Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Dying to Live, Part 2
Scripture: Romans 6:6-10
Code: 45-46

We return again tonight to the sixth chapter of Romans. I trust that your heart is prepared for the receiving of the Lord's Word. These are great days for me in studying Romans chapter 6. Through the history of the church, this particular chapter has been much studied and much discussed, and there is a veritable wealth of material on it. And I find myself being enriched day by day as I'm exposed to all that's been said and thought and taught on this marvelous chapter. And even with all of that, I find the Spirit of God giving me fresh insight and joyous sense of discovery as I go through this great chapter.

John Newton ran away to sea early in his life, finally arrived in Africa, and in kind of a reverse of normal roles, he was sold as a slave to a Negro woman. He sank so low that he lived on the crumbs from her table, and his biographer tells us he ate wild yams, which he dug out of the ground at night. His clothing was reduced to a single shirt, which he periodically washed in the ocean. When he finally escaped his slavery situation, he went to the natives, and he accepted their rather base kind of life.

It really doesn't seem possible for a civilized educated man to have sunk to the level that John Newton did, but the power of God laid hold on him in that situation through a missionary in Africa. He became a sea captain. And later in his life, he became a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ. He wrote many marvelous hymns. Perhaps the most popular of all, “Glorious things of Thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God.”

Soon, he became the pastor of a church in London, and there is still and epitaph in that churchyard where John Newton was the pastor, an epitaph which he himself wrote. It reads this way: “Sacred to the memory of John Newton, once a libertine and blasphemer and slave of slaves in Africa, but renewed, purified, pardoned and appointed to preach that gospel which he had labored to destroy.”

Now what changes a life like that? What can so powerfully and so dramatically and so totally change someone? How does it happen that Paul can say in 1 Timothy 1, “I was a blasphemer and injurious, but the Lord counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry”? How can it say in 1 Corinthians chapter 6 that homosexuals and murderers and adulterers and fornicators and people like that will never enter the kingdom of heaven and yet say, “And such were some of you, but you are washed and you are sanctified”? What is it that can so dramatically change a life?

Well, the answer to that question is found in this sixth chapter of Romans which tells us about the total transformation of a life through the salvation offered in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ can totally

change a person from the inside out.

In the book of Galatians, for example, there's a very key verse. If you haven't memorized it, you should. Underline it. Circle it in your Bible. Put an asterisk by it. Galatians 2:20: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” What a great truth: “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me...,” a new “I.” The old “I” is gone, dead; a new “I” lives, one with Christ.

The moment we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, by a divine miracle, we are crucified with Him. We are buried with Him. We die in His death, and then we rise in newness of life. We're transformed, and that is Paul's developing theme in Romans 6, 7, and 8. It is the result of sanctification.

Chapter 5, of justification, the result of justification – chapter 5 tells us that the first result of justification is security. We are secure in our salvation. Chapter 6 tells us the second one is holiness, a new “I.” Chapter 7 goes on to tell us another one of the results of justification is conflict, and we'll see that when we get there.

But for now, we're looking at the fact that when we are redeemed, we become a whole new person. The Lord who saves makes the one He saves holy. That's why it says in 1 Corinthians 1 verse 2, “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified...,” *hagios*, holy, called holy ones.

Now, it's kind of amazing to think of the Corinthians as being holy, isn't it? Amazing that they should be called “holy ones.” But even the Corinthians, with all of their problems and all of their failures and all of their sins, were nonetheless called “holy ones,” having been made holy in the act of redemption and salvation.

Now, through the first five chapters of Paul's epistle to the Romans, he has presented the idea of salvation by grace through faith, and the dominant theme of all of this has been the grace of God, super abounding grace, and so the key was in 5:20. We pointed that out last time: “Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” In other words, God's marvelous saving grace overrules the heinousness of sin. Now that is a climactic triumph for grace over sin.

Now having said that, Paul, like any good teacher, anticipates a certain reaction, and so as we enter into chapter 6 verse 1, we meet the antagonist. Paul knows this question will come. No doubt it had. It may well be that there were even some saying this in the city of Rome, as well.

The question, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may bound?” somebody's going to come along and say, “Your kind of gospel, Paul, leads to antinomianism. It leads to lawlessness. You go around preaching this grace kind of thing, and you're turning people loose. You’re letting the wraps off, you're taking away the binders, and you're giving them more liberty than they're to have. You can't preach that ‘pure grace’ stuff or people will run amok and they'll abuse it.”

And so Paul is anticipating there will be criticism from some who think this is too libertine a teaching, and may I submit to you that anybody who truly preaches the gospel of Jesus Christ is bound to be accused of this because indeed grace is grace. Now, if a preacher has never been accused of this, it's very likely that he's preaching law because if you preach grace, somebody's going to accuse you of turning people loose, setting them free. If they can sin and God will forgive them anyway, then, my goodness, why not just go ahead and sin all you want? That's inevitably going to be asked.

People who hold out for the fact that you can lose your salvation bring this argument: “Well, you mean that you can go out and do anything you want and the Lord is going to forgive it? Then we ought to just sin like mad and let God exercise all the grace He wants.”

