

## **PHD THESIS SUMMARY**

**THESIS TITLE:** CHRISTIAN LIFE LIVED  
IN THE POWER OF RESURRECTION: An  
Exegetical and Theological Analysis of the  
Implications of Christ's Death and Resurrection  
for the Believer's Life in the Pauline Epistle

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**ARAD 2022**

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## Summary

Most studies dealing with the matter of the resurrection of believers focus on the physical resurrection which will take place at Parusia. However, in this dissertation our aim is to move past those approaches and examine the issue of “Christian life lived in the power of the resurrection of Christ”. Therefore, we won’t refer to resurrection from a physical viewpoint, but to the spiritual resurrection which takes place in the believers’ lives when they participate in the death and resurrection of Christ. In writing this dissertation, we have analyzed, exegetically and theologically, the main Pauline texts in which Paul speaks of the believers’ new life as being directly connected with the death and resurrection of Christ, as well as Christian life lived in the power of Christ’s resurrection. We are referring to those Pauline texts in which Paul incorporates the believers in the narrative of Christ’s death and resurrection. We tried to show that once believers were introduced into the narrative of Christ’s death and resurrection, they were brought to a new life; they were resurrected from their



lives in sin and spiritual death to have new lives in the power of Christ's resurrection. Therefore, this paper observes and elaborates on the manner in which believers were resurrected to new, present lives, as well as the implications of living in the power of Christ's resurrection. To do this we have also observed the role of the Holy Spirit in the present resurrection of believers, as well as the way in which the Holy Spirit enables believers to live new lives and the way in which He makes ethical living possible.

This dissertation falls within the biblical theology studies and uses a holistic perspective to examine the implications the death and resurrection of Christ has in the lives of believers. Until now, not many studies have focused on the resurrection of Christ in connection with the present, spiritual resurrection of believers and focused mostly on the physical resurrection. Some of the evangelical authors who did, however, touch upon this subject are: Oliver O'Donovan, Michael Gorman, Jürgen Moltmann, James Dunn, N. T. Wright, Corneliu Constantineanu, Gordon Fee and others. However, the approach of many authors on the theology of resurrection is either classical, or from

an ethical perspective, and doesn't look to demonstrate what it means to be resurrected with Christ and to live in the power of Christ's resurrection. Undoubtedly, many of the aforementioned researchers, and others, contributed significantly to the understanding of the significance of the new life in Christ, but not enough to comprehend the way in which Paul saw bringing believers into a new life through participation in Christ.

Also, we have noticed a great need in the practical lives of believers to live according to the new life. In other words, we have noticed a great necessity to understand the way in which bringing believers to a new life happened, as well as the necessity of living the Christian faith practically. There's a significant difference between the declarative level of Christian faith and its practical level, between believing in Christ and living with/in Christ.

This dissertation contributes to biblical theology, and even public theology, from several viewpoints. Firstly, it has a theological and historical implications, as it connects Christ's resurrection to the new life lived in faith. Secondly, it has an ethical and social dimension, since Christ's resurrection transforms the lives of believers into

a new life of socially lived morality. Thirdly, this dissertation has an eschatological dimension, since Christ's resurrection inaugurated God's new creation and the believers are part of this new age and enjoy the blessings of the new creation in their present lives. Next, the dissertation has a pneumatological dimension because this new life is lived in the presence, guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Finally, the dissertation has a practical and public aspect since believers live this new life *here and now*, in the postmodern context, even if they maintain a future dimension as well. Therefore, the present research contributes to an understanding of biblical anthropology, biblical soteriology, biblical pneumology, biblical ethics and biblical eschatology.

