

## **Dead to Sin and Alive to God ▪ Romans 6:1-14**

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Doctrine for Discipleship / Sanctify; Mortify

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Intro: In the May edition of *Tabletalk*, the monthly devotional from Ligonier Ministries, the editor wrote about the goal of studying doctrine.

“Theology proceeds from God, teaches us about God, and leads us to God.”

(Burk Parsons)

- Even though the focus the last few weeks has been on the doctrine of sin...the bigger picture is to lead us to God.
- The reality of coming to Christ does not eliminate all sin from us. We are not Wesleyans who believe in reaching a sinless perfection.
- When we are converted there should be a distinct change, but we are not “all cleaned up”, with no struggles.

We don't immediately drop all bad habits and the struggle ends.

--Over time, sometimes old sins resurface—or at least the strong pull of temptation resurfaces, which can be incredibly strong and incredibly discouraging.

- › Believing in the gospel does not give us an inoculation that keeps us immune from sinning.

In moments of raw honesty, we may even wonder how much we love God?

What does the Bible say about how a Christian lives with the ongoing reality of sin.

- The key to navigating this biblically is knowing how grace works in our lives.

Let me start by saying it begins by avoiding a one-dimensional view of grace. A one-dimensional view of grace is seeing that it only works one way.

Enter Romans 6.

- Some of the people Paul wrote Romans to, likely had a one-dimensional view of Grace.
- The chapter is written to answer one question—probably raised by those who hold to a one-dimensional view of grace.

(6:1)

How does a believer understand grace, and how does it deal with our sin?

### **WE'VE BEEN SET FREE FROM SIN (ROM 6:1-14)**

**Or, God's grace is at work to set us free from sin.**

- That's the essence of these 14 verses.
- › The Gospel is not just about pardon for sin, it's also about subduing the power of sin in our lives.

This gives a much fuller understanding of what saving grace really looks like.

The Gospel stresses 3 things we find in this section:

- Identity
- New Creation
- Deliverance

- First, notice the teaching does not start off with Imperatives; instead it begins with the indicative (what is true).

Indicative=what is factually true

Imperative=what I need to do

The indicative comes before the imperative (this helps us understand “grace-centered” theology).

E.G. This is the way the 10 commandments are structured:

## **Exodus 20:2 ESV**

"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."

Who is the Lord? Who are the Israelites? God is a redeemer; his people are the redeemed.

The Indicative gives us the Why?

Why? *Look at your identity in Christ.*

Identity (6:2-5)

- In these verses, three different redemptive realities that are true of Jesus, also connect to us and give us our identity.

—Dead.

—Buried

—Raised

- These gospel-truths are tied to what our baptism represents. (v4)

In the NT, baptism and conversion are so closely tied together.

- › A person's baptism marks that something very distinct has happened in their life so that there is real change.

The reason I'll always be a convinced Baptist is because Romans 6 is in the Bible. I don't see how you can argue for infant baptism and get around this, but that's another sermon.

Looking at the metaphors:

1) Dead and Buried.

Both the metaphors fit together.

Death marks the end of a life; burial marks the reality of death.

| The metaphor of death also means that a person no longer has controlling power.

My parents had a challenging neighbor who lived next to them for years.

Over the years she grew more irritable and meaner. She was one of the types who like to threaten with lawsuits.

Some years back she died. As she died, so the neighbor-relationship died as well.

There is no longer a controlling relationship there—she is no longer a neighbor.

So death means a severance of relationship, in the sense that the relationship *no longer holds a binding power*.

That's how it's employed in Rom 7:2 - the illustration of marriage and the law.

So we can see friends, how it's worked out practically. As believers, who are United to Christ by faith—*the text actually says we died to sin*.

- › The life before faith=Dead *in* sin; Life of faith=dead *to* sin.

Because of our union with Jesus Christ, our relationship to sin has been severed. There is no longer a binding power that sin has over the believer.

## 2. Raised (v4): To walk in newness of life

### New Creation (v6)

V6 shows us another dimension— in regeneration and conversion there is a newness.

The Old Self - Literally: the Old Man (in Adam)

Humanity is divided into two heads: Adam or Christ (Romans 5).

Or if a sports analogy works better: two teams —playing for two different captains.

--Headship of Adam = Old Man/Slave

--Headship of Christ = New Creation/Set Free

- The truth is, every person is *born under* the headship of Adam— a slave to sin.

**John 8:34 ESV**

Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.

**John 8:36 ESV**

So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

A one-dimensional view of sin may overlook this and only focus on forgiveness.

Yet grace reaches much deeper.

This is radical! Being set free, by the Lord Jesus Christ, from the tyranny of the devil and bondage to sin!

Most believers know Rom 6:23...the wages of sin is death.

But do you know Rom 6:22?

**Romans 6:22 ESV**

But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.

This is so important even with how we view ourselves.

Most Christians by default view themselves as sinners.

But if we are “in Christ”, living in the reality of Rom 6, the default setting of how we should view ourselves is “Set Free”.

Deliverance (12-14)

- Now we get to the imperatives (commands) and we are ready to hear/obey (12-14).
- Look at v14—which is the ground of the commands.

For you are not under law, but under grace.

Grace delivers & Grace empowers!

There is a man at this church whose life was changed by this message of freedom 20 years ago. He had a reoccurring sin in his life and had confided in a couple of the elders with it.

One of the elders asked a simple question: "Can you imagine a life of gaining victory over this?" "Can you imagine being set free?"

You may have your own besetting sin—the one that keeps resurfacing in your life.

Can you imagine gaining victory? Can you imagine a life where you can go weeks, months, even a decade or two and say...by the grace of God, that is no longer part of me anymore.

Brother and sisters—sin is something that you are set free from.

But before moving on and wrapping up this series, there is one more thing we need to nail down

### **WE WAGE AN UNENDING WARFARE AGAINST OUR OWN SIN (ROM 8:13)**

The Puritan John Owen

"Be Killing Sin, or Sin Will be Killing You" —a paraphrase of Rom 8:13.

William Gurnall

"The Christian is to proclaim and prosecute an irreconcilable war against his bosom sins; those sins which have lain nearest his heart, must now be trampled under his feet."

#### Doctrine of Mortification

Notice that v13 is a matter of life or death.

#### Conclusion:

I've not written the date down, but I'm guesstimating that the first time I ever encountered a Palmetto bug (let's be honest, it a cockroach) was in the summer of 2003.

It was flying in our duplex that we were renting behind CIU. I took a broom and decimated it. Smashed it to pieces.

I've used that as an illustration before, of the aggressive approach we need to take with sin.

*Attack it the way you do with an unwelcome Palmetto bug.*

*Ever since the summer of 2003, I proclaim and persecute an irreconcilable war against the Palmetto bug....they must all be trampled under my feet.*

But what I did not know in 2003 is that *I would still be fighting the same pests 19 years later.*

And they are just as quick and nasty. They don't stop trying to creep into my house.

Brothers and sisters, the same is true with sin. The war never ceases.

The same pests that try to get into the house of our hearts 20 years ago, they will still be trying to invade in the days, years and even decades ahead.

The assault may be seasonal, but it's never ending.

- › That's why we wage an unending warfare against our sin.

### Closing Application

—If you have a one-dimensional view of grace, you need it broadened. Know that grace extends to the freedom and victory.

—Some need to hear, “Start killing sin, because it’s really killing you.”

—Finally, for those who have been fighting and continue to, don’t retire or retreat. Keep on. The battle will be over eventually, just not yet.

Prayer from the Valley of Vision (Yet I Sin):

“Unmask to me sin’s deformity, that I may hate it, abhor it, flee from it.”