And so the antagonist is really directing his antagonism or the reaction to the issue of grace salvation, and that brings us to this very important question in chapter 6: Can a person be a Christian and go on living in the same relationship to sin he had before he was saved? In other words, does salvation change you? Did you get that? Does salvation change you?

Some people believe that salvation is just a transaction. God just writes it down and changes your ultimate destiny but doesn't necessarily change you. What we're saying is the question has to be answered, “Does salvation really change you? Or can we go on living in the same relationship to sin that we had before?” And as I said last time, some people are saying salvation doesn't change you, and you can really be saved and still going on living the same kind of life you lived before. That is absolutely foreign to the teaching of this chapter.

Let's look at Paul's answer in verse 2: “God forbid,” *m genoito* – no, no, no, no, never, never, never, can't happen, no way, impossible, strongest negative that he can give. And then he says, "Here's the reason,” and here's the key to the whole section: “How shall we that have died to sin live any longer in it?” It's an indignant thought. It angers Paul. It outrages his sense of justification. The thought that we could go on in sin creates disgust. “How shall we that have died to sin..." is the proper rendering, “...that have died to sin live any longer in it?” It is a fundamental contradiction.

A believer, then, cannot go on in the same relationship to sin. He cannot live in the same bondage to sin that he had. He cannot go on continuing to sin at the same level, to the same degree that he did before he was saved. There must be a basic transformation, and that's why I've been teaching you all the way through the book of Romans. And there have been some interesting reaction to some of it,

but you cannot be saved and not be changed because salvation is a transformation.

In John 8:34, Jesus answered them, “Verily, verily I say unto you, whosoever commiteth sin, whosoever goes on committing sin, whosoever's pattern of life is to commit sin is the servant of sin.” Now, are you as a Christian still the servant of sin? Are you still in the same relationship to sin that you were?

Look at chapter 6 verse 18 and you find the answer. “Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.” Now, in salvation your bondage changes from being bound to sin you become bound to righteousness. From the unceasing incessant pattern of sin, you are transformed into one who responds to righteousness, a very important principle. You have died to sin.

This principle is repeated again and again in the Scripture. We talked about it in detail last time, so I'm not going to belabor the point, but let me just stress that a person who is saved is translated out of the kingdom of sin, out of the kingdom of darkness, out of the kingdom of death, out of the dominion of the forces of iniquity, out of the world. We have overcome the world it says in 1 John. We are delivered from the incessant unceasing, unending bondage of Satan, Ephesians 2. You were under the control of the prince of the power of the air. You were under the direct sovereignty of the ruler of the darkness of this world, but you have been set free from that. You have come into a new dimension, and so there is a new life – very, very important.

Now, the fundamental question here, keep in mind, beloved, is not in relation to our acts of sin. We'll get to that. It's in relation to the sin principle as a ruling dominating enslaving principle in life. Now, there are only two dominions in the terms of the apostle Paul, and to see them, all you need do is go back to chapter 5 verse 21. And here's the heart of his thinking: “As sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Now you only have two monarchs – first, sin; second, grace. And everybody in the world is under one or the other and not both at the same time. You're either dominated by sin, or you're dominated by God's grace. It's either sin that directs you or grace which works righteousness and eternal life – sin working death or grace working righteousness and life. And when you were lost, before you knew Christ, it was sin. And when you're saved, it is grace working righteousness and life.

So when it says that in verse 2, “We have died to sin,” it means we have died to the reign of sin; we have died to the dominion of sin. We are no longer in the same relationship to sin that we were in the past. Our citizenship is in heaven. We have a new master. As it says in chapter 6 verse 14 of Romans, "Sin shall not have dominion over you for you are not under the law anymore but under grace,” so sin is no longer your master.

So when a person is saved, there is a very great transaction that takes place on the legal aspect. God declares you righteous, but there also is a great transformation that takes place. You are taken out of the dominion of sin and placed in the dominion of God's grace working righteousness and life.

Now, in order to show the validity of this point, we have the argument in verses 3 to 14 – the antagonist in verse 1, the answer in verse 2, the argument 3 to 14, and we've been developing this argument. Let me just run by the first part as we've already seen it.

In chapter 6 verse 3, we find the first statement of the argument. Now, I'm going to get you back to this so you can follow the flow. Now, Paul says, “Let me show you what it means to have died to sin.” Number one, we are baptized into Christ: “Know ye not, that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?”

And the first thing we want you to see in the first part of the verse is that we were baptized into Christ. In other words, when you're saved, the idea of baptism is to immerse. You were literally immersed into Jesus Christ. It is obviously symbolized outwardly by the baptism of immersion, but he's not talking about baptism here. He's talking about the reality of an intimate living union with Jesus Christ. You were immersed into Christ. I could spend weeks just talking about what it means to be one with Christ. There are so many, many Scriptures that we are put into union with Him in every sense. It's just an incomprehensible monumental thought.

