

I. Introduction

A. Romans 6:1-14 . . . What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? [2] May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? [3] Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? [4] Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. [5] For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, [6] knowing this, that 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 to sin; [7] for he who has died is freed from sin. [8] Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, [9] knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. [10] For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. [11] Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. [12] Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, [13] and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. [14] For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

B. Prayer

II. What shall we say? Shall we sin so grace may increase? No, never!

A. Last Sunday we talked about Romans 6:1-4, where Paul makes it clear that, as Christians, we are no longer to live in sin, because we have died to sin.

1. And this is a significant fact, because a dead person cannot do anything any more. Therefore, if we are among those who have died to sin, then we cannot sin anymore. However, this significant fact has three sides to it which Paul addresses as he works his way through this chapter.

a. First, there is the spiritual or mystical side of dying to sin that takes place when we are baptized, or as many Protestants believe,

- when we repent and come to faith in Jesus Christ. However, regardless of when we die, this dying to a real as physical death.
- b. Second, there is the intellectual agreement with the spiritual fact which is the basis for thinking of and seeing ourselves as having died to sin. It is this mindset that compels us to evaluate ourselves and life situations in the light of being dead to sin and alive unto God. Paul specifically speaks of this in vs 11.
  - c. Third, there is the practical side of having died to sin – a side which has to be worked out on a day-by-day basis as we face temptation, struggle with our own ungodly desires and fears, wrestle with wayward thinking, past hurts, and dashed hopes, deal with difficult people, and work out challenging relationships.
2. Now it is this practical side that often motivates us to think we are not dead to sin. After all, we are still being tempted, and we are still killing off or driving out remnants of the old nature. We are still fighting ungodly desires and foolish fears that we haven't yet fully driven out. And in all honesty, we are not winning every battle – which means we are sinning on at least an occasional basis.
- a. However, I urge you not to allow your experience to beat down the truth. The truth is, if you are a genuine Christian, then you have died to sin and have risen from the dead to live unto God.
  - b. Does this mean you will never sin again? Hardly, but it does mean you will fight your urges to sin, resist outward temptations to sin, make a daily effort to grow in your understanding of righteousness and God's ways, continue putting off the old nature, kill off sinful habits, bring an end to the practice of any known sin, and continue pursuing Christ-likeness until you die, or Christ returns, or you become perfect.
3. And last week, we talked about three major hurdles that stand in the way of taking Romans 6 seriously when it says there is never a good reason to continue in sin, and that we are to live as those who have died to sin. So just by way of reminding you of them, they are:
- a. First, we must overcome the notion that living life our way is better, happier, and more secure than living God's way.
  - b. Second, we must overcome spiritual laziness.
  - c. Third, we must overcome that nagging voice in the back of our mind that tells us it is normal for Christians to sin.
4. Finally, though we looked at vs 4 last Sunday, I want to make a point about it that I did not make last Sunday. Verse 4 is the first of a

number of statements in Romans 6, that make it clear that dying to our old life must come before rising to the new life God has for us.

- a. And this truth presents a vital principle that Christians must employ from the beginning to the end of their Christian life. And the principle, though not unique to Christianity, is this:
  - (1) Old life must die before new life can come. Or, new life cannot come forth where the old life is still alive and well.
  - (2) In other words, just as a seed must die before new life can come forth from it, so we must die to our old self before the new life of righteousness can come to life in us, and manifest itself in our thoughts, words, and deeds.
- b. Now, this principle as applied to the Christian life, needs a small amount of explanation.
  - (1) As I have already said, we died to sin and came to life in righteousness at a point in time, and yet we have to work that truth out over a long period of time and through a process that includes an occasional step or two backwards.
  - (2) In other words, we must continue to die and rise, as it were, as we continue to grow spiritually, for it is in growing that we discover yet undiscovered sinful ways in ourselves. And it is in this kind of discovery that we can then move forward in putting off more of our old nature in order to put on more of the righteousness of Christ.
  - (3) Therefore, we must die before we can rise, and our dying and rising is both a once for all reality and a progressive, growing, and maturing reality.

B. With these truths in mind, let's move on to Romans 6:5-7 . . . For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, [6] knowing this, that 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 to sin (*or no longer serve sin*); [7] for he who has died is freed from sin.

1. In these three verses, Paul provides further explanations of what he said in vs 1-4.
2. Paul begins by using basic logic to assure us that since Christ's death and resurrection are two inseparable parts of His redemptive work, our death and resurrection – through baptism – are also two inseparable parts of our justification and sanctification, or of our

putting off the old nature and putting on the new nature, or of our dying to sin and living unto God.

- a. This is a profound truth that we are wise to believe and act on, for by God's gracious empowerment and presence within us, we are not only able to stop doing what is wrong, we are able to start doing and continue doing what is right.
  - b. And we are able to stop not only the big, obvious sins, but also the less obvious yet just as sinister sins – which in turn means we can put on righteousness in the big obvious areas as well as the less obvious but equally important areas of our lives.
  - c. In other words, by God's gracious work within us and with us, we are able to become holy, like He is holy, in all our behavior.
3. Second, Paul reminds us that in being united with Christ in the likeness of His death, our old self was crucified with Him for the purpose of putting to death our sinful nature, or our inclinations and desires to sin.
- a. And the outcome of this crucifixion of our sinful nature is that we are no longer slaves to sin.
  - b. And this too is profound, for in dying, we are not only dying to sin as a way of life, we are dying to sin as our master. In other words, sin no longer has authority or power over us. It may feel like sin has power over you, or that you cannot keep from sinning, but that is your feelings talking, not reality.
  - c. The reality is, we are no longer under the control of sin, and we are no longer obligated to serve sin.
4. Third, Paul repeats the truth that dying to sin means we are dead to sin, which means we no longer have any life in us that is able to sin. And because we are free from sin, we are free to go in another direction and serve another master. If we have repented and become Christians, we are now under the control of God and His righteousness, and we are now obligated to serve Him – which is a good thing, for this is the path of life.
- C. Romans 6:8-11 . . . Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, [9] knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. [10] For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. [11] Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