In the writing of this dissertation we had to use a well defined method. Firstly, we identified the Pauline texts in which our subject appears and then we conducted an exegetical, grammatical and theological analysis of these biblical texts. Therefore, we drew upon specialized biblical commentaries and various articles which deal with this matter. Our intention was to use this method to observe the relation between Christ's resurrection and the

present resurrection of believers. During this exegetical and theological exercise we have tried to answer a few main questions: What is the significance of Christ's death and resurrection in believers' lives? How does Christ's resurrection transform the lives of believers? How do the believers who became a new creation in Christ live? What does it mean to live in the power of resurrection? During this research we tried to understand the message the author wanted to convey, the way in which the message was received, as well as the way in which this message could be applied in the present context of believers.

This dissertation has six chapters, preceded by an introduction and followed by the conclusions and bibliography. In the first chapter we aimed to talk about the way in which the new perspectives on Pauline theology contribute to an understanding of life lived in the power of resurrection and the implications of Christ's death and resurrection in a believer's life. We tried to show that with the development of new perspectives Pauline theology gained a better understanding. The starting point was Ferdinand Christian Baur and the „Tübingen School“, followed by Ernst Käsemann (1906–

1998), who speaks of the triumph of God over evil, Christiaan J. Beker and his work „*Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought*”<sup>1</sup> from which we adopted the search for a central idea in Paul’s theology. We then got to E. P. Sanders, who proposed a new framework for understanding the Pauline works<sup>2</sup> and finally James Dunn, N. T. Wright and the other proponents of NPP (the New Perspective on Paul). We showed that, “although there’s no one corpus of NPP”,<sup>3</sup> in general it mainly follows two directions. Firstly, a minute reevaluation of Judaism in general (the one contemporary with Jesus and his oldest followers) and in particular in regard to its implicit soteriology. A second direction of NPP is a more diverse set of reevaluations of Paul’s writings, in light of the reevaluated Judaism.<sup>4</sup> By working

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<sup>1</sup> Christiaan J. Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought*, Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1980.

<sup>2</sup> E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion*, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, Minn., 1989.

<sup>3</sup> N. T., Wright, *Paul and His Recent Interpreters*, Minneapolis, Fortress Press. Kindle Edition, 2015, Loc., 2101-2103.

<sup>4</sup> Garwood P. Anderson, *Paul's New Perspective: Charting a Soteriological Journey*, Downers Grove, Illinois, InterVarsity Press, Kindle Edition, 2016, Loc. 466-468.

in these directions the proponents of this new perspective touch on the reinterpretation of the main Christian doctrines. In contrast with the traditional Protestant/Reformed view, which considers Judaism as being a religion of the Law, Sanders and his followers understand Judaism as being a religion of grace and therefore the proponents of NPP pleaded for the importance of faith in detriment to the facts of Law.

For a long time Paul's writings were seen as a set of teachings, of argumentative texts, without seeing them as narrative structures, but in the past years, with the new outlook on Paul, a series of researchers noticed that his writings have at their foundation certain adjacent narratives from which Paul extracts his teachings. The first to mention this interpretation was Richard B. Hays, followed by other theologians such as Norman Peterson, N. T. Wright, Ben Witherinton, Stephen Fowl, Sylvia Kesmaat, Katherine Grieb, Douglas Campbell, Bruce Longenecker, Kar Yong Lim, Beth Moore, Michael

Gorman and others.<sup>5</sup> Examples of such underlying narratives are “God and creation”, “exile and the return from exile”, and, in particular, the narrative of the death, resurrection and ascension, as well as the episode when Paul met Christ on the road to Damascus.<sup>6</sup> The importance of this narrative lies in the fact that, at the moment of conversion, the believer participates in the narrative of Christ’s death and resurrection, and it is on this participation in Christ that Paul bases his soteriology, the whole Christian life, hope, ethical living, reconciliation, ecclesiology, and all the blessings of the new creations. Probably the most prominent writer on the subject of participation in Christ is Michael Gorman. He showed that participation in Christ is conveyed by Paul in several ways—for instance, through words such as “in”, “with” and “through” Christ,<sup>7</sup> like Romans 6:11: “*Likewise reckon ye*

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<sup>5</sup> A se vedea Corneliu Constantineanu, *Interpretarea narativă în teologia paulină*, Cluj-Napoca, Ed. Casa Cărții de Știință, 2009, p. 4-6.

