

Christian Life on the Inside - Sermon 4 of 5

by Roy Hession

Roy Hession's sermon emphasizes the transformative power of grace in overcoming sin and living a life dedicated to God.

Duration: 51:47

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the struggle of living a victorious Christian life as described in Romans 6. He acknowledges that many Christians have tried to reckon themselves dead to sin but have failed. However, he shares a personal experience of being confronted by a couple who pointed out his wrong reactions and lack of love towards a brother. This led him to humble himself and seek forgiveness, experiencing the grace and kindness of God. The speaker emphasizes the importance of caring for others and warns against antagonism and resentment, highlighting that the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Transcript

I'm thankful for what the Lord did for me last night. The Lord didn't seem to convict me or deal with me very specially in the meeting itself. But just as Pam and I were preparing ourselves for bed pretty late last night, there was a knock at our door and a couple came in.

And they came in as penitents to share with me something I'd only been dimly conscious of, if that, wrong reactions to me. And they were not wanting to point to that in me which had caused these reactions, they were only concerned to obey the Holy Ghost who'd said you must get right with that brother. But of course in the process the light of God shone into my heart.

And I saw an area of lovelessness and lack of caring with regard to this brother and the service he was rendering. And I had a beautiful opportunity to go to the cross and humble myself. And I'm saying gracious and kind is he when sinners call him.

So praise the Lord for this wonderful saviour, this work of redemption, this precious blood which is available to us. And I know the Lord's saying that's your problem, you don't care. Things are more important to you than people, but they're not to me.

So I'm praising for what he did for me, thank God for that. And maybe that's how it is. Conviction of sin ricochets right the way through a house party.

And it goes on ricocheting after the house party's over. Because when you get home maybe there's someone whose forgiveness you've got to ask. And without trying to produce anything in them, God may.

And that in turn may send them to get right with somebody else. And dear me, the blessing of God ricochets from life to life. Who can tell what's going to happen in England along the line of the ricochet of the blessing of God as it comes to us first.

Now I want to turn you this morning to Romans chapter 6. Romans chapter 6. And I do ask you to try and look at it with fresh eyes. Of course young Christians it's all brand new. But us older Christians we've gone over this chapter with a tooth comb, at least I have.

And it's been the despair of us. But it isn't to me this morning, it's my hope, the message of it. And I hope it'll all come to life to us.

Once again with Paul you've got to break into his argument. What shall we say then? Well of course that's following on what he said in five previous chapters. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid.

How shall we that died to sin live any longer therein? Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? More than that we are buried with him. You know sometimes I'm having a battle and I'm dying to my rights. And trying to take it.

But I do want people to see me dying. I know I'm having a hard time in that situation but we don't talk about dying, being buried. And nobody knows what a battle you've had and what a surrender you've made.

Maybe you've had that experience. You want to die. You're ready to die but you want people to know you're dying.

Buried. Not even seen, but God seen. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death.

That like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. I like that word newness. The new birth has got to be kept new.

Sometimes the old birth, the new birth gets a bit stale. But here we've got something fresh, scintillating, new all the time. Newness of life.

Nice phrase, isn't it? For if we've been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Not only in glory but right now. There's something inside.

Knowing this, that our old man, the man of old, was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. That phrase, the body of sin being destroyed, has been a difficult thing. It's sometimes thought to be the end tale of sin that's left, even after you're born again, is yanked out and destroyed.

It doesn't mean that. It means exactly what it says. The body belonging to sin should be made of none effect.

Because you see, whereas the flesh captures the soul, it also captures the body. And that body is being used by the flesh, sin. Therefore it's sin's body.

And God's purpose is, through the work of the cross, that that which was sin's body should become his body. And therefore that our bodies, as sin's body, should be made of none effect, in order that we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.

Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dies no more. Death hath no more dominion over him.

For in that he died, he died unto sin, once for all, never needs to repeat it. But in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lust thereof. I like that, that's how the authorised verse is. That you should obey it in the lust thereof.

