

Dead Men Don't Sin

Romans 6:1-10

LTS. Col. 2:1-14

Sanctification always follows justification because in Christ you have died to sin and are raised to a new kind of life.

This morning we pick up where we left off at the beginning of Romans chapter six. The opening verses of this amazing chapter reminded us of a biblical teaching that many modern evangelicals neglect and some take offense at. Specifically, I'm speaking of the N.T. doctrine that teaches us that when a man receives a new relationship with Jesus, he invariably receives a new relationship with sin as well. In fact, the title of the message last week was...

Your New Relationship with Sin.

In that message we were reminded that in Paul's Gospel, Justification and Sanctification are a package deal. They don't come to the believer separately or at different times. To the contrary, the moment a sinner savingly believes in Jesus Christ, the grace of God rolls in like an overwhelming flood and washes away all the guilt of their sin. And then (as if that weren't enough) it changes that new believer at the level of his heart by releasing him from slavery to sin.

Beloved, I want you to know that I am praying for you as we walk through this series of messages. And the reason I feel especially compelled to pray for you is because, as your pastor and biblical counselor and fellow Christian, I am convinced that many who hear these messages have for years (perhaps decades) believed that they are enslaved by the power of specific sins from which they can never escape.

But O my friend, Paul is here to deliver to you Good News this day. Namely, that In Christ, you have already been delivered NOT only from the guilt of sin, but also from the Power of sin. When Paul proclaims the Gospel of Jesus, his preaching is about a Savior who "Breaks the power of canceled sin and sets the prisoner free!" And I want you to be free and live in the joyful freedom that is yours in Christ by the power of grace.

These truths are some of the deepest, most powerful and relevant teachings in the Bible for Jesus-followers like you and me. And Paul believes that you need to know them. I think that

accounts for why in this passage he emphasizes the the need to “Know” them 3 times in this text.

But before we dig into this passage, let’s take a moment to read it.

Please open your Bible to Romans 6, stand with me in honor of God’s word and follow along as I read verses 1-10

Read Rom. 6:1-10

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.

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.

He who has ears to hear, let Him hear.

You may be seated

The question we should ask at this point is, What did Jesus do to free me from the power of sin and ensure my sanctification? Simply stated,

- He died
- He arose from the dead
- He ascended to His Father.

These three actions of Jesus provide the fundamental structure of this text. But I think Paul would insist that I refer to them as benefits that believers receive. And this will serve as the outline for the message.

I. In Christ I Have Died:

II. In Christ I was Raised:

III. In Christ I am Free: Free, that is, from the tyranny of sin. That's what sanctification is all about.

Now, before we start in on the three points, I want you to know that these three benefits come to us from one glorious reality. And that glorious reality is our Union with Christ. Usually, when Paul speaks of our Union with Christ, he uses the term *en Christo*, or "In Christ." This is such an important term in Paul's theology that he uses it 73 times in his letters.

As an interesting side note, Paul makes a brief statement in his final greetings at the end of Romans, and he says (Rom. 16:7),

"Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me.

It just gives us a little insight into how the early Christians referred to one another: "in Christ."

As I have said many times before, the doctrine of Union with Christ is perhaps the sweetest and more important doctrine in the N.T. Scottish pastor and theologian, John Murray, said, "Union with Christ is the central doctrine of salvation." Why would he say such a thing? Well, because everything we receive from God comes to us "in Christ." And Everything that belongs to Him belongs to you! When God thinks of you, he sees Christ.

Beloved, truths like this should help us when we pray. We should train ourselves to use biblical theology in our prayers. "O Father, today has been a really hard day, but I'm so grateful that because of your super-abounding grace I am in Christ. So, all your promises to me are "Yes," and "Amen."

The doctrine of "Union with Christ is critical for understanding the text before us. Without it, we will be left scratching our heads, wondering what it all means. This is the glorious reality from which the three benefits of Christ flow to those who believe.

So here we go. The first point of the our message is...

