

## FREE AT LAST

### "DYING TO LIVE"

#### ROMANS 6:1-14

Language users all know the difference between a statement and a command even if the grammatical terms *indicative* and *imperative* mean nothing to them. Otherwise, the following two sentences would make no sense: "It's raining. Take your umbrella." In this simple illustration, the imperative follows from the indicative; put differently, the command follows from the statement. Apart from the statement, the command would be understandable but not make much practical sense. Why take an umbrella with you on a sunny day?

A quick reading of Romans 6:1-14 demonstrates this fact. Verses 1-10 are filled with declarative statements, *indicatives*; verses 11-14 are filled with commands, *imperatives*. The commands in verses 11-14 follow from the statements Paul makes in verses 1-10. The commands "do not let sin reign in your mortal body," "do not offer any part of yourself to sin," "offer yourselves to God," and "offer every part of yourself to him" make little sense apart from what the apostle has written in the first three paragraphs—*how* and *why* would his readers obey these commands? As one commentator rightly observes, "As always in Paul, "the indicative grounds the imperative" (Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT, 380).

This observation indicates that knowing how to live is grounded in knowing what to believe. In

---

***Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.***

– Romans 6:12

---

other words, how can we know how to live, if we don't know what to believe? Wrongheaded beliefs inevitably lead to wrongheaded sinful behavior. Put differently, duct tape theology inevitably leads to duct tape living. No doubt, this explains, at least in part, why the body of Paul's letters typically opens with a discussion of theology and closes with a discussion Christian living. You don't have to know much theology to be saved, but you do if you want to understand what being saved means.

### **This Week's Core Competency**

**Salvation by Grace** – I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by his grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Salvation by grace is the mother of big ideas filled with profound truths. The word "salvation" simply means to deliver or rescue from danger or harm. For example, a firefighter risks his life to save those in imminent danger of burning alive; likewise, Jesus sacrifices his life to save those in sin, who stand condemned, in imminent danger of its penalty.

In its theological context, salvation includes the following doctrines: regeneration, justification, redemption, reconciliation, and sanctification, to mention just the major ones. Paul opens his letter to the Romans by announcing his thesis: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is God's power for salvation to everyone who believes, first to the Jew, and also to the Greek" (1:16). After announcing his thesis, he goes on to prove first that everyone needs to hear the gospel because "there is no one righteous, not even one . . . For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"

cont. pg. 2

---

(3:10, 23). Then second, he declares that sinners, even though they are not innocent, are justified or declared not guilty by faith just like Abraham was. The Bible says, "Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness" (Ge 15:6), and Paul makes much of this in chapter four where he explains that the patriarch was not justified by works because the law had not yet been given, and furthermore, he was uncircumcised at the time he was declared righteous by faith.

The discussion of justification continues into chapter five where Paul turns a corner to transition to a discussion of sanctification. God intends to conform all those he justifies into the "image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters" (8:29). The process those who are justified go through to become like Jesus is called "sanctification" if it's viewed from the perspective of *holiness*, "spiritual formation" if it's viewed from the perspective of *maturity*, and "discipleship" if it's viewed from the perspective of *training*. The process is the same, as is the implied end, Christlikeness.

While justification and sanctification should never be divorced, the two are distinct:

\* Justification removes the **guilt** of sin while sanctification removes the **pollution** of sin.

\* Justification is a legal declaration of God that is **positional**; sanctification is a progressive work of God that is **practical**.

\* Justification is **neither** a repeated event **nor** a process; sanctification is a **process** that continues throughout life.

\* Justification is through **faith alone**; sanctification takes **effort**. In other words, believers play a role in their sanctification. Transformation is necessarily, though not exclusively, intentional. No one simply drifts aimlessly toward holiness.

## day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

### Romans 6:1-14

1 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2 By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? 3 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 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.

5 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. 6 For 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- 7 because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

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

11 In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. 13 Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an 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. 14 For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

## EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- \* Circle the question marks in vv. 1-3.
- \* Box "so that" and "in order that" indicating *purpose* in vv. 1, 4, 6, 12.
- \* Highlight "died," "death," "dead" and "die" throughout.
- \* Circle "baptized," and "baptism" in vv. 3, 4.
- \* Bracket "glory of the Father" in v. 4.
- \* Box "for" indicating *reason* in vv. 5, 6, 9, 14.

- \* Circle "like his" in v. 5.
- \* Circle "old self" in v. 6.
- \* Underline "ruled by sin" in v. 6.
- \* Underline "slaves to sin," "set free from sin," "sin reign," and "be your master" in vv. 6, 7, 12, and 14 respectively.
- \* Bracket "in the same way" indicating *comparison* in v. 11.

