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Risen and Reigning: An Easter Series / Resurrection; Old and New Man / Romans 6:1–14

In Romans 6:1–14, Paul confronts a vital question: if we are saved by grace alone, does that give us license to sin? His emphatic answer—“May it never be!”—grounds our understanding of grace not as freedom to sin, but freedom from sin. Believers are united with Christ in His death and resurrection; therefore, we have died to sin’s rule and now live in newness of life.

Our old self was crucified with Christ. We are no longer slaves to sin but are free to walk in righteousness. Sin's power remains present, but its dominion has been broken. Christ now reigns in us, and we are called to yield ourselves—not to sin—but to God as instruments of righteousness.

This gospel truth is not merely doctrinal—it is transformational. We are not who we were. We are risen with Christ, called to live as those alive from the dead. The Christian life is one of active holiness empowered by grace.

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## Introduction

In our last message, we beheld the staggering reality of justification by faith. We considered the righteousness of God revealed apart from the law and received by grace through faith. But that glorious truth leaves us with a question—one that has echoed throughout the centuries whenever grace is preached plainly and powerfully: “If salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, then what’s to stop someone from continuing in sin?”

Paul anticipates that objection because grace, when properly preached, will *always* seem too free, too risky, too prone to abuse in the eyes of man. This is the Holy Spirit's wisdom through Paul: he doesn't recoil from such a question—he answers it head-on.

Today, we take up that answer. Today, we reckon with our death to sin and life in Christ. Paul teaches us not only the theological implications of our union with Christ in His death and resurrection, but also the practical demands that flow from it. This passage does not merely inform our minds;

it shapes our living. Because the Christian life is not just about having peace with God—it is about walking in *newness of life*.

Today we will see The Power of the Resurrection through:

1. **The Reality of Death with Christ (vv.2–7)**
2. **The Power of Life with Christ (vv.8–11)**
3. **The Command to Live as Risen Ones (vv.12–14)**

## Text

Please stand for the reading of God’s holy, inerrant, infallible, complete, authoritative and sufficient Word

### **Romans 6:1–14 LSB**

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?

May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?

Or do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

Therefore we were 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.

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,

knowing this, that our old man 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;

for he who has died has been justified from sin.

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him.

For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all, but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting your members 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.

For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Almighty God of our exodus, great was the joy of Israel's sons, when Egypt died upon the shore, far greater the joy when the Redeemer's foe lay crushed in the dust. Jesus strode forth as the victor, great conqueror of death, hell, and all opposing might. He shatters the bands of death, tramples the powers of darkness, and lives, reigning victoriously forever. He, our gracious surety, apprehended for payment of our debt, comes forth from the prison house of the grave, free, and triumphant over sin, Satan, and death. Show us in Your word proof that His substitutionary offering is accepted, that the claims of justice are satisfied, that the devil's scepter is destroyed, and that his wrongful throne is laid waste. Give us assurance that in Christ we died, in Him we rise, in His live we live, in His victory we triumph, and in His ascension we too shall be glorified. Precious Redeemer, You who were lifted upon a cross have now ascended to the highest heaven. You, who as Man of sorrows was crowned with thorns, are now displayed as Lord of life wreathed in glory. Once, no same more deep than yours, no agony more bitter, no death more cruel. Now, no exaltation more high, no life more glorious, no advocate more effective. You are victoriously leading your enemies behind you in captivity. What more could be done that You, Precious Lord, have done! Your death is our life, Your resurrection is our peace, Your ascension is our hope, and your

intercession is our comfort. We pray these things in Christ name, Amen

## Death to Sin

### The Question of Grace Abused

“What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?”

Paul has just finished proclaiming the abounding nature of grace in Romans 5:20—“where sin increased, grace abounded all the more.” But this raises a natural question. If grace abounds when sin increases, shouldn’t we sin more to give grace more opportunity to shine?

Now, some might hear that question and think it absurd, but don’t be too quick to dismiss it. Every generation, including our own, has known those who treat grace as license. The antinomian spirit, or the belief that we are free from all law, including the moral law of God, did not die in the first century. It has been repackaged in our own day with slogans like, “God loves me just as I am,” or “Don’t put me under law, I’m under grace.” The logic is eerily similar to what Paul addresses.

But how does Paul respond?

**“May it never be!”** *Mē genoito*—this is one of the strongest denials in the Greek language. We might say, “God forbid!” “Absolutely not!” “Perish the thought!” Paul is not entertaining the question—he is condemning the conclusion. Why?

Because the very premise of the gospel includes a radical change in the believer. Grace doesn’t encourage sin; it slays sin at the root.

Paul doesn't launch into moral exhortation to stop sinning—he takes us to the foundational reality of who we are in Christ. You don't just *try harder* to stop sinning. You begin by understanding who you are and what has happened to you through union with Christ.

