

## Romans 6:1-14: Our Triumph Over Sin and Death

**Opening Illustration:** Several years ago I met a man on the campus at SEBTS who had tattoos all over his arms and I don't mean Greek and Hebrew words but he had things like skulls on his arm –

- And yet here he was preparing to enroll in seminary to become a minister of the gospel – **He had gone from mastered by addiction to putting himself in the employ of the Lord Jesus – *This text is every bit about stories like that as this text is every bit about the fact that in Christ we have been freed not just from the penalty of sin but the power of sin!***

**Context:** Last week we saw Christ (the 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam's) triumph over sin and death and this week we will look at that triumph applied to us through our union with Him – **Paul now shifts from dealing mainly with justification by faith – *That is how we have been declared right with God by grace alone through faith alone to now dealing extensively with the doctrine of sanctification or our growth in Christlikeness***

- Paul now begins to show the Roman Christians (and us) not only our freedom from sin's penalty but our freedom from sin's power as we have moved from the 1<sup>st</sup> Adam into the 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam, our Lord Jesus – **What we see in this text is that Christians have taken part in a New Exodus – *We have left slavery to sin behind and gone through the waters of the Red Sea as it were in our Baptism and have come out on the other side as the new people of God living a new life under His rule in the Promise Land***

So here is the breakdown as Paul now draws our attention to the relationship between our justification and our sanctification as he looks at our union with Christ: **(V. 1) Paul anticipates a question about this free salvation – (V. 2) Paul answers the question – (V. 3-10) Paul further explains his answer by highlighting who we are in union with Christ – (V. 11-14) Paul gives us 4 exhortations in light of who we are in Christ**

**I. (READ V. 1-2) Paul anticipates and answers a question about salvation by grace alone and not works: If grace abounds over sin shouldn't we continue to sin so we experience more grace? NO!**

Paul here is likely responding to questions he has heard before from those who have either misunderstood his gospel message thinking that salvation by grace might lead to moral carelessness – **Or possibly from that who might have used his gospel message to rationalize sin – *Yet though he is answering a question this is not a digression but a central aspect of the gospel he proclaims!***

- Essentially what is being said here is since grace abounds where sin increased wouldn't it make sense then to continue to sin so that we may see more grace – **The verb tense for “to continue” indicates he is speaking of a life of continual or habitual sin and is not meaning a sinless perfection**
- **∴ *Have you lost your minds, are you crazy (May it never be!) – Don't you know that we have died to sin – Sadly throughout history there have been Christians who have abused this doctrine like an extreme example in Rasputin who argued it was actually the duty of Christians to sin because that sin would bring more forgiveness which would bring about greater joy – But I don't think this abuse of the doctrine is as far off from us as we might think***
- There are possibly some in our midst who think well I prayed a prayer (walked an aisle, got dunked in water) but there was no change in their life – **Or maybe even more close to home there may be some amongst us who might say well I know adultery is wrong (or fornication, or theft, or on and on) but I am going to do it anyway and I will just ask for forgiveness later – I want to warn you not to presume upon the grace of God: *This sort of understanding of Grace may be an indication you've never truly been converted and it misunderstands how radical our new life in Christ is... one in which we have died to the old way of life!***

Paul's central argument here is that we will not continue to live in sin because we have died to it – **This is not a command but is instead reality of what we have become through our union with Christ** – *The gospel of grace does not empower sin, IT EXECTUES IT, it is thus logically impossible to remain in something you have died to*

- Michael Bird says of this question to remain in sin would be like saying should I remain at the bottom of a well after a rope has been lowered to me: *“Grace is designed to get us out of that situation, not make us feel more comfortable within it!”* – **So the justified person doesn't go on living as though nothing has changed which is why Mounce can say: “Any justification that does not lead to sanctification is a sham. Any sanctification not founded upon justification is an exercise in legalistic futility and does not deserve the name.”**

