

**Monday, February 25** – *“If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.” (Romans 14:8)* Just in case you were wondering or maybe you forgot, as followers of Jesus we belong to God. You have made a conscious decision to give your life to Jesus and that decision has consequences (as does every decision). One of the consequences is that you belong to God. You are his and he is yours and that is a great consequence. Just think, nothing in this life or even in death can separate you from God. All your comings and goings and all of your ups and downs will be experienced with God right there beside you. God will love you and carry you through anything and everything, all the pain, all the joy, all the heartbreak and all the triumphs. There is now no place that you can go to be out of God’s care. Hopefully this truth will give you strength and courage today to tackle whatever life hands you.

**Tuesday, February 26** – *“For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin.” (Romans 6:6)* When Jesus died on the cross he paid the price for your sins. You have no sin-debt anymore because of Jesus. Sadly, too many people are still paying their sin-debt because they haven’t fully accepted what Jesus has done for them. Maybe you, being a follower of Jesus, are still sending in your monthly minimum payment for your sin-debt because you just don’t believe that through Jesus your sin-debt has been canceled. You acknowledge that Jesus’ death on the cross covered others, but your sin is too bad, your debt is too big. Your guilt and shame and fear are very happy to cash your check every month even though you are free from all of it. Rip up that sin-debt payment today. You are free because of Jesus. Don’t believe the lies of your guilt and shame and fear. Believe the good news and know that you have been saved by grace through faith in Jesus.

**Wednesday, February 27** – *“So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.” (Romans 7:4)* Have you ever wondered why Jesus did it? Have you ever wondered what’s in it for God? Did God really come as Jesus to save the world simply because God loved all of humanity that much? The short answer is “Yes”, God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son...The long answer (and the one that I bet you are looking for) is that God saved you so that you can be a blessing to others. Salvation in Jesus isn’t simply an insurance policy that covers eternity in heaven. Salvation in Jesus is a release from captivity, the taking off of the chains of bondage, the freedom from guilt and shame, the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit so that you can be a blessing for this world right here, right now. Oh, and have eternity in heaven someday as well.

**Thursday, February 28** – *“Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.” (Romans 6:13)* Does being a follower of Jesus mean that you will never again be tempted to sin? No. Being a follower of Jesus only means that you have the power to make a better choice in your day to day life. Without Jesus there is no option but sin. There is no sin alternative besides Jesus. Yes, someone can be nice, not steal, not cheat, always treat people with respect and still have a life that is stained through and through with sin. Remember, sin is anything that separates you from God; anything that causes you to miss the mark. You can sin very nicely by using your manners as you destroy someone else’s reputation. You can sinfully respect others as you elevate yourself and your perspective above theirs. Because of Jesus, you have a choice to not sin, to be an instrument of righteousness.

**Friday, March 1** – *“So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me.” (Romans 7:21)* I wish I could say that faith in Jesus removes all evil and all temptation from your life. For some this is their biggest problem with God. If God loved us so much, why does he allow bad things to happen? Today’s verse is the answer. None of us are immune to evil. Even followers of Jesus will be and do evil sometimes. Battling with evil is a constant struggle. The advantage that you have, as a follower of Jesus, is that you have a choice. You can realize where you are slipping up, where you are falling short and you can do something about it. Without Jesus, even if you realize your evil you have nothing with which to fight it. Don’t beat yourself up if you believe in Jesus and you still struggle with evil. This struggle is a human thing, thus only God can help you overcome it. Only through Jesus do you have any chance of resisting evil.

Following Jesus is a \_\_\_\_\_.

Yours is a “ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

Christianity is not just an \_\_\_\_\_ or a \_\_\_\_\_.

You work out its implications in every detail of your life - \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

Don't compare your \_\_\_\_\_ to anyone else.

You are an \_\_\_\_\_!