DEVOTIONAL · 1 OCTOBER 2026

Rooted: Finding Home in Christ

Grace & Love of God, Church & Community, Union with Christ, Holiness & Glory of God, Resurrection & Reign, Cross & Atonement, Salvation & Justification, Scripture, Sanctification & Holiness, Mission & Evangelism, Faith & Repentance, Prayer, Discipleship, Sacraments

Every human heart carries a hunger for rootedness — a longing to belong somewhere, to be truly known, to have solid ground beneath our feet. We spend our lives looking for it: in accomplishments, relationships, spirituality, and the countless paths that promise fulfillment but leave us empty. This week's devotional grows out of an Easter sermon on Romans 6:3–4 and the testimonies of four people who discovered that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the answer to that deepest human longing.

Over these six days, we will trace the shape of that discovery together — what it means to be *in* Christ, buried with him in death, and raised with him into a life more rooted and more real than anything we could construct on our own. Whether you are new to faith or have followed Jesus for years, this week is an invitation to go deeper into the union with Christ that is the heartbeat of the Christian life.

Day 1 — The Hunger for Home

Romans 6:3-4

> *Or aren't you aware that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We 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 walk in newness of life.*

Philippians 1:1

> *Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons:*

There is a restlessness woven into the human heart — a longing to be somewhere we truly belong, to be known and held and not let go. We look for it in cities, in relationships, in careers, in spiritual practices. We build and climb and search. And yet something always feels unfinished, like we are perpetually arriving somewhere that turns out not to be home.

The testimonies of people who have come to faith in Christ echo this same hunger. One chased corporate success, luxury, and self-help. Another drowned the ache in substances and the approval of peers. Another crossed an ocean looking for something she could not name. All of them, in their own way, were homesick — and did not know it.

The Gospel's first word to this homesickness is not a technique or a philosophy. It is a person. And the way into that person, Paul tells us in Romans 6, is not merely to admire him from a distance, or even to follow him from afar. It is to be *in* him. The most common way the New Testament describes a Christian is not 'churchgoer' or 'believer in good principles.' It is someone who is *in Christ* — spiritually united to him, rooted and held in him.

To be in Christ is to have finally arrived. Not at a place, but at a person who is himself the home the heart has always been searching for.

Reflect: Where have you been searching for the rootedness and belonging your heart most deeply craves, and how does the idea of being 'in Christ' speak to that search?

Prayer prompts:

- Bring to God the specific places you have looked for belonging apart from him, and be honest about the emptiness those places left.
- Give thanks that God's invitation is not to a program or a set of rules but to a living union with his Son.
- Ask God to deepen your understanding of what it means to be truly 'in Christ.'

Day 2 — More Than a Symbol

Romans 6:3

> *Or aren't you aware that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?*

Colossians 1:2

> *To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae: Grace and peace to you from God our Father.*

A wedding ring is a beautiful thing, but no one would say that the ring *is* the marriage. The ring is an outward sign of something far greater — a covenant of love, a binding of two lives together. Take the ring away and the marriage remains. Treasure the ring precisely because of what it points to.

Baptism works in a similar way. The water itself holds no magic. Being plunged beneath it and raised again does not, by the act alone, transform a person. But it is also far from empty — it is a vivid, physical enactment of a staggering invisible reality. The water points to the miracle of being immersed into Christ himself, of being so joined to him that his story becomes your story.

This is the heart of what Christianity actually is. It is not, at its core, a set of moral improvements to make, or rituals to perform, or songs to sing on Sunday mornings. It is the miracle of union — of a human life being placed *inside* Christ, so that where he has gone, you too go. Think of a passenger inside an airplane: they share in every movement of the aircraft, every destination, every

landing. To be in Christ is to share in everything that is true of him.

The outward sign of baptism is given to us precisely so that we do not forget the inner reality. Every time we see someone go under the water and come up again, we are meant to remember: this is what happened to me. I was put into Christ, and his life became mine.