### III. (V. 3-10) Paul further explains his answer by highlighting who we are in union with Christ

#### a. (READ V. 3-5) You are a new person

Paul now expounds upon his answer by attaching spiritual reality to something that has happened to the Roman Church physically – **Paul is saying your victory over sin has been accomplished in your unification with Christ through Baptism into Him and so His death as it were has been applied to you so that you have died to the old man (the man in Adam)** – Paul here appeals to Baptism into Christ as the means of our unification with Him

- **Paul here speaks to them of something they have experienced (“all of us”) meaning Paul (and the NT for that matter) assumes the church is made up of those who have been baptized (NT has no category for an unbaptized Christian) and they know they have been (which is problematic for those that want to baptize infants or in our circles toddlers) – Which means baptism is only for those that have experienced what he is talking about here spiritually which is why it is for believers (in fact if you do A WORD STUDY ON EVERY TIME “BAPTIZO” is mentioned in the NT it is always in the context of belief or union with Christ) meaning the only proper candidate for baptism is one who understands the gospel – And just to point out Paul is not here merely speaking of Spirit Baptism because as Moo points out: “When Paul uses this term in NT he is almost always speaking of water baptism” and as Stott points out “it would never have occurred to Paul to separate the two”**

The main thrust of the text is not baptism but the believers deliverance from Sin because when we were converted (and subsequently Baptized) we were united or immersed into Christ and His death, burial, and resurrection – **Nonetheless these things become a reality for us through spiritual baptism and are proclaimed as realities through water baptism** – *There is much to learn in these 14 verses about what is being said in our baptism but I will only highlight a few of them all of which give strong evidences that baptism is not to be done by Immersion but that Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water detaling our immersion into Christ*

- **True baptism is associated with death (a theme that runs all through this passage) – We proclaim in our Baptist that God has the right to judge our sins as worthy of death and we want to be found in Christ who took the penalty of our sin and died for it and went into the ground – This is why Jesus would speak of His cross as a Baptism that He was to undergo and how He was anxious to undergo it**
- **This is why we go under the water, not just because the Greek word means immerse or plunge, but because Immersion most clearly depicts what has happened in our union with Him – Interestingly what 1 Cor. 15 says is of most importance (the Gospel) is applied to us here in Romans 6 – What we are saying in Baptism that we are being drowned with Christ (put to death with Christ) in the wrath of God and going into a grave (a watery one) as a dead man completely cut off from air and then being raised from that watery grave to a new life on the other side**

- We immerse because we believe such a radical break from our past life of the old man who loved sin to the new man who detests sin requires a bold and public declaration of what has happened to us – **Thus Believers Baptism by Immersion best depicts how radical the new covenant is in that we do not get into the new covenant by being born (or generation) but by a New Birth (or regeneration) – *Baptism is the gospel in action or the gospel in motion picture!***

Paul is telling us about the benefits of Christ’s work so that in our union with Christ our old man has been put in a grave and our new self has emerged just as our Lord vacated that tomb by the glory of God (meaning a manifestation of His glory through His power) leaving sin and death in His wake – **We to now leave sin and death in our wake which means it’d be absurd to still walk in that old way of life – Thus as Mounce puts it: “Christ’s death FOR sin becomes our death TO sin!”**

- The word for “New life” is most often in NT associated with the end times promises of what awaits the believer – **But here in a sense Paul is saying (in an already-not yet way) that a bit of the future life that awaits us has broken into the present age – *Because we have been bound up with Christ the power manifested in God’s raising Jesus from the tomb is ours and now the eternal New Creation Life that awaits us has made an appearance in the present age so that we can live as New Creations who are becoming what we are positionally and what we will be actually!***

So who are you believer? You are a new person; your old man has died so how the world can you keep living the same way? (**Bruno –if Bruno died and was raised to a NEW life would he still walk with a limp? Of course not and so it is with us we don’t walk as though we are the old man!**)

- You are something new altogether with a new identity – **And that identity is not half in Adam and half in Christ – We are new in Christ which means certain things are now incompatible with us because we are citizens of a new Kingdom**

