

Sin and the Believer

By Henry Mahan

Bible Text: Romans 6:11-12

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Now, if you will open your Bibles with me to the Romans, the sixth chapter I am going to do more teaching tonight than exhorting or preaching. And I have given careful consideration and study to this message and some of the things I am going to be saying to you. So if you care to take notes I won't object at all, in fact, I encourage you to do so. Write down the Scripture references and the comments under each point if you will.

Now, here is the introduction. The title of the message is: Sin...Sin and the Believer. And the introduction goes this way. Every true believer, every child of God is conscious of this fact and he will readily admit it. He is a sinner saved by God's grace. We just sang that a few minutes ago. Suffer a sinner whose heart overflows, loving the Savior, to tell what he knows. Once more to tell it would I embrace, I am only a sinner saved by grace, only a sinner saved by grace.

Now, under that statement here are three headings. Number one, he knows that he is saved. He knows that he is saved.

You say, "Can we know that we are saved?"

David knew that he was saved. He said, "The Lord is my shepherd."

Job knew that he was saved. He said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

Paul knew that he was saved. He said, "I know whom I have believed. I am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day."

John knew he was saved. He said, "We know we have passed from death unto life."

So the believer knows that he is saved. He is redeemed and he is justified in Christ before God. And, secondly, he knows that he is saved not by his works, but by the grace of God. Now, he knows that. There is no question about it. He says, like Paul, "I am what I am by the grace of God." He says, "For by grace have you been saved through faith and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God. It is not of works lest any man should boast. It is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us."

All right. The believer knows he is saved. He knows that he is saved by the grace of God and he knows this. He knows and will readily admit it before God and before himself and before men that he is still a sinner.

Now, this confuses people and bothers people, especially in what we call the Methodist or holiness or Pentecostal movement. They call unsaved people sinners, sinner folks. I don't know what they themselves, but they say, "He is still a sinner."

Well, every believer knows that he is saved. He is saved by the grace of God. But he is still a sinner. He will admit that. Every time he prays he prays as our Lord taught us to pray, "Forgive me of my sins."

Turn, if you will, to Psalm 51. I want you to listen to some of God's elite. I want you to listen to some men whom we know knew God and loved God. We will start with the man of whom God said, "He is a man after my own heart."

In Psalm 51 listen to David. "Have mercy upon me, oh God, according to thy loving kindness, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. I acknowledge my transgressions and my sin is ever before me."

Turn to Isaiah, Isaiah chapter six. Now, here is a man that back in chapter five he kept saying, "Woe is them," and "Woe is you," and "Woe is this, that and the other." About five or six times he pronounced woe upon everybody else.

And then in chapter six Isaiah saw the Lord. He saw the Lord in his glory, in his holiness. And I want you to listen to his conclusion. He said in verse one of Isaiah six, "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord." Now, you have read this many a time.

Let's go on down to verse five. With this sight of God holiness Isaiah came to this conclusion, "Then," said I, "Woe is me. Woe is me. Speaking in the present tense I am undone because I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips and I have come to this conclusion because I have seen the king. I have seen the Lord of hosts."

All right. Turn if you will to the book of Philippians. The book of Philippians, chapter three, and listen to the apostle Paul, Philippians chapter three. Now, I know there are a lot of people who talk about being baptized with the Holy Ghost and getting a second work of grace and being filled with the Spirit and eradicating the old nature and living above sin. These are all current comments and clichés, but Paul didn't believe any of those things. In Philippians chapter three he says in verse 12, "Not as though I had already attained either were already perfect. I am not perfect," he said. "I am not perfect. In Christ I am perfect. In Christ I am perfected and justified because by one offering he perfected forever them that are sanctified." But he said, "I am not perfect. But I follow after if that I might apprehend or lay hold upon that for which I have been laid hold of Christ Jesus."

Now, one other Scripture, Romans seven, just one page over from our text. And the apostle Paul writes here...Now here is what I am saying. Every believer, every true believer, he knows he is saved. He knows he has met the Lord in saving grace. He knows that he is redeemed only by the grace of God through the blood of Christ. And he admits that he is yet a sinner. He has a conflict with sin. Listen to Paul in Romans seven beginning with verse 18. "For I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good..."

