

## 58. The Book of Romans 6:3-6

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

(7-24-24)

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We are currently in the section of our Romans study that deals with **sanctification**—a section that covers Chapters 6 through 8.

**Justification** is all about God releasing us from the *penalty* of sin—**sanctification** deals with God releasing us from the *power* of sin.

Here in Romans 6 the theme is *victory over sin*—as in our '*fallen sin nature*' that 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 6:1–3a (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? <sup>3</sup> Or do you not **know**...

Paul realizes that no child of God can walk in victory over sin if he or she is ignorant to the key truths that he presents in the first ten verses of Chapter 6—that's why three times he uses the word '**know**' (verses 3, 6, and 9).

What Paul wants us to **know** is critical to a life of victory over sin.

The whole passage is built on the statement of Paul in verse 2—

**Romans 6:2 (NKJV)**

<sup>2</sup> ...How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

In verses 3-10 he is going to elaborate on what exactly that means to us and how that truth works its way out into our daily lives—and he does so by giving us 3 principles:

- a. **The Principle of Baptism**-verses 3-5
- b. **The Principle of Crucifixion**-verses 6-7
- c. **The Principle of Resurrection**-verses 8-10

Our first principle:

a. The Principle of Baptism-verses 3-5

**Romans 6:3–4 (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? <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.

Here in verses 3 and 4 the word **baptism** is used 3 times and is a transliteration of the Greek word *baptizo* which means, “to immerse.”

The word is used 74 times in the New Testament and every time the idea is immersion—the question is into what?

Well, we have to look at the context of each passage to determine that—because the word is used to speak of different kinds of baptisms.

1. The baptism of suffering

**Matthew 20:23**

So He said to them, "You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with...(see 2 Timothy 3:12)

2. The baptism of distress or of being overwhelmed

**Luke 12:50 (NKJV)**

<sup>50</sup> But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!

3. The baptism with the Holy Spirit

**Acts 1:5, 8 (NKJV)**

<sup>5</sup> for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now... <sup>8</sup> But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."  
*[This is the baptism of power for service]*

4. The baptism of judgment

**Matthew 3:11–12 (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup> I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit [*salvation*] and fire [*judgment*]. <sup>12</sup> His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn [*the redeemed into His Kingdom*]; but He will burn up the chaff [*the unredeemed*] with unquenchable fire [*the Lake of Fire i.e., "Hell"*].

5. Water baptism

**Matthew 3:11a (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup> I [John the Baptist] indeed baptize you with water...

Water baptism is mentioned throughout the New Testament and is the one we commonly think of when we come across the word *baptism* in the Bible.

There is one more baptism we need to mention—

## 6. The baptism of salvation

### **1 Corinthians 12:13 (NKJV)**

<sup>13</sup> For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body...

If you look at the context of this verse, you will see that *salvation* is in view—so this is speaking of the baptism of salvation. The baptism of salvation is a “dry” baptism where a person who receives Jesus as their Savior is instantly ‘*immersed*’ (baptized) into the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit.

I don’t believe that the use of the word *baptism* in Romans 6:3-4 is referring to *water* baptism—but I do believe that water baptism symbolizes the kind of baptism that Paul is talking about.

Romans 6 is the *reality*; water baptism is only a *ritual* that symbolizes that reality. So, in Romans 6 Paul is dealing with the reality not the ritual—which means that Paul is talking about the baptism of salvation into the Body of Christ and not water baptism.

Let me say it one more time—in Romans 6 there is no water in view here:

### **Romans 6:3–4 (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? <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.

As I said earlier—here Paul introduces us to a critical piece of information that he wants us to know and learn—the truth that we have been *identified* with Jesus, first of all in His death.

Water baptism symbolizes *death*, *burial*, and *resurrection*, which is exactly what happened to you spiritually when you put your faith in Jesus Christ.

You died in Christ, you were raised in Christ (the same Holy Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you), and you ascended with Christ and are at this moment seated with Christ in heavenly places at the right hand of the Father.

- Do I understand all of this? No.
- Can I still benefit from this reality? Yes.

I don’t understand how electricity works but I use it every day; I don’t understand how DNA works but here I am—etc.