## **b. ( READ V. 6-7) You are free from sin’s enslavement**

Paul drives the point further that we are dead to sin – **Your old man** (everything that you were before you became a Christian which was dominated by sin) **has been put to death on a Cross so that your body of death might be annihilated freeing you from the mastery of sin – *Body of death here is referring to the vehicle by which we sin and sin is being personified as something that can be executed!***

- The lot of all of us in Adam was slavery to sin but that old man enslaved to sin has been put to death so that we might be free from the things that had imprisoned us – **We have all experienced the oppressive nature of sin whereby we feel trapped in it – *We now have the freedom to choose the things of the Lord where before we were dominated by sinful desires***
- Paul does not have in mind sinless perfection (as we will see Paul wants us to war with sin) because until glorification there is indwelling sin and our mortal bodies are still subject to the consequences of Adam and our sin – **But though we have not been freed from the presence of sin we have been freed from the dominance of sin (that is important to note!) – *Meaning the normal pattern for the Christian is one of growth in sanctification and ever greater maturity in our faith because of what is ours in our union with Christ***

God’s justifying verdict of us was not just a legal ruling but was a declaration that begins to create the very reality it declares – **This means that true justification leads to sanctification because grace is transformative – Think of it this way: I have performed one wedding (and they left) when I, as a pastor, declared them husband and wife I was not only making a declaration but I was actually proclaiming something that transformed their actual relationship so that they would now relate to one another in a whole new way**

- **Yes for some this truth will be very difficult in this life because the grip of sin is strong: But what we want you to hear today is there is freedom available for the weary and the enslaved – We have**

many testimonies in this room of those who were under a great grip of sin whom the Lord has delivered –

- **So hear this believer:** One day you will never sin again – *You have been justified thus saved from the penalty of sin, you are being sanctified thus saved from the power of sin and you will be glorified thus saved from even the presence of sin* (COMMENTATOR!)

### c. (READ V. 8-10) You have a new future

Paul continues telling us we have a new future both now and in the age to come – **In this death to sin it is not as though we go from negative to neutral but we have gone from negative to positive** (to quote Big Pappa) **in that not only are we free from sin but we get to live with Him – *We now have confidence in this life and the one to come because death no longer has sway over our Lord in whom we are found!***

- **Because of Adam's sin (and ours) Christ in order to defeat death had to take sin and death upon Himself – He took the place of the first Adam and voluntarily took his consequences taking the penalty of sin which is death upon Himself and overcoming its power once and for all leaving sin and death in a grave to rot – *And now because of our union with Him we get the benefit of this work so that not only has the mastery of sin in our lives been dealt the deathblow so has its weapon of death (Death is dead! Amazing Love how can it be that thou my God shouldst die for me!)***
- **And now in union with Him since we have shared in His death we will share in His life – We get new life now and eternal life in the age to come because what is true of our King has now become true of us – *We can have confidence that we are going to be just fine because our King isn't dead anymore and He can never die again which means that for those of us in Christ we will also triumph over death and one day leave a grave in our rear view!***
- **As my dad says of this text: "The Cross was sin's final move, and the resurrection was God's checkmate! Games over!"**

Now because of what our great champion has done in a once for all time act – **Meaning Christ has already done all that is necessary for your freedom and for your future – *You can live with certainty that your destiny is intertwined with His and you are safe and that He will one day usher you into a place where there will not even be a trace of sin or death or pain or things like genocide... only total shalom!***

