Satan will continue to tempt you. But he cannot force you to commit sins. Next time when temptation comes, you say to yourself: “I know that I am a child of God. With God’s help, I can make a right decision.” Then you choose to obey God and turn away from sin.

第一個動詞是「知道」。保羅說，當我們接受基督時，我們必須知道自己有了新的生命。第3節說：豈不知我們這受洗歸入基督耶穌的人是受洗歸入他的死嗎？下一節經文指出，基督復活時得到了新的生命。同樣，當耶穌在我們裡面時，我們也有了新的生命。我們常用的洗禮方式稱為浸禮。進到水裡面，然後從水中出來的順序象徵著我們認同基督的死、埋葬和復活。當我們決定成為基督徒的那一刻，神就給了我們新的生命。這是發生在一個人下水之前。讓我們考慮一個類比。現今，一個男人在女朋友嫁給他的之前要先向她求婚。男孩子要買一顆最大的鑽戒。如果女孩子說：「我願意」，她會將戒指戴在手指上。她迫不及待地向所有人炫耀她的戒指。儘管婚禮尚未舉行，但未來的新娘已經決定要跟那個男孩結婚。婚禮儀式是一個公開的見證，確認她對新郎的承諾。同樣，浸禮是確認接受

儀式的人在相信耶穌時已經承諾要跟隨祂。我是在成為基督徒兩年多之後才受浸的。當時沒有人向我解釋浸禮的含義，也沒有人催我要趕緊受浸。但是我信主之後，就非常肯定自己是基督徒。如果我任何時候離開這個世界，我將永遠與耶穌同在。保羅在經文中給了我們第二個「知道」。我們必須知道我們不再是罪的奴僕。保羅在第 6 節說：**因為知道我們的舊人和他同釘十字架，使罪身滅絕，叫我們不再作罪的奴僕。**我們過去犯罪的「舊人」已經與基督同死。在基督裡，我們是一個新人。結果就是「使罪身滅絕」。這意味著罪對我們是已經失去功效。我們可以把這個情形想成是流感疫苗。你知道疫苗裡面實際上含有病毒嗎？但那些病毒是已經失去功效，因此無法使你生病。如果基督在你裡面，那麼罪的能力就已經失去功效。撒但會繼續誘惑你。但是他不能強迫你犯罪。下次嘗試探到來時，你可以對自己說：「我知道我是神的孩子。在神的幫助下，我可以做出正確的決定。」然後，你選擇順服神，遠離罪惡。

2. Count 看

We have to know that we have a new life in Christ. In addition, Paul reminded us that we should also count ourselves as belong to Christ. He told us in **verse 11**: In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. The word “count” means “consider.” It refers to a sense of self-recognition. The way we react to sin depends on how we look at ourselves. Satan fools us that we still live in our old self. If we count ourselves as vulnerable to his attack, then we will stumble. It is like when a baby learns to walk, sometimes he “forgets” that he can stand up and walk because he is so used to crawling. Brothers and sisters: we have to constantly count ourselves as belong to Christ. Why keeps beaten up by sins and crawl on the ground when God gives the strength to stand up and run with Christ? Most people in America give high regard to soldiers. Military officers are often deployed to dangerous missions. They are not even allowed to tell their family members where they went and what they did. People count soldiers as heroes. When soldiers walk into a restaurant, people will gladly to pay for their meals. But will those soldiers not count themselves as officers when they are in plain clothes? Of course, they will! When they made an oath to serve their country and protect people, it is a lifetime commitment. We see in the news that some inactive or even retired officers step forward to rescue people from accidents and natural disasters. When we commit ourselves to the Lord, it is also a lifelong promise. Whether we are in the church or outside the church, we should still count ourselves as believers. Unfortunately, there are too many weekend Christians. When practicing Biblical principles jeopardizes our own gain, we take the easy way out. When a senior relative asks us to burn incense and bow down to an ancestor, we do not want to offend the person by saying “no.” When our coworkers gossip about the boss or ask us to join a lottery pool, we stay silent and follow along. Why are we so ashamed to show people that we follow Jesus? Children are naturally proud of their parents no matter what humble jobs they do. But why are we so embarrassed to tell people about our Heavenly Father? Brothers and sisters: we need to constantly count ourselves as princes and princesses of the Heavenly King.