For example, there's a sense in which we even can identify with Him in His virgin birth because He was born of the Spirit, and we are born of the Spirit. And certainly, we can identify with Him in His circumcision. He was circumcised on the eighth day, and when He was circumcised it was a placing of Himself under the authority of the law as He had come to redeem those that were under the law.

And in a sense, we partake in His circumcision. In Colossians 2:11, “In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of flesh by the circumcision of Christ.” In other words, Christ was set apart. He was made pure, as it were, and we, identifying with Him, are made pure in Him.

There's a sense in which we can also identify even with His baptism for we, too, have been baptized by the Spirit of God. We can, in a sense, be identified in His sufferings for we bear in our bodies the marks of Jesus Christ. We know the fellowship of His sufferings. We are united with Him in His life. We are united with Him in His eternal, glorious likeness as we are made into His image and conformed to that image more and more until someday we're like Him for we see Him as He is.

And so there's a sense of our union with Christ that we could just study that alone for great, great lengths of time. I suppose it could be summed up, I think it's Hebrews 2:11, “...He is not ashamed to call us brethren.” He's not ashamed to identify Himself with us – how marvelous. So, first of all, when

you became a Christian, you are put in union with Jesus Christ.

Now, the second point that he makes is we are identified in Christ in His death and resurrection. It says in verse 3 we were baptized into His death, and verse 4, “Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been grown together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.”

Notice the word “likeness” there. We didn't actually die physically. We didn't actually rise physically but in the “likeness” of it. In other words, it happened in that manner that we were identified in His death and resurrection spiritually. We didn't actually die but are in the likeness of His death, in the likeness of His resurrection.

And as we saw last time, the spiritual point here is this – that when you came to Christ and believed in Him, immediately by divine miracle, you died. Your old life died, and you rose to walk in newness of life. It's just marvelous. He makes a point of Christ being buried as He was – it says in verse 3 that He was dead, and then verse 4, “...we are buried with Him...,” burial being the proof of death. When Christ was buried, it was the affirmation that He was truly dead, and, in a sense, when we are buried with Him, it affirms that we really died.

Now, what is it saying? It's saying that there's no “old you” around; there's no “old nature” around. Now, I know some people can't quite understand that because they've been taught that all their life, that there's an old nature and a new nature, and the old nature's a black dog, and the new nature's a white dog, and whichever one you say “sick ‘em” to is going to be the one that wins.

Now, maybe you heard that kind of theology, but the essence of what he is saying here is that there's no “old you” left. You were so dead you got what? Buried. And what came out of that grave, "...nevertheless I live; yet not I..." What “I”? The old “I.” It's a new “I,” but it's not the old “I.” What new “I” is it? “It is Christ in me.” It's a new “I.”

Now, folks, we're not dealing with experience yet. We're not dealing with practical things. We're dealing with terms. We're dealing with trying to understand redemptive fact, and it's important or it wouldn't be in the Scripture. So “we have died to sin.” How? “Buried in His death, risen to walk in newness of life.” Great truth.

Let's go to the third point and pick it up where we left off last time. This is really interesting. A third point in Paul's progressive thought is that the body of sin has been destroyed. Now, this really is difficult for some folks, but look at verse 6, very simple: “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.”

Now, the third point in his flow of reasoning is that the body of sin has been destroyed, to put it in King James language. Now, let's look at that verse, verse 6. “Knowing this...” What is that? Well, that's an appeal to common knowledge. “We all know this.” Isn't it interesting how, here we are, 2000 years later, and most of us don't know it?

I mean, part of the problem with Christians not being able to live the Christian life the way it ought to be lived is they don't know who they are. I mean, I know one pastor who told people when they were going to get married, “Take a shower together so you get to kind of know each other, and don't worry about sin because, you see, that's your old nature. And what are you going to do? Your old nature is going to do its thing anyway, so that's just your old nature.” Oh? What old nature? You mean the one that's dead and buried?

You see, if you hold a dualistic view like that, then you can excuse all kinds of things. The upshot of what this man believed was no church discipline because when people do evil that's just the old nature. What are you going to do with the old nature? It's going to do its thing anyway. No chastening, didn't believe the passage in Hebrews applied to the current time, no chastening of believers. Why would the Lord chasten the old nature? You can't correct it. You can't do anything about it, and it's still there, so it's bound to stick up its ugly head.

And you're not two things, hassling back and forth inside, because he says here it's common knowledge. Perhaps it was more common in those days than it is now. “Knowing this...,” he appeals to the common knowledge among believers, including the Romans. This is basic to our understanding of our redemption. This is basic stuff.

And what is it? Three facts in verse 6 – marvelous things. Fact number one: “...our old man is crucified with Him...” Our old man is crucified with Him. Now, it isn't just wounded. It's dead. That's what he says.

You say, “Well, what is the ‘old man’?” What is the “old man”? Well, I'd like you to find out what the old man is. You know, whenever I want to know one of these terms that I can't quite understand, I just look around the Bible till I find it, and it usually pops up. This one happens to pop up in Ephesians 4:22, and here's a definition of the old man. Ephesians 4:22, look what it says: “That you put off concerning the former manner of life, the old man.” What is the “old man”? What is it? Your what? Former manner of life. What kind was it? Keep reading. “...which is...,” what? “...corrupt.”