Now, don't let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey sin in the lusts of the body. The body has natural desires, and sin says use them in a self-centred way, indulge yourself, that you should not obey it, sin, in the lusts of the body, because now it's God's. Now redeem ye your members, this is flesh and blood, as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead, and your members, the body, as instruments of righteousness unto God.

For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? God forbid! Know ye not that to whom you yield or present yourselves slaves to obey, and by the way, the RSV is right there, though it isn't always consistent. The word servant invariably is slave.

But there are some places where to render the word servant by slave in the RSV is so stunning that the RSV couldn't get themselves to do it. Most places they have, and they've slipped back to servant. But invariably, the Greek word, you know, I hope someone won't have a reaction about me mentioning this strange language, Greek.

I don't know any of it at all. I get all mine secondhand from a book that's available to use to me, Young's Analytical Concourse. But the only problem that's defeated us is that that great useful book was based on the AV.

So what are we to do with all these versions? Well anyway, that's where I get what little knowledge I have of the literal meaning of these things. Servants, invariably, is bond servants. That doesn't mean too much.

Slaves. For slavery was a common thing in those days, and everybody would know what Paul meant. He describes himself as a servant of Jesus Christ.

Do you know what he meant? A slave of Jesus. That's what he was, a slave of Jesus Christ, where before he'd been a slave of sin. Know ye not that to whom ye present yourselves slaves to obey? His slaves ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness.

But God be thanked that he were the slaves of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart. Nice phrase. Obeying from the heart.

Obedying from the heart. Not an intellectual thing, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form or pattern of doctrine which was the liturgy. Being then made free from sin, ye became the slaves of righteousness.

What do you think of that? Being made free, you became slaves. I'm sorry, you can't avoid slavery. You're either going to be a slave of sin, or you're going to be a slave of Jesus Christ.

But you've got to be free from the first to become the second. Being then made free from sin, ye became the slaves of righteousness. Not of sin.

Jesus, it says, righteousness. Because our God is among us. It isn't emotional theory.

Slaves of Jesus. And that means a slave. Slavery to being right with God.

Wanting nothing else. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh. For as ye have yielded your members slaves to uncleanness and to iniquity unto uncleanness, even so now yield your members slaves to righteousness unto holiness.

Friends, uncleanness means uncleanness. When you see that word, it refers to sex. And Paul is obsessed with getting a people saved out of the mud and the mire of sexual license.

The day in which Paul lived among the Gentiles was as permissive as our day. And what God was doing then, he's doing now. Raising a holy people out of the mud and the mire.

A holy band of out-and-out young Christians that are not seeing how near a Christian can go to the wind, but absolutely going in the opposite direction of this permissive age. And that's what he's referring to. It wasn't always so with us.

There was a time when we presented these members, slaves to uncleanness. Now it says, as you do that, reverse the process. Present those members, slaves to righteousness, which will lead to holiness.

And then extraordinary phrase, almost, I don't know if you see it, he thought of, when you wear the slaves of sin, ye were free from righteousness. We're used to talking about being free from sin, but hey, here he's talking about there are some people who are free from righteousness. Blissfully free from righteousness, innocent of righteousness, getting no motivations from righteousness.

And when you wear the slave of sin, you wear free from righteousness. And he wants us to be as free from sin as we once were free from righteousness. What an extraordinary way of putting it.

I tell you, he knows how to get it home, doesn't he? But when we wear the slaves of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now, being made free from sin, and become slaves to God, you have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life.

For the wages of sin is death. Hey, this verse, which we've preached to the unsaved, was first given to the Christians. For the Christians can know the wages of sin, playing with sin.

Whereas I'm not saying that a born-again man will lose his place in the family of God when he plays with sin. It's death to everything short of that. The wages of sin, the wages of not repenting and not judging and going on in sin, it may not only be sexual sin, it may be antagonism and resentment, the wages of that sin is death.

