

How to Slay Sin, Part 1

Scripture: Romans 6:6–12; Romans 8:13; Colossians 3:5

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If you've been with us the last couple of posts, you *know* sin is your enemy. You understand it lurks deep within your members, warring against your soul, seeking to ambush you at your most vulnerable moment. You've experienced its power and treachery many times.

You would agree with Paul when he says you're under obligation to put all remaining sin to death—to *kill* it (Romans 8:13; Colossians 3:5). You *know* that too.

But what you may not know is...*how*. How do you *slay sin*?

These remaining posts address that question. This is how you slay sin.

First, understand your true position as a Christian. This is a call to *think biblically* about the way you relate to sin. Miss this vital first step, and the rest will be nothing but a self-improvement exercise.

Study the Bible carefully and you'll notice Scripture rarely calls you to practice a specific behavior without first laying down some kind of theological foundation or framework. That was especially clear in Paul's epistles, the transition from doctrine to duty, belief to behavior (cf. Romans 12:1; Galatians 5:1; Ephesians 4:1; Philippians 2:1; Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:1). Practice follows position, application flows out of sound theology.

That's what you see as Paul develops the doctrine of mortification in the book of Romans. Before you learn anything about the struggle you face as a Christian, before you hear the call to put that sin to death, you *first* learn how you should view sin. Here's how that section begins in chapter 6:

Our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves of sin; for he who has died is freed from sin (Romans 6:6-7).

Notice the syllogism in that verse, Paul's argument. Major premise: all those who die with Christ are free from sin. Minor premise: you died with Christ. Conclusion: you are free from sin.

Free. From. Sin.

Let that truth settle in your mind, Christian. Christ triumphed over your sin, and because of your union with Him, His victory becomes *your* victory. That's the reason you see the phrase "with Christ" throughout that entire section. You've been crucified *with Christ*, buried *with Christ*, and raised *with Christ*. *With Christ* means you are united with Him and *in Christ* you have participated in everything He accomplished.

The extent of your freedom becomes clear in Romans 6:11: "Consider yourself dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus." Don't miss the powerful point in that verse. It has huge implications for how

you fight against sin. You are *free* from sin (Romans 6:7); you are dead to sin (Romans 6:7, 11); you are alive to God in Christ.

Let me ask you this question: What difference does that perspective make when sin ambushes you? Do you think it would be to your advantage, at the moment of temptation, to see yourself as free from sin? What power does a dead, defeated enemy have over you?

I hope you see how that makes all the difference in the world. That's why Paul continues in verse 12, saying, "Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts." Sin is a conquered foe. Don't let it return to power in your life.

That's the vital first step to slaying sin in your life—don't give sin any power. By God's grace, by the power of the Spirit who indwells you, *you* call the shots in your life, *you* choose what you will and will not think about. You're not a victim here. You're not the defeated enemy here, sin is. Treat it like the cowering, quivering captive it is.

But you say, "Why does sin seem so strong?" Because you've been accustomed to thinking like a captive rather than a victor. You've been used to thinking like a slave of sin rather than a slave of Christ and righteousness. If you understand who you really are in Christ, you undermine sin's ability to deceive you and gain a foothold in your life.

You were once *enslaved* to sin. It owned and controlled you. But now, because of Christ you're *free from* it and *dead to* it. He purchased you out of the slave market of sin and made you *His* slave. You are now *in Christ*.

That's your position as a Christian. Understand and enjoy it. That's step one in slaying sin. Step two, coming soon...

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