我們必須知道我們在基督裡有新的生命。此外，保羅提醒我們，我們也應該將自己看為是屬基督的。他在第 11 節中告訴我們：**這樣，你們向罪也當看自己是死的；向神在基督耶穌裡，卻當看自己是活的。**「看」這個字的意思是「認為」。它指的是一種自我的認知。我們對罪的反應取決於我們如何看自己。撒但會愚弄我們，使我們以為自己仍然活在

舊人之中。如果我們看自己是個不堪一擊的人，那麼我們就會被他打倒。就像嬰兒學習走路一樣，有時他忘記自己可以站起來走路，因為他習慣在地上爬。弟兄姐妹：我們必須不斷地看自己是屬基督的。神已經賜予我們力量與基督站在一起並與祂一起奔跑，為什麼老是被罪打倒並在地上爬呢？大多數美國人都很尊敬軍人。軍官經常被差派去負責危險的任務。他們甚至不允許告訴家人他們去哪里以及做什麼。人們把士兵看為英雄。當軍人走進餐館時，人們會很樂意地為他們付賬。但是那些士兵穿便服時會不會把自己看為軍官呢？當然會！當他們宣誓服務國家和保護人民時，那是個終身的承諾。我們從新聞中常常看到一些不在服役中甚至退休的軍官都會自動地，把人們從意外事故和天然災害中搶救出來。當我們委身給主時，那也是個終身的承諾。無論我們是在教堂內還是教堂外，我們還是應該把自己看為信徒。可惜的是，實在有太多的週末基督徒了。當實踐聖經原則妨礙我們個人的利益時，我們就會退縮。當一個長輩要我們燒香並向祖先鞠躬時，我們不想拒絕而冒犯對方。當同事說老闆閒話或是要求我們加入買彩卷時，我們便沉默附和。為什麼告訴別人我們是跟隨耶穌的人是如此丟臉的事？孩子們很自然地都會以父母親為榮，無論他們的工作有多卑微。但是，為什麼談到我們的天父會讓我們覺得尷尬呢？弟兄姐妹：我們需要把自己看為是天王的王子和公主。

3. Offer 獻

We have to know that we have a new life in Christ, and we have to count ourselves as belong to Christ. Thirdly, Paul told us that we should offer ourselves to live for Christ. He said in **verse 13**: Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. The word “offer” means presenting something for someone to use. We have some restaurant owners and workers among us. Even if you are not in the profession, you know that a waiter’s job is to offer services to customers. The English term says it all. A waiter waits by the table, pays attention to the needs of the guests. If the drink is running low, then a refill is offered. If a customer has finished the food, then the waiter will take away the plate. He offers his service diligently, hoping to get a bigger tip. The same is true even if you work in a different field. I know you love your job and cannot wait to go to your office tomorrow. But deep down inside, you wish that your boss will notice your contribution. That is a natural mentality of an employee. A raise and a year-end bonus are huge motivations. In the spiritual realm, we also have our boss. Before we became Christians, Satan was our master. He dragged us by our nostrils to sin. We did not even feel that way because sinning was part of our instinct. When we see the need to lie to protect ourselves, then we just do it. If our supervisor takes off earlier, we stop working but sip coffee and chat. We slander behind people’s back and we harbor hatred toward those who mistreat us. We did not know that we offered ourselves to serve Satan. But now Christ is our new Master. We must make up our mind to serve Him. How? Paul specified that we have to offer our body parts for God. For example, we can offer our hands to help people. We have to offer our eyes to see things that can benefit our spiritual growth. We can offer our lips to encourage people. Jesus said any good deed that is done on the smallest brother is like serving our Lord. An employee will serve his/her boss because of the pay-check and to maintain job security. Sinners have no choice but to serve Satan out of bondage. However, Christians have a choice to serve the Lord out of love for Him.

