



*“His divine power has given to us all things that are necessary for life and godliness.”*

– 2 Peter 1:2

## Week 5

### Buried and Raised with Jesus

#### *The Parable of the Glove*

I have a gardening glove with flowers on it. I love my glove and I want her to fulfill the purpose I have for her and become the greatest gardener there ever was. So how do I make this glove into a great gardener?

First, I tell her it is her destiny to be a great gardener, and I tell her the basics of gardening. She is to break up the soil, plant the seed, fertilize and water the plants, and keep the weeds out of the garden. My little glove nods and says she understands. So, I set her in the garden and tell her to go do it. But she just lies there, and nothing happens.

Then I think maybe a good book on gardening will help. So, I go down to my favorite bookstore, The Tattered Cover, and ask an expert to give me the best book on gardening. I bring it home and have her read it daily for weeks on end. Her knowledge of gardening is growing immensely. When I think she is ready, I put her in the garden again. But still, she can't seem to do it.

Hmmm... What about some positive reinforcement? Maybe I just need to explain the joys of gardening and motivate her to action. She seems to be very excited, and she's motivated to try harder to please me. But still, when she goes into the garden, she can't seem to do the job.

OK, maybe it's time for some tough love! Maybe it's time to explain to her that if she doesn't garden right, she will be sent to glove hell. My little glove is duly afraid and tries even harder in order to avoid possible punishment. But she still can't garden!

That was hardly a success. Maybe a week-long gardening seminar will be the answer. Maybe she needs more concentrated attention on the subject, with all the principles of gardening presented in one week. So, I send her to the best seminar I can find, welcome her home, and send her to the garden with great hope. But she still can't garden!

I'm nearing my wit's end. What about consistent weekly gardening meetings with gardening songs, announcements, and good speeches on gardening? I take her to a meeting. But still the little glove comes home limp and useless.

Aha! This surely will do it! I enroll her in an accountability group with other gardeners who “hold her feet (fingers) to the fire.” It gets off to a promising start, but in the end, she still fails as a gardener.

All right then. What about a small group meeting of good gardeners to encourage her? At least she can see good examples of a garden at their homes and have a few good role models. She gets excited for a while, but again she fails.

Finally, I try the last hope: “Gardeners Anonymous.” Her failure is so acute that it's time for her to confess and try again. But, this too fails. She still can't seem to be a good gardener.



### Scripture Memory Verse

*“And we know that in all things  
God works for the good of those  
who love Him, who have been  
called according to His purpose.”*

**- Romans 8:28**

Then one day, I decide that since I know how to garden, I will put my glove on my hand and do it myself. It works! On my hand, my glove responds as an excellent gardener. She has the strength of my arm. She has the knowledge of my mind. She has the motivation of my heart. She has my life. She has everything she needs to be a good gardener, because I am in her.

So it is with us. We can't live, love, or walk like Jesus. In fact, Jesus says, "Apart from me you can do nothing," (**John 15:5**). His people cannot possibly live victoriously without Him. We can, however, invite Him to take control of our lives. When the Holy Spirit is inside us, and we have asked Him to take control, He not only gives us joy, but also makes us able to do whatever Jesus wants us to do.

**Paraphrased from "Living at His Place" by Jim May.**

### Day 1 – Scripture Memory

1. Pray for wisdom and empowering by the Holy Spirit.
2. Read the scripture verse three times.
3. What is the context of the passage? Read the chapter and surrounding paragraphs.

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4. *Observation/Interpretation:* What does it say? What do these truths mean? Mark the key words and thoughts. Record them below.

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5. *Application:* What do you believe is God's intent in giving these truths; and, through the power of the Holy Spirit, how can you apply them to your life?

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Having practiced the verse, write it from memory.

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### Day 2 – Leaving the Past Behind

Read **Romans 5:20–6:10** and respond below:

1. Describe in your own words the reasoning of the apostle Paul in **Romans 6:1-4**.
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2. How does Paul's reasoning relate to his logic as expressed in **Romans 5:20-21**? Why might the Romans think they should sin more?

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3. In what ways is it easy to take God's grace for granted?

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Read **Romans 6:5-10**. In our union with Christ through His Spirit, something like His death and Resurrection has taken place within us. Before, as Adam's descendants, we were separated from God. We were enslaved to sin with no possibility of pleasing God. Now, we are in Christ and our old hearts have been removed. In their place are new hearts that are capable of depending on and obeying God. This is called newness of life.

4. How does it impact your attitude toward your present and your future to realize that the power of sin in your life has been broken?

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5. When the power of sin over you is broken, you are a newly sanctified person. In what ways is sanctification an ongoing process and not a one-time event?

Think of a job you had in the past. When you left that job, you no longer received the same benefits as the people who still worked there. In addition, you no longer answered to that boss as your authority. That old working relationship was, in effect, "dead." When you took a new position elsewhere, you had a new boss, new benefits, and a new contract.

This illustration offers a limited human model of your new relationship with your new Master. Think of it this way: You have a New Covenant and a new Master with all the privileges and benefits there unto appertaining, and you cannot be fired. That's security!

The problem comes when you go back to your old employer (sin, Satan), and try to reap the old benefits. He doesn't tell you that you're no longer employed (enslaved), and that you now belong to Christ. No, he tries to take authority over you again, so that he can make your life miserable. If you choose to serve your new Master, Jesus, there still will be hard times, but you'll have a Master who loves you, who will never leave you, and who works all things together for good for you (**Rom. 8:28**).