---

day **2**

**EXPLORE** – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. What verse in chapter five provoked the opening questions in chapter six?
2. Is Paul saying that the union of believers with Christ in his death is accomplished by water baptism? Explain.
3. The union of believers with Christ in his *death* and *burial* (v. 4) serves a *purpose*. Describe it.
4. Identify what the union of believers with Christ "in a death like his" (v. 5) implies.
5. Describe what Paul means by "old self."
6. Put what verse 7 means in your own words.
7. List the consequences of death and resurrection for Christ.
8. What must believers do first if they are to obey the imperatives in verses 12-13?
9. **Discussion:** Talk about what to do if you have a recurring sin in your life that you don't seem to be able to defeat.

---

## day 3 **EXAMINE** – an explanation of the message to better understand the meaning of the passage.

Having an overview in mind will make it easier to trace Paul's argument in Romans 6:1-14, as he navigates a transition in his treatment of the thesis: "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile" (1:16). Here's a helpful overview of that transition from a discussion of justification, how one is *declared* righteous, to a discussion of sanctification, how one is *made* righteous: "Subduing the power of sin is the topic of Rom. 6. Paul hints at this theme by using the word 'sin' in the singular throughout the chapter. As in 5:12-21 (and cf. 3:9), Paul pictures sin as a power or master that exercises unbreakable control over all who are 'in Adam' (cf. the notes on v. 12). Sin's tyranny is broken, however, for the person who is 'in Christ.' Rom. 6 is thus permeated with the imagery of slavery, mastery, and freedom: those crucified with Christ should no longer 'serve' sin (v. 6), should not let sin 'rule' them because they have been 'set free' from sin and been enslaved' to God, or to righteousness (vv. 17-22): sin no longer 'rules over' the believer (v. 14a)" (Moo, 350).

In the first paragraph (vv. 1-4) containing the *indicative*, Paul returns to the lively question and answer style he employed earlier, raising and responding to questions suggested by 5:20, "where sin increased, grace increased all the more." The vexing question is: "Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?" To which he brusquely replies, "By no means!"—explaining that those who have died to sin can no longer live in sin. By that he doesn't mean that they can no longer sin but that they are no longer ruled by sin. Baptism, functioning as shorthand for conversion, unites believers to Christ Jesus in his death. Their burial with him marks the end of their old life in this age under the dominion of sin, just as his burial marked the end of his earthly life in this age under that same dominion. Although he was sinless, he was mortal and was tempted, and he ultimately bore the penalty of our sins while living in sin's domain. And just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glorious power of the Father to live a new life outside of the dominion of sin, so also, believers may live that kind of life now. Paul does not specify the precise nature of the believer's

union with Christ in his death or precisely how that union is accomplished. Nevertheless, the fact that it is accomplished through conversion suggests that it is the work of the Holy Spirit accomplished in connection with regeneration, i.e., the new birth.

In the last paragraph (vv. 11-14) containing the *imperative*, the apostle gives believers a command, grounded in the *indicative* (vv. 1-4), "count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God." Sin no longer has dominion over them; God has. One commentator explains that counting or "reckoning does not create the fact of union with Christ but makes it operative in one's life" (Everett F. Harrison, "Romans," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 10:71). Consequently, they are to no longer let sin reign over them by refusing its enticements and are to offer themselves to God to do what is right rather than to sin to do what is wicked. Then the paragraph returns to the *indicative*, summarizing the keynote of the chapter. "Sin (again personified as power) shall no longer be your master," that is, believers shall no longer live under its power—not now, not ever!

In the second paragraph (vv. 5-7), Paul explains that believers' union with Christ in a death like his assures their future participation in a resurrection like his. As a result of this union, they died to sin, that is, they were set free from its power in order to live a new life. Their "old self," the person they were before conversion, died, too. In other words, their conversion changed everything pertaining to their interaction with the world. Put differently, their capacities to interact with everything around them were rescued from the dominion of sin. This happened so that "the body as a helpless tool of sin might be definitively defeated" (Moo, 376), in order that they should no longer be slaves to sin. They were emancipated from their former slavery to sin through their union with Christ in his death! Notice that in Jesus' case he died to sin and began living his new life freed from the dominion of sin *after* his resurrection. In the believers' case, they died to sin and begin living their new lives freed from the dominion of sin *before* their resurrection.

In the third paragraph (vv. 8-10), the apostle reiterates the tie between dying with Christ and being raised with him, which he affirmed in verse 5. However, there Paul has in mind the resurrection

---

of believers in the *future* when Christ returns. Here when he says, "we believe that we will also live with him," he may have in mind more than the believers' future resurrection life. He may be

suggesting a taste of that life can be had now, that is, believers can enjoy their resurrection life or "new life" (v. 4) with Christ now.