我們必須知道我們在基督裡有新的生命，我們必須看自己是屬基督的。第三，保羅告訴我們，我們應該獻上自己為基督而活。他在第 13 節說：**也不要將你們的肢體獻給罪作不義的器具；倒要像從死裡復活的人，將自己獻給神，並將肢體作義的器具獻給神。**「獻」這個字的意思是呈獻東西給他人使用。我們中間有一些餐館的老闆和職員。即使你不是這方面的專業人士，你也知道侍應生的工作就是為客人獻上服務。侍應生一詞的英文就把含義表明了。一個侍應生站在餐桌旁等著，注意客人的需要。如果飲料快要喝完了，那麼他就去添補。如果顧客已經吃完飯，那麼侍應生會把盤子收走。他勤奮地獻上服務，是希望能賺到更多的小費。即使你在別的行業工作，你的心態也是如此。我知道你喜歡你的工作，迫不及待等著明天去上班。但在內心深處，你希望老闆會注意到你的貢獻。那是員工的一種正常心態。加薪和年終獎金是巨大的推動力。在屬靈的領域裡，我們也有老闆。在我們成為基督徒之前，撒但是我們的主人。他牽著我們的鼻子去犯罪。我們甚至沒有任何感覺，因為犯罪是我們本能的一部分。當我們看到需要撒謊以保護自己時，我們就會那樣做。如果我們的主管提早下班，我們便停止工作，然後和同事喝咖啡和聊天。我們在背後誹謗別人，對那些虧待我們的人記仇。我們卻不知道我們一直為撒但獻上服務。但是現在基督是我們的新主人。我們必須下定決心服事他。我們該怎麼樣做？保羅強調我們必須為神獻上我們的肢體。例如，我們可以獻上雙手幫助別人。我們也必須獻上自己的眼睛只看一些有助於屬命成長的事物。我們亦可以獻上嘴唇鼓勵他人。耶穌說，任何做在一個最小的弟兄身上的事，就等同於做在主的身上了。一個員工可能為了工資和保住飯碗而服事老闆。罪人因為罪的束縛，別無選擇而服事撒旦。但是，基督徒有自由選擇，出於對神的愛而事奉祂。

CONCLUSION 結論

We learn from this passage that we can overcome sin if we have a proper perspective of our relationship with Christ. Brothers and sisters: we are saved to be Christ's slaves. From now on, we live for the glory of God. We have to know that we have a new life in Christ. That is the knowledge aspect. We have to count ourselves as belong to Christ. That has to do with our mindset. We also have to offer ourselves for Christ. That is our actions. We can live differently because we are now different. I hope the Word of God will encourage our three baptism candidates and us all. Baptism is not a graduation. But it is a major milestone. All of us in this church family will cheer you up. We edify one another and we grow together. May the Lord bless you, and use you as a blessing to others.

我們從這段經文中學到，**當我們正確理解自己與基督的關係時，我們就能勝過罪**。弟兄姐妹：我們得救是成為基督的奴僕。從此我們為神的榮耀而活。我們必須知道我們在基督裡有了新的生命。那是知識的層面。我們必須把自己看作屬於基督。那是關乎我們的心態。我們還必須把自己獻給基督。那是我們的行動。我們可以活得不一樣，因為我們已經擁有不一樣的生命。我希望神的話語能鼓勵我們三位準備受浸的姐妹和我們所有人。浸禮不是畢業。但那是個重要的里程碑。我們這個教會大家庭中的所有人都會為妳們加油。我們互相鼓勵，一同成長。願主祝福妳們，並使用妳們成為別人的祝福。