Now, when we talk about that which is good we are talking about that which is perfect. The believer has good works in Christ. But we are talking about that which is perfect, how to perform that which is good, that which is good like God. That which is perfect like God.

When the rich young ruler came to our Lord he said, "Good Master."

And Christ said, "Why do you call me good? There is none good but God. There is none good according to perfection, perfect holiness but God.

And that is what Paul is talking about here in verse 19. "For the good, the perfection that I would I do not. But the evil which I would not that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. It is not the new nature. It is not the new creature in Christ Jesus. It is sin that dwelleth, that remaineth in me. I find then a law. This is a rule, that when I would do good, evil is present, always present with me. I delight in the law of God. I delight in the holiness of God. I delight in the character of God after the inward man."

Is that your experience?

"But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, warring against this desire to be perfect in bringing me into captivity all too frequently to the law of sin which is in my members. Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death or the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind, with the Spirit I myself serve the law of God, the commandments of God, the holiness of God. But with the flesh the law of sin."

All right. Turn back to chapter six. Now that is the introduction. Here is the main part of the message under three headings. Paul deals with this solemn, painful subject of sin and the believer. Now, here is the first...here is the first point. Write this down. We have in this chapter a great fact to consider. Now, this is comforting. This is helpful. Here is a great fact to consider. Look, first of all at verse seven. For he that is dead is freed from sin. What did Paul mean by that? Here is what he means. When Jesus Christ our Lord who is our representative, we read that in chapter five. By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Jesus Christ who is our head and our representative went to the cross bearing our sins and there he died under the penalty and guilt of our sin. All of our sins were laid on him. And when he died we actually died with him having born the pun-

ishment of sin in Christ on the cross. And because Christ our Lord died under the judgment of our sins, we died under the judgment of sin. That is what he is saying. The penalty is paid. All that the law requires was met in Christ. All that the justice of God demanded was met in Christ and as far as the law is concerned and as far as the justice of God is concerned we are dead. And it says in verse seven, "He that is dead is delivered or freed or justified from sin."

Here is what it means. If a man is guilty back in the old days of stealing a horse they usually hung him. All right. Then he steals the horse they have the trial. He is guilty. The law says he is guilty and he must pay. He must die. So they take him out and hang him. And he hangs there and he dies. He breathes out his last breath and he dies. As far as that man is concerned the books are closed. The law is satisfied. There is nothing else that the law can demand of him. The law is fully and completely satisfied. He is dead.

Now, this is what they are saying. When Jesus Christ our Lord who is our head, our representative, our redeemer...and we are bone of his...he is bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, he is numbered with the transgressors, when he walked on this earth in perfect obedience to the law it was the same as if I did it. When he went to the cross and died bearing our sins it was just the same as if I personally died under the judgment of God at that time. That is exactly what that says. And therefore as far as the law of God is concerned, as far as the justice of God is concerned, I have already died. And payment God's justice cannot twice demand first at my bleeding surety's hand and then again at mine. Now, that is what that is saying.

Verse six. Look at Romans 6:6. Knowing this that our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin, for he that is dead is justified. He is free from sin.

All right, here is the second point, verse eight. Now, if we be dead with Christ we believe we shall also live with him. In other words, when Christ died they took him down from the cross. And they laid him in a tomb and the Scripture says he arose without sin. He arose without sin. When God the Father brought him forth from the tomb, he brought him forth not as the one with sin laid on him at the cross because God the Father turned his back on him. Our Lord cried, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And God turned his back on him because he was loaded and laden with sin. But when he was brought out of the tomb by the power of God, he was brought out of the tomb without sin.

And this is what this is saying. If we die and are buried with Christ when he arose we arose without sin. We are in a perfect justified state. We have, in Christ, before God a new life and a new standing. We are holy and without blame before him in Christ.