But the gift, and literally the free gift, the gratuitous gift of God, is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen and amen. Now, I want this morning to resist the temptation to recapitulate what I said before.

But I'm going to add one thing to yesterday. I ended by quoting the case of George Muller, who said as he bowed low, there came a time when George Muller died. A brother yesterday said to me, he said, you know this badge I've got up here, he said, I'm thinking of changing it.

We call him John Smith, don't want to mention his name. And there was John Smith. He said, I think I'm likely going to change it and put up there the late John Smith.

There came a time, said George Muller, when I died, died to myself, remember. But I'm thinking of another incident I'd like to put alongside that of a dear brother, I think his name is Pastor Bolt from Canada, and he was leading in prayer and someone said, he said, Oh Jesus, walk in my shoes. Walk in my shoes! Yes, there come a time when you die, but that's not all.

He wants to walk in your shoes. Isn't that beautiful? You can regard yourself as a shoe of deity. Don't look at shoes too much, but at the one who's walking in them.

Walk in my shoes. But if he's to do that, he's got to displace the one who's already walking in those shoes. And that's the crux of the matter about which we've been thinking.

Now we're going to turn to this chapter before us and those who've lived long in their Bibles may heave a sigh, Romans 6, because it's frustrated us so much. It speaks apparently of the victorious Christian life. Three times it speaks of being made free from sin.

In other places it talks about being dead to sin and reckoning ourselves dead. And we've tried to make it work and we haven't succeeded. We've tried to reckon the old man dead, but in spite of that he doesn't seem to lie down.

And this chapter has been the despair of many. It was to me. I got some blessing.

I got some help. But when the simple message of grace first reached my heart after being an evangelist for years, it didn't seem to talk to me about this chapter. And so I said to myself, I'm going to park that well-worn chapter for a bit and I'm going to park all the sermons I've given on it.

And I'm just going to go on with you, Lord, as to what that aspect of things you make living to me. And I have a feeling, Lord, that one day you'll bring me back to those much-worn themes of mine. And you'll bring me back to them through another door.

And I discover the whole thing is much more simple than I was making it. And I think in these last years God has slowly brought me back to these beautiful scriptures, but through another door. And I've discovered it's the same old message that I was newlyward learning at the foot of the cross, but foot from another angle, and an angle which we very much need.

Now the pivot I'm going to make of this chapter is verse 14. And this perhaps is the verse which has tantalised us most. Verse 14.

For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you're not under the law, but under grace. Now that was a verse that tantalised me because I really, in spite of seeking to be consecrated to God and working for Him, I couldn't really say that sin did not have dominion over me. Maybe it didn't have the dominion it used

to, but I knew too many places where in spite of this scripture it did seem to have dominion over me.

I used to think, of course, the dominion of sin meant that I couldn't stop doing certain things, that I kept on repeating certain failures. I went on to the dominion of sin and I couldn't break those habits. And while I thought that that was what not being under the dominion of sin meant, I was never able adequately to understand the qualifying phrase.

For, because, you're not under the law but under grace. As long as I had some sort of theory that I could be, by some leap of faith, get into this place where sin no longer bothered me, I couldn't understand, well why does Paul then go on to say for you're not under the law, but under grace. And because I was wrong there, I was wrong on the whole thing.

And I had to park things until the Lord showed me that what he'd been teaching me from other angles was just the message of this passage. Now, first of all, this passage, this verse, speaks of the dominion of sin. And we must get it clear, what is, in what does the dominion of sin over us consist? Well, let me say straight away, as I see it now, the dominion of sin over me is the guilt of sin.

It's power to condemn me when I've committed sin. Now, I used not to think that. I used to follow the thought expressed in Toplard's hymn, which is very generally accepted, Rock of Ages.

Save me from its guilt and power. And I used to think, well, the guilt is one thing. Praise the Lord, I lost that when I was saved.