**Believer your future is safe because it doesn't depend on you but on your father and on your brother:** My dad used to tell us of a story in Readers Digest that I think drives home this point here is the story – *One day, a father took his two elementary school-age children for a ride in a pontoon boat. They were traveling down the river when suddenly the motor stopped. When the father looked behind him, he noticed something familiar about the red sweater tangled up in the propeller. Then his young son yelled, "sherry fell in!" in horror, the father saw his little girl entwined in the propeller of the boat. She was submerged just beneath the surface of the water, looking straight onto the eyes of her father and holding her breath. He jumped into the water and tried to pull the motor up, but the heavy engine wouldn't budge. Time was running out. Desperately, the father filled his own lungs with air and dipped below the surface, blowing air into his daughter's lungs. After giving her air three times, the father took a filet knife from his shocked son's hand. He quickly cut the red sweater from the propeller and lifted his daughter into the boat. Although she had survived, her deep cuts and bruises needed medical attention, so they rushed her to the hospital. When the crisis was over, the doctors and nurses asked the girl, "how come you didn't panic?" "Well, we've grown up on the river, and my dad always taught that if you panic, you die. Besides, I knew my daddy would come and get me." – **Oh brothers and sisters we have an even greater Father and brother and we can live this life without panic because in them our future is secure and safe***

### IV. (V. 11-14) Paul gives us 4 exhortations in light of who we are in Christ:

## 1) Consider yourself dead to sin (READ V.11)

Paul now shifts from who we are (or what you might call indicative truths) to what we must do (or imperatives based on the truths he's just explained) – **First, we are to consider ourselves dead to sin (which Tom Schreiner says is the very first command in the book of Romans) – Meaning the very first thing Paul explicitly tells the Romans to do is consider** *Since you have died with Him and now experience his resurrection power consider your old self truly dead!*

- We see here that sanctification requires active involvement from us as we consider ourselves dead to sin which is a present imperative meaning it is to be the continuous action of our lives – **And as we will see in a minute we are to continually offer ourselves to God – As Andy Davis puts it: “In Justification our effort and works are unnecessary and unwelcome... in sanctification, they are essential and celebrated and commanded!”**
- Again when considering this command in light of our baptism into Christ it serves to let us know this sign of baptism should only be given to those who can indeed consider the things of the gospel – **So one step toward our victory over sin is to continually reckon (southern term) what Paul has said of us in Christ is really true – Thus we work this out in our lives not by putting mind over matter but by reflecting on what is actually true of us in Christ**
- We are to daily appropriate these truths of our change in position to our lives – **So this is something that is true of us and yet as Bird says: “Needs to be made true FOR us as well!”** – Bird tells the story of how Alexander the Great one night when he couldn't sleep walked around the campsite and found a guard standing post asleep which was an executable offense and when he angrily woke the soldier he asked him: *“What is your name?” to which the guard responded Alexander which annoyed Alexander the Great and after asking 3 times what his name was he kept getting the same answer “Alexander” finally Alexander looked at him and said, “if your name is Alexander, then either change your name or change your behavior”*

Practically how do we do this: 1) we must be open and confess sin not just to God but to one another (We need to be ok with not being ok!) – **But 2) here we must understand some of our battle with sin does not come from a lack of willpower but a lack of remembering who you are in Christ and rejoicing in that fact – We should remind ourselves daily that we have been bought at great cost and that He has given us the power to resist sin**

- Jesus has died not only so you would be forgiven but so you would never sin again and when we give into sin we forget what all the suffering of Jesus was meant to accomplish – **We must consider daily will we defile the life Christ died to win and will we trample on the purpose of His suffering – This sort of meditation will increase our affection for the Savior and it is true that we do not want to disappoint the ones we love!**

## 2) Do not let sin reign in you (READ v. 12)

So not only must the believer consider himself dead to sin but also he must refuse to let sin reign in his life – **We are to make war on our sin so that you don't OBEY its passions – We see here the tension between what God has already accomplished and our own responsibility to obey as we are to not let indwelling sin gain control of us as we become what we are**

- We dare not underestimate sin **WE must make proper estimation of sin and as John Owen puts it “be killing sin or it will be killing you” – THIS IS WAR!**
- **Practically how do we do this: It means we cannot tolerate sin our lives or go on habitually practicing – We must be grieved and repulsed by our sin so that the distaste drives it out – We must make progress with sin which does not mean that we will not sin but it does mean we will be broken by our sin**

3) Do not offer yourself to sin (13b) READ 13-14

4) Offer yourself to God (13b-14)