Now, I will show you that. Turn with me to Romans eight, right over a page, Romans eight, verse 28. Now watch this, Romans eight, verse 28. I am going to read several verses here. Listen to what it says, Romans 8:28. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image

of his Son that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate them he called. Whom he called he what? He justified. Whom he justified he also glorified. Now, what shall we say to these things? I God be for us who can be against us? He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, every believer, how shall he not with Christ freely give us all things? Now, who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect. There is no charge. We are justified. We are justified. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God. And let me ask you a question. Who else is at the right hand of God? We are, seated in Christ. Is that what Scripture says? We are seated together with Christ.

All right. Go back to our text. This is a great fact to consider and a comfort. He that is dead is freed from sin. I will tell you this. If we were crucified with Christ and God's law and justice satisfied there isn't a mark on the books of God against us. We are totally justified. That is what Scripture teaches, without guilt. And it says here in verse eight, if we be dead with Christ we live with Christ. Now, watch this. This is so important here. Verse nine, Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead by the power of God...and, brethren, that is acceptance, God testified when he raised him from the dead that he was satisfied with him, with Christ, that he accepted his sacrifice and offering. He accepted him. He raised him from the dead knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more. Death hath no more dominion. Sin has no more dominion over him.

Now here is what I am saying. The true believer who is in Christ by God's eternal grace and by faith who is in Christ crucified, buried and risen with Christ, the true believer, now this is strong, but it is so, can no more come under sin again or under its curse than Christ can. Now you think about that.

I am going to tell you something. That is... Turn to Isaiah 40 a minute. That is the basis for comfort. We can't find any comfort in our own...in ourselves or in our works or in our deeds or in our...even our faith. It is so weak. But now here is the comfort. Isaiah 40, verse one, says, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people," saith the Lord. Speak ye comfortably to the heart of Jerusalem. And cry unto her. Here is the basis for comfort. Her warfare is accomplished. Her iniquity is pardoned, pardoned, put away. She hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

When Barabbas...when our Lord Jesus Christ took the place of Barabbas on that cross and they went down and set him free he didn't have to go into hiding. Barabbas could walk right down the street, right past the courthouse. They couldn't touch him. The Roman law wouldn't let them touch him. Somebody else had taken his place. He could walk right by the arresting officer. He could walk right down the street because he died when Christ died as far as the Roman law was concerned. And you and I, I am saying this, that if we died, if Christ is our Savior and Lord and our substitute, when he died we died. And when he arose, we arose without sin before God. And we can no more come under the charge or curse or guilt of sin again than Christ can. Can't do it. That is what verse nine of Romans six says. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more.

That is the reason our Lord said, "He that believeth on me shall never die. He that believeth on me shall never be ashamed. He that believeth on me shall never come into condemnation. There is, therefore, now no judgment to them who are in Christ. Can't be.

You see, when our Lord died on the cross he effectually paid the sin debt. And now he sits at the right hand of the Father, totally, wholly accepted and justified. There isn't in this universe anywhere one little sin that can come up before the Father and say, "I lay this on Christ. He has got to come and pay for this."

No, sir. He has no sin. He has paid for all. He drank the very bitter dregs of the bottom of the cup of God's wrath. He walked the winepress and he walked it fully. And sin can no more...can no more demand of him any thing, he can no way come under...death hath no more dominion, no more charge. And he has no more on us, none whatsoever if Christ is our Savior and our Substitute.

Now, if you trust in an altar experience, you got a problem because sin can still lay claim to you. If you are trusting and resting in a religious profession or you are resting in something else other than Christ then you may be brought before the judgment, but not in Christ.

Now, here is the fourth thing. Look at verse 10. For in that he died he died unto sin once. But in that he liveth he liveth unto God.

Brethren, we are alive unto God. We are sons of God. We are accepted in the beloved. Jesus paid it all, all the debt I owe. Sin left her crimson stain, but he washed it. How? As white as snow. Dear dying lamb, thy precious blood shall never loose its power, till all the ransomed Church of God be saved to sin no more. What a tremendous fact to comfort. If we died with Christ we are free of all charge, all blame, all condemnation, all judgment. If we were buried with Christ we arose again without sin, totally justified before God, wholly unblamable, unprovable in his sight.

