

**TUTORIAL**  
**3.10**

# Living a New Life

Bible presenter Scot Keen discusses sanctification in the believer's life in Romans chapter 6. He explains that we are no longer slaves to sin and but slaves to righteousness. Believing this will help us live out our new lives in Christ.

## Introduction

So far Paul has dealt with the fact that we are all guilty sinners before God. He touched on God's salvation, justification by faith and will now talk about sanctification, or Christian growth and maturity. We will first look at Romans chapter six, which deals with the believer's relationship to sin and the idea that we are alive from the dead. Then in chapter seven we will touch on the believer's relation to the law and the struggle with the flesh. Finally in chapter eight, we will discuss our deliverance through Christ.

## Our relation to sin

Let's begin in Romans chapter six with the believer's relation to sin. I want you to see that we are no longer dealing with sins plural, meaning the fruit, we are dealing rather with the thing sin itself, so singular. We are dealing with the root of the problem. Sin is pictured as a reigning power. We remember this from all the way back in Romans 3:9, where Paul says that he has proved that all men are under sin. Being under sin speaks of being under the condemnation of sin and the authority of sin. Paul dealt with the condemnation of sin when he described justification. Now as he talks about sanctification, he deals with our being set free from the authority of sin. We are looking at sin being personified.

Doug Moo, in his commentary on Romans, says, "Sin reigns, it can be obeyed, it pays wages, it seizes opportunity, it deceives, and it kills. In a word, Paul personifies sin. He pictures it as a power that holds sway in the world outside of Christ bringing disaster and death on all humanity." So again, we are dealing with the root of the problem, not just the fruits of that problem.

Here is an analogy I took from Watchman Nee and his work *The Normal Christian Life*. He compared sin in the life of a believer to the prohibition that took place in the United States. A lot of Christians were trying to do away with

alcohol completely and so they would pour out alcoholic beverages and in doing so try to rid the world of alcohol. Watchman Nee made the argument that, until the distilleries were shut down, it would never effectively work. It had to happen at the root level. That is what Paul does with sin in Romans chapter six through eight. He does not try to clean up people's behavior. He deals with the behavior later on. In this section, Paul talks about our relationship to sin (that we are no longer slaves of sin) and in doing so, he deals with sin at a root level. Paul insists that believers need to know that they have been set free from the authority of sin. He asks the question in Romans 6:1, "Shall we sin, or shall we continue in sin, so that grace may abound?"

## Know you are free

In chapter five Paul said, "Where sin abounded, grace abounded all the more." The natural, logical question would be, "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?" Paul's answer is very strong. He says, "May it never be. How shall we who died to sin still live in it?" Paul will make the argument that we should not continue in sin because it is entirely inconsistent with who we are in Christ. How can we who died to sin still live in sin?

I'll give you an analogy that is kind of crazy, but maybe it will help you to remember it. Imagine being a scuba diver. It is entirely appropriate and necessary to wear scuba gear when you are under water, but if someone was to wear scuba gear just walking down the street, you would wonder what that person was doing. It is entirely inconsistent when being out of the water. Paul is saying that, now that we are in Christ, it is entirely inconsistent to live as slaves of King Sin because we died to sin.

Look at Romans 6:2, "How shall we who died to sin, still live in it?" Paul is saying that believers should not continue in sin, and yet, it obviously possible for a believer to continue in sin. We know that because Romans 6:12 says, "Don't let sin reign in your mortal bodies." So sin is present and desires to reign in us, and yet we have been set free and are responsible to not let sin reign. Chapter six will tell us how we are to go about that. We do not need to sin because we died to sin with Christ.

Look at Romans 6:3, "Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into his death? Therefore we have been 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." When Paul says, *do you not know*, it is implied that his audience does not know, and he wants them to. Do they not know that, having been baptized with Christ, they were baptized into His death?

Chapter five spoke about being identified with Adam and with Christ, which begs the question, how are we identified with Christ? Paul explains that here in

chapter six. He says, "We were baptized with Christ into his death." We were connected to Him. In Corinthians Paul says, "By one spirit, we were baptized into one body." When we believed the Gospel, the Spirit of God placed us into the Body of Christ. We were connected with Him through Spirit baptism. Because of that, Paul can say that we have died and our lives are hidden with Christ in God. Not only that, but he says in Galatians, "All who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourself with Christ." So we are connected. We are clothed with Christ. We identify with Him through baptism. When we believed the Gospel, the Spirit placed us into Christ, and therefore we are connected to Him. Since He died to sin, we died to sin with Him.