You were buried with Him in baptism, and you were raised a new creation with a new nature—

### **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.**

Water baptism is only a ritual to remind us of this dynamic spiritual truth—a truth that was alluded to by Jesus when He said, “Behold I make all things new!”

➤ “Yes, but in what way?”

- *New heart*—Ezekiel 36:26
- *New spirit*—Ezekiel 36: 27
- *New name*—Revelation 2: 17
- *New creation*—2 Corinthians 5: 17
- *New man*—Ephesians 4: 24
- *New song in my heart*—Psalm 40: 3
- *New commandment to govern my life*—John 13:34-35

➤ *So then, why aren’t we experiencing this new life more than we are?*

It’s because we don’t *believe* what God has said—we’re not walking by faith.

➤ *What has God said?*

**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*.**

In other words, justification by faith is not simply a *legal* matter between me and God, it is a *living* relationship—it is “***a justification which brings life***” (Romans 5:18, literal translation).

I am in Christ and identified with Him—therefore, whatever happened to Jesus Christ has happened to me. When He died, I died. When He rose, I rose in Him. I am now seated with Him in the heavenlies! (Ephesians 2:6)

**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***.**

This tremendous spiritual truth is illustrated in the miracle of the resurrection of Lazarus (John 11).

Warren Wiersbe—

*“When Jesus arrived at Bethany, Lazarus had been in the tomb four days; so, there was no question about his death—and by the power of His word (“Lazarus, come forth!”) Jesus raised His friend from the dead!*

*But when Lazarus appeared at the door of the tomb, he was wrapped in grave clothes. So, Jesus commanded, “Loose him, and let him go!” He had been raised “in newness of life” but he couldn’t walk in newness of life until the grave clothes were removed.*

*Many Christians are like that, they have been raised in newness of life but they’re still bound by the grave clothes of ignorance or unbelief and so they can’t walk in that new life.”*

Too many Christians are “*betweeners*”—they live between Crucifixion Friday and Resurrection Sunday.

They’re stuck in the ‘*grave*’ but know nothing of the *glory*—believing in the power of Jesus’ death on the cross to save—but not in the power of His resurrection to live!

**2 Peter 1:3–4 (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup> as His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, <sup>4</sup> by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust.

How do we appropriate the promises of God into our lives?—*by faith!*

a. **The Principle of Baptism—verses 3-5**

b. **The Principle of Crucifixion—verses 6-7**

**Romans 6:6–7 (NKJV)**

<sup>6</sup> knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. <sup>7</sup> For he who has died has been freed from sin.

“**Knowing this**” is the Greek word is *ginosko*—a word that often means “*the taking in of knowledge; the process of learning experientially.*”

Paul is telling us that the truth he wants to communicate with us isn’t something we can learn from a book—not even from God’s Book which gives us the principles but then requires us to apply these spiritual truths into our daily lives (through the power of the Holy Spirit) that they might become ‘*living and powerful*’—and ultimately life changing!

- ➔ Use learning how to play football in a classroom setting—but then going out onto the field to learn the game by applying through real life experience what you learned as head-knowledge.

So, Paul is telling us up front that you will never be a victorious Christian if you don’t take what you learn by reading the Bible or by going to Bible study out into the real world and apply it into real life situations.

**“Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him...” (verse 6)**

Just what is this “**old man**” that Paul is referring to here?

Many commentators think that the “**old man**” is a reference to the “*old nature*”—the old fallen nature that we inherited from Adam. It’s because of *that* interpretation they claim that the old nature was crucified with Christ and is dead and gone—and that now as Christians we only have the new nature.

This interpretation is reflected in the words of Pastor John MacArthur—

*“The old you died, there isn’t any old nature anymore. There isn’t an old nature and a new nature fighting it out in you. Our old man was crucified and buried with Christ, and you were raised with a new nature...You’re not a spiritual skitzoid.”*

Well, if that’s the case, what was Paul talking about in Galatians 5:16-17?

**Galatians 5:16–17 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup> I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh [*the old fallen sin nature*]. <sup>17</sup> For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

I believe the problem is that many have misinterpreted what Paul was talking about when he tells us that our ‘old man’ was crucified with Christ. I don’t believe he was talking about our old fallen nature (which will remain with us until we die or are raptured)—the ‘old man’ was Paul’s way of saying—the old *life*, our former *conduct* before we got saved.