Ah, but this power, this indwelling power, that's another thing. And if I needed a work of grace for the first, to be saved from that guilt, I suppose there's a second work of grace by which I'm going to be saved from this indwelling power. And on that basis has come all the teaching about the second blessing.

Two states of sin, therefore two works of grace. Two states of sin, a sinner by birth, by nature, and a sinner by practice. The first state of work of grace deals with us as sinners by practice, but the further work of grace is going to deal with that old thing and yank it right out, and we're no longer going to be under that dominion.

But I have to say, while I thought that, I couldn't get anywhere along this line. No, the power of sin consists in its guilt, and that is much deeper and a more tyrannous power over us than indwelling tendencies. A man may repeat, may commit a sin years ago, and he may never repeat that sin.

He's repeated other, but not that one. But he can be under the dominion of that particular sin for years afterwards, simply because it's still condemning him. There's one matter about which no one must ask him any awkward questions.

And a man can be under dominion of sin, of a particular sin, for years, although he's only committed it once, because it's still condemning him. He's still accused. He's there something still in the dark.

You may, after meeting at home, go home and make yourself a cup of coffee in the kitchen. Drink your cup of coffee. Some people won't drink coffee at night.

It keeps them awake. Doesn't seem to do that for me too much, but if you think it keeps you awake, it will. Why am I wrong? Anyway, this person's my picture.

He's drunk a cup of coffee before he went to bed, and he's too tired to wash up the cup. I say he. The she's are never too tired to wash up, it seems.

They cannot bear it. But he, they don't mind. And in the morning, he's a bachelor.

He sees that cup. The cough is gone, but the stain remains. Well, you see, that's quite simple.

I just leave it a few days, and that'll take care of itself. But after a few days, the stain's still there. If he leaves it a week, it's still there.

If he leaves it a month, it's still there. The passage of time does nothing to remove that stain. And the passage of time does nothing at all to remove the guilt of sin.

And you know, our hymns are so right so often, at least the ones that have survived. I guess there have been some funny hymns written in their time, but in the goodness of God, they've all passed out of our hymn books. But the ones that really had the message seem to have remained.

And what a lot of hymns there are that talk about stain. There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins, and sinners plunge beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stain. Sin always involves a stain.

And that is a picture of ongoing, on-continuing guilt. It isn't always in your mind, but then it comes up again. And you're under the dominion of sin, and of that particular sin that you did years ago, or the other week, or the other day, not being cleansed.

This in turn gives Satan his power over us. This is exactly what Satan wants. He's called the accuser of the brethren, and he must have something to accuse us of.

And when sin's been committed, he caps down on it, and he begins to accuse you. He begins to accuse you. In your holiest moment, when you're occupied with Christian service, I know from experience, he can have a little demon from hell on my shoulder, and while I'm leading in prayer, or even preaching, he can say, that little demon is saying to my mind, hypocrite, hypocrite, hypocrite, hypocrite.

You get on very well when that takes place. Your hands go limp, and you withdraw, and don't want to be too involved. Because of certain things you're in your life, and the devil is saying to you, hypocrite, hypocrite.

To change the metaphor, our particular sins, whatever they may be, is a foundation on which Satan builds a great superstructure. The foundation may not be all that big, but my superstructure can be big, and it can last for years, and it can obliterate the sun, the superstructure of accusation, of unease of heart, of guilt. And this, in turn, leads us to more sin.

When this is the situation with us, we're so cold and so down, and I'll touch, that a little more sin isn't going to make things much worse. And as the sin promises you a little lift up, a little attraction, then you go into it. By the way, do you know there's only one sin that doesn't give you any pleasure? When I was confirmed, I was confirmed in my sins.

But the man who prepared me for confirmation said one thing, which is good, and I'll never forget it. He told me, jealousy is the only sin that gives no pleasure. Oh my, you'd better get right, brother.

You're not even getting the little tiny compensations that sin can give you in pleasure. But maybe there are some things you like to do, and after all you've got so much out of touch, or a little bit more, there's even pleasure in blowing your top, isn't there? And you're so away, so cold, that one more such incident doesn't make any difference. You don't appear any more out of touch with God afterwards, because you were out of touch before.

