

Slave No More!

Part 3 in the series called Your new relationship with sin.

Romans 6:1-14

LTS: 2 Cor. 5:14-21

Grace never promotes a life of sin. Rather, It emancipates us from slavery to sin.

Please take your bible and stand with me in honor of God's word. We will be reading Romans 6:1-14

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ² By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

⁷ For one who has died, has been set free from sin. ⁸ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.

⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.

¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹² Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. ¹³ Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

As I look across the landscape of churches and professing Christians in our time it occurs to me that this passage of scripture is especially relevant.

When I was a kid growing up in church it seemed like the big concern was that Christians were so separated from the world that they were having no discernable gospel influence upon anyone except themselves.

As that ideology gained traction all across the country things began to change. It's almost as if church leaders of that era became convinced that if we were ever going to reach the World, God's people would have to become like the world. Indeed, the decades that followed, proved that this approach to life and ministry would come to rule the day.

You may remember reading about the scourge of modernism in church history. Then seeker-sensitivity brought in pragmatism. Then came the emergent church which sought to reimagine worship, the Lord's table, and even the preaching ministry in which they incorporated vulgar language in sermons just to prove that Pastors are as common and sinful as everyone else.

I recall reading an article from 2005 by Joel Belz, (the founder of world magazine) who bemoaned this shift in Christian culture. He wrote,

More often people who claim to be Christians pursue the same selfish ambitions, worship the same worthless idols, enjoy the same sinful pleasures, watch the same ungodly entertainments, and grasp for the same greedy possessions as everyone else.

There is shockingly little difference between the way that Christians and non-Christians behave. A recent report from the Princeton Religion Research Center claimed, "Religion has Gain Ground, but Morality Is Losing Ground," The report showed how increases in church attendance and Bible reading have been offset by a simultaneous decline in morality among churchgoers. (World Magazine (April 30, 2005, Joel Belz, p. 6
End Quote:

When Belz speaks of declining morality, he might as well could have called it a decline in holiness. When the world came into the church, the church became like the world.

I suspect that if Paul's Opponents were alive today they would come to Paul and say, You see! this is exactly what we warned you about! Preaching a grace that super abounds over every sin can only lead one to abandon any scruples about personal sin. They will become like

the godless gentiles who gave themselves over to every kind of debauchery in the name of God. And frankly, in many occasions they would be absolutely justified in their criticism.

And speaking of church history, this trend is nothing new!

In the 1800's when Charles Spurgeon preached in London, he found himself needing to fight this same spirit among many who self-identified as Christians.

In his famous book, *The Soul Winner*, he found it necessary to say things such as the following.

Though nowadays we hear of persons being healed before they have been wounded, and brought into a certainty of justification without ever having lamented their condition, we are very dubious as to the value of such healings and justifyingings.

This style of things is not according to truth. God never clothes men until he has first stripped them, nor does He quicken them by the gospel till first they are slain by the law. When you meet a person in whom there is no conviction of sin, you may be quite sure that they have not been wrought upon by the Holy Spirit; for "when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness and judgment."¹

The whole point of the passage before us is that when a man or woman receives a new relationship with Jesus, he also receives a new relationship with sin.

Now, let me just take a moment to help you see that there is no doubt that freedom from sin is the main point of the passage. Just follow along as I walk through the following atements of Paul in this text. He says,

v. 1. "Are we to continue in sin

v. 2 Shall we still live in sin?

v. 6. That you will no longer be slaves to sin.

v. 12 Do not let sin reign in your body

v. 13 Do not go on presenting the members of your bodies to sin

¹ (Charles Spurgeon, *The Soul Winner*, p. 19)

v. 14 Sin shall not have dominion over you (or will not be your master).

Unfortunately, anyone who looks for gospel opportunity on a regular basis would tell you that a majority of people with whom they speak (especially here in the south) will at the same time claim to be a Christian and unashamedly parade their personal, habitual delight in sin. But if the Bible is right (and it is) such persons remain under the dominion of sin and are unknown by Christ.

The last couple of times we met to study this passage I emphasized the reality that Paul is teaching us about sanctification. And that is certainly true! But I want to remind you this morning that the passage that we are studying rests in the middle of a larger context and a larger point that transcends sanctification.

notice the first few words in chapter 6. Paul says, "What shall we say then?"

That question points back to what Paul was teaching us before we came to chapter 6. And the focus of what he was saying before chapter six was all about the absolute assurance of salvation that every true believer has because of the grace of God in Christ Jesus.

let me remind you of this by pointing to a few bullet points in the text that steer us in that direction.

