

Baptism of the Holy Spirit: Plural of *Nekros* in Rom 6:4 Refers to Spiritual & Physical Deaths of Christ; Analysis of Rom 6:5; Retroactive Positional Truth: Sin Problem Resolved on the Cross while Human Good & Evil Are Rejected; Human Good Is a Satanic Tactic; Evil Is Metastasized Human Good

37. The key to understanding these two births is found in the plural of *nekros* and explained in this excerpt:

In Greek νεκρός is a common noun (from Homer) and adjective (from Pindar \pin'-der). The noun denotes the "dead person or body." The adjective means "dead." (p. 892)

In the New Testament νεκρός is used as both noun and adjective. As adjective in the sense "dead," it is used of men.

The New Testament tells of the dead whom Jesus raised up [He is said to raise Lazarus from "the dead": ablative plural of separation] (John 12:1), and the disciples were also given power to raise [ἐγείρω (*egeirō*)] "the dead" [νεκρός (*nekros*): plural] (Matthew 10:8).¹ But belief in the resurrection of the dead receives a new basis and new strength from the resurrection of Jesus. As He was raised from "the dead" [ablative plural of separation] (Romans 6:4), so at the end of time [Rapture] the dead will be raised (1 Corinthians 15:35, 52) at the ἀνάστασις τῶν νεκρῶν [*anastasis tōn nekron*: resurrection of the dead (genitive plural)].² (p. 893)

38. In all the examples noted by Bultmann, including our passage, there is no use of the definite article before *nekros*. Were this the case, the translation would be, "Christ has been raised up from *the dead ones*."
39. Absence of the definite article requires the plural translation *from deaths* referring to the spiritual and physical deaths of Christ.
40. This is followed by a conditional sentence that recognizes the baptism of the Holy Spirit from the standpoint of retroactive positional truth resulting in current positional truth.

Romans 6:5 - For if [1CC] we have become intimately united to the likeness of His death [θάνατος (*thanatos*): singular for spiritual death] and we have [through retroactive positional truth], not only this, but also we shall be intimately united to the likeness of His resurrection [through current positional truth]."

41. Paul uses logic to make his point by the use of a conditional sentence in which the protasis makes an assumption from the standpoint of reality: "For if we have become intimately united to the likeness of His spiritual death, and we have."
42. The verb "have become" is the perfect active indicative of γίνομαι (*ginomai*). The intensive perfect tense refers to a completed action that has changed the nature of the person producing the action.
43. The believer produces the action through the baptism of the Holy Spirit at salvation which puts us into union with Christ, first of all with regard to his spiritual death.

¹ "Raising the dead" (ἐγείρω + νεκρός [*egeirō* + *nekros*]) in these verses refer to resuscitation, not resurrection.

² R. Bultmann, "νεκρός," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), 4:892–93.

44. The indicative mood indicates that this assumption is a statement of fact regarding retroactive positional truth.
45. What the believer has become is “united to the likeness of His death.” The predicate adjective “united” is the masculine plural of **σὺμφυτος (sumphutos)**: to be identified with,” the concept of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is that we are intimately united with Christ.
46. The work “likeness” is the locative of sphere of the noun **ὁμοίωμα (homoiōma)**: “a form or a copy.” It is preceded by the definite article **τῷ (tōi)**, translated “the” indicating a previous reference in context, specifically verse three where we are told we have been “baptized into His death.”
47. In both cases “death” is the singular noun **θάνατος (thanatos)** referring in both cases to spiritual death. This is the unique death of Christ on the cross during which He was judged for the sins of the world.
48. Everything about the person of Christ is unique. No one else has ever been perfect man and perfect God, therefore, no one else has ever been qualified to die spiritual death on behalf of others.
49. However, any person who places his faith alone in Christ alone is intimately united in the Lord’s spiritual death during which all of his sins were judged in Him.
50. The protasis therefore establishes a premise from which the apodosis will arrive at a conclusion.
51. An apodosis is the main clause of a conditional sentence. If the protasis is a first class condition and thus assumed to be true, then it follows that the statement in the apodosis is also true, “We shall also be intimately united in the likeness of His resurrection.”
52. The key word in this phrase is the future passive indicative of the verb **εἶμι (eimi)**: “we shall be,” plus the conjunction **καί (kai)**: “also.”
53. The tense of the verb is gnomic future instead of what may be presumed to be a predictive future.
54. “The predictive future may indicate that something will take place or come to pass.”³ It would indicate that our resurrection body will be like the Lord’s resurrection body, a future event that becomes reality at the Rapture of the church.
55. This is an accurate statement but it is not what is being communicated in Romans 6:5. There we find the gnomic future which “is very rarely used to indicate the likelihood that a *generic* event will take place. The idea is not that a particular event is in view, but that such events are true to life. ‘In the gnomic future the act is true at any time.’”⁴

³ Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 568.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 571.