What is the “old man,” then? Your old, corrupt self, your unregenerate self. That's what it is. And it's contrasted in verse 24: “...that you put on the new man...” What is the “new man”? “...after God, it's created in...,” what? “...righteousness and true holiness.”

Now, what are you? Are you old man and new man fighting each other? You'll never find that in the Bible. Are you old nature and new nature hassling? No. You have put off the old man. You have put on the new man. “The old man was corrupt according to deceitful lust, your former manner of life. The new one is created in righteousness and true holiness.” To put it in the terms of Paul to the Corinthians, “If any man be in Christ he is a...,” what? “...new creation..." Now, that's the old self.

Now go back to Romans chapter 6. Oh, wait a minute. Stay in Ephesians. I want to make a couple of comments cause some of you maybe sort of looking around wondering about a couple of things. I just thought of that. I probably ought to clear some things there.

Sometimes the Ephesians passage, where it says in verse 22 that you put off concerning the former manner of life, the old man, sometimes that's seen as a command. And it seems, to some people, that Paul is saying here to you Christians, “Now, you Christians, go ahead and put off that old man. You just go ahead and put off that former manner of life, that old man.”

But you see, in Romans chapter 6, it says the old man's already dead. So how do we harmonize those? Well, it fits well into the context to see the infinitive here in verse 22 “to put off,” the infinitive in verse 24 “to put on,” as what John Murray calls “infinitives of result,” and he's not alone in this. He translates it this way: “So that ye have put off according to the former manner of life the old man,” so that it is not a command but a statement of fact.

Bishop Handley Moule, long ago, translated this verse that, “You were taught in Christ with regard to the fact that your old man was laid aside.” Martyn LloydJones translates it, “Do not go on living as if you were still that old man because that old man has died. Do not go living on on living as if he was still there.” That's the point.

And I think we are doing justice to the original language, and we are making Paul consistent when we see this not as a command but as a statement of fact. He is saying, “You – “ in verse 20 “ – have not so learned Christ. You didn't learn Christ to continue in your sin. You have put off the old manner of life, the old man and put on the new man.”

But even if you want to fight to the death for the fact that this is a command in the passage, it then only embellishes the earlier fact that if it is true that you have, in fact, put off the old self, if you have in fact seen the death of the old man, then certainly, in practice, you ought to be living it out that way. And we'll talk more about that in the future, but I'm comfortable with the fact that here Paul is making statements of fact.

Look at Colossians 3:9 and 10 because here is the thing to me that is so convincing about the proper interpretation of Ephesians. Colossians is a parallel book and Colossians deals in a parallel sense

with Ephesians. You know that if you've read the two books. They really do parallel each other, and in Colossians 3:9, “Lie not one to another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds and have put on the new man.” That's a statement of definition about a Christian – since you've done that.

Now, let's go back to Romans 6:6 and see if that isn't consistent. We've already put off the old man. Why? Romans 6:6, “Knowing this...,” common knowledge, “...our old man is crucified with Him.” Now, let me just bring another thought into this place. The word “old” in the English could come from two Greek words: *archaios*, from which we get “archaic,” or *palaios*. *Archaios* means “old in point of time.” *Palaios* means “old in point of use.” And *palaios* is used here, old in the sense that it's worn out, useless, fit for the dump, the scrap heap, to be discarded. It's the old man in that sense, the useless man, the unfit man, the man only fit for the scrap heap, the person we were before salvation, doomed, damned, depraved, unregenerate, useless.

So what is the “old man”? It is the unregenerate nature. It is described for us in chapter 5. It is the inAdam man. Chapter 5 verse 12 says that, “As by one man's sin entered the world and death by sin, so death passed upon all men for all have sinned.” And then in verse 14, “...death reigned from Adam to Moses...” Adam was the identifier, in terms of the fifth chapter, of those in sin. Being in Adam was being in sin. Being in Christ was being in grace.

“...as in Adam, all...,” what? “...died, so in Christ shall all...,” what? “...be made alive.” So it is the old man, the Adamic nature, the unregenerate nature, the old nature, if you like that term. “What I was in Adam,” it is the old ego of Galatians 2:20. “I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live but not I,” not the old “I,” a new one.

And what Paul is insisting in this text and it is germane to his doctrine of justification is that when a person is redeemed, there is a breach. There is a complete cleavage with complete dissection, if you will, of the person from the old sin nature. It is not a process. It is an already completed reality. And to suppose that the old man has been crucified and still lives on, or, as some people say, it's been crucified, but it also rose from the grave with us is to contradict the whole point of what Paul is saying.

Our old man has been crucified, not our old man is in the process of being crucified. Some people are running around saying, “I'm trying to crucify the old man.” You're wasting your time, folks. It's already been crucified. You are a new creation.

Now, let me add this. You are a new creation, but you are a new creation not yet perfect – not yet perfect – but nonetheless a new creation. The old man is the unregenerate man. The new man is the regenerate man. You are one new man. The old man ceased to exist. That's what Griffith Thomas, the commentator of years ago, said.