I. In Christ You Have Died

1. You will remember from last week that certain people had a problem with the Gospel of justification by faith alone. I'll let Stephen Yuille set the stage. He writes, " "Paul. I want a word with you.' Paul stops dead in his tracks. I understand your teaching on justification, but I'm very concerned. This notion that our works don't contribute to our justification will result in laxity. It will make people think they can live however they like.

How does Paul respond? We have his answer in verses 1-23.¹

2. Paul's answer (v. 1) is "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may abound? By no means. How can we who died to sin still live in it?"

3. Paul was struck with horror at the possibility that that a Christian might be found giving himself over to a life of godlessness and sin in the name of grace

4. Paul understood that the grace that justifies us is the same grace that sanctifies us.

A. In the N.T., grace is not a sentimental disposition or a warm positive feeling.

B. No! grace is the very power of God that transforms sinner into saints, and rebels into joyful servants of Christ. And how does he do that? He causes us to die to sin. Note what Paul says: "How can we who died to sin still live in it?" Answer: It is impossible.

5. Now it is critical that we understand what Paul means by sin _We died to sin. But Paul is not speaking about specific acts of sin. He is thinking of sin in terms of a realm or a government or a kingdom. Before we were born again, we lived in the realm, the kingdom of sin. Paul makes this point to the church in Colossae when he declares,

(1:13–14)

[God the Father] "has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

¹ J. Stephen Yuille, *The Obedience of Faith: Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, (Peterborough, Ontario, Canada, H&E Publishing, 2021), 173

6. Here in Romans (back in 5:21) Paul says that sin reigned in death but grace reigned in righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

7. So, Paul is arguing that there are two realms or kingdoms. The kingdom of sin and death whose representative head is Adam, and the kingdom of grace whose representative head is Christ our savior and Lord.

8. There was a time when every one of us were citizens of the kingdom of sin and death. Explaining this to the church of Ephesus Paul writes,

(Eph 2:2–3)

[that it is a kingdom] in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

9. But Paul is writing this letter to people who have been rescued from the domain or Kingdom of sin and death. We no longer have to obey the laws of the old kingdom. We are no longer under its tyranny. We are no longer hopeless vassals and slaves to Pharaoh or His Lord – the Devil.

10. The whole purpose and goal of this train of thought is this, (Rom. 6:12) Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions (lusts). Why? Because (6:14) “sin will have no dominion over you. That is, you are no longer a citizen of the realm, or Kingdom of sin. Legally speaking, the moment you trusted in Jesus for salvation and were declared righteous in the court of heaven, you died to the realm of sin and became a legal citizen of heaven in which you will live forever... to the praise of His glorious grace.

11. “Shall we continue in sin so that grace may abound?” That is, Shall we continue living a lifestyle dominated by sin? *Mae Ginoita!* How can we who died to sin [the realm of sin] still live in it? Answer: It is impossible! When a sinner receives a new relationship with Jesus, he also receives a new relationship with Sin.

12. You see, the first thing that justifying grace does is it unites us with Christ. Paul wasn't worried that true believers would return to a lifestyle that mingles carnality with Christ. To be

one with Christ means that we are indwelt by the Spirit of God. And there is NO way the Holy Spirit is going to allow a believer to “continue in sin, or “Practice” sin (as the apostle John put it),” without serious conviction and discipline designed to draw you back to Jesus. And the author of Hebrews warns that if you don’t experience discipline, you are NOT a son!

13. Paul says, “How can we – we of all people! We who died to sin - still live in it? Paul answers the question in 6:10 where, writing about Jesus, he says,

“For the death He died He died to sin, once for all, but the life He lives He lives to God.

14. The pronoun “He” there in (v.10) refers to Christ. So, How did Jesus die to sin? He died to sin by bearing the penalty of sin on the cross. Because the believer in Jesus is counted as one with Christ, Christ’s death is counted as your death. The wages of sin is death, therefore Jesus died to fulfill the legal requirement of death for sin. And since the penalty for sin is paid, how could anyone return to that life of bondage all over again? The Spirit of God will not allow it? It is not possible.

15. Now notice the next phrase here (6:3) ,

“Do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?”