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you in his word.

### *The Message of the Passage*

*Because believers have died to sin through their union with Christ, they must recognize that they have been freed from the dominion of sin to begin living their new resurrection lives to God now.*

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on the message of Romans 1:1-7 and your response to it.

What attitude should anyone experiencing a recurring sin like anger, passion, greed, etc., adopt?

Testify to the truth of Romans 6:1-14 in your own life.

Identify a personal takeaway for future use from the message of the passage.

---

# notes **N** STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

v. 2 **died to sin** "The Christian's death 'to sin' is the main point of Rom. 6. But what does this death 'to sin' mean? Paul uses the verb 'die' because (1) it creates an immediate tie with the death of Christ, central to the believer's own 'death to sin'; and (2) it connotes a decisive and final break in one's state of being. *The idea, then, is of a decisive separation from sin.* This separation could be a separation from the penalty due because of sin, but the context demonstrates that Paul is talking not about the penalty, but about the power, of sin (cf., 6b: 'that we should no longer serve sin'; v. 14a: 'sin shall no longer have lordship over you'). It is better, then, to view the separation as a separation from the 'rule' or 'realm' of sin, sin being personified, as throughout this chapter, as a power that rules over the person outside Christ" (Moo, 357, italics added). "A spiritual transaction happens in the life of the person who is uniting himself with Christ such that he is *freed from the reign of sin*, in particular the tyranny of passions and desires. It seems clear as an inference from this that Paul believes that those outside Christ are bound to and in sin. They are not and cannot be free from sin" (Ben Witherington III, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, 158, italics added).

v. 3 **baptized/baptism** Baptism does not accomplish union with Christ. "Baptism, rather, functions as shorthand for the conversion experience as a whole. As such, it is the instrument (note the 'through' in v. 4) by which we are put into relationship with the death and burial of Christ . . . that death of his to sin is also our death to sin (vv. 2, 6, 9-10); and that resurrection of his to new life, in which we will 'participate' in the future (vv. 5b and 8b), is even now working to enable us to 'walk in newness of life' (vv. 4b, 11)" (Moo, 355). "They presumably were intended not merely to recall their experience of conversion-initiation, but to understand it as somehow identifying them with Christ—and not just Christ recognized as alive and present, but Christ in his death" (James D. G. Dunn, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 38a, *Romans 1-8*, 328).

v. 4 **buried** Baptism, i.e., conversion, puts us into a relationship not only to the Jesus' death (v. 3) but also his burial, "which sets its seal on death" (Bruce, 138). "'Burial with Christ' is a description of the participation of the believer in Christ's own burial, a participation that is mediated by baptism. Paul's point, as Beasley-Murray puts it, 'is not that the believer in baptism is laid in his own grave, but that through that action he is set alongside Christ Jesus in his'. . . Burial confirmed the reality of death, and the purpose for mentioning the believer's participation in it both here and in Col. 2:12 is the same: our death with Christ to the old age of sin is final and definitive. More than this, the mention of burial makes for a fitting antithesis to the 'newness of life' which is the sequel to our burial with Christ" (Moo, 363, 365).

v. 4 **glory** "The 'glory' here is more especially God's glorious power—the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead" (Eph. i. 19f.; cf. Col. ii. 12)" (F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, TNTC, 138).

v. 5 **if** Gk. *ei* has the force of "since" (Dunn, 316); cf., "since" (GNT).

v. 5 **death like his** Cf., "likeness of his death" (NASB). Our death in Christ, like his, was a death to sin, that is, a death to sin's dominion or rule in the present age. "Paul does intend to talk of a real dying of the believer, a dying of oneself in belongingness to this age the era of Adam—dying being understood not so much as the cessation of physical existence as such, but as the severing of all links with this world, as a ceasing to be responsive to the stimuli of this world" (Dunn, 331). The perfect tense denotes a past event with continuing results.

v. 5 **resurrection like his** "Here again Paul's readers would recognize that he is not referring to Christ's resurrection in the past as such, but to believers' resurrection [in the future] which will be just like his" (331).

v. 6 **old self** Lit., "old man." "The 'old man' is what we were 'in Adam'—the 'man' of the old age, who lives under the tyranny of sin and death. As J. R. W. Stott puts it, 'what was crucified with Christ was not a part of me called my old nature, but the whole of me as I was before I was converted'" (Moo, 373-74).

v. 6 **body ruled by sin** Lit., "body of sin." Paul uses the word *soma* to refer to the whole person, with an emphasis on that person's interaction with the world . . . What must be rendered impotent if I am to be freed from sin (v. 6c) is not just my physical body but myself in all my sin-prone faculties" (375).

v. 12 **sin** Sin is personified throughout the passage. It is said to "reign" in verse 12, is called "master" in verse 14, and offering oneself to sin is contrasted to offering oneself to God in verse 13.

### Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

Many kids think that once they have trusted Jesus as their Savior, they won't sin anymore. That would be awesome if it were the case! As a young parent, I remember a time shortly after my son had trusted Jesus and was baptized. Each Monday morning his teacher would ask her students to begin the day by journaling about their weekend. He wrote a rather large tall tale about a "trip" we had taken that weekend that included some worrisome details. The teacher called to check in on our family only to find out he had fabricated the story. In reality, he had raked leaves and gone to church. He didn't yet understand that while he would still be tempted to sin, he was not enslaved by it. For those of us in Christ, it's a freeing truth! Not only has Jesus paid sin's penalty, He has broken the power of it in our lives. We are dead to sin and alive in Christ. Will we still sin? Yes, unfortunately as long as we live in our fallen bodies in a fallen world, we will disobey God from time to time. How can you help your child when those moments come? Point them to 1 John 1:9 and remind them they must confess their sin to God. He will forgive and restore because He is faithful and fair. Thank God He restores those who sin!

#### What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read Romans 6:1-14

1. What question does Paul ask in verse 1?
2. How does he answer it?
3. How can we live a new life?

#### What Do You Think

1. If you haven't trusted Jesus as Savior you are controlled by sin. How does that make you feel?
2. Read verses 12-13. How can you avoid sin?

#### What R U Going To Do

Write 1 John 1:9 on a piece of paper and post it somewhere you can see it every day. Each time you catch yourself sinning, confess it to God. Over time, you will find yourself thinking of it before you sin!

#### Core Comp

Salvation by Grace - I believe I become a child of God through faith in Jesus, not because of anything I do.

#### Memory Verse

Romans 8:1 - *Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*

### KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized my verse \_\_\_\_\_, completed *Scrolls* \_\_\_\_\_, brought Bible \_\_\_\_\_, brought a friend \_\_\_\_\_.

Series Discipleship Challenge located in KidPix Store.

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_ Parent's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Earn 1 token by completing the PantegoKids Bible study and another token by reciting the memory verse.

Questions: Kids@pantego.org

# 30 CORE COMPETENCIES

## 10 CORE BELIEFS

### **Trinity** 2 Corinthians 13:14

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

### **Salvation By Grace** Ephesians 2:8-9

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

### **Authority of the Bible** 2 Timothy 3:16-17

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

### **Personal God** Psalm 121:1-2

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

### **Identity in Christ** John 1:12

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

### **Church** Ephesians 4:15-16

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

### **Humanity** John 3:16

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

### **Compassion** Psalm 82:3-4

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

### **Eternity** John 14:1-4

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

### **Stewardship** 1 Timothy 6:17-19

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

## 10 CORE PRACTICES

### **Worship** Psalm 95:1-7

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

### **Prayer** Psalm 66:16-20

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Bible Study** Hebrews 4:12

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Single-mindedness** Matthew 6:33

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

### **Spiritual Gifts** Romans 12:4-6

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

### **Biblical Community** Acts 2:44-47

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

### **Giving Away My Time** Colossians 3:17

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Money**

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Faith** Ephesians

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Life** Romans 12:1

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

## 10 CORE VIRTUES

### **Joy** John 15:11

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

### **Peace** Philippians 4:6-7

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

### **Faithfulness** Proverbs 3:3-4

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

### **Self-Control** Titus 2:11-13

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

### **Humility** Philippians 2:3, 4

I choose to esteem others above myself.

### **Love** 1 John 4:10-12

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

### **Patience** Proverbs 14:29

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

### **Kindness/Goodness** 1 Thess. 5:15

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

### **Gentleness** Philippians 4:5

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

### **Hope** Hebrews 6:19-20

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

## About the Authors

**Tom Bulick** (M.A. in Educational Leadership, Eastern Michigan University, Th.M. in Old Testament, and Ph.D. in Bible Exposition, Dallas Theological Seminary). For more than forty years, Tom has served as pastor, faculty member, and administrator. Tom was Vice President for Student Life and Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Trinity Western University (Vancouver, B.C.) for twelve years before accepting the position of Spiritual Formation Pastor at Pantego Bible Church in 1998. He and his wife Ruth have one son, Zach.

**Wendy Hollabaugh** (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



8001 Anderson Blvd.  
Ft. Worth, TX 76120  
1-866-PANTEGO  
Fax 817-275-6403  
www.pantego.org

The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you *Belong, Become, and go Beyond* as follower of Jesus Christ through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is [tbulick@pantego.org](mailto:tbulick@pantego.org).