

Freedom from Sin

That was an icy response from her,” said Clarence, stopping to look over the hood of his car at Dontrell before climbing into the driver’s seat.

Dontrell looked at his friend, his eyes pained and guarded. “That was one of Brianna’s girlfriends we just saw. She has every right to hate me as much as Brianna does.”

Brianna and Dontrell had been married for six years, and Dontrell had been selfish and unfaithful for practically the entire time. The couple had divorced three years ago.

Things got worse for Dontrell after the divorce, and he found himself listening to his new friend, Clarence. It was Clarence who encouraged Dontrell to attend church, where he eventually accepted Christ.

“I still feel bad about all I put Brianna through,” Dontrell said. “If I told you some of the stuff I did....”

“I don’t want to know,” said Clarence, “but I understand about regrets. We all have them. It’s good that you’re not proud of a sinful past, but that’s just what it is—past. When you accepted Christ, your sins were no longer counted against you, because He died and rose again.”

“You make it sound so easy,” Dontrell murmured.

“It wasn’t easy. Jesus died on the Cross. It cost Christ everything so that we could be saved. The least we can do is to leave our old life and sins behind and walk in the victory He won for us on Calvary.”

1. *How did Jesus’ death and resurrection set free from the power of sin in your life?*

2. *What role does the Holy Spirit have in overcoming your sins and living for Christ?*

3. *Is there a specific sin that you still need to ask the Holy Spirit to give you victory over?*

Dead to Sin

Romans 6:1-4, KJV

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Romans 6:1-4, NIV

¹What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ²By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? ³Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

The first three chapters of Paul's letter to the believers in Rome provide a clear indictment of sin against all humanity, and because of our sin, we are condemned in the eyes of a holy and righteous God. Thankfully, God has graciously offered us the gift of eternal life in Jesus.

Considering all this, our lesson's Scripture begins with a question about whether God's people should continue sinning so God's grace could increase in their lives. The obvious answer is absolutely not! Since we have died to sin, we should no longer live in it. When we were "baptized into Christ Jesus [we] were baptized into his death" (6:3). When He died on the Cross, those who put their faith in Him also died with Him. Further, just as Jesus was raised from the grave, so too are those who died with Him raised to walk in the "new life" (vs. 4). Christ's resurrection glorified the Father, and such should be the heart's desire of those who walk in the new life that is ours in the Lord.

Everything we do should bring glory to Him. However, living for the glory of God is impossible on our own. Thankfully, He who died for us and rose again now lives within us, so we can now live for the glory of our Father.

4. *Paul asked if we should continue to sin so God's grace may increase. Why is the answer a resounding no?*

5. *What does our baptism into Christ do for us?*

6. *What are the practical results of believers being "buried" and "raised" with Christ?*

Freed from Sin

Romans 6:5-10, KJV

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

6 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.

7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

Romans 6:5-10, NIV

⁵For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— ⁷because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

⁸Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. ¹⁰The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

Because of our identification with the death, burial, and

resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are no longer slaves to sin. Rather, in Christ we have been freed from the slavery and bondage that sin brought us. When someone trusts in Jesus for the forgiveness of sin, their old self—the sin nature we are born with—has been crucified with Him.

However, since the Lord rose again, believers also have risen to eternal life in Him. In so doing, we left that old self that was ruled by sin in the grave where it belongs. Now, we no longer have to serve sin because Jesus freed us from it. Having died with Him, we can now live with Him. Death has no “mastery” over our Lord or over us (vs. 9).

Our freedom from sin is threefold. First, in Christ, believers have been freed from the penalty of sin, for Jesus took our penalty upon Himself when He died for us. Second, we are being freed daily from the power of sin, for as death no longer has dominion over our Lord, sin need not have rule over His people. And third, we live in the great hope that one day we will be freed from the very presence of sin in eternity with Jesus.