6. Why do we tend to go back to our old employer? What bogus benefits do we gain from it? What fears keep us tied to him?

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Jesus' death puts to death our old relationship with sin. His resurrection takes place in us too. We are given a new life and new power through the Holy Spirit!

Think back to that gardening glove. In the glove's hand is a root. The root is the newness of life Jesus brings to us. The foundation of all that BLC stands for is in that root. It is the Exchanged Life - a name that embodies a concept so important that we chose it as the name of this module.

The starting point for your journey in BLC is the recognition that you have exchanged your old life for a new one over which Christ reigns. Every module after this will require that you draw on the Resurrection power of Christ to live a dependent life. In and of yourself, you are weak, but in this very weakness, God's strength is revealed as you live a Resurrection life in the power of the Holy Spirit.

7. Summarize in your own words the truths contained in **Romans 6:1-10**. What is so important about them? What do they tell you about the process of sanctification?

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### **Day 3 – The Decision is Ours**

*“... Make every effort to add to your faith goodness.” – 2 Peter 1:5*

We must do something. The instructive word **add** contains expected action on our part. We can't do what God does, but when we initiate the action, He will help us do what He wants us to do.

We cannot save or sanctify ourselves; God does that. He gives us newness of life through grace, not through our own efforts. However, God does not force us to walk correctly before Him. We must work out our own salvation, that is, flesh out day-by-day the work He is accomplishing in us (**Phil. 2:12**). In this sense the word add means that we must get into the habit of doing things, and in the initial stages that is difficult. To take the initiative is to make a beginning, to instruct yourself in the way you must go.

Beware of the tendency to ask what to do when you already know what it is. Take the initiative – don't hesitate – take the first step. Determine to act immediately in faith on God's leading and be strong of purpose. If you hesitate when God leads you to do something, you are spurning the grace in which you stand. Take the initiative yourself, make a decision of your will right now, and do not allow yourself to go back.

Burn the bridges of doubt and hesitation behind you. Resolve, “I will write that letter,” or “I will pay that debt.” And then do it. Make your decision irrevocable.

When you cultivate the habit of carefully listening to God about everything, finding out what He is leading you to do, and then doing it, something remarkable will happen. That blessed day will come when a crisis arises, and you find yourself turning instinctively to God. You'll know then that the habit of working out your salvation has been formed in you. It starts now. We must take the initiative **where we are**, not where we haven't yet been.

Read **Romans 6:11-14**.

1. What is the decision we need to make according to verse 11?

2. What actions do we need to take when we count ourselves alive to God? See verses 12-13.

3. Describe the role of human choice in living the Exchanged Life.

4. How does obedience fit in?

5. See **John 14:15, 21**. How is affection (love) for God interrelated with obedience and choice?

6. What parts of your body have you explicitly offered to God, and what parts have never been offered to God? Take time now to offer your whole life and body to Jesus. How does this action please God?

7. What does the change of ownership, according to **Romans 6:14**, mean to you in relation to your physical body?

Read **Romans 6:15-18**.

8. Why should we not take for granted the grace of God while pursuing our sinful desires?

9. What contrasting pictures does the apostle Paul present in verse 16 as an argument in favor of taking a proactive stance against sin?

10. What triggered the release of the Romans from the slavery of sin and freed them to righteousness (verse 17)?

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11. The “self-life” does not die easily. Write some thoughts that you can share with your sisters in Christ about the areas you find especially hard.

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12. What specific act or acts of obedience can you do each day to establish the habit of listening to God? \_\_\_\_\_

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### ***Day 4 – The Identity that Leads to a Victorious Life***

Read **Romans 6:19-23**.

1. What does Paul contrast in verses 20-22?

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2. What, according to verses 22 and 23, are the benefits and gifts of our union with Christ?

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3. Do you remember what your attitude was like when you were a slave to sin? Describe some elements of it as a reminder.

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4. What is it like to have changed ownership and become a slave to righteousness?

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5. Look back over **Romans 6** and write down five basic truths about God, Jesus, sin, or humanity that you notice. Record their reference. (Example: All have sinned. — 6:23)

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6. How will the Holy Spirit empower you to choose to walk in righteousness?

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## Day 5 – Transforming Power

Read Chapters 8 and 9 in “Transforming Power of the Gospel” and write down thoughts and questions that stood out for you from this week’s lesson that you want to discuss with your group.

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### The Exchanged Life Overview

**THE VICTORY!** Do I desire to THANK and TRUST God for the results whether they are positive or negative? TRUSTING in VICTORY!

**THE STRUGGLES:** Do I realize there will be STRUGGLES in this trusting process? These may include disappointments, feelings of failure, attacks, frustrations, and times I don’t understand why God doesn’t answer as I want Him to.

**THE TRUST:** Do I TRUST God to work through me in my weaknesses and strengths as I choose to obey with the power of the Holy Spirit?

**THE HOLY SPIRIT:** Do I realize that even in my strengths, I am weak? I need to ask the HOLY SPIRIT to give me understanding and the power to obey.

**THE WILL:** Do I CHOOSE to obey the truth?

**THE HEART:** Do I LOVE God enough to respond to his revealed truth with obedience? (Love is a motivation for obedience.)

**THE HEAD:** Do I really BELIEVE that the truth is true and from God. (Belief is a motivation for obedience.)

**THE FOUNDATION:** Do I base everything on the TRUTH from Scripture?



