

Week of June 24-30

## **REENACTMENT**

**Scripture Reading:** Read Romans chapter 6

Plymouth Plantation. Colonial Williamsburg. Old Sturbridge Village. Genesee Country Museum. What do these places have in common? They are all places where history comes alive before your very eyes as folks reenact what life was like in a particular period of time in the past. Plymouth takes us back to the 1600's, long before our nation was founded. Colonial Williamsburg moves us a century later to the mid 1700's when the Colonies were on the brink of war with Britain. Sturbridge is decades later, 1790-1840, as we see what life was like in New England following the Revolutionary War. The Genesee Country Museum is the latest of the bunch and moves us forward through the 19<sup>th</sup> century into the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. A visit to any or all of these living museums is certainly worth the trip. The reenactments make history come alive.

In Romans 6, Paul talks about another reenactment. It occurs every time a believer is baptized in water. We reenact the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In effect, our baptism serves as a living history lesson to the world of what Jesus did.

For Paul, though, the reenactment also has additional significance for believers. It explains a spiritual reality that is essential for us to see if we are to experience the development of God's righteousness in us. Look at what Paul writes in verses 3-4: *"Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."* You see, Jesus wasn't the only one crucified on the cross and buried on Good Friday. We were too and it is this fact that allows us to be set free from sin's reign, as Paul makes clear in verse 6: *"For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be rendered powerless, that we should no longer be slaves to sin."*

Unfortunately, many believers miss these truths. They come to the cross to be freed from the penalty of sin but they fail to linger long enough to see that Jesus also made provision for them to be freed from the power of sin. That's why so many believers live frustrated Christian lives. They give up ground to the enemy by failing to lay hold by faith of what Jesus has already done. They start with what they see or feel instead of what he has said. They try to serve God and live holy lives but they're doing it in their own strength. This is a recipe for disaster as we'll see in the devotional on Romans 7. A better choice is take heed to Paul's counsel, *"Count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus"* (Rom 6:11).

**Action Step & Prayer Focus:** After a sinful failure, have you ever promised the Lord you will never fall again in that area only to find yourself soon after going back to the Lord for forgiveness because you fell again? Isn't it time to take another look at the cross, not just to receive cleansing for your sin but to experience Christ's victory over sin? Pray for the Lord to teach you how to strive less but trust more what Christ did at the cross for you.

**Take-a-way:** *A baptismal reenactment reveals that Jesus not only died to pay the penalty for our sins; we also died with him to be freed from the power of sin.*