Reflect: In what ways do you tend to relate to Christianity more as an external set of practices than as an inner union with a living person?

Prayer prompts:

- Ask God to move your faith from the surface level of outward habit into a deeper, living sense of being truly joined to Christ.
- Give thanks for the gift of visible signs like baptism that keep the invisible reality in front of us.
- Confess any ways you have reduced your faith to performance rather than resting in your union with Jesus.

Day 3 — Buried with Him

Romans 6:3-6

> *Or aren't you aware that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We 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 walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with Him like this in His death, we will certainly also be united with Him in His resurrection. We know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be rendered powerless, that we should no longer be slaves to sin.*

Romans 6:23

> *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Before there can be a spring, there must be a winter. Before there can be resurrection, there must be death. This is the order of things in creation, and it is also the order of the Gospel. Easter is glorious, but it is not the whole story — it is the second half of a story that begins at the cross.

The cross is an offense to our pride because it tells us something we do not want to hear: that we are not essentially good people who simply need encouragement. We are people enslaved to sin — sin that hurts the ones we love most, sin that turns other people into instruments for our comfort, sin that accumulates a debt before a holy God that we have no means of repaying. When we are honest enough to stop comparing ourselves to others and look at what is actually in us, we feel the weight of it.

Being united with Christ in his death, then, is not a morbid idea. It is the most liberating news in the world. It means that Jesus has gone where we could not go — into death — and carried our sin and its penalty with him. The power of sin that controlled us is dealt with in that death. The debt of sin that condemned us is paid in that death. When we are joined to Christ, his cross becomes our cross, and everything that needed to die dies with him there.

Like a seed buried in winter soil, something has to go into the ground before new life can emerge. The burial is not the end of the story — but it is the necessary beginning of it.

Reflect: Have you ever sat honestly with the reality of your own sin — not compared to others, but as it actually is? What does it mean to you that Jesus willingly went into death to deal with it?

Prayer prompts:

- Bring to God an honest confession of the weight of sin you carry — patterns you cannot break on your own, debts you cannot pay.
- Give thanks that Jesus did not wait for you to be worthy before going to the cross for you.

- Ask for a fresh, heartfelt grasp of what the cross has actually accomplished on your behalf.

Day 4 — The Tide That Cannot Be Stopped

Romans 6:4

> *We 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 walk in newness of life.*

Romans 6:9-10

> *For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, He cannot die again; death no longer has dominion over Him. The death He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life He lives, He lives to God.*

Anyone who has tried to build a sandcastle at the water's edge knows the feeling: no matter how carefully you construct the walls, no matter how deep you dig the moat, the tide eventually comes. It is patient and powerful and entirely unstoppable. The wall of sand was never really a match for it.

This is the image that captures what happens when the life of the risen Jesus enters a human soul. Every wall sin has built — the habits, the addictions, the bitterness, the fear — is, in the end, just sand. The tide of God's life is stronger. This is not wishful thinking. It is grounded in a historical event: Jesus physically walked out of a sealed tomb on the third day. Death itself could not hold him. And if death — the last and greatest enemy — could not contain him, then nothing in your life can contain him either.

To be united with Christ in his resurrection is to have that same unstoppable life now at work within you. It begins to shift your desires. Things that once enslaved you begin to lose their grip. Things about Jesus that once seemed dull begin to draw you. The change is real, even if it is gradual, even if there are days you cannot see it. The Holy Spirit is moving like a tide through everything, renewing, restoring, recreating.

And this is not where the story ends. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead will one day raise all who are in him — physically, finally, forever. The tide of resurrection life will have the very last word.

Reflect: Where in your life have you felt the tide of Christ's resurrection life at work — shifting your desires, loosening a grip sin once had, drawing you toward him?

Prayer prompts:

- Give thanks for specific evidence of the Holy Spirit's renewing work in your life, however small it may seem.
- Ask God to increase your trust that his life in you is stronger than whatever walls of sin or fear still stand.
- Bring to him the areas where you most need the tide of his resurrection power to break through.

