

THE WAY OF VICTORY EXPLAINED

TEXT: ROMANS 6:1-14

Introduction:

1. Two of the great doctrines taught in Paul's epistle to the Romans are justification and sanctification. Romans 5 expounds the doctrine of justification; and Romans 6 expounds the doctrine of sanctification.
2. One preacher put it this way: In chapter 5 we have freedom from sin penally – we have been declared righteous; in chapter 6 we have freedom from sin practically – we are being made righteous.
3. W.H. Griffith Thomas said, "From Romans 3:21 to Romans 5:21 the theme has been Justification by Faith in the Crucified Saviour; now, from Romans 6—8, it is Sanctification by Faith in the Risen Lord."
4. In other words, chapters 3-5 teach us salvation from the penalty of sin; and chapters 6-8 teach us salvation from the power of sin.
5. Most Christians understand salvation from the penalty of sin (John 3:16), but many Christians struggle with sin because they do not understand what it means to be saved from the power of sin.
6. In the early chapters of the book of Romans, the contrast is between judgment and justification; now it is between sin and holiness (cf. 6:19, 22).
7. Sanctification is the logical outcome of our justification. Justification is not only necessary for sanctification (holiness); justification secures it.

I. WE HAVE BEEN SAVED AND SANCTIFIED BY GOD'S GRACE.

1. Romans 6 begins with the question, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" The answer of course is, "God forbid" (6:2; cf. 5:20, 21).
2. There have always been people who have misunderstood the doctrine of grace, and some have even perverted the doctrine of grace.
3. Jude 4 warns us of ungodly men who turn "the grace of our God into lasciviousness."
4. When a man receives Christ he has been delivered from the penalty of sin (hell), and he has been delivered from the power of sin. This is all according to God's grace (Eph. 2:8-13).
5. So Paul says in Romans 6:2, "God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"
6. I have met people that have said, "Since we are saved by grace anyway, it does not matter how we live." Or, "We are not under the law, but under grace." This is a misunderstanding of Romans 6:14. (It is

interesting how they always leave off the first half of Romans 6:14.) Cf. Titus 2:11-13.

II. CONTINUANCE IN SIN IS IMPOSSIBLE BECAUSE OF OUR UNION WITH CHRIST.

1. We see three dreadful words in Romans 6:1 – “continue in sin.” No wonder the apostle Paul says, “God forbid” (6:2).
2. Continuance in sin is impossible for the man that is dead to sin (6:2). We are not to “live any longer therein” (6:2).
3. Our sanctification rests upon the same foundation as our justification – i.e., our union with Christ. Continuance in sin is impossible because of our union with Christ.
4. Can a dead man sin? Of course not. When Christ died, we that believe in Him died with Him (6:6-8).
5. Galatians 2:20 says, “I (old man) am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I (new man) live...”
6. “Knowing this, that our old man (old unregenerate man) is crucified with Him...” (Rom. 6:6).
7. Before we were saved our body was a “body of sin” (6:6). It was an instrument of unrighteousness unto sin (6:13) and a servant of sin (6:17).
8. But it was crucified and thereby rendered powerless – “that the body of sin might be destroyed (“done away” – Scofield margin)” (6:6).
9. Our union with Christ in His death and resurrection means absolute severance from sin. Continuance in sin is impossible because of our union with Christ. “Christ liveth in me” (Gal. 2:20) and Christ cannot sin.
10. So why do Christians sin? Oftentimes it is through ignorance. Notice how often Paul says, “Know” (6:3, 6, 9, 16; 7:1).
11. How do we know that we have been saved from the penalty of sin? Faith. We believe the Bible (cf. Rom. 10:9).
12. And how do we know that we are being saved from the power of sin? Faith. We believe the Bible (Rom. 6:8).
13. When Christians yield to sin, it is because they lack faith. The Bible says they are “free from sin” (6:22), but they do not believe it.
14. There is a death for sin (atonement); and there is a death to sin (victory), which means that sin ceases to have a place in the life of a Christian.
15. I heard a preacher say something once that really gripped my soul. He said he was preaching in a church and at the invitation time he heard a personal worker tell a man at the platform, “Now that you have accepted Christ, do not think that you will stop sinning.”