- In chapter 4 Paul tells us the marvelous, good news that in the courtroom of heaven sinners are declared righteous not on the basis of keeping the law, but by faith alone. Beloved, this is abounding grace!
- What did our justification bring us? Paul says (5:1) that that it secured for us peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. That's abounding Grace!
- Moreover, through Jesus (5:2) we have also obtained access into the presence of God. That's abounding grace.
- Not only that, but in (5:3) we learn that now have the ability to rejoice when we suffer because God uses it to change our character and fill us with hope. And the hope he lavishly bestows doesn't disappoint us because the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. That's Abounding Grace
- And then the ultimate way in which God demonstrated his love for us (5:8) was in the fact that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. That, beloved, is abounding grace!
- Therefore, (5:9) the blood of Jesus saves us from the wrath of God, and he did it when we were still his enemies. That's abounding grace.

For people who thought that the only way to be counted righteous in God's eyes was is keeping the law, this was too much! So they accused Paul (3:8) of antinomianism. (anti

means against, and Nomos is the GK word for law). In other words, they accused Paul of being lawless (which he was NOT, as we will see in Chap 7). They accused him of teaching that the free, abounding grace of God is nothing more than a license to sin. But nothing could be further from the truth.

- It's important to note, however, that all of us are sometimes practical antinomians.
- We all have used the promise of forgiving grace as a license to sin.
- Whenever you find yourself tempted by that stubborn sin, and after a few hours or minutes you give in to that sin thinking, "I might as well just give in because God will... forgive... you are engaging in practical antinomianism.

To the contrary, the grace that saves us is the grace that sanctifies us, purifies us, and changes us from the inside out.

Jerry Bridges lends clarity to this issue when, in his excellent book, *The Pursuit of Holiness*, he writes the following:

Therefore, we may say that no one can trust in Christ for true salvation unless he trusts Him for holiness. This does not mean the desire for holiness must be a conscious desire at the time a person comes to Christ, but rather that the Holy Spirit who creates within us saving faith also creates within us the desire for holiness. He simply does not create one without the other.²

Someone will rightly ask, "Why do Christians necessarily have a new relationship with sin? And as we learned last week, we obtained a new relationship with sin because..."

I. In Christ we have died to sin.:

1. When did we die to sin? We died to sin the very moment we became alive to God. The moment we believed, we began to live. And the moment we believed, we died. That is, we died to sin.

Now, we need to remember that that when Paul mentions sin in this context, he is

² (Jerry Bridges, *The Pursuit of Holiness*, p. 39).

NOT thinking so much of individual acts of sin, but rather the domain, or kingdom of sin.

- All of us were born in the kingdom or realm of sin. But we were NOT only born into it, we were also enslaved to it. To be sure... That's why Jesus came to die.

And my friend, if you have come to church this morning with a burden of guilt and sin pressing upon your soul, you have come to the right place. In fact, Jesus has a message for you that he wants you to hear this very moment. He says to you (from Matt. 11:28)...

Matthew 11:28

Come to me, all who labor and are bearing a heavy load, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am gentle and lowly of heart and you will find rest for your soul.

Aren't you weary of carrying and keeping hidden your guilt and sin? Don't you want the rest, the relief, the cleansing, the forgiveness that washes every stain away and reconciles you to God.? This is why Jesus came. He came for you!

- In theological terms He came to bear the legal penalty of your sin so we could be set free.

Now, back to our text:

2. Paul said we died to sin. But How did we die to sin? We were baptized into his death. How is that possible? Its possible because He is our representative head. When you were born-again, you were united to Christ in such a way that whatever he has is now yours, and everything you have belongs to Him. That means, in Christ all your sin was laid on him and all His righteousness was laid on you.

3. Paul says it like this (6:4) "All of us who were baptized into (or united with) Christ were baptized into His death. So, the question is, how can people who are united with Christ, having died and been buried with Him in his death..., how can people such as that continue in the same relationship with sin that we had before?"

Paul's answer: It's not possible!

So, first, In Christ we Have Died to Sin.

Second, we learned last week that...

II. In Christ we were raised to holiness.

1. Let's review verses 5-6

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing...