<sup>6</sup> N. T. Wright, *Paul: In Fresh Perspective*, Minneapolis, Fortress, 2005, p. 8

<sup>7</sup> Michael Gorman, *Participating in Christ: Explorations in Paul’s Theology and Spirituality*, Michigan, Grand Rapids, Baker Academic, 2019, p. 3-4.

also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God **through Jesus Christ** (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) *our Lord*". Also, participation in Christ is conveyed through the prefix "syn", translatable through "co", "together with", or "with". Therefore, the believers who died together with Christ, were crucified with Christ (συνεσταυρώθη – Rom. 6:6), were buried with Christ (συνετάφημεν – Rom. 6:3-4), were resurrected with Christ, ascended with Christ, etc. Michael Gorman constructs a theology centred around the death and resurrection of Christ. He considers that participation revolves around three words: "cruciform (cross-shaped), participation and mission".<sup>8</sup> Gorman's thesis is that "the participation/crucifixion/death of Christ (*cruciformity*) is paradoxically also the participation in Christ's resurrection (*resurrecformity*)."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Michael Gorman, *Cruciform or Resurrectiform: Paul's Paradoxical Practice of Participation in Christ*, *Ex Auditu*, 33, 2017, p. 60.

<sup>9</sup> Recomandăm pentru acest subiect și lucrările lui Gorman: *Becoming the Gospel: Participation and Mission in Paul*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2015; *Inhabiting the Cruciform God: Kenosis, Justification, and Theosis in Paul's Narrative Soteriology*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2009; *Cruciformity: Paul's Narrative Spirituality of The Cross*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.



In light of the participation in Christ, justification by faith was also redefined, moving past the Reformation's heritage which considered justification to be penal, as God punishes His Son to regard humans as free from sin. Conversely, the Reformed conception pertaining to the imputation of righteousness was discarded. For the proponents of NPP, justification by faith also implies an eschatological participation in the new creation, as well as an ethical transformation. Participation and justification can't be separated, as they are two sides of the same coin, the coin of conversion. Co-crucifixion with Christ is immediately followed (implicitly or explicitly) by resurrection with Christ: resurrection into a new life, in a relation of covenant with God. This reality of justification and baptism implies transference in Christ. Therefore, the ones who are in Christ were transferred from under the power of sin under the power of Christ's righteousness. Thus, ethical living is something that inevitably follows from participation in Christ. Therefore, righteousness is participative and transformational.

Another result of the participation in Christ is "the participation of believers in the new creation of Christ".

The believers, having been united with Christ, became a new creation, were renewed and are consequently introduced in the new eschatological creation. With the resurrection of Christ, the new creation was inaugurated and the believers participated in it through participation/faith in Christ, and the prophecies of the Old Testament regarding the new creation were fulfilled. The old age, the one under the sign of sin and everything the believers were in the old Adam has passed, and believers now live in the new age, in the new Adam who is Christ. Through participation in Christ, believers also share His love and character.

What makes this participation possible is the Holy Spirit, working on the believers' regeneration and their continual renewal, Him being the One that enables the believers to live the new life. The possibility of ethical living derives from this. The believers, previously enslaved by sin, were granted the possibility of ethical living because of the participation in Christ, the transformation and enablement the Holy Spirit performs in the believers' lives. Although the Holy Spirit is the one who makes participation in Christ and adopting Christ's character possible, this new

creation is just inaugurated and it will fully realize itself at Parusia. Opening these new interpretive horizons facilitated an understanding of life lived in the power of resurrection. We have shown in this chapter that, since believers participate in the narrative of the death and resurrection of Christ they received justification, they were transformed, inducted in the new creation and can live the new life fully.

