

Winning Over Sin Rom 6:12-19

12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. 13 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. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! 16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? 17 But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. 18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. 19 I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness. NKJV

Paul's argument is that the believer will win over sin. "For sin shall not have dominion over you" v-14. But Paul has also argued that because of the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer, he will also live in such a way so as to overcome sin.

We have a tendency to minimize sin. MacArthur in his commentary has a great lead in to this section. Of course I cannot give it all in this message but I highlight certain parts.

"Sin is the most devastating, debilitating, degenerating power that ever entered the human stream. Its evil, in fact, corrupted the entire creation, which "groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now" (Rom. 8:22).

"Sin is rebellious, ignoring and even trampling on God's Word. Someone has called sin God's would-be murderer, because if sin had its way it would destroy God Himself along with His righteousness.

"Sin is ungrateful, refusing to acknowledge God as the source of every good thing. The sinner indulges in God's gracious provisions that are all around him but fails to credit, much less thank, God for those things. He takes God's blessings and uses them to serve self and Satan. Every sinner is like Absalom, the undisciplined son of David who kissed his father while plotting to usurp his throne (see 2 Sam. 14:33-15:6).

"Sin is incurable by man's own efforts and power. Even if fallen man wanted to rid himself of sin, he could not do it, any more than "the Ethiopian [could] change his skin or the leopard his spots" (Jer. 13:23). The Puritan writer John Flavel commented on the damning effect of sin by writing that if a sinner's penitential tears were as numberless as all the drops of rain that have fallen since the Creation, they could not wash away a single sin.

"Sin brings satanic control, because every sin serves the purposes of "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2). Every unredeemed sinner is a spiritual child of the devil (John 8:44).

"Although sin promises satisfaction, it instead brings misery, frustration, and hopelessness. Job

lamented that “man is born for trouble, as sparks fly upward” (Job 5:7). In fact, because of sin, all “creation was subjected to futility” (Rom. 8:20).

“Worst of all, sin damns the unredeemed soul to hell. In his vision on Patmos, the apostle John “saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire” (Rev 20:12-15).

“With the single exception of Jesus Christ, every human being born into this world has been born with a sinful nature. The natural, unredeemed person is under the tyranny of sin. It controls his thoughts, words, actions—his total existence. Jesus declared that “everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin” (John 8:34), and because every unsaved person is unable to commit anything but sin, every unsaved person is a slave of sin.

“As Paul notes in the present passage, the natural man is a willing slave of sin. Men prove that truth every day of their lives as they reject the light of God that they have. Although unregenerate persons often want desperately to escape the unpleasant and destructive consequences of their sins, they do not want to relinquish the cherished sins themselves.

“Sin is the terrible, life-wrecking, soul-damning reality that resides and grows in every unredeemed human heart like an incurable cancer. Even when men try to escape from sin, they cannot, and when they try to escape its guilt, they cannot. The greatest gift God could give to fallen mankind is freedom from sin, and it is that very gift that He offers through His Son, Jesus Christ. It is on that great, unsurpassable gift of redemption from sin that Paul now focuses his great inspired mind. MacArthur’s Commentary on Romans

But when God regenerates the sinner and gives him the Holy Spirit to dwell within him, the Holy Spirit not only saves the believer from the penalty of sin but from the power of sin. Thus although the believer is not without sin, sin no longer rules over him as in the past.

- I. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.
 - A. Do not let sin reign.
 1. When we were without Christ in the world we had not desire nor power to resist sin.
 2. But now that we have been saved and given God’s nature, we no longer desire to sin as we once did.
 3. But Paul’s admonition show us two things.
 - a. One, we can allow sin to rule over us or else the warning has no meaning.