Here's Sunday morning, the family's got the clean tablecloth on, and how careful everybody is not to stain the tablecloth. And if the children upset something, they're recommended on Sunday. But as the week goes by, there's so many stains, that by Saturday, a few more doesn't make any difference, because they're all part of the general pattern.

And friend, that's what's happened to us. We've lived in this sub-normal place for so long, that further sin, further wrong reactions, and self-indulgences, become just part of the general pattern, and you don't feel they put you any more out of touch with God. Of course they do, you were out of touch before.

And all this comes from this basic dominion of sin. Now this is what Paul means by sin. As I understand it now, Paul doesn't merely mean the act of sin, nor does he merely mean the principle of sin, which causes the act.

But he also means what's built upon the sin, that sin in its totality, the guilt of it, the accusation of it. And I tell you, you have much more of it than you realise, when you become more sensitive. How quick do you feel accusation, and sin's having dominion over you.

That's the reason why the devil wants you to sin. Not merely to get you to do something unethical, but having done it, having got you to do it, he then has the opportunity to accuse you. Please turn the cassette over now.

Do not fast wind it in either direction. Having done it, having got you to do it, he then has the opportunity to accuse you. Now, will you get that? I said that to some young men battling with impurity.

It's helped, helped me. That's the reason why the devil prompts you, and tantalises you, and induces you to commit sin. So that the next day you feel like a dog.

You can't look Christians in the eyes. The doing of the thing wasn't the principal thing for the devil. What he was wanting was, now, he's got you.

Brother, will you lead in prayer? Not today. Or if you do, it's all mechanical. Would you like to give a testament? And you share a Christian fellowship.

You feel so bad. And you don't expect it to get better for about a week. I don't know.

Somehow you get some sort of pseudo-peace, and on you go. This, then, friends, is the dominion of sin. Now, Paul next speaks in this verse about the law.

I don't want to amplify this too much. We've already mentioned this. Now, when we are in this sad, unhappy state, and any of us can get there any time, what do we do? The natural thing is to have recourse to the law.

To make promises. To espouse higher standards. To perhaps promise to pray more.

And pick up the threads of our Bible reading again. And to be nicer and holier. That's the law.

And we have recourse to the law. And we put ourselves under law in an attempt, thereby, to get out of our unhappy state of soul. Now, this phrase, under law, under the law, needs to be understood.

When it says the Christian is not under the law, but under grace, it doesn't mean he's resolved from the obligations of God's holy law. That has never changed. What has changed is the method by which it's going to be implemented.

When you're under law, you're trying to do it yourself. And you are, by the means of those attempts, hoping for peace, hoping for righteousness. There's another way in which the righteousness of the law is going to be implemented, as we saw yesterday.

But being under law, I define it in this way, from my thinking, it's the attempt to get peace with God, and righteousness, and restoration, by the doing of this, that, and the other. Perfectly good things, of course. That's what is meant by being under the law.

And you never, never get peace that way, because you never quite succeed in doing what you ought to do to get peace. It'd be most interesting if you passed a paper round, and each person wrote down what they felt they got to do to become a better Christian. And then we'd say, have you done it? No.

Do you think you will succeed in the future? Judging from my failure in the past, I don't think so. That's under the law. You never make it.

And being, seeking peace and restoration by these promises and new efforts of ours, in actual fact, only makes things worse. For the law, instead of weakening, sin strengthens it. And this in a different sense from which I've already mentioned it.

Can you not see that if your way out is to espouse higher standards, if you fail to reach those standards, sin has more to accuse you of than before you espoused those higher standards. The devil says, look, you haven't made it. Look at those promises.

And therefore, you find yourself more accused, more in guilt, than you were before. And that is what Paul means in 1 Corinthians 15, 56. Perhaps you've puzzled your over this phrase, but here it seems is the meaning.