1. We can easily miss the point of these four verses if we think Paul is using Christ's death and resurrection to speak of His redemptive work. However, Paul is using Christ's death and resurrection as an example of our dying to sin and rising to live a righteous life unto God, that is, for the pleasure and glory of God.
  - a. So in these verses, think of Christ's death and resurrection in terms of His dying TO sin, just like we must die TO sin, and His rising TO live a new kind of life unto God just as we are to rise TO live a new righteous life unto God.
  - b. Admittedly, this is somewhat of a unique use of Christ's death and resurrection to make a point, but this is what Paul is doing, so let's learn what we can from it.
2. Paul begins by affirming, once again, that if we die with Christ, we can be certain that we will rise to live a new life with Him – not in the future, that is, after we die, but here and now, while we are still living in this world.
3. Then Paul says something that may seem strange if we do not see it within his somewhat unique use of Christ as our example of living the Christian life.
  - a. Paul says that Christ, having been raised from the dead is never to die again, for death is no longer master over Him.
  - b. I don't want to make more of this point than I should, but I do want you to see that as our example of dying to sin, Christ never has to die to sin again. He paid the debt, and there is no more debt to pay. Therefore, (physical) death has no hold over Him.
  - c. In a similar way, two things happen when we die to sin.
    - (1) First, when we die to sin, we die to all sin at one moment in time, and we die to all sin and its power over us for all time. Therefore, from the point of dying onward, we never have a slave/master obligation to the devil or to sin again, which means we never have to sin again.
    - (2) Second, dying to sin is only one part of an inseparable two part process. Therefore, we not only die to sin, we rise to live unto God. He becomes our new master. His will determines our new commands. And His ways set the course for our ways.
4. Now, building on these truths, Paul says, "Even so, or likewise, consider (*think of, see, reckon*) yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus."
  - a. With this statement, Paul begins to focus on the responsibilities God has placed on us to stop sinning and live a godly life.

- b. In the ten previous verses, Paul was talking about the spiritual or mystical side of putting a stop to sin and pursuing a life of righteousness. Here, Paul is bringing to our attention the personal and practical side of dying to sin and rising to live a new life of righteousness unto God.
  - c. And so we see that the first step in fulfilling our God-given responsibility is to see ourselves and think of ourselves and believe that we are dead to sin and alive to righteousness. In other words, we need to anchor this truth in our heart and cling to with our mind.
- D. Romans 6:12-14 . . . Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, [13] and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. [14] For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.
1. Building on the mindset of considering ourselves dead to sin, Paul moves on to give us three steps or three things we must do to say no to sin and yes to righteousness. However, there are two things I want to say about these three steps before looking at them.
    - a. First, let us never think that doing what God requires of us in any way diminishes our continued need for God's abundant power to work in us and with us.
    - b. Second, as Christians, we have the God-given capacity to do all that God requires of us, including putting off the old nature and putting on Christ-likeness. However, having the capacity is not enough. For example, the normal person has the capacity to read and write, yet it requires hard, persistent work and outside assistance to turn that capacity into the ability to read and write.
    - c. The same is true for our God-given capacity to no longer sin and live godly, it requires hard, persistent work on our part and gracious assistance on God's part.
  2. Now, let's return to vs 12-13, where we find God's simplified, yet effective plan for putting off the old nature, bringing an end to sinning, removing sinful habits, putting on the new nature, developing godly habits, and living unto God.
    - a. And again, notice the order, for it begins with saying no to sin and then saying yes to God and righteousness.

- b. And finally, we know this plan is directed at us as something God has given us to do because it begins with do not let or, do not allow sin to reign in your mortal body.
  - c. Therefore, the first thing God tells us to do is to no longer allow sin to exercise authority over our human body – which includes our mind, desires, five senses, feelings, fears, words, and deeds. In other words, using all the empowerment and assistance God’s makes available to you, it is your responsibility to resist temptation and turn away from sinful thoughts, foolish desires, ungodly fears, bad habits, sinful behavior, and then turn toward God, His word, and His ways in order to live according to this first step in the plan.
  - d. The second thing you must do is to stop presenting or submitting the members of your body (i.e., mind, five senses, mouth/words, feelings, and various other parts) to sin, so that they cannot be used for sinful purposes. In other words, it is your responsibility to direct the various members of your body away from sin.
  - e. The third thing you must do is the other side of the second step, which is to begin and continue presenting or submitting yourself to God as someone who is alive from the dead (*i.e., having died to sin you are now living unto God*), and continue presenting or submitting the members of your body to God as instruments to be used for righteous purposes.
3. Paul concludes this section and introduces us to his second question of Romans 6, with these words in vs 14: “For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.”

### III. Conclusion

- A. Is it normal for Christians to sin? NO! Is there a defensible reason for Christians to sin? NO! Do Christians have to sin? NO!
- B. So what should we do to stop sinning? Employ God’s three step method for putting off the old nature, putting on the new nature, and living each moment of the day unto God, just as Jesus, upon rising from the dead, now lives unto God.