## **Believe you are free**

Listen to this again. In verse Romans 6:4, "Therefore we have been 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." Look too at Romans 6:10-11, "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." We are connected to Jesus so we also died to sin, and therefore we have been set free from its authority. It is logical. Christ died to sin, we were in Christ and so we died under sin.

Let me give you a story from back in the Civil War days in the United States. There was a man named George Wyatt who was drafted to be in the military. George Wyatt had a wife and three kids and didn't want to leave his family because he was afraid he would never return. There was young man by the name of Richard Pratt who had no family, and Richard Pratt agreed, for a certain sum of money, to go instead of George Wyatt. George Wyatt was drafted, but Richard Pratt went in his place and fought in the civil war. In the course of battle, Richard Pratt was killed. Years later, they tried to draft George Wyatt again, and he legally avoided that draft by saying that he died in the person of Richard Pratt. That is the concept that Paul is bringing out. You and I died to sin through another. We died in the person of Christ. He died under sin, and we died in and with Him.

When Paul talks about dying under sin, he is talking about being separated from the authority of sin. Remember in Romans 3:9 that when we were in Adam we were slaves of sin, under its condemnation and also under its authority. We were slaves of King Sin. We were slaves of King Sin until we died. When we died with Christ we were raised to walk in newness of life in freedom from the dominion of sin. That is what Christ has done for us.

Look at Romans 6:5-6, "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 self 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." Paul says our old self, our old man, was crucified with Christ. The old man is

who I was in Adam and from Adam. I died with Christ, and so I was raised as a new creation in him. I still have a propensity to sin, or else Paul would not say in verse twelve not to let sin reign in my body. Sin is still present, but it is no longer my legal master. I died to the authority of King Sin. Paul says *do you not know*, which implies that his audience obviously did not.

Hiroo Onoda was a Japanese soldier in World War Two who fought in the Philippines. He was twenty-two years old when he went into battle, and his commanding officers told him, "Do not leave. Do not retreat. Only carry out your mission to the point of death." As soldiers came in and fought this battle, Hiroo Onoda and those with him retreated into the mountains, and they hid there from 1944 until 1974, thirty years in hiding, and he would not come out until he was discharged from a superior officer. In essence, he was living as if the war was taking place, when in fact the war was over. He did not know that he was free to return home. That is how it is with many believers. We have been set free from sin as a reigning power, but if we are ignorant of that fact, we cannot enjoy the new life that we have in Christ. We cannot glorify God with the new life that He has given us. So Paul says, "Do you not know we have been set free from the authority of sin?"

In verse seven Paul goes on to say, "He who has died is freed from sin." We died with Christ under King Sin. I would be confident to say that as you hear these truths from Romans, you are probably struggling to understand how you died with Christ. How are you alive with Him? How does it all work? It is a process to grow in our understanding of these things. Even if you cannot understand how it worked, please trust God's word in verse seven that says, "He who has died is freed from sin." When you recognize the impulse to sin (the sin that Paul personifies as a reigning power), would you please believe God's Word which says that you don't have to yield to that any longer because you have been set free? You are no longer a slave of sin.

Paul says *do you not know*. He wants all believers to know that they have been set free from sin. Not only does he want us to know this, he wants us to believe it. He says, "Believe that you have been set free." Look at Romans 6:8, "Now if we have 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." "Even so," verse eleven, "Consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus." One author said in a book, "If you feel like you've died to sin, you've died to sin, and if you don't feel like you've died to sin, you've still died to sin." This is an issue of faith, not feelings. The desire to sin is not weakened in the believer, but the separation from its authority is there. We have the freedom to say no to King Sin. God has set us free from its authority. We need to know that, but we also need to believe that.