So it is clear that, through all these statements, justification or salvation is very important, people. It causes a radical change in the nature of a person. So when someone comes along and they're living in the same old relationship to sin, under the same old tyranny of sin with the same old lifestyle, no matter what they claim, the fact is, if there hasn't been a radical demonstrable change in the reality of who they are, then they have not been redeemed. Very important. Substantial truth. The old man, the sin nature, is dead and the new holy nature is born.

Now, second fact – now, whatever was difficult with this passage, that wasn't – was it? I mean, it's pretty obvious. Second fact, now that the old man is crucified, it says that the body of sin might be destroyed. Now, what is this? And we're really getting in deep theologically, folks. Hang on to your hat here.

“The body of sin might be destroyed.” “What in the world? You mean when I became a Christian the body of sin was destroyed?” Well, that's what it says. You say, “I don't think I'm a Christian. I mean, I didn't even know what sin was before I was saved. Now that I'm saved, all I can see is sin. What are you saying to me? You say I'm supposed to be perfect?”

Well, let's see what he means. “The body of sin might be destroyed.” Now, Paul conceives of sin as associated to the body. I mean, it's obvious. If you follow his argument all the way into chapter 8, he talks about, chapter 8 verse 10, “If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin.” Verse 11, “If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also give life to your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you.”

Chapter 8, he's definitely talking about a mortal body, a physical body. He connects it with sin. In verse 13, he says, “If you live after the flesh, you'll die, but if you, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body,” which appear to be sinful deeds, “you shall live.” In verse 23, he says, “And not only they, but ourselves also, we have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption that is the redemption of our body.” In other words, we face the fact that as long as we're in this body we have a problem with sin. So the body is connected with sin in Paul's thinking, not only in Romans 8 but in many other places.

Let me just say, to save a lot of time in chasing around with everybody's viewpoint, that the expression “the body of sin” is best seen as referring to our humanness under the absolute domination and control of sin, okay? As conditioned and controlled by sin. It is, apparently, a genitive of possession. A person's body before salvation is totally and utterly in the possession of the sinful nature.

So you've got the old man controlling the body, and by “body,” I don't think we're necessarily just talking about the physical body, but I think we're talking about humanness which, of course, is manifest through our physical bodies. And so, because of our union in Christ's death, the body of the

believer is no longer the possession of sin, no longer controlled and conditioned and solely dominated by sin. And I think that's what Paul has in mind.

I'm trying to cover a lot of things, and my mind is filled with them. I hope I don't leave any out. But 1 Corinthians 6 comes to mind, verse 19, “What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have of God? And you are not your own for you are bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body.”

And this is in that fornication text where he's saying, “Look, your body is not any longer under the domination of sin. It is not any longer conditioned and utterly absolutely controlled by the sin principle, and so you don't want to yield to that because your body is now under the control of the Holy Spirit.”

It's the same thing, I think, that Paul has in mind later on in Romans, chapter 12, where he points out the fact that we are to present our bodies as living sacrifices which are holy and acceptable unto God as an act of spiritual worship. So I think the best way to see this – some commentators see it as the body representing the mass of sin – I kind of lean to the idea that he's referring here to the fact that our old man has been crucified which, as a result, has destroyed the dominion of sin over our humanness. It is not to say now that the body is evil all the time and only evil. That's not true. I don't see that.

I see the body as potentially good. How else could it be offered to God as a sacrifice? How else can our bodies be given to Him for His use? But in our humanness, before we were saved, sin totally dominated, totally controlled.

You say, “Well, now that I'm saved, what's the deal?” Sin is no longer in control. It no longer is the tyrant. It no longer calls all the shots. It no longer is the sovereign. You no longer are its slave, and that's why it's so stupid to sin – because you don't have to, see. The tyranny is broken.

In chapter – well, let me save that. I don't want to give too much away. Well, I'll tell you – Romans 7:23. I just have to. I'm having a great time sorting all this out in my mind. Paul looks at his body. He says, “I see a law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity the law of sin, sin which is in my members.” What does he mean by that? “Sin which is in my members.”

Then, back in verse 18, “I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing...” In both of those cases, I think he's looking at his humanness. It is his humanness. Innately, in that humanness, there is the potential for evil and sin. There are instincts. There are bents. There are propensities that become bridgeheads for the attack of the enemy to lead us into sin.

So the body, I think, in Paul's terminology, is basically the bridgehead. It is the vehicle by which sin manifests itself. And so the unregenerate person, in his humanness, is totally controlled by sin.

Let me put it another way. An unregenerate person can do nothing really good. As I told you some months ago, he can do “bad-good,” but not “good-good.” In other words, he can do human good that isn't good as far as God's concerned. That's “bad-good,” but he can't do “good-good,” which is goodness that's not only good, as it reaches out to men, but it's good as it reaches to God because the motive is to glorify Him and the strength is found in the power of the Spirit of God. So, when you become a Christian, according to verse 6, that dominant tyranny of sin over the body is broken, and there's a new controlling agent.

