

## BE FREE TO LIVE A NEW LIFE

Romans 6:1-14

### INTRODUCTION:

After the rookie pitcher walked a third straight batter, the manager strolled to the mound. "Son," he told the southpaw. "I think you've had enough." The young pitcher argued, "*But look who's coming to bat. I struck this guy out the last time he was up.*" **The manager said, "Yeah, I know Son, but this is still the same inning!"**

**It's a hard fact of life** that some things will just not yield to our **grit, determination** and **hard work**. Some things in life are bigger, badder and tougher than we are.

You could spend every waking moment for the rest of your life battling against your **old sin nature**, but it will **NOT GIVE WAY** to prayers and fasting, nor to sabbaticals in the desert, neither to mortification of the flesh or even **scrupulous obedience to the law**. **THAT'S THE BAD NEWS.**

**Fortunately, THERE'S ALSO GOOD NEWS.** The good news is that you can be free from sin by remembering that *YOU MAY BE LINKED TO THE GRACE OF GOD* **BY BAPTISM INTO JESUS' DEATH AND RESURRECTION.**

That, precisely, is God's promise found in **Rom.6:1-14**. Because of the length of this morning's text we're not going to read it all right now; we'll be reading from portions of the passage as our lesson progresses.

**But in the first two verses we find:** Paul very clearly teaching that God's grace is a free gift. Paul's opponents understood this. But **they had pushed free grace to logical absurdity** by declaring, "*If this is the case, then Christians should sin all the time, because when we SIN MORE, it results in more abundant grace, which results in God's greater glory.*"

In **vs. 1-2** Paul asks the question that's on their mind and then answers it. 1) "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?" 2) *May it never be!* It's very telling to note that he doesn't refute their argument by back-peddling or mollifying his statements. He doesn't add modifying clauses to the gospel nor make it "works-oriented," as the Pharisees had done. Instead, he demonstrates the ignorance of those who would suggest such things!

In a nutshell, his answer is that grace not only frees us from sin's penalty, it also brings us into a relationship that frees us from the POWER of sin!

**Paul wards off those who would compromise God's grace by first asserting that---**

### **I. OUR BAPTISM, IN THE NEW BIRTH PROCESS, JOINS US NOT ONLY TO JESUS' DEATH, BUT ALSO TO HIS LIFE!**

#### **A. Verses 2-11 convey three basic truths:**

1. **First point:** That baptism identifies us with Jesus' death, which is where we contact the BLOOD of Christ [**Jno.19:34**], which is what frees us from sin's penalty [**Acts 20:28; 1 Pet.1:18-19**]; and that's the argument Paul is making in **vs. 2-3**.
2. **Second point:** That it is in baptism where we're freed from sin's power, because that's exactly the point when the relationship change takes place [**Rom.6:16-18**]; and that's the point being made in **verses 4-7**.
3. The **Third point:** Which Paul is explaining in **vss.8-11**, is that baptism frees us to live a new life IN CHRIST, as a part of the FAMILY OF GOD! **TOGETHER these three truths support the principle that baptism joins us to BOTH Jesus' death and life. Now, just to briefly cover these three thoughts:**

- B. **"BAPTISM IDENTIFIES US WITH JESUS' DEATH."** **vs.2-3-** "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?*"

1. Baptism somehow so closely identifies us with Jesus that **GOD TREATS BAPTIZED BELIEVERS AS IF WE WERE THE ONES WHO HAD DIED.**
    - a) In **EVERY CASE** of N.T. conversion WATER BAPTISM ON THE PART OF BELIEVERS stood between every sinner and the forgiveness of his sins!
      - 1) The dawn of the church was ushered in with the baptism of those 3,000 on the day of Pentecost.
      - 2) And Paul said later that Christians are baptized by direction of the Spirit [*preaching of the gospel!*] into the church. **1 Cor.12:13.**
    - b) **SOME TODAY** try to minimize personal responsibility and the actions of obedience by substituting a **PROMISE** [*Holy Spirit Baptism*] for a **CONDITIONAL PERFORMANCE OF COMPLIANCE** [*Water Baptism*]!
  2. Holy Spirit baptism is a PROMISED ACTION by God to indicate the ushering in of a NEW PHASE of His planned scheme to redeem sinful man!
    - a) And the PURPOSE OF H.S. BAPTISM, as stated by Jesus in **Jno.16:13**, was to keep the apostles from being “*comfortless*” because of His ascension, and to assist them in the proclamation and VERIFYING of the truth by “*bringing all things to your remembrance!*”
    - b) **No one was EVER COMMANDED to be baptized in the H.S.**
  3. Water Baptism identifies us with Jesus' death, His burial, and His resurrection! WATER BAPTISM is a LIKE FIGURE of just what Christ did, **and is our “ACCEPTANCE”** of that GRACE-SACRIFICE **God made in OUR BEHALF!!**
    - a) In **6:4-5** Paul says that we were baptized into his death.
    - b) Baptism in water links us to the death and burial of Jesus Christ, and then signifies our NEW BIRTH in that likeness of Christ's resurrection as we are “*BORN FORTH OUT OF THE WATER.*”
    - c) **This first truth, that water baptism identifies us with Jesus' death, also leads us on to a second truth:**
- C. **BAPTISM FREES US FROM SIN'S POWER. 6:6-7-** “*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.*”
1. **Baptism leads to a new, superior life**, because we have represented Christ's death in our being buried in water and the NEW BIRTH in our being RAISED to walk that new life! (**vss.4-5**).
    - a) The word “LIFE” signifies something new, different, and extraordinary, with the implication of superiority.
    - b) Because we were ***knit*** and ***fused*** to Jesus' death (sumfutoi), **WE SHARE IN HIS NEW LIFE.**
      - 1) Those who claim that the gospel gives Christians license to sin WITHOUT GUILT overlook the fact that the we have a new, morally superior way of life that has replaced that “*old man of sin that was PUT TO DEATH!*”
      - 2) **WE CAN CHOOSE to re-enter a life of sin, BUT THAT OLD LIFE CAN'T PULL US BACK AGAINST OUR WILL!**
    - c) **To illus. this point:** There was a man who sold wood to his neighbors. He always took advantage of them by cutting his logs a few inches under the required four feet. One day the report was circulated that the woodchopper had been converted. Nobody sitting on the bench there in front of the grocery store believed it, ***for they all declared that he was beyond being reached.*** One man, however, slipped quietly away from the group where the conversion was being discussed.
 