## Live your new life in Christ

In Romans 6:12 Paul says, “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts.” Did you catch that? Sin is in us and it has desires and we are responsible not to obey those desires. Sometimes people say, “I can't help but do,” fill in the blank, whatever it is that they are struggling with as a sin. Paul says we can help it. We have been set free, and we are under obligation to not let sin reign in our mortal bodies. Paul wants us to believe this and he wants us to act on it as well. We need to know and believe what is true of us, that we died to sin's authority and have been raised to walk in newness of life.

In verse thirteen Paul says, “Do not go on presenting the members of your body 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.” Some people call this the Gospel to the saved. This is the Good News, not of how Christ has set me free from the penalty of sin, but of how He set us free from the power of sin. This is the Good News to believers, and Paul exhorts us to live out our new life in Christ. Do not let sin reign in your mortal body. Sin is present and desires to reign, and we are responsible to say no to it. Instead we are to present ourselves as instruments of righteousness to God. As believers we can use our hands, feet and minds as instruments of sin, or we can use them as instruments of righteousness. Paul is telling us not to yield to sin, but to yield instead as instruments of righteousness under God. We do that by faith.

Look at Romans 6:13 again, “Present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead.” That is a strong statement. Let me give you another example of how this works. If we were at an event and they asked for all the men aged thirty to forty-five to come forward, then I would go forward. I wouldn't tell my age, but I would be presenting myself as a male who is between thirty to forty-five years old. If we were at an event and there was an announcement for all Christians to come forward and receive a free gift, then it would be as a Christian that you would present yourself.

Paul says, “Present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead.” That means yield to God as one alive from the dead. Yield to Him by believing that you are alive from the dead. This is meaty here. If you yield to God as alive from the dead, it means that you must believe that you died to sin and that you are not a slave to sin. You believe that you are alive under God in Christ, and so you yield to the Spirit of God at work in you believing those things are true. So it is a believing submission. You are conscious of the fact that this is true of you in Christ, that you are not a slave of sin, and you yield to God on that basis.

It took me several years of chewing on Romans to understand these truths. It didn't come overnight. As a new believer, I'd be faced with temptation, and my immediate prayer would be, “Oh God, please help me not to give in to this.”

Please enable me not to do this.” I literally remember the day when faced with a temptation and, instead of saying, “Oh God, set me free from this,” I said, “God, thank you that you did set me free.” I had a believing attitude in God's word. When we feel a strong desire to sin, it is our privilege to be able to claim the Word of God that even though the desire to sin is present, it is not our authority. We died to sin and are alive under God in Christ Jesus.

Watchman Nee, as I mentioned earlier, uses an analogy that will help us remember this. He uses the illustration of a ship captain. The evil ship captain is running the ship, and he tells people to mop the deck, hoist the mainsails, or scrape the barnacles underneath the boat. The people run and carry out all the orders that this evil dictator gives. Along comes someone else, a new captain, and so the evil ship captain is tied to the mast of the ship. He is still there barking out orders, but he is no longer the one in charge. Christ is in charge now. You and I both have a desire to sin, and we also have a desire to do the things of God. Although both desires are present, God says we are supposed to yield ourselves, not to sin, but to righteousness as those alive from the dead. We need to believe God's Word and yield to Him on that basis.

## **The truth about sin**

Being dead to sin means that we are not under the authority of sin, and being alive under God means we have the life of Christ and so can live the Christian life. Look at the conclusion in Romans 6:14, “For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.” How does being under grace set us free from sin? We will talk about that in chapter seven. Paul just alludes to it now before moving on. He says that sin is present, but it is no longer our master, and therefore, we should treat it as an evil power that has been deposed of its authority.

Look at Romans 6:15, “What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be! Do you not know,” Paul says, “that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?” Understand that Paul is talking to believers here. He is not doubting their salvation. He says that we died to sin with Christ. We are no longer slaves of sin legally and yet, for all practical purposes, we are slaves to the one we obey. Even though we are not slaves of sin, if we yield to sin, we are being a slave of sin in that moment. We can yield to sin resulting in death (which I think speaks of separation of fellowship with God) or we can yield ourselves to God resulting in righteousness. This is practical sanctification.

Look at verse seventeen, “Thanks be to God that, though you were slaves of sin,” that is when we were unsaved and slaves of King Sin, “you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed.” They responded in faith and were freed from sin. They were set free from sin's authority and became slaves of righteousness.