And whatever sin in our past, present or future can no more...can no more come and require of us any thing than it can come before the throne of God and require that Christ die again. It can't do it. It has no charge. And we are alive unto God, accepted in the beloved and seated at the right hand of God.

All right. Well, here as brother Sammy said a while ago, is that solemn subject. Secondly, we have daily, daily a great enemy with which to deal.

Did you notice in this chapter how many times the word S-I-N is used? Sin, sin, sin, sin, sin. Brother Barnard said one time, "When you attempt to define something spiritually you get in trouble." But I am going to attempt to define sin. What is sin?

Point number one under this second heading, a great enemy with which to deal. What is sin? Well, I am telling you this. Sin is a whole lot more than what men are saying it is.

Sin is more than drunkenness. If drunkenness was the only problem a man had as far as sin is concerned he could quit it. He could quit it. Sin is more than lying. If lying is the only problem a man has then he could quit it. Sin is more than adultery. If adultery is the only problem a man has, he could quit it. Sin is more than stealing. If stealing is the only problem that a man has, he could quit it. But sin is a principle and a nature that produces these things. Sin is the transgression, the transgression of the law of God not only outwardly, but inwardly.

Our Lord said in the book of Matthew, he said, "You have heard it said by them of old times, thou shalt not kill. But I say unto you to hate, to hate your brother in your heart is to be guilty already of murder whether you ever take his life or not. You have heard it said by them of old times thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you to look with lust, to lust in your heart is to be guilty already of adultery. And on and on and on he goes defining those sins.

But in Romans chapter three, verse 23, here is one of the best definitions in the Scripture, one of the best, Romans 3:23. Listen. For all have sinned. All have sinned and here it is. And come short of glory of God. That is what sin is. Sin is to come short of the glory of God. Sin is anything in thought, in word, in imagination, in deed, that comes short of what? Perfection. Perfection. Sin is a nature or a principle that comes short of God's perfection, that is contrary to God's holiness. And our Lord said to the disciples, "Sin is not necessarily what goes into our body, sin and that which defiles us comes out of our hearts."

Sin is pride, pride. In Proverbs chapter six, our Lord names six, yea, seven things that he hated he said and pride is number one.

Sin is envy. Do you ever envy? Are you ever covetous? Are you ever discontent with what you have and envy someone who has more? Sin is lust. Sin is hatred. Sin is greed. Sin is ingratitude. Sin is blasphemy, not just blasphemy with the lips, but blasphemy with the heart. Sin is jealousy. Sin is evil thoughts. All of these things are sin.

And, secondly, this sin has great power. These things that lurk within us and live within us are like outlaws and they hide in our nature and we think that they are gone. And then they appear at the least expected time. We are going along thinking we are doing so well, growing in grace, spiritually growing and suddenly that outlaw that has been there all the time hiding within us rears up his ugly head. Sin is an outlaw which hides in our nature and appears when least expected. Sin is an enemy, a constant enemy that wars against the new nature.

Turn to Galatians 5:17. Listen to this. And every honest believer will confess this and admit this, that he has a constant warfare when he recognizes what sin is. When he recognizes what sin is he admits that he has a constant warfare with his pride, covetousness, ingratitude, lust, hatred, malice all greed, selfishness. It says in verse 17 of Galatians five, the flesh...the flesh lusteth, warreth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. And these are contrary one to the other.

We feel like two people. We feel like two distinct people. That's what Paul...that's how he identified himself. He said, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I find another law in my members like another person, a body of death, a body of sin that wars against this body of truth and light. These are contrary one to the other so you cannot do the things that you will.

And I will tell you this. This sin nature is such a part of us that it won't die till we die. And I am not talking about dying daily. We do daily. We crucify the old man daily. I am talking about this. This nature of sin and this conflict with sin is going to stay with me and you till they put us in the ground. That is what I am saying. You are going to have a battle with it. And you are going to have...

And do you know something? Thirdly, sin's battle ground or field of battle is the body. It is the body. It is the flesh. Paul called it a body of death and he called it, do you know what he called it in Philippians? He said it is a vile body. This is a vile body.