## The Reality of Death with Christ

In his introduction to the commentary on these verses, John MacArthur writes the following:

**Romans: The MacArthur New Testament Commentary Chapter 23: Dying to Live**

In his early teens, John Newton ran away from England and joined the crew of a slave ship. Some years later he himself was given to the black wife of a white slave trader in Africa. He was cruelly mistreated and lived on leftovers from the woman's meals and on wild yams he dug from the ground at night. After escaping, he lived with a group of natives for a while and eventually managed to become a sea captain himself, living the most ungodly and profligate life imaginable. But after his miraculous conversion in 1748, he returned to England and became a selfless and tireless minister of the gospel in London. He left for posterity many hymns that are still among the most popular in the world. By far the best-known and best-loved of those is "Amazing Grace." He became the pastor of a church in England, and to this day the churchyard carries an epitaph that Newton himself wrote (Out of the Depths: An Autobiography [Chicago, Moody, n.d.], p. 151):

John Newton, Clerk,  
once an infidel and libertine,  
A servant of slaves in Africa,  
was, by the rich mercy of our Lord and Savior,  
Jesus Christ,  
Preserved, restored, pardoned,  
And appointed to preach the faith  
He had long labored to destroy.

How could such a debauched, self-proclaimed enemy of the faith eventually be able to say with Paul, "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service; even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. And yet I was shown mercy" (1 Tim. 1:12–13)?

"How shall we who died to sin still live in it?"

This is not mere rhetoric—it is theological reality. Paul says, "We *died* to sin." The tense is past. It is not a process. It is a completed event. And it happened at the moment of our union with Christ.

This death is not emotional, not symbolic—it is legal and spiritual. We died to sin in the sense that we were separated from its dominion. Just as Christ died once for all, never to die again, so too we have died to sin's reign.

This statement here, "Once for all", is very often misquoted and

misunderstood. All here does not refer to people. The Greek word being translated speaks of “an altogether decisive and unrepeatable event” CEB Cranfield

Then Paul points to baptism—not primarily as a ritual, but as a sign of spiritual union.

“Or do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?” (v.3)

Baptism, rightly understood, is the outward sign of an inward reality. It pictures death, burial, and resurrection. When we were united to Christ by faith, His death became ours. And that means His burial was ours. We were buried with Him so that we might walk in *newness of life*.

Mounce writes:

**Romans (1) Dead to Sin, Alive in Christ (6:1–14)**

The text does not say that sin dies to the believer; it is the believer who has died to sin. Origen, the most influential theologian of the ante-Nicene period, described death to sin in this way: “To obey the cravings of sin is to be alive to sin; but not to obey the cravings of sin or succumb to its will, this is to die to sin.” Sin continues in force in its attempt to dominate the life and conduct of the believer. But the believer has been baptized into Christ,<sup>7</sup> and that means to have been baptized into Christ’s death as well. Christ’s death for sin becomes our death to sin

This does not mean that sin is eradicated, but that sin no longer reigns. Before Christ, we were slaves to sin. After Christ, we are free from the bondage of sin, from the power of sin, from the dominion of sin.

“Our old man was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with...” (v.6)

The “old man” refers to our former identity in Adam, defined by CK Barrett as “ourselves in union with Adam”—corrupted, rebellious, enslaved. That man was crucified with Christ. His dominion is gone. The “body of sin”—that is, our whole being under the control of sin—is rendered powerless. Not absent, but impotent.

“For he who has died has been justified from sin.” (v.7)

Here Paul uses the language of legal freedom. A dead man is no longer

under obligation. In the same way, we have been set free from sin's penalty and power.

## The Power of Life with Christ

"Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him." (v.8)

Here is the glorious result to our death with Christ: **we also live with Him**. Just as surely as we were united with Him in His death, we are united with Him in His resurrection. The tense here is important—it is not only pointing forward to future resurrection, though it certainly includes that—it is also pointing to the present *resurrection life* we now experience in Christ.

This is not hypothetical. It is not a spiritual ideal. It is a present reality.

Regarding this statement that we shall also live with Him, J Murray writes "the believers walk in newness of life is not (seen as an idle) possession but as engaging in activity". The greek word here speaks of a completely new way of life, and one that is active because of the change that has been brought about.

"Knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him." (v.9)

Death once held dominion, even over the Son of God—voluntarily, for the sake of our redemption. But no more. Mounce described the death and crucifixion of Christ as "Satan's ultimate show of force" - now Christ has conquered the grave, never to be subjected to it again. And here is Paul's point: because we are united with Him, the same holds true for us. Death is no longer our master. Sin is no longer our lord. The curse has been broken.

"For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God." (v.10)

This is both the model and the means of our sanctification.

- Christ *died to sin*—not in the sense that He ever sinned, but in that He bore sin's penalty once for all and broke its legal claim,
- Christ *lives to God*—meaning His life is fully and perfectly devoted to the will and glory of the Father.

And Paul now draws the conclusion for us in verse 11:

“Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.”

This is a command to *think rightly*. The word translated “consider” is *logizomai*—to reckon, to count as true. This is not a call to manufacture a feeling or strive for a spiritual high. It is a call to align our thinking with theological reality. You *are* dead to sin. You *are* alive to God. So live accordingly.