Paul's 2 final exhortations seems to be giving us a preview of Romans 12: Where we are told not to be conformed to this world but to be transformed by the renewing of our mind and to offer our bodies as living sacrifices to God – **We are called to not offer our body parts (hands, mouth, feet) as weapons for the enemy but to make ourselves weapons in the employ of God – *In Colossians Paul writes of putting off certain things and putting on others and it is similar here***

- We are not to put ourselves at sin's disposal but we are not just not to do something we are to pursue something in its place (offering our whole self to God or putting ourselves at God's disposal) – **Paul here is using military language and so saying you are a citizen (and soldier) in a new Kingdom and you are not to aide and abet the enemy but are to use all that you are in service of the rightful King – *We do not go back to the old master but we give all that we are to the one who has rescued us!*** (This one reason Baptism was so radical in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century because it was most fundamentally an announcement that you had another Lord than CAESAR)

Practically how do we do this: We must put off and put on – **Meaning we play defense and offense so that as we kill sin in our life we replace it with something greater – *You kill greed and put generosity in its place, you kill lust and put proper respect and care for the opposite sex in its place***

You have victory saint because of the grace of God and not the Law – **Offer yourself to God freely because you are no longer under a works-based Mosaic system because those who rely on works of the law are under a curse and it had no power to change – *But you are now under a grace freeing rule because your champion has kept the law for you and you are now empowered to live it out not for salvation or acceptance but because you have been accepted***

- Verse 14 is not a command but a promise that sin will not triumph – **Grace then does not encourage sin, it annihilates it – *Which should then make us like our brother Barnabas so that when we see the grace of God in and around us we are glad!***

**Conclusion:**

So if you are here and you don't know the liberating power of our Lord Jesus – **If you feel enslaved this morning (enslaved to pornography, or drugs, or greed, or your own pride in being good, if you cannot go to bed until you know where YOUR NEXT FIX is coming from) we want you to know there is freedom available – *All throughout this room there are stories of people who have had the chains of sin fall off*** (I am one of them, I used to be consumed with myself and other wordily things and the Lord has delivered me through the power of His Son)

- Jesus stands ready to receive you if you will repent of your sin, fall at His feet and cry out for mercy – **He is in the chain breaking business and there is no sin that He cannot drown and put to death in your life – *We hold out to you TRUE FREEDOM, EVERLASTING FREEDOM!***

Believer: The impossible has happened for us – ***The Better Moses has come and He has brought us out of our sin to slavery and made us a Kingdom of Priests and given us a whole new life whereby we are concerned with the things of God***

- And this is radically and powerfully attested to in our Baptism which we must be continually reminded of because it does not just clarify what we do with water but who we are – ***In Baptism we plunge a repentant drug addict into the water we are not just putting forward a right of passage but we are enraging the kingdoms of the old order saying to them the wrath of God (the waters of God)***

*will one day over take you but this one is outside of your domain because he by faith understands that he has already been through the flood of judgment, he has already been through the Red Sea and the waters of the Jordan, and in Christ he is already seated in the Promise Land – We will enrage the principalities and powers with that kind of Baptism as we see a word in water that we are not who we once were!*

**So why would we walk as though we are still that dead man as if we hadn't already made it clear that we are the crucified ones:**

- (MATT F!) That man I met those years ago who shared with me that he was so enslaved to his addictions that he could not go to sleep without getting fix is now my co-laborer in the Lord – You heard from him last week his name is Matt Foshee and he told me just this week how much he loves this text because he sees himself there and so can you – *Because of God's radical transformation of freeing this man I have had the joy for years to see him minister alongside him and you have been benefited by that transformation as he has been one of your pastors and this feels my heart with gladness at the grace of God*
- Soon this man who used to be only concerned with a fix will lead a of folks will leave us to Utah to tell people there is freedom to be found – *Oh brothers and sisters, radical transformation and freedom are ours in Christ Jesus we don't have to look far for evidence of this as we see it in the lives of men like Matt Foshee and even the one who is writing this letter to us!*