So Paul says, "I'm speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. Just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness resulting in sanctification." We are progressively being sanctified. Paul says, "Yes, you used to be slaves of sin, and you yielded to sin and it just took you down a downward path of shame and lawlessness and ungodliness." He says, "Now, present yourselves as instruments to righteousness, and the end of that road is sanctification."

Look at Romans 6:20, "For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed?" Paul is asking, "What good came out of that, when we yielded to sin? Those are the things that we are ashamed of now." So, in contrast now, "Having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life." Paul is saying that we are not to yield to sin because the end of that road is death. Instead, we are to yield ourselves to righteousness and that results in sanctification and eternal life. I believe this eternal life is an experience of fellowship with God. Life in the knowledge of God, as John chapter seventeen would define it, is eternal life; knowing God and knowing Jesus Christ. So Paul is urging believers to not continue in sin. He raised a question in verse one, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" He now says, "No, you died to sin. No, you're not under law, you're under grace. No, when you yield to sin, you practically make yourself a slave of sin. No, because sin brings death." The answer is an emphatic no. This concept raises many questions in our minds because, as I said earlier, we don't feel dead to sin or that we are free from sin, but this is when God calls us to walk by faith and not by sight.

## Clarifications

To conclude, here are some helpful clarifications. It was not sin that died in Romans chapter six, but rather we who died to sin. This means that the desire to sin is still present. Paul says in Romans 6:12, "Don't let it reign," which means it could reign, but we are not supposed to let it. Being dead to sin then, does not mean that sin died, and it does not mean that we are unable to respond to sin. After all, why would he say, "Don't let it reign," if it is not possible to respond to sin? It does not mean that the propensity to sin has weakened. It is still present. It does mean that our relationship to sin has radically changed. We are no longer slaves to sin. We need to know this. We need to believe it is true, and we need to yield ourselves to God on that basis.

At the end of the civil war in the United States, Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation which gave freedom to all slaves. Interestingly, when you look at history, there were some people who still served as slaves because they did not know that Lincoln had signed that bill. The first thing we

need to know is that we died to sin and have been emancipated, that we are no longer slaves of sin. Other slaves knew they were free but had a hard time believing it. They did not feel like they had been set free. It was really an act of faith for people to step out and enjoy their freedom. We need to know that we have been set free. We need to choose to step out in faith in God's Word and trust that we are no longer slaves of sin. Instead, we yield ourselves as instruments of righteousness under God. When we do that, we find that we are practically being set apart and sanctified day after day. That is what Paul teaches about sanctification in Romans chapter six.



## DISCUSSION POINTS

### *Living a New Life*

1. From this passage of Scripture (Romans 6:1-23), give at least three reasons why we should not continue in sin. Who are the ones that “reign in life”?
2. How does Spirit baptism relate to our death unto sin?
3. What does “death” speak of?
4. What were we “separated” from?
5. Who is “our old man”?
6. If our “old man” was crucified, why do we still sin?
7. Who or what died in Romans 6? Us, or sin? Why does it matter?
8. According to Romans 6:7 who is it that is freed from sin?
9. What does it mean to “reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin”?
10. What are the two main points of application we are exhorted to make?
11. What does it mean to “present yourself to God as alive from the dead”?
12. In Romans 6, Paul gives at least four reasons why believers should not continue in sin. What are they?
13. Give at least two descriptions of what being dead to sin does NOT mean.
14. Give at least two descriptions of what being dead to sin DOES mean.





## **ACTIVITIES**

### *Living a New Life*

In our last scenario, we encouraged a new believer regarding the fact that, through faith in Christ, they are accepted before God. You hopefully were able to encourage your friend and now he is confident of his justification. The struggles he sometimes has do not shake his confidence in the finished work of Christ. He knows that it is not a question as to whether he did enough; he is resting in the fact that Christ did more than enough. However, the struggle with sin is very tiring and he knows that where sin abounds, grace abounds all the more. He knows he's secure in Christ. Now he finds himself giving in to sin more often. He wonders why it even matters. Why should he even resist? What do you tell him from Romans 6?