In the second chapter we analysed the matter of “The Death and Resurrection of Christ in the Pauline Writings”. We tried to show, firstly, that the Gospel preached by Paul is not his own invention, even if it was revealed to him by Christ, but it’s anchored in the writings of the Old Testament. Secondly, we endeavoured to show that the prophecies of the Old Testament, foretelling a new life of the people, were fulfilled in Christ and the believers live this new life in the present. Thirdly, we tried to show the meaning of death and resurrection in Paul’s writings. We have shown in this chapter that once with the paradigm shift in Paul’s life that happened on the road to Damascus, Paul changed his perspective on Christ and the writings of the Old Testament. From that moment onwards, Paul

considered himself as part of the new people of God and lived in God's new creation.

In the first part of this chapter we showed that the defining elements of Judaic eschatology were fulfilled. Thus, the prophecies about the coming of the Messiah were fulfilled (for example, Is. 11:10, cf. Rom. 15:12). The restoration of the people that the prophets speak of (Is. 25-26; Ezek. 37; Hos. 6, 13), regarding the New Covenant (Jer. 31; Ezek. 36), regarding the coming of the Holy Spirit (Ezek. 36; Joel 2) and regarding the new creation (Isa. 65-66) were fulfilled with the coming of Christ.

In the second part of this chapter we have shown the meanings of the death and resurrection of Christ in the Pauline writings. We have shown that, although the meanings of the words "*anastasis and egeiro*" (as well as other words he uses to denote resurrection) refers to the physical resurrections, Paul also uses these terms to denote spiritual death and resurrection. We have shown that Christ's death takes a central place in Paul's writings (1Cor. 1:17, 21; 15:1-4, etc.). He states that he didn't want to know anything other amongst the Corinthians than Jesus Christ the Crucified, because only in Christ is

salvation possible. Christ's death should be looked at through the lens of resurrection, because death without resurrection is worthless.

Christ's resurrection is seen by Paul as the inauguration of God's new creation. Isaiah's prophecies (Is. 40-66) were fulfilled in Christ, His resurrection being the first fruit of the new creation (1Cor. 15:20). Moreover, through participation in Christ the believers participate in the new creation and have become themselves a new creation. The coming of the Holy Spirit is the sign of the new creation's presence. Through the Holy Spirit believers were renewed, were adopted and were made apt to live in the new creation. Although the new creation is already present, it still coexists with the old creation and until Parusia, they shall continue to do so.

Also, Christ's resurrection is connected to the change or transformation of the lives of believers. This sense is very important because the entire Christian life and of course our dissertation depends on it, therefore this was the topic of the third chapter. The physical resurrection (1 Cor. 15) also depends on the spiritual resurrection, because those

who are in Christ will benefit from a physical, final resurrection.

As can be anticipated, in the third chapter we set out to write about “Incorporation into Christ and the New Creation: the Transformation of the Believers to a New Life”. Therefore, we wanted to, firstly, debate the way in which believers are transformed from a life of sin and spiritual death to a new life through incorporation in the narrative of Christ’s death and resurrection. Secondly, we wanted to show that the foundation of the believers’ new life is incorporation in Christ. Thirdly, we endeavoured to show that through the participation of believers in the narrative of Christ’s death and resurrection, the believers have died from sin and live a new life. And finally, we set out to see the way in which the believers who have been freed from sin and brought to life through their union with Christ live. To do this we performed an exegetical and theological analysis of the main texts in which Paul connects bringing the believers to a new life with the death and resurrection of Christ, such as Romans 6:1-14, Galatians 2:15-21, 2 Corinthians 5:14-21; Ephesians 2:1-7 and Colossians 2:11-15.

