

# Shall We Continue in Sin?

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**T**HIS is not your question nor mine. It comes from the Apostle Paul and is located in Romans 6: 1, 2: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

This particular truth is a follow through from a few verses in the preceding chapter: "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans 5:20). He answers the challenge of sinning a bit that the grace of God might appear more illustrious and abundant. This premise is destroyed by the teachings of Paul, under the pen of inspiration. "But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid" (Galatians 2:17). "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law" (Romans 3:31).

How sad to observe many so-called Christians living with a sin problem. The main reason is no repentance in their supposed conversion. Poor teaching gives us the privilege of sin until we get sanctified or die out to self or make Christ Lord of our lives. What an insult to the grace of God! If Christ died to take away our sin (I John 3:5), when does He do it? In installments? Gradually? A growth process? The thief on the cross had no time to get into trouble with sin. Maybe that is why God said TODAY! I remember no dips in Paul's Christian walk. In fact, he announced in 2Corinthians 2:14 that God \ ALWAYS CAUSETH US TO TRIUMPH IN CHRIST.

The enemies of the cross state that we continue to live in sin. Paul asks the question, "How shall we, that are DEAD TO SIN, live any longer therein?" (Romans 6:2)

To be dead to sin and live in sin are incompatible. In verse II of this same chapter, we are admonished to reckon ourselves to be dead unto sin. This is a premise that we operate on. Verse 8 says we are dead with Christ. It is a fact to rest upon. Before the grace of God was revealed to us in Christ, we were given over to sin, continued in its course, and were enslaved by its power. Now, in the resurrection of Christ, we are made alive and now live dead TO sin, instead of IN sin. "For in that he died, he died UNTO sin once (so do we in Him); but in that he liveth, he liveth UNTO God (so do we)" (Romans 6:10).

The consequence of this association and identification is evident in Romans 6:4): "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto 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." Baptism means identification with the death and resurrection of Christ.

There is no possibility of meeting Christ at the cross and sometime later meeting Him at an empty tomb. Imagine picking and choosing which we will take - Jesus as our Savior or as our Lord and Master. He *is* the Lord Jesus Christ! "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him" (Romans 6:8).

## Our Possession in Christ

It is thrilling to behold! "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (I Corinthians 1:30). "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (I Corinthians

6:11). These provisions are inseparable, the application of the merit of Christ and the gift of the Spirit which renews our relationship with God.

It is absurd to the order of God's grace to think that we are saved from our sin and then continue to be under the bondage of such, without restraint or any change of heart and life. The Bible very clearly declares the position of those in Christ: "Being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:9). Of course the believer obeys His Lord! No obedience? No faith!

Biblical terminology for renouncing and forsaking sin is REPENTANCE. "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the FOUNDATION OF REPENTANCE FROM DEAD WORKS, and of faith toward God" (Hebrews 6: 1). How dare we speak of deliverance of sin and continue in it? I John forever states that we do not continue to practice sin. This is one of the evidences of our knowledge of possessing eternal life (IJohn 5: 13). When a Christian sins, direction has already been given to him: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (IJohn 1:9). We know this verse is for Christians, because just two verses away he classifies us as "My little children." "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not (continuous action); whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him" (IJohn 3:6).

God's direction for our daily life is appreciated by all who desire His purpose accomplished in their lives. "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (II Timothy 2:19). "Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1Peter I: 17 -19).

## Our Walk

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto 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" (Romans 6:4). All creatures are first made and fitted for their use before they can perform the operations belonging to that creature, so a holy nature must be placed in us. We are powerfully changed before we can accomplish God's plan and purpose. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Corinthians 5:17).

Friend, if your walk is not according to New Testament standards, please don't try to talk the language. Do not claim to be a Christian if your action does not match your supposed position. We already have a sufficient number of hypocrites. Please do not add to the number.