1 Corinthians 15, 56. The strength of sin. Now, what gives sin its strength is the law.

And if you regard sin as not merely the act of sin, but its power to condemn you, can you not see that the law adds to the power, the opportunity of sin to condemn us, under the law, with its tenfold lash, the ten commandments. Learn, you lass, how true, that the more I tried, the sooner I died, while the law cried, you, you, you. If you are not in despair, I can only suggest you haven't tried to be a good Christian hard enough.

Really try. And you'll know what despair is. Because the strength of sin, that which gives power to sin to condemn us, is the very thing we thought was going to give us life.

The law. And of course, we make our own laws, all sorts of things. All right, then we've seen the dominion of sin.

It goes on to say you're not under the law, but you're under grace. And that brings us to the third word here, grace. Now, I don't need, at length, to amplify and define what the grace of God is, because we've already done that.

But I just want to turn you to see it in black and white. The great definition of this wonderful grace of God, which is the sinner's and the failing saint's only hope. Romans 11, 6. Romans 11, 6. And if by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is normal grace.

And then the authorized version adds what the revised standard has dropped out. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work. Presumably the translators, comparing all the manuscripts, felt that that last phrase wasn't in the original.

Perhaps they thought some scribe added it. Well, thank God for that scribe. He was bang on.

It's put positively, then negatively. I like a bigger Bible, I must say. I like it.

If it be of grace, it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more works, if you've got to be something first. But if it be of works, it's no more grace, otherwise work is no more work. It's got to be one or the other.

Now that's this marvelous love of God for the undeserving, those who haven't succeeded to fulfill the works of the Lord. And that grace of God, that doesn't require something in you first, has provided an answer for our predicament, has provided a remedy to set us free, and offers us this freedom on an entirely different principle from that in which we were finding it. The simple truth is this.

Sin need not have dominion, in the sense we've seen it, for any longer than it takes you to avail yourself of the remedy which grace has provided. Three times in this Romans 7, we go back there, you have a phrase, free from sin. Romans 6 I mean.

Verse 7, free from sin. Verse 18, free from sin. Verse 22, free from sin.

What does it mean? If we've seen sin and its power in the sense in which we have, you're beginning to understand what it is to be free from it. And the hymns had it right. They didn't imagine it was some place of immunity from any stirrings of sin within.

The old gospel hymn says, I do believe, I will believe that Jesus died for me, that on the cross he shed his blood from sin to make me free. Are we offering that penitent sinner a very advanced place of sanctification where thereafter he'll have no more problems and no more need to repent? No, it's freedom from sin in this sense, where sin has lost its power completely to condemn me. And the poor struggling Christian is set free like a bird in the air.

Free from sin, in that sense. And I tell you, that's terrific. This guilt of sin in the sense I've been speaking of is a far deeper thing than even the tendency to sin.

And this freedom that grace gives from that which is being burned in the soul and causing us so many much struggles is a far greater thing than some interior something or other that might happen to me. Free from sin. And it tells us the way in which we may be free from sin in this sense.

We become free from sin, now listen, and I die to it. And now that's my problem. I can't get to that place where I can say I'm dead to sin.

Where I don't have any response. That a situation doesn't stir a wrong reaction in me. But wait a minute.

Did you notice that this scripture says that Jesus died to sin? Verse 10, in that he died, he died unto sin once. It doesn't say he died for it, he died unto it in the same way as he wants you to, or to enter into. Now what does that mean for Jesus? Because what it meant for Jesus is what it means for me.

Does it mean there was a time when Jesus was alive to sin solicitations? And after a certain point he became dead to those solicitations? Of course it cannot. He never was alive to sin solicitations. The prince of this world cometh, he said, and has nothing in me, nothing in which he can get to respond.

Well what did it mean for Jesus to die to sin? When he hung upon the cross, when he paid our debt, and said it's finished. Sin lost its power to condemn it. The moment he said, if the world hath wronged thee, or, oh, if they ought, put that to mine account, sin then had power to condemn him.