Go to verse 16 of Romans 6. “Know ye not, that to whom you yield yourself servants to obey, His servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness.” Now, all of a sudden, you've yielded yourself to God, and God is the monarch, and God is the ruler. Verse 17, “God be thanked, whereas you were the servants of sin, you've obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to you, and you've been made free from sin and become the servants of righteousness.” You see, you have a new monarch. You have a new lord. You have a new master. Sin is no longer the utter absolute controlling factor.

Galatians 5:24, “And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” Did you get that? Now, that's a positional statement. It has practical workings that we'll see as we go along, but I'm just trying to tell you who you are, right now. A little while later we'll tell about how we ought to behave. But the flesh has been killed in terms of its tyranny, in terms of its dominance, not necessarily – are you ready for this? – in terms of its presence.

Martyn LloydJones used to give an illustration of this. He said there were two fields with a little road in the middle, and all his life, before he knew Christ, he lived in the field over here. Satan was the dominant force in that field, and Satan drove him and dictated to him and told him what to do and his humanness and his flesh and his body was used for sin. And then, by the grace of God he crossed over into the new field. And that field is under the dominion of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it's controlled by righteousness and by holiness, and that is the new ruler and the new monarch.

But he said, “I always seem to have a hard time because I keep hearing Satan across the road yelling orders at me. And though I am not under his dominion, he has a very clever way of making me interested in what he's asking me to do.” There's no real tyranny there, but it comes to us in enticing terms, and often, though it's not necessary to do it, we fall prey to that very thing from which we've been delivered. And we'll talk about how we deal with that when we get to the practical.

Now, notice again, back into verse 6, the body of sin is destroyed. “Destroy” is probably a bad selection of terms because it gives us the idea that maybe the sin nature has been eradicated.

Katarge has been used by some to teach the eradication of the sin nature. In other words, you never sin again after you're saved. You might make mistakes, but they're different.

The term occurs 27 times in the New Testament, but just its usage in Romans would help us to get a better feeling for what he means by this. For example, in Romans 3:3 – you don't have to turn to it. Just listen, and follow my thinking. In Romans 3:3, he's speaking of the apostasy of Israel. Paul says, “Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?” Now, *katarge* is the word “without effect.” It couldn't mean “destroyed” because nothing could destroy the faith of God.

Again, having presented the magnificent case for the doctrine of grace, Paul says, in chapter 3, “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: we establish the law.” And again, it couldn't be rendered, “Do we destroy the law?” The law is eternal and is not to be destroyed by any man. In Romans 4:14, it says, “For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect.” And, of course, the promise of God could never be really destroyed.

The word is better translated, in those passages I just read you, “of none effect.” The idea is that here the body of sin loses its dominance. It loses its total control. I think, in chapter 7 – do you see it in verse 2? “A woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as she lives. If the husband be dead, she is loosed...” Same word. It doesn't mean she's destroyed. It means she's free from the dominance of that husband. He's dead.

It means then, according to Thayer, “to render idle, inactive, inoperative, to deprive of its strength.” I like that one – “to make of none effect, to deprive of force influence or power, to bring to naught.” And what it's saying is that the body of sin is deprived of its dominant power, its controlling power. I think, really, Phillips translated well the thought and intent of the verse, “Let us never forget that our old selves died with Him on the cross that the tyranny of sin over us might be broken.”

Let's go to the third fact. First fact, the old man's crucified. Second fact, the body of sin is rendered inoperative, or sin's tyranny is made of no effect. “That...,” it’s the third “that” here, “...henceforth we should not serve sin." That is a fact, not a request, folks. That is a fact. We will no longer serve sin.

It doesn't say we won't sin, but it's not a tyranny anymore. You don't have to sin. If you're unregenerate, what do you have to do? Sin. Even the best thing you do, according to Isaiah, the righteousness that you would consider to be the best you do is as what? Filthy rags.

So the tyranny of sin is total domination, but in the crucifixion of Christ and our death in Him, the old man dies. The body of sin is rendered inoperative in terms of its tyranny, and henceforth we no longer are under slavery to sin, *douleu*, to be enslaved, to be bond slaves. We are no longer bond slaves to sin, and that's what I read you earlier in 6:17 and 18 – 18 particularly, “We've been made free from sin and become the slaves of righteousness.”

Now, the controlling force in our life is grace and godliness and righteousness and holiness, and Paul reaffirms the reason for this in verse 7: “For he that is dead is freed from sin.” He that is dead is freed from sin. Again, it's not so much the idea that we are dead. It's the idea that “we who died,” aorist tense. We who died are freed from sin, and that's the whole point that he's making. We are freed from sin's tyranny.

Now, let me say, at this point, it doesn't mean that we are freed again from sin's presence. Sin is still around us, and, as long as our humanness is there, as long as our flesh is there, we're going to have to struggle with that. As long as we can still hear the voice of Satan yelling from the field across the road, and as long as we still have some of those old human bents and propensities, we're going to have some problems. But his point here is that in dying with Christ, sin is no longer reigning, ruling over us. Just a very, very important truth.

