

### Victory Over Sin (6:1-14)

- Sanctification comes from the Greek word which is translated “holiness” (vv19,22). To be holy means ‘to be separate’ or ‘to be set apart.’ It is being set apart for God for a holy purpose and being set apart from sin unto a holy life. Sanctification is the purpose & continuation of justification; it is God producing actual righteousness in the believer.
- Romans 6 shows that believers can live in victory over sin, that the power of sin and its “right” to rule over our lives has been broken.

#### 1. The Christian’s Relationship to Sin

- Victory over sin begins by being aware of our position in Christ – that we are dead to sin and alive unto God. Paul said earlier in Rom 5:20 that if sin increases, grace abounds all the more. This truth, however, is perverted by some into an unbiblical teaching: if sin magnifies the grace of God, as it does, then shouldn’t we continue in sin so that God’s grace may be displayed abundantly (cf Rom 3:8)? Paul’s response is swift and unequivocal: “God forbid!” God forbids that anyone should think he has the right to live not caring how he should live. A believer can fall into sin, but he doesn’t live in habitual sin as he did before he was saved.
- A Christian is dead to sin in the sense that sin has lost its influence over him; he is not subject to its control anymore. Sin is not eradicated completely, but the believer does not have to give in to his sin anymore. To live in sin is the habitual lifestyle of the unbeliever. With conversion, it simply is not fitting to live any longer in sin. When a man turns to God, he turns away from sin (1 Thess 1:9). Every Christian has died to sin. This is an accomplished reality. It is not something that we feel, but rather a fact that is true of us because God declares it to be true. This is our new status before God.
- If Christians are dead to sin, why do we still sin? Our corrupt nature, though weakened, is not eradicated. We are blameless but not faultless due to indwelling sin. The power of sin is broken but the presence of sin is not entirely eliminated. Sanctification does not refer to sinless perfection in this life, but of freedom from sin’s control. The Christian may sin, but sinning is out of character. The fact is, we still struggle with sin, but in a different relationship than before we came to faith in Christ. We do not have to obey the power of sin any longer. Those born of God cannot continue in their old way of life, which was characterized by sin. If a person lives in sin, it is incompatible with being a Christian (1 John 3:9). We now obey God and keep His commandments as our pattern or habit.
- The fact of the believer’s death to sin is established by a reference to the significance of baptism. Baptism here refers to the day of our salvation when “*by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body*” (1 Cor 12:13) - by which we were made part of the Body of Christ. When we are baptized in Christ at conversion, we are being identified with Christ (1 Cor 10:2).

- To be baptized into Christ's death is to be totally identified with Christ in His death. When Christ died to sin, conquering its power, we who believe in Him died to sin and its power.
- In baptism we are buried with Christ. We died with Him.
- Baptism also has the positive purpose of identifying us with Christ in His resurrection. Since we are united with Christ in His glorious resurrection, we should walk in newness of life (Eph 2:1). Our new walk in Christ should be totally distinct from our life before Christ.
- The believer is a new man, a new creation, though he is a new man not yet made perfect (2 Cor 5:17). The behaviours, thoughts, attitudes, and actions that marked us before we were in Christ were part of our old self. That's not who we are anymore. That person is dead, so we're now free to walk in a new life.

## 2. The Basis of Victory over Sin (6:6-10)

- We are to believe and act on the basis of our new identity. All Christians are supposed to know this: "*Our old man*" or our old self (Eph 4:22; Col 3:9) has been crucified or put to death and rendered inoperative – it is a once-for-all, thorough act. The result of this crucifixion with Christ is that the "*body of sin*" might be destroyed or rendered powerless, so that we should not be slaves of sin.
- Crucifixion of the old man is not something we do; it has already been done. When Christ was crucified, our old nature was crucified with Him. We are no longer under the slavery to sin! Will the Christian sin? Yes! Does he have to? No! We still have an old sin nature within us that wars against the indwelling Holy Spirit (Gal 5:16-17). But Paul commands us to put off the old man and put on the new man (Eph 4:22-24). The believer, being dead to sin, is released from the control of his former master, sin. He is able to live outside of sin's power.
- Our Christian faith is grounded upon the knowledge and fact that we will live with Christ. Christ has effectively dealt with sin - paid its penalty, removed its sting, won victory over it. When we trusted Christ as Saviour, that very moment when we were identified with Him, sin lost its control and authority in our lives. If we sin, it is not because we have to, but because we make the choice to do so. Victory begins when we are aware of our position in Christ. When we come to Christ, we must make a distinct break with the old life (v2).

## 3. The Way to Victory over Sin (6:11-14)

- The Christian life is not a life of sin, but of struggle against sin. Paul outlines 4 steps we must take to have victory over sin:
  - Firstly, the believer must **KNOW** (vv3,6,9). Our Christian behaviour must rest on sound doctrinal knowledge (Ps 119:11). It is essential to know the effect of our union with Christ. This centers upon what Christ has already accomplished by His death and resurrection. When He died to sin, we died to sin! When He arose in victory, we arose in victory. We are no longer

slaves, but we are free! The emphasis is not what we do but upon what Christ has already done.

- Secondly, the believer must **RECKON** (v11). This means "count on these facts" or "live as though they are true." 2 facts of reckoning – reckon to having died to sin & being alive to God. To reckon is an act of faith; it is taking God at His word. Only when we accept the fact that we are both dead and alive, and by faith appropriating this fact, will we see any measure of victory over sin. Faith is not based on feeling; it is based on God's Word.
- Thirdly, the believer must **RESIST** (v12-13a). We must act upon this truth. We must take the decisive step to not let sin reign in our lives. Godly living is a necessity, not an option. We have an active responsibility to stop the reign of sin. We have an element of control; we must abstain from evil (1 Thess 5:22-23; James 4:7). We can resist the devil's work by not presenting the "members" of our body to sin.
- Finally, we must **YIELD** (v13b). We are to consciously surrender the members of our bodies over to God. The word "instruments" means "weapons." Continuously put them at God's disposal and yield or present yourself for the Lord to use (Rom 12:1). Sanctification involves the co-operation of believers (Heb 12:14; Phil 2:12), ie. the diligent employment of the means of sanctification, yielding to God & separation from sin.
- God promises victory over sin to those who are not under the law but under grace. While Christians do fall into sin, sometimes into gross sins, they cannot remain there. They will be miserable until they get right again with God. And grace has the power to conquer sin. The law commands, but it contains no power to obey. But grace frees us from condemnation, motivates us by God's undeserved love, and empowers us by His Spirit, whom God freely gives to all who trust in Christ. Grace liberates us from sin & enables us to triumph over it.

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