

# 56. The Book of Romans 6:2

*Paul's Epistle to the Romans*  
A message by Pastor Phil Ballmaier

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(6-26-24)

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We have just entered into a new section in our study in Romans—Chapters 6 through 8.

- **Chapters 3-5** tell us we are free from the penalty of sin.
- **Chapters 6-8** tell us we are free from the power of sin.

In the last section the theme was **Justification**—which as a Christian refers to my position before God—the emphasis is on being.

In this new section the theme is **Sanctification**—this refers to my practice for God—the emphasis here is on doing. Understand that the order is *vitaly* important.

In the Christian life you have to first be what God wants you to be before you can do what God wants you to do—position always precedes practice—you have to be a Christian before you can live like a Christian.

Justification happens the moment you trusted in Jesus—Sanctification happens every moment after. (2 Corinthians 3:18) So, in Romans 6-8 Paul will be dealing with the subject of *sanctification*—or to put it in more practical terms—this section deals with victorious living in Christ.

The repetition of the word “**know**” in Romans 6:2, 6, and 9 indicates that Paul wanted us to understand a basic truth—Christian living depends on Christian learning; and duty is always founded on doctrine.

If Satan can keep a Christian *ignorant*, he can keep them *impotent*—which is why he has been working very hard over the years to ‘*dumb down*’ the Church and keep professing Christians away from sound doctrine—

## **2 Timothy 4:3–4 (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup> For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; <sup>4</sup> and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

So, to say it one more time—justification is all about God releasing us from the *penalty* of sin through what Jesus did for us on Calvary's Cross—sanctification deals with God releasing us more and more (it's a process) from the *power* of sin.

Here in Romans 6 Paul will be addressing this by building this chapter around 4 key words → **Know, Reckon, Present and Obey**.

So, as we said last time—we have arrived at one of the most powerful passages ever penned by the Apostle Paul.

Acting as a lawyer, Paul powerfully and persuasively made his point in the first five chapters that salvation is apart from works—it's all about grace. That then becomes his segue into Romans 6—

**Romans 5:20 (NKJV)**

<sup>20</sup> Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more... ['super abounded']

**Romans 6:1 (NKJV)**

<sup>1</sup> **What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?**

First of all, let me just say this about the concept of **grace** in general—

Paul knew that the teaching of grace would be a problem for many who were of a legalistic mindset and would no doubt argue with him by saying—

*“Paul, you can’t let people relate to God through grace, it will promote loose and lawless living! You have to lay down the law and force people to obey God by telling them what they can and cannot do!”*

One pastor said—*“All too often, Christians try to fight sin by preaching, “No, no, no”—but Paul’s method was to teach, “Know, know, know” (verses 3, 6, and 9).”*

Paul uses three different Greek words to get his point across—

1. **Agnoeo (verse 3)**—a word that means ‘to be ignorant of something.’
2. **Ginosko (verse 6)**—a word that often means ‘the taking in of knowledge, the process of learning.’
3. **Eidon (verse 9)**—a word that comes from a root that means, “to see.” The word suggests *fullness of knowledge*—‘to know and understand something.’

The idea here is that Paul wants to teach us a truth that is vital for living our Christian lives. He wants to take us from *ignorance* to a full and complete *understanding* of these important truths because he knows that Christian living depends on Christian learning—which is why we are a *teaching* church!

**Romans 6:1 (NKJV)**

<sup>1</sup> **What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?**

What he actually said was—***“Shall we continue in the sin that grace may abound?”***

Paul isn’t talking about *sins* (plural) but about the *sin nature* we inherited from Adam—the root cause of all the individual sins we commit.