16. The preacher said he was shocked because this was not good counsel for a new convert (cf. John 5:14; 8:11; I John 2:1a).
17. Rather than telling a new convert that sin is inevitable, we should be teaching him that if he has trusted Christ as his Saviour, he has victory over sin (Rom. 6:14a).
18. Many people have this notion that Christianity is just like any other religion – you believe a few doctrines; you follow certain rules or rituals; you go to church once in a while – and then you live just like every other sinner!
19. But that is not Biblical Christianity! That is not what the Bible teaches.
20. When Christ died on the cross for our sins, He died as an atonement for sin; He died to destroy sin; and He died to rob sin of its power (for the believer).
21. Before I move on, let me say a few words about baptism (Rom. 6:3-5). Baptism by immersion is a picture of our union with Christ. In baptism we identify with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection.
22. Baptism is an outward visible sign of an inward spiritual work.
23. The Bible teaches that believers are to be baptized after they get saved (cf. Acts 8:36-38; 9:17, 18).
24. But first there must be that inward spiritual work. Have you experienced that?

III. WE MUST CONTINUALLY RECKON OURSELVES DEAD TO SIN (6:11).

1. Here is where many believers get confused. “Dead to sin” does not mean the death of sin as a power in the heart. The great preacher, H.A. Ironside, was taught that as a young preacher and it nearly drove him insane. He was taught that a Christian could reach a state of “sinless perfection” and that sin would be “eradicated” from his life.
2. Ironside struggled with this for quite some time and wound up in a mental hospital (with many others who believed the sinless perfection doctrine).
3. Romans 6:12 says, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."
4. This implies that sin is already in our mortal bodies. The Bible does not teach eradication of the sin nature. The Bible teaches counteraction.
5. Our new divine nature overcomes our old sinful nature by the great principle of counteraction; "just as at the Red Sea the law of the wind counteracted the law of the tide" (W.H. Griffith Thomas).
6. The law of the strong east wind counteracted the law of the tide.

7. An airplane should fall from the sky by the law of gravitation, but it is upheld by the law of aerodynamics. This is the law of counteraction.
8. The Bible does not teach that sin is dead to us. What it teaches is that those of us who are in Christ are dead to sin (6:11).
9. But we must continually reckon ourselves to be dead to sin. W.H. Griffith Thomas wrote, "When sin makes its appeal we must refuse to recognize it by reckoning that we died to it in Christ, and at once it will go, its power broken" (*St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, p. 172).
10. F.B. Meyer said this about "the secrets of victory over sin."
11. Remember that the blood of Jesus is ever at work cleansing you.
12. Reckon yourself dead to the appeals of sin.
13. "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16).
14. As soon as you are aware of temptation, look instantly to Jesus.
15. F.B. Meyer said, "It was first taught me by a grey-haired clergyman, at Southampton. Once, when tempted to feel great irritation, he told us that he looked up and claimed the patience and gentleness of Christ; and since then it had become the practice of his life to claim from Him the virtue of which he felt the deficiency in himself. In hours of unrest, 'Thy Peace, Lord.' In hours of irritation, 'Thy Patience, Lord.' In hours of temptation, 'Thy Purity, Lord.' In hours of weakness, 'Thy Strength, Lord.'"
16. That lesson was a great help and blessing to F.B. Meyer.
17. I hope it will prove a great help and blessing to you as well!
18. This is a matter of faith, not feelings. You may not "feel" dead to sin. But we walk by faith, not by our feelings. Our feelings can be misleading.
19. The Bible says, "our old (unregenerate) man is crucified with Him..." (6:6). We must believe God's Word, and continually reckon ourselves dead to sin.

CONCLUSION:

1. I heard a true story about two Irishmen, Pat and Mike. They found a strange looking turtle running around with no head. Its head had been completely severed from its body. A big argument started with Pat insisting that the turtle was dead, and Mike insisting that the turtle was alive.
2. Finally, a man named O'Brien walked by and they asked him his opinion. O'Brien looked at the turtle and said, "The turtle is dead, but he doesn't believe it!"