

## INTRODUCTION 引言

Status is an important thing. A major problem the U.S. faces in recent years is the influx of illegal immigrants. I know this is a sensitive matter to some of us. I have no intention to criticize those people who cross the border. Each person has a different story. Those migrants enter into this country. But unlike U.S. citizens, they cannot enjoy all the benefits of this nation. Spiritual status bears some similarities to immigration status. Many people go to churches on Sunday. They do certain things Christians do. They are in a church but they are not in God's Kingdom. Therefore, they do not enjoy all the blessings from God. In Romans 6, Paul tells us Christians are those who are IN Christ. Salvation is a matter of connection. Paul uses baptism to illustrate his points. Two brothers and a sister will be baptized today. We reiterate a Biblical truth every time we have a baptism. The ceremony cannot save anyone. Only Christ can save us. A pastor said the water can only produce wet sinners if they do not have a true relationship with Jesus. It can wash away dirt but it can never remove sins.

## EXPLANATION 解釋

### 1. Believe 相信

We will focus on three action words based on this passage. The first word is "believe." Those who are in Christ must believe that they have died with Him. Verse 4 says: **We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.** The mode of baptism we use is called immersion. The process of getting into and coming out from water symbolizes our identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. It was as if we went back to 2,000 years ago and died together with Jesus. As a result, when He rose from the dead to a new life, we also get a new life. Jesus is our leader and representative. Suppose the company you work for is acquired by another firm. Your boss signs the paper and completes the merger. From then on, you will become an employee of the new company. Similarly, Jesus died on our behalf. Those who identify with Him will receive a new life. But here is the key, we obtain a new life NOT at baptism but at the moment we receive Jesus. The teaching of washed and saved cannot be found in the Bible. If baptism cannot save us, then why go through the ceremony? First, it is a command from the Lord. Second, it is a testimony of our faith. Baptism candidates use the ceremony to affirm their willingness to follow Jesus. It is like a bride and a groom use a wedding ceremony to tell everyone that they will marry the other person. That decision was made when the man proposed to the lady. No girl will wait until the wedding day before making up her mind! The ceremony confirms what both persons believe. Likewise, baptism verifies one's faith in Jesus. Those who are in Christ have become children of God.

### 2. Belong 屬於

Paul says those who identify with Christ must believe that they have received a new life. This is not just a one-time blessing. Paul continues and tells us that from now on we belong to Christ.

Look at verses 5-6: **5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. 6 We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.** Those who identify with Christ in His death also identify with Him in His resurrection. A key word in these verses is “with,” from which we derive the English term sync. When you sync your headphone to your phone, two devices will work together. When we identify with Christ, we sync with Him. He lives in us and we belong to Him forever. Those who only want to get a ride to heaven will have missed a ton of blessings in this life! One such blessing is the release from the bondage of sin. Paul describes that those who belong to Christ “the body of sin might be brought to nothing.” It means the power of sin on them is made ineffective. It is like a poisonous snake whose teeth are pulled. It will still bite you but it will not hurt you because its power is now ineffective. Satan is unable to force us to sin if we belong to God. The Lord and us now work on the same team. God uses His power to save us from condemnation. He gives us the same power to resist temptation. Next time when Satan entices you, call the heavenly 911 hotline and cry out: “Lord, help me walk away from sin!” Do not be fooled by Satan and do not allow him to drag you by the nose to sin. Instead, let the love for God compel you to follow Him.

### 3. Behave 行為

Those who believe in Christ have died with Him and rose with Him. They now belong to Christ. That eternal relationship should affect how we behave in daily life. Paul urges us in verse 13: **Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.** The word “present” is repeated here. It means to stand beside and to assist. You can picture it like waiters in a restaurant. They take your food order, bring you silverware and refill your drink. They serve you diligently, expecting you to give them a bigger tip. Waiters will no longer see you as customers once you leave the restaurant. In contrast, Jesus will forever be our Master once we are in Him. In other words, believers must also be Jesus’ followers. Paul describes our new status in verse 18: **And, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.** Christians are slaves of the Lord. We may not like that title. Actually, we are never truly free from a Biblical standpoint. We are slaves of Satan in the past. We are slaves of the Lord in Christ. Here is a major difference, we had no choice in the past but to serve Satan. But we now have the freedom to serve God. We can choose to whom we show our loyalty. Many of you are immigrants like me. You pledged allegiance to this nation when you were sworn in to become a citizen. As part of the duties, you must fight for this country if you are drafted to war. In Christ, we represent the Heavenly Kingdom. You should follow Biblical principles in school, at work and at home. That will influence your speech and actions. Paul emphasizes on sin. We must stop sinning and bringing shame to God. Instead, we must live a godly life and give glory to God.

### CONCLUSION 結論

Salvation is a matter of connection. Those who are in Christ should continue to live with Him, by Him and for Him. What we believe will determine to whom we belong and it will also affect how we behave. Being saved is just a starting point, getting baptized is a milestone, but following Jesus is a life-long journey. May this message be an encouragement to our baptism candidates and to us all.