How do I know that? Because he defined the term “old man” for us in Ephesians 4:22—

**Ephesians 4:22 (NKJV)**

<sup>22</sup> that you put off (literally “have put off”), concerning your former conduct, the **old man** which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts...

The “old man” isn’t our old nature because our old fallen nature doesn’t *grow* corrupt—it already *is* fully and completely corrupt! If something is *growing* corrupt it means that there is still something good in it that hasn’t yet been corrupted—and yet Paul would go on to say in Romans 7 that in his fallen sin nature there dwells nothing good!

Listen, Paul tells us in Ephesians that our “old man” is our former conduct—the way we lived our lives before Jesus saved us and gave us a new nature. The old nature is just that—the *nature* you inherited from Adam—it speaks of what we are in Adam, not what we do.

So then, the “old man” is not my old nature—the “old man” is the old me, the old life, the old desires, my old habits and actions that have died with Christ and are now buried and gone.

**Galatians 2:20 (NKJV)**

<sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh [my physical body] I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

**2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV)**

<sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

That brings us to the statement by Paul—

**Romans 6:6 (NKJV)**

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

Now, what is Paul saying when he talks about the “**body of sin**”? Greek scholar, Kenneth Wuest, said that according to the rules of Greek syntax all of the references to “**sin**” in chap. 6 are actually referring to the “sin nature.”

So then what Paul is really saying is “... **the body of the sin nature**...”

Therefore, the **“body of sin”** could be paraphrased *“the instrument of the sin nature.”*

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones is correct when he says that by the term **“body of sin”** Paul is talking about the *old nature*, and its influence on our physical body.

The body is not sinful, the body is neutral—it can be controlled either by our old sinful nature or by our new nature in Christ.

One commentator had this to say—

*“A tremendous fact is introduced here: the old man (the old me, the old life) was crucified with Christ so that the physical body need not be controlled by the sin nature any longer.”*

The term **“that the body of sin might be done away with”** (the Greek is—“Katargeo”) does not mean destroyed or eradicated.

The Greek word means—*“rendered inoperative,” “made ineffective,”*—or in other words, *“No longer able to exert a controlling force or power.”* The same Greek word is translated *“loosed”* in Romans 7:2 in the context of—*“If a woman’s husband dies, she is “loosed” from the law of her husband and is free to marry again.”*

- There is a change in relationship—the law is still in operation, but it no longer has any authority or power over the woman because her husband is dead.
- The sin nature is still alive, but the old man is dead so that my physical body is no longer bound or forced to be the instrument through which the sin nature expresses itself.

Before I came to Jesus Christ my body was the instrument of my sin nature because the old me (the old man) was the slave of my fallen sinful nature. The old nature working through the old man used my body as the instrument through which to satisfy those sinful desires.

But when I put my faith in Jesus, the old me died and was buried with Christ, and a new me, a “new man” was resurrected with Christ along with a new nature—the nature of God. The new nature working through the new man (which now has godly desires) wants to use my body as the instrument to satisfy those desires (righteousness, godliness, etc.)

➤ *What about the old nature?*

Well, it’s still there but it no longer has the old man to work through; the old man (the old me, the old lifestyle) was crucified with Christ and is gone.

The connection between the sin nature and the body (which was its instrument for expressing itself)—has been broken! Therefore, as Paul stated, “the body of sin or ‘*the instrument of the sin nature*’ has been rendered *inoperative*.”

Let me use the illustration of an old steam powered train.

You have the locomotive (the old man, with his evil desires), next you have the coal car (the old nature, which fuels the old man), and finally you have the body of the train (my physical body).

Before I knew Jesus my sinful nature (which I received from Adam) was fueling the evil desires of my old man which in turn used the body to satisfy those desires by moving the body in the direction that the old me wanted it to go.

If you take away the locomotive, the coal car has nothing to feed, and the train becomes inoperative. The same is true with the old man—take him away and the old nature has nothing to fuel and therefore the body, as the instrument of sin—is rendered *inoperative*.

➤ You may say, “*If that’s true then why do we sin at all as Christians?*”

**Because these truths have to first be *understood*, then *believed* and finally *applied* if they are to become a reality in our lives. That’s why Paul builds the entire chapter around those 4 key concepts: Know, Recon, and Present and Obey.**

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