And I think I will just add as a footnote here, that's the reason if a Christian sins, he's responsible because sin does not have the tyranny. First Peter 4, just to bring Peter into the picture to let you know he taught the same thing, “For as much then as Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that has suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.” And Peter's lining us up with the death of Christ, and he's saying, in effect, that in being crucified with Christ, you've ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the lust of men, but to the will of God. Again, Peter is saying, 1 Peter 4:1 and 2, that the tyranny and the bondage of sin has been broken.

Now, it might be a good footnote to look at Romans 7:20 for just a moment. What happens when you do sin? Who is it? Just listen to this: “Now if I do what I would not, it is no more I that do it.”

“Well, what are you saying?” It's not the new “I.” It's not the “new person,” the “new man,” the “new creation.” But it is what? Sin that dwelleth in me. The new “I” has been freed from sin. The new “I” is a new creation. The new “I” is the marvelous divine nature, as Peter calls it, planted in the life of the believer. The new “I” is Christ in you, the life of God and the soul of man.

It's not that that's sinning. It's that sin that's around it, surrounds that new “I”, that humanness that's there that becomes still the bridgehead, but we don't have to sin because the tyranny is broken. That's the essence. A justified person is set free from sin.

Now, let's look at a fourth principle, just very quickly. It's a very simple one, a fourth principle. First principle, we are baptized into Christ; secondly, we're baptized into Christ's death and resurrection; thirdly, the body of sin is rendered inoperative or no longer in control. And now, let me give you a fourth. The death of Christ was a death to sin. The death of Christ was a death to sin.

Now, hang in there, folks – verse 8. Here is the sort of the sum up of what he said: “Now if we be – if we have died again,” same idea, really, “if we have died with Christ, we believe we shall also live with Him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dies no more; death has no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin...,” how many times? Once and that he lives – he lives unto God.

Now, here in verse 8, to begin with, you have the same ideas we have in verse 3 and verse 5. We have died with Christ, and we now have risen in new life with Christ. This is a certainty. He says, “We believe that we also shall live with Him,” and the future tense doesn't point, I don't think, to heaven. I think it points to certainty – from here and now throughout forever in heaven. We participate in the same holy life that our Lord lives now and forever.

Then, verse 9, again, building on the same thought, “Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dies no more; death has no more dominion over Him.” In other words, we have died once in Christ. We rise to walk in newness of life. We are certain of that forever because verse 9 says Christ is never going to die again. Why? Because the dominion of sin was broken the first time, right? It was broken the first time.

And how do we know that? How do we know that Christ really broke the power of sin the first and only time He died? How do we know that? Because God what? Raised Him from the dead. And when He came out of the grave, He showed that He had broken the dominion of sin because sin's power, sin's sting, sin's executioner is death. And when He conquered death, He showed that He had indeed conquered sin. It was a decisive, complete, and final victory. There will be no more added to it. Never.

And then, the climax in verse 10, and we're going to stop with verse 10. And here's the key: “For in that He died, He died unto sin once: in that He lives, He lives unto God.” There are two elements that I want you to see, and then we're going to close. And it's been marvelous, your patience through this difficult part.

First, He died once. Once. A victory that needs no repetition. Verse 9 says, “He will die no more.” Why? Because death has no more power. He has broken that power. This is a very, very important principle to the writer of the book of Hebrews.

The writer of Hebrews shows how, in the Old Testament, they had to kill an animal and then another animal and another animal and another animal. It just kept going and going and going and going, and he makes a marvelous contrast, and he says that, “But Christ, the Lamb of God, the Priest of the Most High God, the true Priest, and the true Offering, offered sacrifice for sin once,” right?. Once. And by His one offering, he says, "...he perfected forever them that are sanctified.” He makes a major point out of the “once” idea, particularly in Hebrews 7 and in Hebrews 9 and Hebrews 10:10. Once.

So when Christ died once, came out of the grave, He showed He had broken the power of sin, so when we believe in Him and are placed in His death and resurrection, we too have broken the power of sin permanently, and it'll never lay claim on us again. It'll never be our tyrant.

Then there's a second thought in verse 10 that I want to close with, and this is the key to unlocking some of your thoughts that will pull it all together. "In that He died, He died unto sin." What does that mean? Theologians have wrestled over that phrase "He died unto sin." What does it mean? We died to sin back in verse 2. "How shall we that have died to sin?" And "He died to sin" in verse 10.

Now, what does it mean that "we died to sin"? Well, whatever it means that we died to sin, it means that He died to sin. Whatever way He died to sin, we died to sin. What does it mean? How can Christ's death be a death to sin and our death be a death to sin? Whatever it means for us it means for Him, whatever it means for Him it means for us, and we have to understand this.

Some have tried to teach that when it says "we die to sin," it means that we no longer are sensitive to sin. Is that true? It can't be true. It can't be true. It can't be true for Christ. He never was sensitive to sin. He never was victimized by sin, so He can't stop being victimized by it. Christ could not have become insensitive to sin through the cross. He never was sensitive to the sin. Whatever it means that He died unto sin, it means for us to die unto sin because we died unto sin in Him, right? In His death.