16. We should note here that Paul expected people to know and understand these things. Paul had never been to Rome, so how did they come to be taught these deep, rich doctrines The most logical answer I came upon this week (and in multiple sources) is that they must have learned them as new believers were taught these truths in preparation for their baptism. Think about it. Everywhere the Gospel bore fruit, people repented and believed and joined local churches. And as those churches sought to fulfill Jesus’ Commission to teach and baptize, the elders made sure these new converts understood the substance behind the symbol of baptism.

17. The substance behind baptism is that Jesus was immersed into death and the grace for sins that were not His own. He experienced the fullness of God’s wrath on your behalf so that you could be delivered and rescued from the righteous wrath of God that you deserved.

- A. Perhaps you are here today and you have never heard these truths. Let me assure you that it’s all true.
- B. In your heart of hearts you know that you do your best to subtly keep God at arm’s length. You don’t want him messing around with your life and exposing your sin. But my friend, the only reason He exposes your sin is so that He can forgive it and wash it away, and rescue you from its tyranny.
- C. This very moment the Holy Spirit is calling you to surrender yourself to His mercy

and love. He is right now peaking clearly to you, urging you, drawing you. And He will not stop until you are fully His.

- D. Right now, as you sit here in the middle of this service, ask Him to reveal the truth to your soul. He is the only Savior and He will be yours if you will have Him now.

18. Back now in our text (v. 3) Paul says, “You know, don’t you, that all of us who have been baptized into Christ...”(stop there). What does it mean to be baptized into Christ? Paul tells us in a letter that he probably wrote years before his letter to the Romans; the epistle to the Galatians. I suspect most believers were as familiar with that letter as they would eventually be with the letter to the Romans. But in Gal. 3:27 we read, “ For as many of you who were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

19. To put on Christ is simply a different way of saying we are in Christ. I imagine being out on a freezing cold winter day. You feel like you are going to freeze to death. But then your dad comes up behind you and wraps you up in a very long winter coat with a thick hood that envelopes you completely in its warmth.

20. This is what it’s like to “Put On” Christ.” He is wrapped around you, and you disappear in His robes of righteousness. That’s what happen the very moment you first believe in Jesus. In God’s eyes you become one with Him. Therefore, whatever belongs to Him belongs to You. Even His death belongs to you.²

21. What did Jesus do to free me from the power of sin and ensure my sanctification? First, He died. And “in Christ” we died with Him. To emphasize that point Paul includes the words, “We were buried, therefore, with him.” That is, we died to [the realm of] sin.

22. What a comfort it is this truth is for the believer in Jesus. Matthew Henry offers the following insight in these words, saying...

As the death of the oppressor is a release, so much more is the death of the oppressed... Death brings a writ of ease to the weary. Thus we must be dead to sin, obey it, observe it, regard it, fulfil its will no more than he that is dead [is able].³

23. In Christ we died to sin.

² Yuille,

³ Matthew Henry, [*Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2206.

Second, Jesus not only died, but He also rose again from the grave. And that means,

II. In Christ You Were Raised

1. In the next verses we read,
“Romans 6:4–5

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.

2. Just as we have learned that Christ’s death to sin was our death to sin, so now we learn that Christ’s resurrection to new life is our resurrection to new life.

3. What is Paul talking about? He’s talking about change – real change as it relates to the believer’s relationship with sin. Salvation is like dying and rising again to a whole new life. We die to sin and we come alive to God in Christ Jesus. O my friend... Salvation brings serious change!

4. We see this throughout the N.T.

1 Peter 4:3–4 (ESV)

For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. ⁴ With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you [for it]

5. We see this promise of change in 1 Cor. 10:13

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your

ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

2 Cor. 5:13.

“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new, he is a new Creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

6. So Paul is teaching us that:

- I. In Christ we Died
- II. In Christ we have been raised
- III. In Christ we are free. But you will need to come back next week to hear about that.

17. In his famous hymn “Rock of Ages,” Augustus Toplady urges Christians to sing to God, “Be of sin the double cure, save from wrath and make me pure.

18. That’s exactly what Paul is teaching us. In Christ God has saved us from wrath AND makes us pure.

Sanctification always follows justification because in Christ you have died to sin and are raised to a new kind of life.