

## ROMANS 6:1-23 & 7:1-6

So far in the book of Romans, we have witnessed the depravity of man, and **"the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth ---."**

Yes, on the cross of Calvary, Jesus bore the tremendous burden of sins that had separated us from God.

However, our sins are only the fruit of a very bitter root.

You see, we're not sinners because we have sinned. We sin because we are sinners.

We have been born in sin, and **"shapen in iniquity."**

In short, we have inherited a sin nature.

And it's that natural tendency to disobey God which has made us His enemies in the first place.

True, upon conversion, the child of God receives a new nature.

In fact, 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, "**--- if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature** (or a new creation): **old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.**"

And the scriptures also tell us that our new nature "**--- is created in righteousness and true holiness.**"

However, we didn't receive our new nature in place of our old. We received it in addition to the old, and herein is the problem.

Yes, a Christian has two natures, which immediately begs the question, *Who is in charge?*

The answer to that question is found in the next few chapters, beginning at Romans

5:12, and running right through to  
Romans 8:13.

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In last week's lesson, we looked at the  
source of our sin nature, and  
discovered we had inherited it from our  
great ancestor, Adam.

Romans 5:12 **"Wherefore, as by one man sin  
entered into the world, and death by  
sin; and so death passed upon all men,  
for that all have sinned."**

Yes, Adam's disobedience introduced sin into  
the human race, and along with it,  
physical and spiritual death.

From that point on, man's natural tendency  
has always been to disobey God.

The result, of course, has been a tremendous  
burden of sin, separating us from our

Creator, and condemning us to a lost eternity.

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Now, someone might ask, *What do you mean, a natural tendency to sin?*

The best example I can find to explain a natural tendency is found in the animal kingdom.

A pig has a natural tendency to wallow in mud. In fact, I have been told it is beneficial to his skin.

On the other hand, a sheep is not made for mud.

Oh, he might slip and fall into the mud, but with all that wool on his back, he'd be a sorry mess.

No, he simply isn't made for mud.

Now, as we have just noted, a Christian has two natures, each having very different natural tendencies.

Yes, a Christian can be a sheep or a pig, but, hopefully, not in equal measure.

No, as far as God is concerned, the sheep should have full sway in the Christian's life, while the pig should be kept in the place of death.

So let's take a closer look at these two natures.

Before we met Jesus, our old nature was in charge, directing our steps along the path to eternal damnation.

On the other hand, our new nature, according to Ephesians 4:24 **"is created after God in righteousness and true holiness."**

Quite a contrast, isn't it?

Not surprisingly, what rejoices the one,  
grieves the other.

So, once again we have to asked the  
question, *Who is in charge?*

Well, the answer certainly should be the new  
nature.

In fact, God has already taken the  
initiative to make that happen.

And, as is the case with our salvation,  
Jesus Christ is at the very centre of  
His plan.

So whether it be our salvation, or our  
victory in Christ, it is all wrapped up  
in the Son of God.

However, in both cases, God has given us a  
free choice.

Now, as far as our salvation is concerned,  
Jesus paid it all.

2 Corinthians 5:21 says, "--- he hath made  
him to be sin for us, who knew no sin;  
that we might be made the righteousness  
of God in him."

Yes, "we might be made the righteousness of  
God in him," but then again, we might  
not.

In the end, the choice is ours.

In like manner, our victory in Christ is  
irrevocably linked to the Son of God,  
but once again, we must make the  
choice--not once, as in the case of our  
salvation, but on a daily basis.

And that's what Chapter 6 is all about.

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Chapter 5 concludes with those glorious  
words, found in V 20, --- "**But where  
sin abounded, grace did much more  
abound.**"

Chapter 6 picks up on this same thought, but with an unusual twist.

V 1--- **"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?"**

In other words, if an increase in sin only causes an increase of grace, **"Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?"**

Paul answers that question with a resounding **"God forbid,"** and then goes on to explain why this is such a bizarre idea.

First of all, we should not **"continue in sin"** because we are living on the other side of the grave.

Yes, God actually sees us as crucified with Christ, and raised again in newness of life.

It's an established fact that all Christians should count on.

In fact, it's an *established fact*, that Paul expected the Christians in Rome, to count on.

Listen to his words, found in Romans 6:2-

6 "--- **How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?**

3 **Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?**

4 **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.**

5 **For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his**

**resurrection:**

**6     Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."**

That's right. In the same way that God has redeemed us by substituting His Son, He has given us victory by identifying us with Jesus in His death and resurrection.

And interestingly enough, Christian baptism is a picture of this very situation.

As we go down into the waters of baptism, we are symbolically buried with Christ.

And as we are raised up out of the waters of baptism, we are identified with Him in His resurrection.

Yes, as far as God is concerned "**--- our old man is crucified with him, that the**

**body of sin might be destroyed, that  
henceforth we should not serve sin."**

However, we must get on board, so to speak,  
if we are going to **"walk in newness of  
life."**

Yes, we must get involved.

And in order to emphasize that point, I have  
left out the first two words of the  
verse I have just quoted.

Actually, the first two words of V 6 are ---  
**"Knowing this"**---and they changed the  
whole perspective of the verse.