## Where Is the Old Man?

Some work hard to keep him suppressed. Others conclude he has been eradicated. Many give him credit for their failures, disposition, and unChrist-like actions. *Well, you know how it is, we are still in the flesh and always will be until we die.* Since when are we Christians subject to the flesh? Ever hear of the fruit of the Spirit? The love chapter in I Corinthians? Here is God's standard of conduct for all in His family. *But, you say, I*

cannot live that way! It is *not* your ability to practice such. It is the resurrected life of Christ working in and through you that produces *such* action, making you attractive to the unsaved.

The Bible informs us that our old man is to be reckoned dead - crucified. "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" (Romans 6:6). We declare this fact. We must do so often. "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin" (Romans 6:11). When sin lifts its attractive seduction, declare yourself dead to such enticement. Tempted to do *what*? You are dead! No response can be expected from a dead man.

We declare a funeral, for we Christians have died to the world around us. Our citizenship is above. "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified (dead) unto me, and I unto the world" (Galatians 6:14). The old man was crucified in identification with Christ on the cross. We reckon it to be so. The consequence? That henceforth we should *not* serve sin or be victimized by it.

The real victory over the old man is to recognize that we put on the new man. "That ye put off concerning the former conversation, the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:22--24). "Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Colossians 3:9,10).

The entire body of sin is to be put off (Colossians 2:11). We abstain from worldly lusts which war against the soul (I Peter 2:11). We say a loud, firm NO to the solicitation of the evil world in which we all live. "Order my steps in thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me" (Psalms 119:133).

If we are dead to sin and alive unto God, the conclusion in verse 12 is that we let not sin reign in our mortal body. The members of our body no longer are dominated by lust. "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of un-righteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members (of your body) as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Romans 6:13).

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants (slaves) to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness" (Romans 6: 16). In the next verse, the Apostle Paul thanks God that these people who were formerly slaves of sin are now obeying from the heart and have been made free from sin and are now slaves of righteousness. Friend, has this happened within your heart, mind, and body? Only God can produce this miraculous change in your life. Have you allowed Him to do it?

A Christian leads a holy life. "But now being made free from sin, and become servants (slaves) to God, ye have your FRUIT UNTO HOLINESS, and the end everlasting life" (Romans 6:22).

Many people, instead of yielding, wage a battle to surrender to the will of God. Instead of reckoning, they struggle with the flesh, which is always a losing battle. God takes possession only of that which we present to Him. Don't make a battle of .it. Do what He says! You have His divine enablement promised for you. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God,

that ye present your bodies (actual members of your body) a living sacrifice, HOLY, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove (demonstrate) what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:1, 2).

### Free from Sin

This is Scriptural terminology, not mine. "For he that is dead is FREED FROM SIN" (Romans 6:7). He that is dead to sin is free from sin acting in him. Real believers (there are no other kind) possess a change of heart. "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance" (1Peter 1:14).

Not only are we dead to the solicitation of sin, but we now live in newness of life in Christ. Remember this is TRUTH that we reckon on and personally appropriate at all times. Should we continue in sin? Paul writes. God forbids such action (Romans 6:1, 2). Instead of excusing and tolerating sin, why don't you claim the complete victory over sin that Christ provided for you on a cross and in an empty tomb? Is your surrender of your body complete to the accomplishment of His purpose? Who do you belong to? Yourself? Are you under God's absolute authority?

How glorious to be set free of sin, with a passion to be holy! The battle with sin is over. Now we can get busy obeying the One Who died for us. His instructions for our labor are clear in the Scriptures. He told us to teach and preach His Word. The very paper you are reading this instant is the product of God's work within the life of the editor, who is obeying Christ's command to reach you with biblical truth.

### God's Plain Command

"But as he which hath called IS HOLY, SO BE YE HOLY in all manner of conversation" (1Peter I: IS). "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death (of His Son), to present you HOLY, and unblameable and unproveable in his sight" (Colossians 1:21, 22). As a child of God, you are to live a holy life. God has prepared such for you. The scriptural term is *sanctification*. When are you going to declare sin and the world dead to you? As an unsaved person, when are you going to declare Christ is NOW your Lord and Savior? Why not do it NOW? (Write and tell me about your declaration of confidence in God's promises.) Of course, you must grow strong spiritually. You WILL if you keep your knees bent in prayer and your Bible open, reading and studying it!

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