Let me just give you some illustration. I am saying that the battle ground of sin is the flesh. And when we are through with this flesh and put it in the ground, then we are going to be through with sin, and not until then. When these eyes are closed to see no more and these ears are dead to hear no more and this sinful nature sleeps in the dust we won't have any more sin. We will rise to be with our Lord with the nature that he hath perfected, the nature of God that he has put within us. But this flesh, here is the battle ground. Here is the source of evil and error. Let me give you these illustrations.

Now, here is the first thing. The materialism and desires of this flesh lead us to covetousness. Now Paul tells us to be content in whatsoever state God has put us. It is hard to be content lying on a hospital bed, but that is what he said. It is hard to be content when you don't have enough money to buy food like some of our friends down in Mexico. The body wants to eat and it wants to eat steak and potatoes. And it wants to eat...it doesn't want to eat tortillas and black [?]. It wants to eat good things.

It is hard to be content with a body wracked with pain and stooped over with old age. But I don't care. We are still supposed to be content. That is what the Word of God says. We are not supposed to murmur. We are not supposed to complain against God's providence. He said, "Be content with what you have and avoid covetousness which is idolatry."

We have got a car, but we want a better one. You young folks have a home to live in, but you want a bigger one. You got a washing machine, but you want an automatic. Do you see what I am talking about? We got a good suit, but we want a pretty one because somebody else got a prettier. We got a rug on the floor, but it's got a hole in it and we want a new one. And we envy.

You say, "If that's sin..."

That's sin. That's sin.

And what causes it? It is this body with its materialism and its desires. It wants, wants, wants, wants, wants. It wants more. It wants better. It wants bigger. It wants comfort. It wants luxury. And it is not content to live on what God gives us. And it is not content with where God puts us.

A lot of preachers are not content in their churches. They want bigger churches. But that is sin. That is the flesh.

Isn't that what Psalm 73 says? David, he said, "I was like a beast. I complained against the providence of God."

All right, secondly, the appetites and passions of this flesh what do they do? They produce desires that we are ashamed of. They produce desires that are contrary to holiness. And there is no use saying they are not there because they are. And they are very real and they are very strong. And where do these desires come from? This flesh. That is where they come from. That is the field of battle. And when this flesh is buried you are not going to be bothered with them anymore. But there isn't a person in this congregation, if they will be honest and truthful, that is not ashamed of your thoughts. Too often just literally you look up to God and say, "Well, I think that's odd. Why do I desire things like that?"

I'll tell you why. Because you have got an appetite and a passion in that body of yours that is going to stay there until they put you in the grave. And you may as well admit it.

All right, thirdly. The pains and infirmities of this flesh lead to depression. Now, brethren, when we talk about being depressed we are talking about sinning. We are talking about sinning. It is a sin to murmur against God. That is what God judged the Israelites for in the wilderness. They murmured against God. They said, "We are tired of this light bread and we are tired of this water out of the rock. We want the garlics of Egypt." They murmured against God. They were impatient.

And...but the pain and infirmities of this flesh lead us to depression, impatience and coldness of heart. Yeah, they do. We give in to it, don't we? And I understand that. I am just...what I am saying is, brethren, sin is sin. I don't care whether you find it in a drunk or in a believer. It is still sin. You can call it anything you want to. It is still sin.

And I will tell you something else. Do you know when a parent tells a child to do something and the child resents it and just resents it, maybe has a good reason or no reason, but he still....do you know what he is doing? Fourthly, it is that strong selfish will, that will, that self will that rebels against authority. It rebels against...

Do you know what men have told me down at the steel mill and other places where they work? When they are working with the gang everybody loves them, everybody loves them. They are working with a gang. Whatever they do, whatever they work. And one

day they called him to the superintendent's office and said, "We are going to make you a foreman."

So he comes off the gang. He becomes a foreman. He puts on the foreman's hat and he goes out. Everybody hates him. They loved him yesterday. But today that... Do you know what it is? They hate God because that man represents authority.

I have known men to turn down promotions to keep from being hated. Children...children rebel against parents. It is that will. It is this flesh. My flesh resents advice. Does yours? Don't tell me what to do. I know what to do. It resents advice. It resents orders.