So, to paraphrase what Paul is really saying here in Romans 6:1-2—*“As believers in Jesus, redeemed by His blood and justified through His grace—shall we continue to be dominated by our fallen sin nature to increase the grace God shows us that He might have even more glory?—Certainly not!”* (verse 2)

**“Certainly not”** doesn’t really capture the strength of the Greek Paul uses here—it’s an idiom for the strongest reaction possible—one of outraged indignation, *“No way, absolutely not!!”*

This statement by Paul is based on what some heretics in Rome were teaching Christians, that if our sin gives God the opportunity to show us grace which brings Him glory—“Let’s sin all the more so that God ‘drenches us’ in His grace and receives even more glory!”

Paul already made reference to this earlier—

**Romans 3:8 (NKJV)**

<sup>8</sup> And *why not say*, “Let us do evil that good may come”?—as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their condemnation is just.

**Romans 6:1–2 (NKJV)**

<sup>1</sup> What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? <sup>2</sup> **Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?**

By saying this, Paul introduces us to a critical piece of information that he wants us to know and understand—the truth that we as believers in Jesus have been *identified* with Jesus, first of all in His **death**.

In fact, “**death**” is all over this passage—

**Romans 6:2 (NKJV)**

<sup>2</sup> Certainly not! How shall we who **died** to sin live any longer in it?

**Romans 6:3 (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup> Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His **death**?

**Romans 6:4 (NKJV)**

<sup>4</sup> Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into **death**, that just as Christ was raised from the **dead** by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

**Romans 6:5 (NKJV)**

<sup>5</sup> For if we have been united together in the likeness of His **death**, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness of His* resurrection,

**Romans 6:6 (NKJV)**

<sup>6</sup> knowing this, that our old man was **crucified [died]** with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

**Romans 6:7 (NKJV)**

<sup>7</sup> For he who has **died** has been freed from sin.

**Romans 6:8 (NKJV)**

<sup>8</sup> Now if we **died** with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

**Romans 6:11 (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup> Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be **dead** indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Romans 6:13 (NKJV)**

<sup>13</sup> And do not present your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the **dead**, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God.

This is the key piece of doctrine that Paul wants you to know—in fact, it’s the fundamental principle of the entire chapter as well as being absolutely critical to our walk.

What does Paul mean when he says we have ‘**died to sin**’ (**‘the sin nature’**)—verse 2?

I want to stress that Paul is not teaching that when you became a Christian ***sin*** (the sin nature) died to you (in that it is no longer an issue in your life).

He said that ***we*** died to its control over us—It’s not something ***we do***; it’s something ***Jesus has done*** at the cross.

➤ You say, “*But then why am I not experiencing more victory over sin in my life?*”

I’ll tell you why—it’s because your ***sin nature isn’t dead***—and even after you get saved it continues to hassle you! (Galatians 5:16-17)

Before we got saved (for the most part) sinning wasn’t a problem we wrestled with (getting drunk, sleeping around, looking at porn, lying, cheating, stealing ...)—we justified all of it as having *fun* and taking care of *number 1*. But now that we’re saved, and God has given us a new nature (heart) with godly desires—the devil can *really* work us over through temptation and condemnation!

He tempts you to sin and when you give in and fall to it—he condemns you and causes you to believe that you’re the most miserable excuse for a Christian—if you’re even saved at all!

The good news is, as Spurgeon put it—“*Dead men don’t struggle!*”

Now, I’ll warn you it doesn’t stop there—Satan will use your sin nature against you by tempting you to satisfy its wicked desires. When you give in and sin—he will lead you into a couple wrong courses of action: *To you wanting to try harder or wanting to give up all together—both are a mistake!*

**I see it all the time**—a Christian who loves the Lord has a bad habit, which he or she desperately wants to stop—so they purpose to try harder which leads to a theology of sanctification based on self-effort. This only works for so long before temptation gets the best of them—and they fall into that sin again.

So, they promise God they’re going to try harder which once more leads to a measure of victory—but only for a while until they eventually run out of self-control and fall once again to that ‘*besetting*’ sin!

This cycle of trying and failing, trying and failing keeps repeating itself until, before long—they are so discouraged and beaten down that whatever confidence they had in the God’s Word and its promises of victory (for the child of God)—is completely gone.