Because of some ethical misunderstandings, Paul writes to the Christians in Rome about the transformation which Christ brought in their life after conversion. He states that at the moment of conversion the believers died from sin, because when they were baptised into Christ they were also baptised into His death, the water baptism marking the passage from spiritual death to spiritual life. He says we were crucified with Christ (συνεσταύρωμαι, see 6; Gal. 2:20), we died with Him and we will live with Him (συναπεθάνομεν καὶ συζήσομεν, 2Tim. 2:11), we were buried with Him (συνταφέντες αὐτῷ, v. 4; Col. 2:12), we were brought to life with Him (συνεζωοποίησεν, Eph. 2:5; Col. 2:13), we were resurrected and put in the heavenly places with Him (συνήγειρεν καὶ συνεκάθισεν ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, Eph. 2:6), we are with Him, joint-heirs with Him we suffer with Him (8:17), we are glorified with Him (συγκληρονόμοι δὲ Χριστοῦ, εἴπερ συμπάσχομεν ἵνα καὶ συνδοξασθῶμεν, 8:17) and with Him we will reign (συμβασιλεύσομεν, 2Tim. 2:12).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans*, William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., Grand Rapids. Mich., 2012, p. 248; A se vedea și Corneliu Constantineanu, *Trăiți în pace: dimensiunea socială a reconcilierii în*

This participation in Christ implies being freed from the old life and brought into a new life, lived in Christ. The believers have already died from sin, they were freed from under the power of sin and resurrected into a new life and have the possibility to live the new ethic. To explain this, Paul states that “the old man”, the man enslaved by sin, was crucified, so that the body of sin can be disrobed of its power (Rom. 6:6), therefore will no longer rule the lives of believers and they will no longer give the members of their bodies to the power of sin. The believers’ new life is lived for God, and the members of the body have become instruments of justice (Rom. 6:10-13).

This is shown by Paul in Galatians too. In 2:20 Paul emphasises the participation of believers in the narrative of the death and resurrection of Christ. He says „*I am crucified with Christ*”. As we have seen in Romans 6:6 “*our old man was crucified with him*”, in Galatians 5:24 he says „*and they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh*

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*teologia paulină*, Casa Cărții: Risoprint, Oradea; Cluj-Napoca, 2013, p. 186.



*with the affections and lusts*” and in Galatians 6:14 he says *„the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world”*. The moment when this happened is that of conversion, on the road to Damascus, when Paul met Christ. Since that moment he no longer relied on the righteousness awarded by the Law, but on the righteousness awarded by Christ, which also implies an ethical transformation. Since the old self, the self enslaved by sin was crucified with Christ then Paul, just like all believers, lives a new life, present for God, in Christ.

Another text which highlights participation in Christ and the transformation of the believers to a new life is 2Corinthians 5:14-21. In these verses, Paul shows that the foundation of the believers’ new lives is *„the love of Christ“*, which has been concretely demonstrated by Christ’s death for the sinners. For *„if one died for all, then were all dead“* (v.14). Christ’s death was a substitutive act, a death ‘in lieu of’ another person. Consequently, through the union with Christ, the believers also died with Christ, and Christ’s love was poured out into the believers’ hearts. Therefore, now, those who live through Him, no longer

live for themselves, but for Jesus Christ who died and rose again for them.

Through his death, Christ changes the believers' sinful, egotistical lives into lives lived for God. Therefore, as they are now in Christ, they have become new creations, and the old things have passed away and they have become new (v.17) Paul adopts the terminology of the „new creation“ from Isaiah and uses it to write about the renewal Christ made in the believers' lives and their inclusion in a new creation. In this way, Paul reaffirms the doctrine of justification through the participation in Christ's death and resurrection. In Christ, the believers have received God's righteousness (v.21), He who has reconciled the world with Himself, without imputing the believers their trespasses. (v.18-19).

In Ephesians 2:1-7, Paul sets the believers' new lives against their new ones, referring also to the moment of transformation. He says that their old lives were marked by spiritual death, because they were dead in their trespasses and their sins (Eph. 2:1); the old life follows the course of this world, of the atheists, under the rule of evil and according to the prince of the power of the air and

under God's final judgement. Yet, despite this adverse situation, they were brought to life with Christ (*sunezopoiesen to Christ*) (v. 5) and they have already ascended with Him. The underlying catalysts of this deliverance and transformation are God's grace, goodness and love.