He soon came running back in excitement and shouted: “It's so! He has been!” They all asked, “How do you know?” “I measured the wood he cut yesterday, and it's ALL a good four feet long!” That convinced the crowd. **The woodcutter's changed behavior revealed a changed life.** Living this new and more excellent way of life is possible because---

2. **Christ frees us from sin's mastery.** According to **vss.6-7**, our death with Christ broke sin's power to compel us to sin. We can resist EVERY TEMPTATION we desire! **1 Cor.10:13.**
- By virtue of that NEW BIRTH baptism we have been so closely identified with Jesus Christ that God treats us *as if we died at the Cross*. But God isn't pretending.
  - It turns out that in fact real world benefits of Jesus' death accrue to us.
  - The **possibility** of sin is real, **but the necessity isn't!** We have the POWER and the assurance and the confidence that we DON'T HAVE TO SIN.
- D. **BAPTISM FREES US TO LIVE A NEW LIFE. (8-11).**
- We know that Christ is free of death's dominion (**vss.9-10**).
    - We know that sin and death no longer have any power over Jesus Christ. He is free because he died with respect to sin.
    - We, too, are free because--**REMEMBER!**--we were linked to Christ's death and resurrection the moment we obeyed the gospel!
  - We similarly reckon ourselves alive to God. (**11**).
    - Verse 11** suggests that an important component in holy living is your mindset. Because you are a Christian, you must come to a clear and settled understanding of what happened at the Cross. You must impress upon your view of things the actual fact that in the VICARIOUS DEATH of Christ **you suffered sin's penalty (death) and the old score was settled.**
    - When you decided to rely upon Jesus Christ you made an irrevocable decision. If you are going to live out that decision and gain freedom from your previous, sinful way of life then you need to see yourself as you truly are--someone whom God has linked to Christ's death, [thereby breaking the penalty of sin] and who has been linked to Christ's resurrection, which is immune to sin's influence.
    - Let me put it in plain, simple terms. God has given you a new, clean life. Why would you want to drop that and go back to your old, filthy ways? **You do not have to sin—BUT THE CHOICE IS YOURS.**
  - In each and every case the fact that you have been baptized into Christ--somehow mysteriously linked to His death and resurrection--means that you are free. That's why Paul asks, "*What kind of religious simpleton would even think of asking if Christians should sin all they want?*"
    - The first principle to bear in mind from **Romans 6:1-14** is that baptism joins us to Jesus' death and blood and His resurrected life, and makes us a part of His body.
    - From that Paul concludes that the only logical way to live is **TO LIVE FOR GOD!**
    - He has given you a new life that is free from all the dark, rumbling passions of your sinful nature. **SO GO LIVE IT!**

## **II. MORE THAN BEING "FREE" TO DO IT, BAPTISM OBLIGES US TO LIVE OUR NEW LIFE FOR GOD (12-14).**

- A. We are obligated to reject sin's rule in our lives! (**12, 13**).
- Because we are free from sin, we must fight against it! **cf.** In the United States of America we are free from the tyranny of radical fringe groups.
    - We refuse to be oppressed by autocrats who would use fear and terror to force their will upon us. **SO, because we insist on living free, we fight terrorism.**
    - Rather than knuckling under to the **terrorists** who blew up the World Trade Center, to the **fanatic** who blew up the Alfred P. Murrah building in Oklahoma City, or the **violent radical** who sent bombs through the mail--**WE RESIST.**
      - We **struggle.** We **fight against them.** We **refuse to permit them to govern us.**
      - In the same way, Christians must resist the sin nature that still lingers within us.
    - This is what he had in mind when, in his book, "*Three Steps Forward, Two Steps Back,*" Charles Swindoll wrote,