That's why he went to the cross. That's why God turned away his face. Sin had power to condemn him.

But once the blood was shed, once the work of grace and redemption was finished, and the judgment daring was over, and he said it's finished, sin could no longer condemn him, for the price had been paid, and he died to it. And if there was another world, other worlds of sinners, he wouldn't have to repeat Calvary again. Something's happened on this earth, which is going to avail for the whole universe if there are other sinners and other things.

He's died to sin, and sin lost its power to condemn him. Shown by the fact that up from the grave he arose with a mighty triumph over his foes. If Jesus had not paid the debt, he never would have been a freedom saint.

But the fact that he has, shows his directly, sin can no longer condemn him, for the sin of which he is now free is your sin. And if you're sure it is free, you can be free too. But how? By seeing and reckoning on the fact that I have also died to sin.

If a man owes a debt, can't pay it, and a friend pays the debt for him, the man who first owed the debt gets the receipt. And he's reckoned as having paid the debt himself. And we reckon, says Paul, that if one died for all, 2 Corinthians 5, then all died.

We have paid our penalty in the person of our dear beloved substitute. We saw yesterday that God made an effigy of his Son and judged us in him. An effigy of us in his Son and judged us in him.

So much so that Paul says he died. I've died. Which means I've paid the price.

The judgment has been exhausted. I've died. And that means that if sin cannot condemn my surety, it cannot now condemn me.

Turn to Galatians 2.19. Now we often quote Galatians 2.20, but what about 2.19? I, through the law, have died to the law that I might live unto God. The law condemned me to death for my sins, but in the person of my Saviour I've paid that penalty. And the law can't condemn me any more.

Take the case of Daniel. He broke the law of the means and persons which said you mustn't worship any other god but the King. And they insisted that that law should have its way.

And so, much to the sorrow of Darius, Daniel had to be put into the lion's den. And the law of the means and persons put him there. But in going there and being brought out again, he couldn't be put back again.

He, through the law, had died to the law that he might live unto God and serve his King again. And by the way, dying to sin, in Romans 6, and dying to the law, in Romans 7, I take to be the same. To die to sin is the same as to die to the law that condemns you through sin.

And to be free. Now this is what happened to Jesus, our shorty. He's died to sin.

Now I say, count on that fact. Repent. Accept this work of Jesus.

It is all finished. Don't go on punishing yourself. Don't go on taking a stick to yourself.

No more self-incrimination. We can do that. Repentance by itself can only make things worse.

You go around feeling like a dog. But having repented, as some of us did last night, and are going on doing all the time, and have been doing for years. You have to believe that love has never lost its power.

And sin has lost its power to condemn you, and now you're free to live unto God. Now this is what is meant. As I see it, directly, you're so dead to sin's power to condemn you, once you've repented.

But you've got to repent. And then you've got to believe. I'm thinking of that word, Psalm 66, 18.

You can bother to look at it. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the law will not heal me. And I understand the Hebrew word, regard, is if I regard with favour iniquity in my heart.

Now that doesn't necessarily mean there's a particular sin that I'm doing which I favour, and which I enjoy. The sin in question may have happened some time ago. I'm not actually committing it now.

But I still regard it with favour, because I won't condemn it. I justify it. I was right to feel like that.

I was right to write that letter. You're regarding with favour that sin. And as long as you regard something like that with favour and justifying it, the Bible says the law will not heal you.

But you can reverse the process. You can judge, and confess, and repent, and condemn that which up to now you've been justifying. And then what? Enter into freedom, which may well be.

You'll have to ask another to forgive you, because they were involved too. And you want to be right not only with God, but with man. And then you don't have to carry that load a moment longer.

Free from the law, oh happy condition, Jesus has bled, and there, in that blood, is remission. Then it goes on to say, now adopt an attitude consistent with that. You see, if reckoning myself dead to sin, trying to say, no, I'm not responding, I'm not responding, why does it then go on to say, let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body? No, it wouldn't have any meaning.

