

Romans 6: Battle Sin and Win!

Romans 6:3-5

What a sharp sword we are wielding—in the form of Romans 6! We are cutting down sin in our lives right by the roots. Why is sin such a big deal? Well, our sin did cost God our Father His one and only Son (John 3:16)—His perfect Son Who took on our sin and punishment before God that we could be part of His death on the cross and, gloriously, live a new life in Him now and forever. Sin also exacts a price from us that we can ill afford to pay, and that is consequences. Sometimes sin will demand our death as payment. This is what the Bible calls the wages of sin:

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We need to remember that there is no such thing as secret sin:

Numbers 32:23

But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out.

Galatians 6:7

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

So we need to keep the Sword of the Spirit sharp and ready. We need to prepare ourselves for action:

1Peter 1:13-16

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

Yes, we are forgiven for our sins through the work of Jesus on the cross. We are justified by faith in Jesus alone! However, we all bear the scars of past and present sin—indeed, it wars against the soul (1 Peter 2:11)—and have had to live with the consequences of following our flesh. That is why God clearly delineates between flesh and spirit, so that in every moment of every day we have to choose between the two. There is no middle ground!

Galatians 5:16-18

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

The logical end of sin unchecked is death—death to joy, death to relationships, death to intimacy with God, and ultimately, physical death:

James 1:14-15

But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

So it's not like we need more reasons to hate sin—it kills!

*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: Rather than perpetually lament your failures in walking with God in obedience—which we all experience—think about your successes and what spiritual practices led to your victories.

*STUDY POINT: As a matter of closely relating to our brothers and sisters in the Lord, conduct your own study—devotionally—looking at epic victories and, yes, epic failures in the Bible, paying attention to what lessons we can glean for our own walk with Christ.

But woe to us, dear believer, if we resort to fighting sin in our own strength. We fight, and win in our battle against sin, through the Word of God and the power of the Holy Ghost. His Word empowers us to say “no” to ungodliness and worldly lusts (Titus 2:11-15). The Holy Ghost, Who inspired Holy Scripture, enables us to say “yes” to God every time. And if we seek Him daily and love Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength (Luke 10:27) and we fail—that's where His grace picks us up again so we can continue being close with Him. That's what grace is for—not for trying to win a sin competition, wherein we know that grace super-abounds over sin every time (Romans 5:20)!

Romans 6:3

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

(NIV) Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

Paul demolishes here the foolish idea of sinning to the utmost after justification in order to increase God's grace. Once a born-again believer goes under the water in baptism, they have declared to the world that they are dead to sin. Therefore, this identification with the death and burial of Christ through our public act of water baptism must remain at the front of our minds and in the centre of our hearts. Knowing is really the first step to victory over sin—knowing His Word!

*QUESTION FOR MEDITATION: Do you recall a time in your walk with God when knowing made all the difference between giving into sin and having victory over it? What did that process, or the absence of it, look like? Could a process like this be a helpful spiritual discipline?

*STUDY POINT: Look up, write down, and memorize at least twelve Scriptures and/or passages that would be powerful and ready companions in your daily battle against sin.

Romans 6:4

(KJV) 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.

(NIV) We 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.

Here we remember coming out of the water of baptism unto newness of life! More than just a trite bit of symbolism, this act declares to the world that we are a brand new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). It is at that moment we should be compelled to live—not perfectly—but nonetheless in practical righteousness, keeping short accounts with God:

1John 2:1

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

So our response to God when he convicts us of sin—through His Word and His Spirit—has become our sanctification:

SANCTIFICA'TION, n. [See Sanctify.]

1. The act of making holy. In an evangelical sense, the act of God's grace by which the affections of men are purified or alienated from sin and the world, and exalted to a supreme love to God. God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. 2 Th 2. 1 Pet 1.

2. The act of consecrating or of setting apart for a sacred purpose; consecration.

Through this divine and mysterious co-partnership with God, we get to play a part in our sanctification and, you guessed it, battling sin and winning is God's desire for us. He wants us to succeed and prosper in life and godliness, becoming more like His Son, godly choice after godly choice. Hallelujah!

Romans 6:5

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

(NIV) 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.

And now the incredible news! Just as we were submerged under the water in baptism, symbolizing our death to sin, we also come out of the water, experiencing His resurrection unto our new life in Him. What joy and what celebration must accompany our obedience to Jesus in declaring to the world that we are His—through water baptism!

And all of these verses Paul has penned serve to silence the silly notion of sinning more and more that grace may abound.

Amen.

~ Reverend Darren McClelland