7. *What hope do we have because of the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord?*

8. *How does death bring freedom from sin?*

9. *In what three ways are believers freed from sin?*

Power over Sin

Romans 6:11-14, KJV

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

13 Neither yield ye your

Romans 6:11-14, NIV

¹¹In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

¹²Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an

members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. ¹⁴For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

That believers are dead to sin is great news, but in Jesus Christ, we are also alive to God. This is not something that comes automatically. Rather, God's people must believe that they are dead to sin and alive to Him, and then by faith they must act upon that truth. Those who have been freed from sin should no longer be blinded by it. Therefore, they can now reason clearly and draw the right conclusion about being dead to sin and alive to God. As a result, we neither have to let sin reign in us nor obey its lustful desires; rather, we now yield to God, who gave us eternal life in Christ. Instead of being instruments of sin and the wickedness it brings, we can be "instrument[s] of righteousness" (vs. 13) to His glory. Prior to coming to Christ in saving faith, we were under the condemnation of God's law. But by the grace of God we can live to His glory. Sin is not our "master" (vs. 14). We are now under His grace. We can be free from the chains of sin and alive to God through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

10. *Because we are alive to God in Christ, what should not reign over us?*

11. *Instead, because we are alive to God in Christ, what should reign over us?*

12. *Why should sin no longer have mastery or dominion over God's people?*

From Death to Life

“Spiraling down a deep dark hole” describes Lewis’s life from the time he was 18 years old until his 30th birthday. After his mother’s death, he turned to drugs for release from his grief and lost his job. His older sister let him move in with her, but after he stole from her, she kicked him out. Lewis moved from one drug house to another. He lost contact with his sister and friends.

On Lewis’s 30th birthday, he wanted to die as he laid under a bridge ready to overdose. Then within himself, he heard his mother’s voice saying, “I’m praying for you.” Something within him pushed him to the nearest church. The doors were open. Lewis went inside and knelt at the altar. He begged Jesus to give him power to overcome his drug addiction. He didn’t hear an audible voice, but once he said, “Jesus, take over my life,” he felt peace.

Lewis didn’t know how long he laid on the altar, but suddenly a young man was sitting next to him. The young man prayed and asked Jesus to make Lewis a new man.

This young man, the church janitor, offered Lewis to join him in his small room in back of the church. Lewis shared his story, then the janitor picked up an old Bible and started reading about being made new in Christ. Lewis knew he wanted that new life.

Lewis stayed with the janitor while he attended a support group for his addiction. The janitor found Lewis a janitorial job at another church, but even as the temptation to return to his old life frequently appeared, the Holy Spirit empowered him to overcome the temptations, and his janitor friend helped him continue to live for Christ.

13. *Why is it necessary to acknowledge sin in order to die to it?*

14. *What role does the Holy Spirit play in living a new life in Christ?*

15. *How have you experienced death to sin and new life in Christ?*

Moment by Moment

“Dying with Jesus, by death reckoned mine; Living with Jesus a new life divine;

Looking to Jesus till glory doth shine, Moment by moment, O Lord, I am Thine.”

As the hymn says, living for Christ is an intentional, moment by moment choice. Jesus’ death and resurrection enables us through the power of the Spirit to daily die to sin and live for Christ. It’s our choice if we will do so.

► *Complete the following sentences as they apply to your life personally:*

I intentionally daily die to sin by _____

I daily choose to live for Christ by _____.

KEY VERSE

For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.

—Romans 6:5, KJV

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his.

—Romans 6:5, NIV

DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK’S LESSON

Week of May 2 through May 8

(See *The Quiet Hour* and *Cross* devotionals on these passages.)

- Mon.** Romans 6:15-23—No Longer Slaves of Sin.
- Tue.** Ezekiel 36:25-30—God Bestows the Spirit.
- Wed.** Romans 7:1-13—We Have Died to the Law.
- Thu.** Romans 7:14-25—A Struggle to Obey.
- Fri.** Romans 8:1-4, 10-17—No Condemnation for Heirs.
- Sat.** John 20:19-23—Receive the Holy Spirit.
- Sun.** Romans 8:18-30—All Things Work Together for Good.