## INTRODUCTION 引言

身份是一件很重要的事。美國近年來面對非法移民湧入的問題。我知道對我們中的一些人來說這是一個敏感的課題。我無意批評那些越過邊境的人。每個人都有不同的故事。這些移民進入這個國家。但與美國公民不同，他們無法享受這個國家的所有福利。屬靈的地位與移民身份有某些類似之處。很多人星期日去教堂。他們做基督徒所做的某些事。他們在教會裡面，但他們不在神的國裡。因此，他們無法享受到神所有的祝福。在羅馬書第六章中，保羅告訴我們基督徒是那些在基督裡的人。救恩是關於連結。保羅用浸禮來說明他的論點。兩位兄弟和一位姐妹今天將接受浸禮。每次我們舉行浸禮時，我們都會重申聖經真理。儀式無法拯救任何人，唯有基督才能拯救我們。一位牧師說，如果一個人沒有和耶穌建立真正的關係，水只會產生弄濕的罪人。水可以洗掉污垢，但永遠無法除掉罪。

## EXPLANATION 解釋

### 1. Believe 相信

我們將根據這段經文思考三個動詞。第一個字是「相信」。那些在基督裡的人必須相信他們已經與耶穌同死。第 4 節說：所以，我們藉著洗禮歸入死，和他一同埋葬，原是叫我們一舉一動有新生的樣式，像基督藉著父的榮耀從死裡復活一樣。我們使用的洗禮方式稱為浸水禮。進入水然後從水裡出來的過程象徵著與基督的死、埋葬和復活認同。我們彷彿回到了 2,000 年前，與耶穌一起死去。結果，當祂從死裡復活獲得新生命時，我們也獲得了新生命。耶穌是我們的領袖和代表。假設你工作的公司被另一家公司收購。你的老闆簽署文件並完成合併。從此你將成為新公司的員工。同樣，耶穌為我們而死。那些與祂認同的人將獲得新生命。但關鍵是，新生命不是從浸禮開始，而是從我們接受耶穌的那一刻開始。聖經中找不到靠浸禮而得救的根據。如果浸禮無法拯救我們，那為什麼還要進行儀式呢？首先，它是來自主的命令。第二，它是我們信仰的見證。接受浸禮的人利用這個儀式來確認他們願意跟隨耶穌的心志。這就像新娘和新郎透過婚禮來告訴大家，他們準備和對方結婚。他們是在男孩向女孩求婚時做了這個決定。沒有任何女孩會等到結婚那天才下定決心的！儀式證實了雙方的信念。同樣，浸禮證實一個人對耶穌的信心。在基督裡的人已經成為神的兒女。

### 2. Belong 屬於

保羅說那些與基督認同的人必須相信他們已經獲得了新生命。這不僅僅是一次性的祝福。保羅繼續告訴我們，從現在起我們已經屬於基督了。請看第 5-6 節：5 我們若在他死的形狀上與他聯合，也要在他復活的形狀上與他聯合；6 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。那些與基督的死認同的人，也是與祂的復活認同。這兩經文中的關鍵詞是「與」及「同」，我們從這個希臘文的用詞得出英文「同步」(sync) 這個字。當你把耳機連接到手機時，兩個設備便可以同步工作。當我們認同基督時，我們就與祂同步。祂住在我們裡面，我們也永遠屬於祂。那些只想搭便車去天堂的人，將會在今生錯過許多祝福！其中一個祝福就是從罪的捆綁中得到釋放。保羅描述說，那些屬於基督的人是「罪身滅絕」。其意思是罪對他們失去了功效，就像一條牙齒被拔掉的毒蛇。它仍然會咬你，但不會傷害你，因為牠的傷害已經失去功效了。如果我們屬於神，撒旦就無法強迫我們犯罪。主和我們現在屬於同一個團隊。神使用祂的能力拯救我們脫離永遠的沉淪，祂也賜給我們同樣的能力來抵抗試探。下次當撒旦引誘你時，你必須打屬天的 911 熱線呼喊：「主啊，求祢幫助我遠離罪！」不要被撒旦欺騙，更不要被他牽著你的鼻子去犯罪。相反，讓對神的愛激勵你跟隨祂。

### 3. Behave 行為

那些相信基督的人已經與祂同死，並與祂一同復活。他們現在屬於基督。這份永恆的關係應該影響我們日常生活的行為。保羅在 13 節勸告我們：**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。**這裡重複了「獻」這個字。它原文的意思是站在旁邊並提供幫助。你可以將其想像為餐廳的服務員。他們幫助你訂餐，給你餐具並為你倒水。他們很殷勤地為你服務，期待你給他們更多的小費。當你離開餐廳之後，服務員將不再將你視為顧客。相比之下，一旦我們在耶穌裡，祂就永遠是我們的主。換句話說，信徒也必須是耶穌的跟隨者。保羅在第 18 節描述我們的新地位：**你們既從罪裡得了釋放，就作了義的奴僕。**基督徒是主的奴僕。我們可能不喜歡那個稱呼。事實上，從聖經的立場，我們從來都沒有真正的自由。我們過去是撒旦的奴僕，我們在基督裡是主的奴僕。一個主要的區別是，我們過去別無選擇，只能侍奉撒旦。但我們現在有服事神的自由。我們可以選擇向誰表示忠誠。我們中的許多人像我一樣是移民。當你宣誓成為公民時，你承諾效忠這個國家。其中的一項義務是，如果你被徵召，你必須代表國家去打仗。在基督裡，我們代表天國。你必須在學校、工作場所和家裡遵循聖經的原則。這會影響你的言語和行為。保羅把重點放在罪。我們必須停止犯罪，停止羞辱神。相反，我們必須過敬虔的生活，將榮耀歸給神。

### CONCLUSION 結論

救恩是關乎於連結。在基督裡的人應該繼續與祂同在、並且靠祂和為祂而活。我們所相信的將決定我們屬於誰，也會影響我們的行為。得救只是一個起步點，浸洗是一個里程碑，但跟隨耶穌是一生的旅程。願這篇信息鼓勵今天接受浸禮的弟兄姐妹和我們所有人。