The last text we dealt with in this chapter is Colossians 1:11-15 and we think it's important because in it, Paul again compares and contrasts the believers' old lives and their new ones, emphasising the moment of transformation. He uses five metaphors to explain the transformation Christ has brought into believers' lives. In Christ, the believers were „circumcised“ not physically, but spiritually, by stripping them of their human desires of the flesh and of the mind. The second metaphor Paul employs is that of baptism. „*Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead*“ (v.12). The third metaphor is that of *death and resurrection*. In this phrase, Paul uses two verbs, both prefixed by „συν“, (*with, together*): „συνταφέντες“, which means „*buried with*“ and „συνηγέρθητε“, which translates

„*risen with*”. The fourth metaphor is that of the „blotting out of the handwriting of ordinances that was against us“, which, in Paul’s view, signifies forgiveness, deliverance from sin and justification. The last metaphor is that of „embarrassment“, which he uses with two separate meanings. Firstly, he uses it to describe how the believers were freed from under their earthly desires and the second meaning is that of the disarming of the evil powers that believers were governed by before their conversion. The believers experienced these changes when they were transformed, they died, they were buried and resurrected in Christ, they went from spiritual death to spiritual life, they were delivered from sin and its power and they were freed from the evil powers, thus receiving God’s righteousness.

In the fourth chapter, we explored „The Contribution of the Holy Spirit in the Believers’ New Lives“, the way he regenerates believers in the moment of conversion and enables them to live the new life. In the first part of this chapter, we have shown how the Holy Spirit performs this regeneration (Tit 3:4-5; 1Cor. 6:11; 12:13). To support our ideas, we showed that, in his epistle to Tit, Paul first

describes the believers' state before conversion, and then the transformation which occurs in the moment of conversion and the manner in which the reborn believers must live.

The believers have been renewed through „*the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost*“ (Tit 3:5). This work is also described in 1 Corinthians 6:11: „*but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God*“, and in 1 Corinthians 12:13: „*For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body [...] have been all made to drink into one Spirit*“.

We have shown not only that the Holy Spirit performed this renewal, but also that He was placed in the believers' hearts. This made the believers into a temple of God, both collectively (the Church has become a temple of God, 1Cor. 3:16-17) and individually (the believers' bodies have become temples of the Holy Spirit, 1Cor. 6:19). Through the Holy Spirit, the believers have been sealed, they have received an earnest of the inheritance of the new creation (Eph. 1:11-14) and they have been adopted (Gal. 4:4-7; Rom. 8:15-17). Moreover, the Holy

Spirit makes it possible for the believers to live their new lives in Christ; He is the enabler, by empowering them to overcome their weak human nature. To accomplish this, the Holy Spirit has transformed them from ordinary humans into spiritual beings, from people who used to be governed by the desires of the flesh to people who live for God, bringing forth the fruit of the Spirit (Rom. 8:1-14; Gal. 5:16-26).

In the fifth chapter, we wrote about „The Power of Christ’s Resurrection; the Ethical Aspect of Christ’s Resurrection“. We have shown that, in Paul’s view, ethical life is closely connected to the transformation brought by the participation in Christ and the renewal performed by the Spirit. Once the believers were brought to a new life, one which has an eschatological dimension, they can only live by manifesting the ethics of the „new creation“. To prove this, we drew on several Pauline texts which connect Pauline theology with real life or ethical living: Romans 6:15-23; 12:1-15:13; Ephesians 4:17-24; Colossians 3:1-17 and 2 Corinthians 3:1-4. We have already shown that in Romans 6:1-14, Paul writes about the transformation of the believers through participation

in Christ, and throughout the next chapters (15-23) and in the last part of this book (12-16), he shows how the believers who have been transformed in Christ must live. In the past, prior to the conversion, the believers were enslaved by sin and death, but now, once transformed by Christ, they have become servants of justice and they live for God. The foundation of ethical living is the transformation which Christ has brought. Once they were brought/resurrected to a new present life, ethical living is inevitable, because this transformation entails both ethical living and permanent renewal (Rom. 12:1-2).