"Go do this."

"Why does he talk to me like that for?"

Well, we do it, but we resent being told to do it. We resent authority. In other words, we want our way.

Brethren, that is sin.

A wife got a lovable husband. He supplies her needs. But she just resents him being the head. She resents him making the decisions. She may agree with the decision, but he made it. I have known women to take the opposite just to be contrary, haven't you? Present company excepted.

I will tell you something else. Not only the materialism and desires of the flesh, not only the appetites and passions, not only the pains and infirmities in old age, not only the strong selfish will, but brethren, fifthly, the influence which this flesh has on the mind and the spirit is unbelievable, unbelievable. The flesh...the flesh, thoughts in the flesh in this fleshly nature, desires in these things can drag the spirit and faith down until we will convince ourselves that we are not really saved. Yeah, I have been there. The old flesh just...

Newton was there. Listen to what Newton wrote. You have heard this before, but...this was in one of those periods of time when the flesh was so strong and the thoughts were so contrary to holiness that he said, "Tis a point I long to know and oft it gives me anxious thoughts. Do I really love the Lord or no? Am I his or am I not? If I love the Lord why am I like this? Why am I dull and lifeless frame?"

I will tell you why a dull and lifeless frame. It is because of the infirmities and pains of the body. It is hard to rejoice when you are hurting. You get one of these severe headaches that some of you folks have and I will tell you, it is sure hard to pray, isn't it? You get help. You get drugged out. The flesh takes you down.

Why this dull and lifeless frame? Hardly can they be worse who never knew his name. When I turn my eyes within all is dark and vain and wild. I am filled with unbelief and sin. Can I call myself God's child? If I pray or hear or read, sin is mixed with everything I do. You who love the Lord tell me. Now, be honest. Is it that way with you? Is it?

Everybody knows it is so, just hate to admit it. Just the to admit it.

Yet ...now wait a minute. Yet I am warned my stubborn will. I don't like it. I don't like that stubborn will. I find sin a grief and a fraud. Now should I grieve for what I feel if I did not love him at all? No, you wouldn't. No, you wouldn't. But an honest heart...

And you know when our Lord saw Nathaniel coming he said, "Behold an Israelite in whom there is no guile." He wasn't saying Nathaniel wasn't a sinner. He wouldn't say that. Nathaniel was a sinner like anybody else. He was saying there was no hypocrisy in him. He was saying Nathaniel is an honest seeker and a wholesome honest person in his dealings with God.

And I am saying that an honest believer, regenerated by the Holy Spirit with a renewed nature and a new heart recognizes sin to be sin for what it is. He admits it before God. He confesses it and he seeks for the glory of God to avoid it.

And that brings me to the third thing: a great resolution.

Now, watch verse 11, verse 11. Now, verse seven, he that is dead with Christ is free from sin. And verse eight said if we be dead with Christ we live with Christ. And verse nine says sin will never bring a charge against him or against us because in verse 10 in that he died once he died once in that he liveth he liveth unto God. Now, verse 11. Likewise reckon as done ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin but alive unto God. Now reckon that.

Now, let me bring out this point right here, number three. To reckon myself to be dead or freed from sin so that I boast I have no sin that would be a lie, wouldn't it. If I stood up here in front of you and I said, "Now, I am dead to sin. I mean by that I don't have any sin. I live above sin.

Like one fellow said one time, "I haven't sinned in 20 years."

That would be a lie.

All right. Secondly, to reckon myself to be dead to sin by saying sin in a believer is not really sin. Oh, yes it is. I don't care where you find pride, pride is pride. I don't care where you find lust, lust is lust. I don't care where you find envy, it is envy. I don't care where you find idolatry, it is idolatry. Sin is sin no matter where you find it whether you find it in the gutter or the pulpit. It is sin. It is an offense to God and it is a hateful enemy. It is sin.

We reckon ourselves, thirdly, to be dead indeed unto sin. Look at one statement, verse 11, the last line, through Jesus Christ our Lord. That is where the guilt is. That is where the glory is. That is where the rest is. That is where the comfort is. That is where the debt was paid. That is where the victory is. It is all in Christ, all in Christ.