Some people teach that it means that we ought to die to sin. It doesn't say we ought to die; it says we have. And Christ certainly – couldn't be said of Him that He ought to die to sin also. What does it mean?

Some people say, "Well, when Christ died to sin, it means that He became perfect." No, because He was always perfect, and, also, we didn't become perfect, so it doesn't mean that. What does it mean? Two things – and I think this is simple enough. First, He died to the guilt of sin – to the guilt of sin. This is the legal sense.

Romans 6:23 says, "The wages of sin is...," what? "...death." That's sin's penalty, and when Jesus died on the cross, He died to sin in terms of paying the penalty. He died to the guilt of sin. Let's put it this way, He died to the penalty of sin. Jesus paid it all – all to Him what? I owe. Jesus paid the penalty. He met sin's demand. God says, "You sin, you die." Jesus said, "I'll take that death for every man."

So He died unto sin once in paying the penalty. Now, that's a forensic thing. That's a legal thing, but it's nonetheless the fact. Jesus died unto sin in the sense of paying the penalty.

Now, listen to this. This is marvelous. When we died in Christ, our penalty was paid also, and that's why the law and sin has no more power over us in terms of penalty. That's why you don't have to go to hell to pay for your sins – because they've been paid for.

Now, let's say you go out and murder a whole bunch of people. How many times can the law take your life? How many times? Once. What happens if they take you up there in the gas chamber and they put you in and – pshhh – and you're gassed, and you're dead, and they walk in and unstrap you, and you go, “Ah, it's good to be back”?

Do want to know something? That's the law's tough luck. It has no claim on you. You paid the penalty. It just so happened that you rose from the dead. That's exactly what happened in the cross. The wages of your sin was your death, and you died in Jesus Christ. And you paid the penalty, and that's why sin has no claim on you.

And so, when it says in verse 2 that we have died to sin, and it says in verse 10 that He died to sin, we come together, and both of us can die to sin in the sense of paying the penalty. There's only one way for you to deal with your sin, folks. You've got to die, and you either die in hell forever paying for them, or you die in Jesus Christ. The choice is yours.

But there's one other thing. He not only died to the penalty of sin – would you listen to this? And here's the thing I think most people misunderstand – He died to the power of sin. He broke the power of sin. It's not something in the future. He did it then. He broke the power of sin.

You say, “Well, wait a minute. Was He under sin?” Sure, He was. He bore in His own body our sins. In fact, in 2 Corinthians 5:21 – this is a statement beyond all comprehension – it says, “He was made sin for us.” Temporarily under its power like you can't believe. And by dying, He bore the weight of sin, and by rising, He broke the power of sin. And He entered a new state no longer under the power of sin, no longer under the dominion of sin. And you and I came out of that grave with Him and we are no longer under its power either. No longer do we pay its penalty. No longer are we under its power.

So a twofold death to sin, I think that's exactly what Augustus Toplady had in mind when he wrote the familiar hymn “Rock of Ages,” and one of the lines is “Be of sin the double cure; saved from wrath and makes me pure.” You hear it? In the death of Christ, as we put our faith in Him, we die, and we are saved from wrath because we died of the penalty in Him, and we are made pure because we died of the power in Him.

Summing it up, Dr. Needham has written an interesting book called *Birthright* that deals with some of these things, says, “A Christian is not simply a person who gets forgiveness, who gets to go to heaven, who gets the Holy Spirit, who gets a new nature. Mark this, a Christian is a person who has

become someone he was not before. A Christian, in terms of his deepest identity, is a saint, a born child of God, a divine masterpiece, a child of light, a citizen of heaven. Not only positionally (true in the mind of God, but not true in actuality here on earth), not only judicially (a matter of God's moral bookkeeping), but actually. Becoming a Christian is not just getting something no matter how wonderful that something may be. It is becoming someone."

And so let's go back to John Newton. Listen to what he said – same man we started with, "I am not what I ought to be. I am not what I wish to be. I am not even what I hope to be. But by the cross of Christ, I am not what I was." Let's pray.

Father, we feel like our feeble minds have been stretched to the breaking point. Help us, by faith, to accept what we can understand. Leave the mystery to eternity. It is enough to know that sin's tyranny is broken in salvation and that men are redeemed unto holiness and that we cannot have the same relationship to sin we had before. And anyone who thinks that he may go on sinning in the same way that grace may abound doesn't understand redemption. Thank You for the actuality, not only the positional truth and the judicial fact, but the actual reality that we are new, brand new, all new creations fit for eternity.

Father, help us who have been freed from sin to listen no longer to its voice, knowing we need not for we are now under the leadership of the Lord by grace through righteousness to holiness. Help us as we continue in this marvelous chapter to see the unfolding of Your description of what it is to be a Christian. Thank You that You transformed John Newton and that he was totally transformed. Thank You, also, that he recognized that though he wasn't what he used to be, he still wasn't what he ought to be. Help us, Father, who are new to listen to You and the Spirit and move forward to Christlikeness. We pray in His name. Amen.

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