We do not live to *become* something—we live because we *are* something. This is not “fake it till you make it.” This is “believe what God has said and walk in it.”

And note: this is not just a mindset change—it is a declaration of identity. Paul is teaching us that our sanctification begins with understanding who we now are in Christ.

## The Command to Live as Risen Ones

Now, based on these glorious truths, Paul moves from the indicative to the imperative. From what *is* to what *must be*. And it is here that we see the beautiful balance of gospel transformation.

“Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts.” (v.12)

This is the first command in the entire chapter. But it is a command grounded in grace, not law. It flows from the union we have with Christ. Paul is saying: *Don't let sin be king*. Don't submit to its desires. You are no longer a slave. You are free. So don't return to the chains.

This verse implies that though sin's power has been broken, its presence remains. Sin still seeks to reign. It knocks at the door of your heart, demanding obedience. And Paul is saying: *Don't answer*.

“And do not go on presenting your members to sin as instruments of unrighteousness...” (v.13a)

The word for “present” means to offer up, to yield. It's the image of a servant reporting for duty. Paul says, *stop handing over your body—your*



*eyes, your tongue, your hands, your mind—to be tools of sin.* They don't belong to sin anymore.

"...but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God." (v.13b)

Here is the positive command. Yield yourself to God. Offer up your body—not to sin, but to the Savior. Why? Because you are alive from the dead. You're not who you were. You are now a vessel of righteousness.

Every day we face the decision: *Whose instruments will we be?* Whose will we obey? We cannot serve two masters. We will either yield ourselves to sin, or to God. There is no neutral ground.

"For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace." (v.14)

This is not just a command—it's a **promise**. "Sin shall not be master over you." Why? Because we are under grace. Grace doesn't lead us to lawlessness. It leads us to freedom—freedom not to sin. Freedom to walk in righteousness.

"Under law" implies condemnation, judgment, failure. "Under grace" means acceptance, power, transformation. Grace teaches us to say "no" to ungodliness (Titus 2:11–12), and grace gives us the power to live as we ought.

## Conclusion

Beloved, this passage is not abstract theology. It is spiritual warfare. It is heart surgery. Paul is teaching us to live in the light of who we are.

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You are not what you once were.

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You are not what your flesh says you are.

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You are not what the devil accuses you of being.

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You are a blood-bought, Spirit-indwelt, grace-saturated, sin-freed, death-conquering child of the resurrection.

Christ did not rise from the grave so that we could remain in ours. He rose that we might rise with Him. And if we have died with Him, we *shall also live with Him*.

So what now?

The world wants to redefine you by your past. Your flesh wants to deceive you with its lusts. Satan wants to enslave you with lies. But Christ calls you to walk in **newness of life**.

The gospel is not merely information. It is transformation. It is not only the means by which we are justified—it is the power by which we are sanctified.

And so I leave you with this question—a question that demands a response not only today, but every day:

**If you have truly died with Christ and now live with Him, how can you continue to present yourself to sin as though you are still in the grave?**

Christian—*Are you living as one risen from the dead?*

Are you walking in newness of life?

Or are you still wearing grave clothes that Christ already took off?

Do not let sin reign. Christ reigns. And you, in Him, reign with Him. So rise—and live.

Let us pray.

**Our gracious and sovereign God,**

We come before You in the name of Jesus Christ, our crucified and risen Lord. We thank You for the Word we have heard, for the gospel of grace that saves, sanctifies, and secures. We praise You that, having been united with Christ in His death, we are also united with Him in His resurrection.

We were once slaves to sin, dead in our trespasses, following the course of this world. But You, O Lord, being rich in mercy, made us alive together with Christ. Thank You that grace is not a license to sin, but the power to live free

from its dominion. Thank You that we are no longer under law, but under grace—no longer condemned, but justified—no longer enslaved, but sons and daughters.

Help us now to walk in that newness of life. Let not sin reign in our mortal bodies. Let us not yield our members to unrighteousness, but present ourselves to You as those alive from the dead. Make us holy, not merely in position, but in practice. Let our hands do the work of righteousness, our lips speak truth, our feet run to obedience, and our hearts love what You love.

We confess our weakness, O Lord. Though we are no longer slaves, we still feel the pull of the flesh. So strengthen us by Your Spirit to put to death the deeds of the body. Teach us to daily reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive to You in Christ Jesus.

For those among us who have not yet died to sin—who remain under its rule—O Father, have mercy. Grant them repentance and faith. Let them see the crucified Christ who bore the wrath they deserve. Raise them from death to life by Your sovereign grace.

And for all who belong to Christ, let us live as those risen with Him. Let this church be marked by gospel transformation—by purity, by zeal, by joyful obedience. Make our lives a visible testimony to the power of resurrection life.

We thank You, Lord Jesus, that You died once for all, and now live unto God. So too, may we live unto God. May we fight sin with holy resolve, walk humbly in grace, and long for the day when we will see You face to face.

Until then, preserve us, purify us, and fill us with joy in believing.

We pray this in the matchless name of Jesus Christ,  
**Amen.**