All right. Therefore, verse 12, let us...let not sin, therefore...Now here it is. Here is what I am coming to. Recognize it. Admit it. Our Lord said, "He that covereth his sin shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall find mercy."

My little children, I write unto you that you sin not. But if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us.

Now, here is what he is saying in verse 12. Therefore let not sin reign. It does remain. It is ever present. It is a constant enemy. It is a source of irritation. But don't let it reign. Don't let it control you. When you see pride, suppress it. When you see lust suppress it. When you see this greedy angry spirit suppress it. Let not sin reign. Don't yield to it. Don't give in to it. Sin does remain. We are conscious of its presence. We are conscious of its power. We are conscious of its affliction, but what he is saying here, "Don't let it reign. Don't let it control you. Don't let it take over. Don't yield to it. Don't surrender. Don't pull up the white flag and say, 'Well, that's my nature.'"

No, that's not good enough. Put it out. Step on the neck of it for the glory of Christ and the glory of his kingdom. Make your decisions.

I wrote an article in the bulletin one time, "Make your decisions based on this truth that Christ is king of my life and first in my life. And I am going to be dedicated to him in every way for his glory."

And the gospel is second. And the church is third. And my family is fourth and I come way down the line somewhere. It is not to satisfy my flesh to which I should be given but to glorify my Lord. And that is what he is teaching us here. He is teaching us not that we are going to ultimately get a complete victory over this body of flesh until we die. But we can suppress it. And we can seek to control it and not yield to it. Christ is king.

All right. Here is the last thing. Do we have anybody to help us in this battle? Oh, my, yes. Our Lord said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

But here is what...here are four or five things. Number one, make use of the means of grace. I tell you, turn to the Word. Turn to the Word of God. Be much in the Word of God. Be much in prayer. Be much in worship. Don't stay away from the worship services. Come to the worship services. Read the Word of God. Come to the worship services. Read the word of God. Spend much time in prayer.

Here is a second thing. Cultivate the fellowship of believers. The Scripture says, “Evil companions corrupt good manners.” If you will cultivate the fellowship of people who love God it will help you to walk with God. That’s right.

And, thirdly, help one another. The Scripture says, “Confess your faults one to another.” That is not confess your sins to one another. That is confess your faults, your potentiality, those things to one another. Admit what you are. And pray one for another.

But, last of all, look to Christ. In him is our victory. In him is our confidence. In him is our sanctification. In him is our hope and life. Look to Christ.

Let me read this 12th verse again. Let not sin therefore reign, control. Don’t yield to it in your mortal body. It’s there, but don’t let it reign. It remains, but don’t let it rule. Put it down. Suppress it that you should obey it and the lusts thereof. We belong to Christ. We are his children and we shall glorify his name. Adorn the gospel of God our Savior.

I hope that is helpful.

Our merciful Lord, how difficult it is to deal with this subject of sin. We rejoice in our hearts and we are glad that Christ dealt with it in his body on the tree, paid the debt, set us free. In Christ we have no sin. We are free from sin and we are justified and sanctified in thy presence else we couldn’t even speak thy name or come into thy presence or be accepted of thee. In Christ we are free from sin. Sin has no dominion over him or death. It has no dominion over us.

But, our Father, we know and we confess that in this flesh dwelleth no good thing. In the flesh no man can please thee. In the flesh there is a constant warfare and battle so that we long for that day when we shall be taken out of this life and perfectly conformed to the image of our Lord to sin no more, not even to think that which is evil but to be perfectly righteous and holy like Christ. For until that day give us comfort and strength and hope and joy in Christ. Let us find in him all we need and never look to ourselves or even look to our sins or look to our works or look in any way to anything that is of this flesh, but look to Christ for our salvation and acceptance.

And, Lord, give us the grace to grow in that grace and to grow in the knowledge of Christ and that we might grow in the fruit of the Spirit that Christ might be glorified in us. Forgive our sins. What sinful creatures we are. Forgive us of our sins. Cleanse us from our unrighteousness in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.