2. You know the narrative of the passion of Jesus. He lived in a sin-ravaged world, was tempted in the same manner as we are, yet without sin. He died legally bearing the sin of all who would believe, he was buried in a borrowed tomb, and then, on that glorious first Easter morning, Jesus burst into life again: Death was swallowed up by life - a new life; a different kind of life than the one He had in this world. A better life! No longer would he be confined to a world of sin, nor would he suffer under the constant presence of sin.
3. After the resurrection he was the same man, but a different man. He was a man who could never again experience death because of sin.
4. This verse (5) repeats the same idea as the previous section. That is, in Union with Christ we died to sin. Now we have a new relationship with sin. As Jesus arose from the dead, so we have been raised to walk in newness of life. In other words, we now have a new life motive. Rather than living to satisfy the desires of the flesh, we live to please and honor the Lord.
5. In V.6 our "old self" refers to who we were in Adam. Similarly, The "body of sin," refers to our fallen human nature without the indwelling Spirit of God. In Christ, however, that previous version of me doesn't exist anymore. Now the merit of Christ's death is mine, and the penalty of our sin is paid in full.³

³ Stephen Yuille, p. 175

6. When Paul wrote his 2nd letter to the church in Corinth he said (2 Cor. 5:17)

“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature. The old has passed away;
Behold,, the new has come.”

7. When Paul wrote to the Galatians, he had this same truth in mind. In Gal. 2:20, Paul declares

“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.
And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me
and gave himself for me.”

8. At the end of v. 6 Paul tells us what the goal of all this is. Namely, “that we would no longer be slaves to sin.” Once again, Paul is pointing to the believer’s new relationship with sin!

- It doesn’t rule you anymore.
- You don’t have to obey it anymore!
- You have been raised from the dead to live a new kind of life;
 - a life no longer dominated by sin.
 - A life no longer enslaved to sin.
 - A life in which you have the desire and the power to live a life that honors the Lord.

9. Does that mean that believers can live in sinless perfection? NO! If that were the case, several statements of Paul end would make no sense.

- He says, “(v.12) “do not let sin reign in your mortal body.”
- (v. 13) “do not present your members to sin as instruments of unrighteousness.”

10. Of course believers will still sin, but you can no longer love it and live in it the way you did before. To the contrary, you hate your sin and are quick to run to the Father in honest confession and eager to receive His fatherly forgiveness! Sin is no longer what you live for. It is no longer the defining pattern of your life.

So first we learned that In Christ We have died to sin

Second, In Christ we have been raised.

Now finally,

III. In Christ you are Free:

1. Read vv. 7-10

For one who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ For the death he died - he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.

2. These verses present Paul's summary of what he has taught so far..

- You who are now in Union with Christ because of super-abounding grace...
- are also ones who died to sin because of super-abounding grace.
- Furthermore, you are also raised to live a righteous and holy life by the power of super-abounding grace.

- And Since you died in union with Christ's death, sin has no dominion over you.

- And since you were raised in Union with Christ, you are

- set free.

- Free to live for the Lord.
- Free to walk in the Spirit.
- Free to live a life that is pleasing to the Lord.
- And Free to faithfully and successfully battle the tempting influences of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

3. Adam is no longer your representative head in the eyes of God. Therefore, sin is no longer your master, your Lord. You have been set free!:

4. And this brings us to Paul's application. How should we respond to these truths?

A. Before we touch on that, let me just make an important observation that I may have mentioned in passing last time. Namely. That everything Paul has revealed to us thus far is in the indicative mood. That is, he has not commanded us to do anything. His focus has been entirely on the settled and glorious facts regarding what God has done for you and to you in Christ. Consider this abbreviated list. In Christ.

- You have Union with Christ
- You have peace with God
- You have access to God
- You have purpose for life
- You have unmitigated hope
- you have died to sin.
- you have been raised to new life.
- You have been set free from sin's tyranny!
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5. All of this is true of you ever since you first trusted in Jesus for salvation. You see, Before the Lord lays down a single command, he first takes the time to reveal to us what we have in Christ, and more importantly, who we are in Christ. Only with these rich truths lodged deeply in your heart will you be equipped to obey God command and do it with joy.

- In his excellent book on Christianity and liberalism, J. Gresham Machen said the following.

"Here is found the fundamental difference between liberalism and Christianity--liberalism is altogether in the imperative mood, while Christianity begins with a triumphant indicative; liberalism appeals to

man's will, while Christianity announces, first, a gracious act of God."⁴

6. So, what is the proper response that those who are in Christ should offer to the Lord in response to His Super-abound grace? Should we respond by declaring...

"Let us continue sinning so that grace may abound? May it never be!

7. Rather, Paul writes (v. 11-14)

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.¹⁴ For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

8. In other words, embrace your new relationship with sin. It's time to defriend sin. Its time to excommunicate it! It's time to pursue holiness in the fear of the Lord for the Glory of your savior, and your own life-long joy!

- 9.

Grace never promotes a life of sin. Rather, It emancipates

⁴ Machen, J. Gresham. Christianity and Liberalism, pg. 39, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids Michigan, 2009.