Also, in Ephesians 2:1-7, Paul describes the same transformation, and in Ephesians 4:17-24 he writes about a permanent battle believers must wage their whole lives for the purpose of inner renewal. To attain this goal, the believers must shed everything related to their sinful lives every day and put on their new selves and the character of the new creation. The believers have already received regeneration, justification and redemption, but, at the same time, they must lead a lifelong fight to maintain this renewal.

Paul further elaborates on the topic of the renewal which Christ has brought into the believers' lives in his Epistle to the Colossians, 1:11-15, and starting with chapter 3, he describes the way the believers who have been regenerated in Christ must live. To maintain the change in their lives, believers are asked to continually abandon the things which had value for them in their previous life, which was lived without Christ, and then they are called upon to adopt a new way of life. This change must be made in all aspects of life, in family relations (the relationship between husband and wife, the one between children and parents), work relations (the relationship between masters and servants), the manner in which believers should speak and other aspects of daily life. By living in this prescribed manner, the believers have become living epistles, representations of a written Gospel in their community (2Cor. 3:1-4).

In the first half of the sixth chapter, we first wrote a summary of this dissertation, and then, we sought to offer a few practical regulations for Christian life in the postmodern era. We first identified a few characteristics of postmodernism such as atheism, relativism,



multiculturalism, immigration, globalisation, the health crisis caused by Covid-19 and others. Next, we endeavoured to offer a few directions for Christian life and for the believers' participation in God's mission. We highlighted the fact that once the believers were transformed in Christ, they became a written Gospel and God's letter to the current generation. Christians are called to preach the Gospel both verbally and practically, through their way of life.

Therefore, the need for this paper first lies in the scarce number of studies on the matter of the believers' new life from the perspective of the participation in the narrative of Christ's death and resurrection. However, the new perspectives on Pauline theology facilitated new interpretive horizons, and the understanding of Pauline theology reached a different level, especially the issue of life lived in the power of Christ's resurrection. Also, we think this paper is necessary from the perspective of the necessity of practical living in the power of resurrection. In Christ, the believers were, in effect, transformed and are presently living the new life, but, of course, with the hope that they will enjoy it fully at Parusia. We have

shown that living in the power of resurrection signifies being risen to a new life through the participation in Christ's life and death. The new studies on Pauline theology have enabled the understanding of the resurrection of the believers through participation in Christ.

The apostle Paul uses the language of death and resurrection to describe how believers were brought to a new life in Christ. The believers' participation in Christ's death and resurrection equals the believers' resurrection from spiritual death to spiritual life. Dying with Christ means the believers identify and become one with Christ and are dead to sin. Resurrection with Christ means the believers were resurrected into a new life. The believers' participation in Christ's death and resurrection also brings justification, liberation from sin and its power, ethical transformation and the adoption of Christ's character and the ethics of the new creation. The Holy Spirit (and the word) is the means by which regeneration is performed and maintained. The regeneration process in the believers' new lives demands abandoning the old things of the old life/creation daily and adopting the things of the new

life/creation. The transformation of the believers to a new life (through participation in Christ) makes ethical living possible. The believers' new life is observed in all aspects. They are called upon to live the new life in society. The believers contribute to the spreading of the Gospel through incorporation.

This dissertation also opens new avenues for research. Our intention was not to conduct an exhaustive study of the subject but rather to give some directions by seeking to explain the significance of Christ's death and resurrection in the believers' lives, the manner in which Christ's resurrection transforms the believers' lives, how they live after they have become a new creation in Christ and what it means to live in the power of the resurrection. By addressing these issues, we have paved the way for further research, both in Pauline theology and in biblical literature, in general. We think there is a need for further studies on the manner in which the believers' new life is connected to Christ's death and resurrection in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in the Epistle of Jacob, in Peter's Epistles and especially in John's.

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