At this point they no longer believe that victory over sin is possible in their life—and so they quit trying and walk away from God, and in the process, lose their joy and even the assurance of their salvation—and Satan has succeeded in completely defeating and demoralizing them!

What they have failed to learn is that as Christians—we’re not working *toward* victory; we’re working *from* it—it’s ours already—all we have to do is believe it and walk in it by faith! (Habakkuk 2:4)

**Let me stop here and ask you a question—**

➤ “*Do you really believe that all you have to do to go to heaven is to believe in Jesus Christ? Do you really believe that!?*”

If you said yes, then let me ask you this—

➤ *"Why then don't you believe the same thing with regard to the control of sin in your life?"*

So, in Chapter 6 the theme is **sin**—as in our *'fallen sin nature'* we inherited from Adam. In this chapter, Paul builds his teaching on overcoming sin in our lives as Christians around 4 foundational principles—**know, reckon, present, and obey**.

### 1. Know

#### **Romans 6:2–4 (NKJV)**

<sup>2</sup> Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? <sup>3</sup> **Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?** <sup>4</sup> **Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.**

Again, Paul uses the word **know** 3 times in 3 different forms in the Greek (v.3, 6, and 9) to drive home to our hearts that victory is built on how much we know and understand what God has said to us in His Word about riches He has given to us who are His children.

Without knowing what God has said on this subject—even though we are rich through God's grace, and more than conquerors when it comes to victory over sin—we will go on living in defeat and despair.

The sad reality is that too many Christians are ignorant to all the spiritual riches that are theirs in Christ—and so they live like spiritual paupers.

J. Vernon McGee—

*"When I was in Chicago many years ago, I picked up the evening paper during the week and read a little article and clipped it out. It was way down at the bottom of the front page and wasn't apt to be noticed. It read "The flophouses and saloons of Chicago's Skid Row were searched today for one Stanley William McKenna Walker, 50, an Oxford graduate and heir to half of an \$8,000,000 English estate. The missing persons detail hoped that somewhere among the down-and-outers who line the curbs and sleep off wine binges in the cheap hotels they would find Walker, son of a wealthy British shipbuilder." I thought how tragic it was. Imagine being an heir to half of \$8,000,000 and being a wino who's sleeping in two-bit hotels. I felt like sitting down and weeping for that poor fellow. Then I began thinking of the children of God today who are living in cheap hotels, living off the "wine" of this world. I don't mean that literally, but that they engage in cheap entertainment down here. They are wealthy beyond the dreams of Croesus and are blessed with all spiritual blessings, but they live like paupers down here. There are a lot of folks in our churches who live like that today, and it's tragic. I was telling this story when I was a pastor in Los Angeles, and a lady who was visiting from Chicago came up afterward and asked, "Dr. McGee, do you know the end of that story?" I said, "No, I never heard." She said, "Well, they found him." "Oh," I replied, "that was wonderful." "No," she said, "they found him dead in a doorway on a cold night later on that fall." How tragic to die like that man died. Many Christians live and die like that, and yet they are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ."*

One author put it this way—

*"There are a lot of Christians like that—they live like spiritual paupers when in fact their 'rich Brother' Jesus Christ has died and has left them great wealth!*

*Their problem is not what they possess—their problem is that they just don't know what they possess in Christ*

*and so they go on living like defeated paupers.*

*This was something God alluded to through the prophet Hosea, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...” (Hosea 4:6)*

*But once you learn what God has said about who you are in Christ—once you get the facts about what God has promised you as a child of God, and what He has provided for your victory—it will revolutionize your life!”*

One of the first things that Christians need to know is—justification and sanctification are inseparable—both are rooted in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

That is the most important truth you will ever **know**  
if you are ever going to have victory over sin in your life.  
It will set you free from human effort and all of  
the discouragement and frustration that comes with it.

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If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower—please reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Want to know more? Click [here](#).

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