Certainly, God already knows **"our old man is  
crucified with him,** but the point is,  
do we?

And do we agree with Him when He says, we  
**"are dead to sin?"**

If we do, we will act accordingly.

And certainly Paul expected the Christians at Ephesus to act accordingly.

In Ephesians 4:21-24, he says, **"If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:**

**22: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;**

**23: And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;**

**24: And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."**

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A preacher once illustrated this principle with the following story.

He described the Christian with his two natures as a small man taking two rather large dogs for a walk.

He then asks the question --- *In which direction will they go?*

The answer is, *In the direction of the dog to whom he says sic him.*

Yes, a Christian must make a deliberate choice to **"put off"** the old man and **"put on"** the new if he is to expect victory.

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So then, what are the consequences of agreeing with God when He says **"our old man is crucified with"** Christ?

The answer is found in V 7 **"--- he that is dead is freed from sin."**

And doesn't that make sense?

In the natural scheme of things, a corpse is totally unresponsive to sin.

In like manner, if our old man is truly **"crucified with him,"** then we are **freed from sin."**

But what if it doesn't feel like **"our old man is crucified with him?"**

Well, feelings are important, but they should never take precedence over the Word of God.

And besides that, our feelings can be quite undependable.

For example --- Let's suppose I have just completed a hard day's work followed by a very late night.

The next morning the alarm clock goes off at six o'clock.

Rubbing my eyes, I take a look at the clock  
and say, *It sure doesn't feel like six  
o'clock.*

But it is, isn't it?

According to the rotation of the earth, and  
all the machinery of the heavens, it's  
six o'clock--in spite of my feelings!

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Let's take another example, this time from  
scripture.

Jesus said, **"He that heareth my word, and  
believeth on him that sent me, hath  
everlasting life, and shall not come  
into condemnation; but is passed from  
death unto life."**

Now let's suppose, and I sincerely hope this  
is true, that at some point in your  
life you believed Jesus' words, and you  
accept Him as your personal Saviour.

Jesus assures you that at that point in time  
you **"passed from death unto life."**

Now let us also assume that at a low point  
in your life you really didn't feel  
saved.

Do your feelings alter the fact that you  
have been gloriously saved?

Absolutely not!

Christ's finished work on the cross, and His  
assurance that you have **"passed from  
death unto life"** are entirely  
unaffected by your feelings.

Your salvation is a past event.

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And this might be a good time to mention the  
fact that a great deal of Chapter 6 is  
written in the past tense.

You see, whether it is our individual sins,  
or as in this case, our sin nature, all  
has been dealt with at the cross.

As far as God is concerned, **"our old man is  
crucified with"** Christ.

It's a past event.

So, whether it feels like it or not, we have  
every right to put **"our old man"** in his  
place.

And we have all of heaven to back us up!

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But that's only part of the blessing.

Romans 6:8 also says, **"--- if we be dead  
with Christ, we believe that we shall  
also live with him."**

Yes, we are now living on the resurrection  
side of the grave.

And, V 9-10 says, **"Knowing that Christ being  
raised from the dead dieth no more;**

**death hath no more dominion over him.**

<sup>10</sup> **For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God."**

Yes, **"he liveth unto God,"** and so can we.

And did you notice, V 9 says **"death hath no more dominion over him."**

Certainly there were others in history who were raised from the dead, but none of them escaped corruption.

Take Lazarus, for instance.

He was gloriously raised from the dead, but he continued to grow old, and one day he was laid to rest for a second time.

Poor old Lazarus!

But Christ **"dieth no more!"**

He rose victorious, over sin and death!

And V 11 says **"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin,**

**but alive unto God through Jesus Christ  
our Lord."**

Did you notice that little word "**reckon**?"

We are to "**reckon**" ourselves to be "**dead  
indeed unto sin**" and "**alive unto God.**"

Now, the word "**reckon**" is sort of an  
accounting term.

When you "**reckon**" on something, it becomes  
part of your calculation, and it  
affects the bottom line.

You see, it's one thing to know Christ was  
raised from the dead, to give mental  
assent to that fact.

It's quite another to "**reckon**" yourself to  
be "**dead indeed unto sin, but alive  
unto God.**"

When you "**reckon**" on God's proclamation, you  
build it into the very fabric of your  
life.

You actively "--- put off concerning the former conversation (or manner of life) the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" and you "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

Yes, you must get involved, just as Paul expected the Christians in Rome to get involved.

Listen to his words in Romans 6:12-14: "**Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.**

<sup>13</sup> **Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.**

14     **For sin shall not have dominion  
over you: for ye are not under the law,  
but under grace."**

I would like to draw your attention to the words "**reign**" in V 12, and "**dominion**" in V 14.

Before a believer comes to Christ, sin is like a cruel monarch, reigning over his life with absolute power.

But things have changed.

A Christian is no longer part of his cruel domain.

He is "**dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God.**"

And that's why Paul says, in V 12-13, "**Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.**

13     **Neither yield ye your members as**

**instruments of unrighteousness unto sin."**

No, we shouldn't yield our eyes to lust, or our ears to gossip, or our tongues to lies.