But if it's the meaning that I see it now, your judgment as much as mine, if you feel that's not quite right, you think it through. But if it is so, if I'm free, and can count myself free from sin's power to condemn me, let not sin therefore reign in my mortal body. Let me take up an attitude consistent with one who's died with Christ.

And in the reinforcement the Spirit will give you, say, look, let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should be it in the lust thereof. And the second thing we've got to do, not only to take up an attitude consistent with that to sin, but also to present these qualities to God. Which were once presented as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, I now present for God, for Him to use.

To make up for the notices, a few more minutes. A last thing is this. There's a sweet sequence here of grace.

With regard to our freedom from sin through dying to it. Back to Romans 6 then. Here it is, and with this thought we're going to close.

There we are. I don't know whether I got to, but I'm at Romans 6 now, back again. First, verse 7. He that has died, or he that is dead, is free from sin.

In this sense. If a man's died under the law, the law cannot later condemn him. You remember the Profumo case? And that doctor who was doing those vile things? And he was found guilty.

And the judge said he was going to contemplate over the weekend what the sentence was going to be. And pronounce it on him. On Monday.

But over the weekend, that man succeeded in poisoning himself in prison. And he never had the condemnation passed upon him. For he was dead.

And he that is dead is free from sin. And so there's what I've been saying. That's where we begin.

He that has died in Christ is free. Hallelujah. And that's what we see.

But then there's a progress. You don't stop there. You then go on to verse 18.

Being then made free from sin. There was a result. You became slaves of righteousness.

All this is real. You love the one who sets you free. You say, as that serpent of old would say to his Hebrew master, I love, I love my master.

I will not go out free. I will be set free from that awful slavery and condition. To do as I like.

Theoretically possibly, but not in practice. For love is begotten for the one who sets you free. And you voluntarily, having been made free from one slavery, gladly adopt another one.

You become a slave of righteousness. I cannot work my soul to save. For that the Lord has done.

But I would work like any slave for love of God's dear Son. And I want to tell you, I've seen it happen. The love for Jesus.

That this way of going to Calvary and finding this beautiful freedom begets in us. I'm amazed. I've seen holiness in the brethren and the increasing number of all being blessed in these days.

The real thing. All the other theories of holiness, I don't know whether they work, but I know this one does. It's the Bible one.

It's the gospel way. Being made free. They become slaves.

I've heard people pray the most extravagant prayers. I've heard some people say being set free they feel like hugging Jesus. And as for his wishes, my, of course.

And love produces a glad obedience. And you're in a sensitivity to things when they go wrong. But we go on further.

The progress. Verse twenty-two. Thee now made free from sin.

Yes. And become slaves of God. Yes.

Ye have your fruit unto holiness. They're the holy people. He that's forgiven much and being set free from much loves much.

And he that loves much delights to please his Lord. If failure comes, he knows where to go. He doesn't remain down.

He knows he that's dead, he can go back to the cross and reckon himself having died to sin's power again. And out he is in the light of love and in the light of service. Isn't that nice? See? The progress.

Verse seven. You begin to see he that's died is freed from sin. Praise the Lord.

With what result? You become a slave of righteousness. And with a further result, that leads to holiness. Holiness by faith in Jesus.

Not by effort of my own or the power of sin's dominion. In all its aspects, bruised and crushed by grace alone. I know I owe a debt of love.

To him I know I owe back to my sin from which I've been set free. I dare not and would not go because a debt of love I owe. Thank you Jesus for loving us.

And not taking the sides of the law and of the devil against us. But rather taking up our case. Defying every foe that will condemn us and make us feel bad.

And declaring us right with the Father. As right as thy blood can make us. Lord may some of us enter into it.

Some who are still blaming ourselves. Help us to come into rest and freedom and gladness. Interpret these things to us for thy dear name's sake.

Amen.

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