*“Do not try to coexist peacefully with temptation . . . If you are weakened by certain kinds of music, you are playing into the hands of Satan himself to listen to it. If you're weakened by certain pictures that bring before your eyes things that build desires within you that you can't handle, then you're not counteracting sin and temptation. **You're tolerating it. You're fertilizing it. You're prompting it.** If the newsstand is something you can't handle, stay away from it! Quit clucking your tongue and shaking your head as you linger over the pages. If you're weakened by relationships with certain people, abstain from them.”*

2. **Vss. 12-13** tell us that **we are obliged to reject sins' rule**. It is our duty to stop using our eyes, our ears, our tongues and our hands for sinful purposes – as well as any other parts of ourselves!
- B. Instead, as **verse 14** says, WE ARE OBLIGATED to embrace God's sovereignty over us! (**13b, 14**).

**[Illus: An illiterate couple had just obeyed the gospel.** They met with a group of brethren who were so close they occasionally even dressed alike when doing certain things. When engaged in a particular project, the men wore red shirts, so the woman made one for her husband. He came home after the meeting terribly disappointed, though, because the others had a message printed on their shirts and he didn't. His wife, **undaunted by her inability to read**, sewed three words on his shirt that she copied from a sign in a store window across the street. He wore it to the next meeting and came home bubbling with joy. He said all of the men really liked the inscription because it so aptly described the wonderful change they had seen in his life. It turned out that his wife had written, **"UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT."**]

1. SO NOW, **are we WITHOUT LAW, OR JUST** no longer under **the law?**
  - a) **Verse 14** says that we are **UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT**. We are **NO LONGER OBLIGATED** to obey the law of Moses. In the very next chapter Paul wrote, **Rom.7:8-10-** *“[Sin,] seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead. 9) Once I was alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. 10) I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death.”*
  - b) Paul often spoke out against religious legalism, a widely popular view which teaches that **OBEDIENCE TO LAW** is the means by which God's people **earn**, or **can command** grace!
  - c) But Paul **ALSO** stated we still have to abide by the **LAW OF CHRIST!** **1 Cor.9:20-21-** *“To the Jews I became as a Jew; 21) to those who are without law, as without law, **though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ**, so that I might win those who are without law.”*
2. Thank God that we live **UNDER GRACE!**
  - a) Those who live under law are obligated to obey every aspect of the law. **Perfect obedience in every detail is required.** **Jas.2:10-** *“For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.”* **Gal.5:1, 3-** *“It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. 3) And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law.”*
  - b) When the moment of temptation comes you must cast yourself upon God by **accepting His grace and that new relationship He offers us IN CHRIST!**
    - 1) **EVERYONE** has access to His grace! **Jno.3:16; Titus 2:11-12.**
    - 2) And this same apostle Paul tells us how we accept that Grace: **Rom.6:3-5.**
  - c) You must remind yourself that with Jesus Christ, you died to sin – and that sin no longer has the power to compel you.

## **CONCLUSION:**

- A. In A.D. 73, a small band of 930 Jews resisted the might of Rome from a rock fortress called Masada. It rises 1300 feet above the surrounding desert at the southern end of the Dead Sea.

1. From the top, outlines of the Roman military camps that had cut off all supplies to the Jewish rebels can still be seen.
  2. An earthen ramp, built to besiege the fortification, slopes up one side.
  3. When Roman troops stormed the wall and finally broke through, they were met by an eerie silence.
  4. The dead bodies of 930 men, women, and children stole from their conquest the thrill of victory.
  5. The Jews deliberately chose to die free rather than to live under the indignity of slavery.
- B. God does not advocate suicide, even under the most extreme adversity. Yet those Jewish defenders grappled with a TRUE life and death issue – one remarkably similar to what WE face as Christians.
- C. Are WE going to CONTINUE TO YIELD TO SIN as we LIVE IN bondage to selfishness, and are shackled by passions that cannot be satisfied, and subjugated by self indulgence that only leads to further misery? TO YIELD TO SIN IS TO LIVE IN BONDAGE.
- D. **OR, WILL YOU DIE, [die to your sinful life] AS YOU LIVE IN THAT FREEDOM** which comes from an acceptable relationship with God through Jesus Christ, one filled with the joy of a close, personal fellowship with God and His family, reveling in the peace that passes all understanding, and enjoying that sense of release which comes from having a clear conscience?
- E. *We can live free of sin's compulsion by remembering that baptism has linked us to Jesus' death and resurrection.*
- F. **DO YOU NEED TO BE BAPTIZED INTO THE BODY OF CHRIST, TO BECOME A PART OF THE FAMILY OF GOD, A CITIZEN IN THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST, FOR THE REMISSION OF YOUR SINS? THE CHOICE IS YOURS, AND YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE IT RIGHT NOW, as we stand and sing!**