We must keep our bodies in subjection.

And Paul reminds the Corinthian believers of this very thing, no doubt using the Greek Olympics, that were so popular in his day, as an example.

Here's what he says, in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 --- **"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. 25: And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible."**

And then, referring to his own struggle, he writes --- **"I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:**

**27: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."**

That's right. Even Paul had to **"reckon"** on God's proclamation in order to have a successful ministry.

He had to align his will with God's, and put **"off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts."**

And so must we.

We begin by knowing the facts --- **"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him."**

Then we must "**reckon**" upon God's  
proclamation concerning our position in  
Christ.

And then we must "**yield**" ourselves "**unto  
God, as those that are alive from the  
dead**" and our "**members as instruments  
of righteousness unto God.**"

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V 14-15 "**For sin shall not have dominion  
over you: for ye are not under the law,  
but under grace.**

<sup>15</sup> What then? shall we sin, because  
we are not under the law, but under  
grace? **God forbid.**"

Once again, there's the suggestion that the  
grace of God might give us a license to  
sin.

Immediately Paul responds with an emphatic  
**"God forbid!"**

V 16 **"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"**

In times past, we were slaves, but now Christ has set us free.

Should we return to our old master?

Absolutely not!

In fact, we cannot return to him, at least in the capacity of slaves.

But, unfortunately, we can return as willing servants.

Even though we have been rescued from the penalty of sin, we can willingly serve sin.

However, not only is a sinning saint a contradiction in terms, it's a contradiction of his blessed Lord.

**"God forbid"** that that such a thing should happen!

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During a dark period in America's history, thousands of Africans had their freedom brutally taken away.

They were required to serve without remuneration and without choice.

It made no difference whether they were employed in a task that was injurious to their health or against their principles, they must serve.

The same is true of the servant of sin.

He is employed in his master's business, and it matters not that the end thereof is death.

But the Christian has a new master.

Romans 6:18-21 says, **"Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of**

righteousness.

19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death."

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It must have been a wonderful day when the African American finally regained his freedom.

A man could, at least in theory, decide what he would do and where he would go.

Now, I don't want to offend anyone, and I'm certainly not an authority on the subject, but I can't help wondering if there might have been a few individuals who found this new situation rather daunting.

You see, for those born into slavery, not only had they been deprived of their freedom, they had been deprived of the opportunity of directing their own lives.

So perhaps there were some who opted for returning to their former masters, not now as slaves, but as servants, receiving a modest wage.

Of course I don't really know if this actually happened, but in the spiritual realm, it often does.

Just like the children of Israel in the wilderness, some Christians desire the *leeks and the onions, and the garlic* which we enjoyed when we were slaves in Egypt.

But we're not slaves!

We have a new Master, a new nature, and a new job description.

When **"ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness,"** but now ye are **"free from sin."**

Of course we're not sinlessly perfect.

We can sin, and we do sin, but we shouldn't **"serve sin."**

It's not right, and it is not necessary.

1 Corinthians 10:13 says, **"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above**

that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

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Romans 6:22-23 "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

<sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

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As we begin Chapter 7, we are brought face to face with another reason why sin, in the life of a believer, is absolutely inappropriate.

V 1 "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the

**law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?"**

First of all, Paul establishes a given ---

**"the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth."**

And then he zeroes in on one aspect of the law, namely, the marriage contract.

V 2 **"For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth ---."**

Yes, marriage begins with a solemn promise given before God.

It is a binding contract, in force "unto death due do us part."

V 2-3 **"--- but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.**

<sup>3</sup> **So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but**

if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man."

And then Paul makes his application.

V 4 **"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."**

Yes, our relationship with Christ is like a second marriage, the first being terminated by death.

However, in this case, it's the death of the wife rather than the husband that has ended the marriage.

That's right. In the mind of God, **"our old man is crucified with"** Christ, and we

are living on the resurrection side of the grave.

As a result, we are free to be **"married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead."**

Now, as is often the case, both of these marriages have the potential of producing offspring.

In fact, the first marriage already has.

V 5 **"For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death."**

It was a natural process, wasn't it?

Our old union produced sin, which, under the Law, could only bring forth death.

V 6 **"But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of**

**spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."**

And now, as V 4 says, our second marriage "-- **should bring forth fruit unto God.**"

Yes it "**should,**" but it might not.

Once again, it all depends on our willingness to see things as God does, to "**reckon**" it to be so simply because God says it is so.

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I would like to conclude our lesson by summarizing what we have learned so far.

First of all, "**our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.**"

We have been "**made free from sin**" and become "**the servants of righteousness.**"

**"God forbid"** then that we should resurrect  
the old man with all his evil desires.

**"God forbid"** --- that we should serve that  
old defeated *monarch* who once ruled our  
lives.

**"God forbid"** --- that we should creep back  
to our old slave master and become his  
willing servant.

And **"God forbid"** --- that we should return  
to our old husband, forsaking our  
loving bridegroom.

It's not natural, and it's not right.

**"But now being made free from sin, and  
become servants to God, ye have your  
fruit unto holiness, and the end  
everlasting life."**

