

The Courage to Live
Romans 6:1-11
Reverend Dr. Raphael Warnock
April 9, 2023

Text: Roman 6:1-11 (KJV)

6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? **2** God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?**3** Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? **4** Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. **5** For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: **6** Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. **7** For he that is dead is freed from sin. **8** Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: **9** Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dies no more; death hath no more dominion over him. **10** For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he lives, he lives unto God. **11** Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Sermon Summary

Reverend Warnock began his sermon by raising critical questions introduced at the beginning of the text: “*What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?*” Without doubt the recent global pandemic, the persistent deaths caused by mass-shootings and the rise of fascism have produced an adverse and cumulative impact on our individual and national psyches.

The wake of the COVID-19 is marked by the loss of loved ones, the negative psychological effects of isolation and the collapse of economic securities producing depression, stress, and deeply emotional challenges for us all.

Simultaneously, four years of Trumpism and its reconceptualization and reemergence as a type of national fascism has situated our physical bodies and moral consciences in what can be described as “The Age of Trauma”.

Many have become desensitized with school shootings happening so often, while suicide has become the number one cause of death among American middle school children; *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin?* Nevertheless, the people of God must possess the *Courage to Live*. Reflecting on the words of St. Augustine the Bishop of Hippo, Reverend Warnock called on us to conceive courage as the sisterly sibling with hope and anger, while all three work together to produce a better world.

The sermon gives three principles which suggest we have “the courage to live” when we proclaim and accept:

- 1) **God wants me to Live** – This proclamation is evident in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. God so loved us that He gave us His only begotten Son, so that we wouldn’t perish but have everlasting life. Jesus

proclaimed, I've come that you might have life and have it more abundantly. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is God's proof that He wants us to live. We should proclaim God's desire for us to ourselves: We should say, "God wants me to Live" as a means of countering the adversities against us.

- 2) **Some things must die** – Living for God requires we put to death anti-life emotions, proclamations and behaviors which can suffocate the lifegiving Word of God within us. Thoughts of jealousy, shame, self-doubt or too much focus on enemies who demonstrate polite or blatant racism are self-defeating, anti-social and work contrary to the will of God for our lives. We must do as the Apostle Paul who states, I'm crucified with Christ yet nevertheless I live (Galatians 2:20). You can live and allow these anti-life forces to die.
- 3) **Christ makes me alive** – This proclamation is rooted in understanding what Jesus' resurrection means for our lives. The resurrection demonstrates Jesus' ultimate power over life and death. He laid down His life and arose to reclaim His life. He is the Lord of life, and He's gives life (Zoe) to everyone who believes in Him.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) What are some challenges threatening your Courage to Live?
- 2) Do you or have you doubted the idea that God wants you to live?
 - a. What can you share?
 - b. What advice do you have for others?
- 3) How can you implement the point, "Some Things must die" in your life?
- 4) Explain sermon-point number three, "Christ makes me alive," in your own words. Have you experienced Christ's live-giving power?
- 5) Can you describe "the courage to live" through terminal illness or life-threatening circumstances?