Day 5 — You Are Not Alone

John 16:33

> *I have told you these things so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take courage; I have overcome the world!"*

Psalm 116:8-9

> *For You have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling. I will walk before the LORD in the land of the living.*

Philippians 1:6

> *being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

Some of the most powerful testimonies of faith come from people who have known the most profound loneliness — who have sat on the edge of darkness and found that they could not save themselves. They tried everything: spirituality, relationships, substances, achievement. They looked everywhere for something solid to stand on, and the ground kept giving way.

When Jesus meets people in those places, what he offers is not a self-improvement program. He offers himself. He offers his presence — a presence that walks with people through the hardest days, not as a distant manager of circumstances but as a living Savior who has himself gone through death and come out the other side. In him, people who have never known what it is to be truly at peace begin to discover that peace. Not a peace that means life is suddenly easy, but a peace that runs deeper than circumstances.

One of the most beautiful fruits of union with Christ is that you never walk alone again. The life of God himself is in you, the Spirit of the risen Jesus accompanying you through every ordinary and extraordinary moment. What once felt like an unbearable weight — shame, grief, the wreckage of past choices — begins to be carried by hands that are stronger than yours. He who began a good work does not abandon it halfway through.

Rootedness is not only about knowing who you are. It is about knowing you are not alone. In Christ, you are known, accompanied, and held — not because you have earned it, but because he is faithful.

Reflect: In what areas of your life do you most need to receive the truth that you are not walking alone — that Christ is present and his work in you is not finished?

Prayer prompts:

- Ask God to make the reality of Christ's presence feel tangible in the specific places where loneliness or fear weighs heaviest.

- Give thanks that the work he has begun in you he will faithfully complete.
- Confess any tendency to try to carry alone what he has invited you to bring to him.

Day 6 — Found, Rooted, and Sent

Romans 6:4

> *We 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 walk in newness of life.*

John 15:5

> *I am the vine and you are the branches. The one who remains in Me, and I in him, will bear much fruit. For apart from Me you can do nothing.*

Titus 3:5-6

> *He saved us, not by the righteous deeds we had done, but according to His mercy, through the washing of new birth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This is the Spirit He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior,*

To be found in Christ is not the end of the journey — it is the beginning of a new kind of life altogether. The newness of life that Paul describes in Romans 6 is not merely a private interior experience. It expresses itself outward: in changed desires, in transformed relationships, in a growing capacity to love others rather than use them.

People who have been united to Christ describe this transformation in concrete terms. Relationships that were once defined by self-seeking begin to be characterized by genuine care. Friendships built on the foundation of Christ turn out to be the most real and lasting friendships they have ever known. The belonging they spent years chasing through achievement or romance or spiritual searching — they find it, unexpectedly, in a community of people who are also in Christ,

also being shaped by the same Spirit, also learning what it means to be loved and to love.

This is because the vine gives life to all the branches, not just one. To be in Christ is to be grafted into a living body — a community of people through whom the life of God flows. The rootedness the Gospel offers is never merely individual. It is communal. We are found together, rooted together, and sent together into neighborhoods and cities and relationships with the same life-giving news that found us.

You were made for this. Not a self-constructed identity or a borrowed sense of belonging, but a life hidden in Christ — rooted, held, overflowing, and moving outward. This is the life Easter announces. This is the life that is yours in him.

Reflect: How is your union with Christ shaping the way you relate to the people around you — and where is he calling you to carry his life outward?

Prayer prompts:

- Give thanks for the specific people and community through whom you have experienced the belonging that Christ gives.
- Ask God to show you where and how the new life you have in Christ is meant to overflow into the lives of others.
- Ask for a deeper sense of your identity as someone rooted in Christ — not in achievement, approval, or self-effort — so that you can live from that place with freedom.

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