56. Thus the gnomic future indicates that a real event occurs at the moment of the baptism of the Holy Spirit; that event is identification with the resurrection of Jesus Christ or current positional truth.
57. The doctrine of positional truth needs to be defined in a way that helps explain its important impact on the believer.
58. The word *position* is defined by Merriam-Webster as:

The area occupied by a physical object: Location. Relative place, situation, or standing.⁵

59. Therefore, we must view our spiritual location as being identified with actions of the Holy Spirit: (1) a location that is retroactive back to the cross, and (2) a location that is currently functional.
60. These two locations are ministries of the Holy Spirit related to the baptism of the Holy Spirit at salvation: (1) retroactive positional truth indicates a location where the sinful nature is identified with Christ's work on the cross and is established as a truth or doctrine that occurred at the moment of salvation; (2) current positional truth indicates a location where the believer is identified with Christ in His resurrection, ascension, and session and is also established as a truth or doctrine that is a present reality.

Retroactive Positional Truth

1. Retroactive positional truth occurs at salvation when the Holy Spirit identifies the sinful nature of the believer with the two deaths and burial of Christ.
2. We discover this from a study of Romans 6:4-5:

Romans 6:4 - Therefore, we have been buried together with Him [Christ] through baptism of the Spirit into His death [physical] in order that as Christ has been raised up from deaths [the ablative plural of separation of the noun νεκρός (*nekros*): spiritual & physical deaths] to the glory of God the Father, so also we might walk [aorist active subjunctive of περιπατέω (*peripateō*): contingent on volitional motivation] in newness [καινότης (*kainotēs*): unknown; unheard of; newly introduced] of life.

v. 5 - For if [1CC] we have become intimately united to the likeness of His death [θάνατος (*thanatos*): singular for spiritual death] and we have [through retroactive positional truth], not only this, but we shall be also intimately united to the likeness of His resurrection [through current positional truth].”

3. The spiritual death of Christ occurred when the justice of God imputed to Him the sins of the entire human race and then judged them.
4. The result was the atonement of all the sins of human history through the substitutionary spiritual death of Christ.
5. The issue that separates mankind from fellowship with God is sin. Once removed, the issue that remains is the ongoing conflict between the plan of God designed for those who believe and the plan of Lucifer which is designed for those who continue in unbelief.

⁵ Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed., s.v.: "position."

6. Although sin was dealt with on the cross, still remaining are the problems of human good and evil.
7. Put simply, human good refers to the tactics of the plan of Satan while evil is the end result. For example, our Declaration of Independence states in its second paragraph that “all men are created equal.”
8. This means that, apart from physical or mental handicaps, every person is born with equal opportunity to take advantage of his life and liberty to pursue personal tranquility. That not all capitalize on their “unalienable rights” means there will always be an inequality of result.
9. Egalitarianism is defined as “a social philosophy advocating the removal of inequalities among people.”⁶ A person who holds such an opinion is involved in human good, quite probably influenced by cosmic panaceas:

An over simplified, supposed cure-all prescription guaranteed to remedy a complex problem. Panaceas captivate the ignorant, those who resent truth and arrogantly cling to false premises. A prevalent historic panacea is human equality.⁷
10. When enough people are able to influence the body politic to pursue the egalitarian dream, what results is evil which is metastasized human good. The typical goal is to “share the wealth” which is sought through various expressions of evil: social justice, reparations, socialism, fascism, communism, terrorism, and globalism.
11. Evil is therefore a cosmic panacea that attempts to solve the problems of this life apart from grace, divine establishment, and divine viewpoint.
12. Both human good and evil were rejected by Christ on the cross. What the individual is left to determine is whether he will use his God-given equality of opportunity to pursue truth or misuse these assets to pursue the lie.

⁶ Ibid., s.v.: “egalitarianism.”

⁷ R. B. Thieme, Jr., *Christian Integrity*, 3d ed. (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 2002), 185.