- b. And two, we can prevent sin from ruling over us.
 - 4. When sin reigns over someone it controls them.
 - 5. Like a master to a slave, they follow the bedding of their master.
 - 6. And although when they were lost, they did it willingly, once they have been saved, the conviction of the Holy Spirit will keep them from pursuing sin as they once did.
- B. Do not let sin reign in your mortal body.
 - 1. When we were lost we were totally lost.
 - 2. Our soul, spirit and body were fully engaged in this world for our own pleasure and satisfaction.
 - 3. But when we were saved our spirit was reborn by the power of God.
 - 4. But our body still beset with weakness and propensities to sin.
 - a. To satisfy the desires of the flesh and the mind, Eph 2:3
- C. That you should obey it in its lusts
 - 1. Paul here refers to these as the lusts of the flesh.
 - a. Lust NT:1939 epithumia (ep-ee-thoo-mee'-ah); from NT:1937; a longing (especially for what is forbidden): *Strong's Numbers and Concordance*
 - b. epithumia NT:1939 denotes "strong desire" of any kind, the various kinds being frequently specified by some adjective. The word is used of a good desire in Luke 22:15; Phil 1:23, and 1 Thess 2:17 only. Everywhere else it has a bad sense. In Rom 6:12 the injunction against letting sin reign in our mortal body to obey the "lust" thereof, refers to those evil desires which are ready to express themselves in bodily activity. *Vine's Expository Dictionary*
 - 2. Gal 5:19-21 When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, your lives will produce these evil results: sexual immorality, impure thoughts, eagerness for lustful pleasure, 20 idolatry, participation in demonic activities, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, divisions, the feeling that everyone is wrong except those in your own little group, 21 envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other kinds of sin. NLT
 - 3. We might liken our struggle with the war on terror.
 - a. Once we were brainwashed by Satan and were his followers, Eph 2:3
 - b. But we have been liberated and set free and our mind is in the

process of being de-programed.

- c. But we must cooperate with our liberator, Jesus Christ, by spending time in prayer and His word.
- d. We must spend time with other Christians for our fellowship as opposed to those who are still under the control of Satan.
- e. We must always be aware that Satan and his followers want us to come back to their side.
- f. So then temptations come our way and our fleshly lusts have a desire to cooperate with them we must be vigilant to make sure that we do not fall into temptation and sin
- g. Remember, sin makes great promises that it will not keep and when it is finished it leads to death
- h. James 1:14-15 14 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own **desires** and enticed. 15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death . NKJV

II. 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. V-13

A. We have a choice

1. We can give our mortal bodies to do righteousness or unrighteousness.
2. God does not force us to yield to His will for us, but wants us to respond out of love.
3. Paul says we are not to make any of the parts of our body available to do unrighteousness.
4. But that we are to yield our entire selves to God to do His will.
5. For if we are truly alive from the dead, no longer dead in sin, but now alive unto God, then yielding to God is natural for us.

B. Just don't show up.

1. If we do not make ourselves available to do sinful things we can avoid them.
2. If Christian men would get rid of some of their magazines they would not need to look at them.
3. I was listening to one of the associates of Billy Graham one day. He said that when he checks into a hotel one of the first things he does is take the

Gideon Bible and a towel. He places the towel over the TV and puts the Bible on top to hold the towel. That way he can't watch TV without removing the Bible.

4. Make yourself a rule, that for every critical thing you say about someone you will say a positive thing. That will shorten your conversations.
5. There are some programs and movies and even whole channels that we as Christians should block out, not from the children but from ourselves.
6. If you don't show up at the devil's workshop, you won't get much done for him.

C. Get busy for God.

1. The old adage "ideal hands are the devil's play ground" is so true.
2. Look at David who instead of going out to lead the troops decided just hang around the castle. Where did that lead him?
3. God has plenty to keep us busy and it is not dull like you have heard.

D. Keep your distance.

1. There are some people I don't spend much time with.
2. It not because I am better than them.
3. It is because they want me to follow them down the wrong path.

E. Don't play with fire.

1. I never was a pyromaniac, but I did like to set things on fire and to play with fire when I was a kid. I am sure that some of the stuff that came up missing when I was a kid was a result of my amazement with fire.
2. I was kind of cured of that one summer when I almost set the neighbors bean field on fire.
3. If you live long enough you learn a healthy respect for things like gasoline and matches.
4. But some Christians are still playing with fire.
5. They get involved in things that might lead to a bad burn and they don't show a healthy fear.
6. Husbands - wives, don't be stupid. Stay away from those relationships that are from the devil himself.
 - a. Years ago I was talking to a lady who was attracted to a man that she went to church with. He was nice to her (probably in way he should have not been).

- b. She was unsettled about that relationship as was her husband.
- c. They both went to counselors to see why she had these feelings and what could be done about them.
- d. And although they did not live around here she showed up in my office one day after this had gone on almost a year.
- e. I listened to what she had to say and saw how she had feeling for both her husband and this other man.
- f. I knew that we was a devoted Christian so I told her what I believed God wanted me to.
- g. I told her that it was wrong, and approaching sinful if it were not stopped.
- h. Her response was well maybe I was meant to marry this man instead of my husband, maybe God wants me to marry him.
- i. In America we have this stupid idea that you cannot fall in love with the wrong one. That if you fall in love with someone beside your mate then you just made a mistake the first time.
- j. That is stupid. You could have fallen in love with any number of people, but God expects us to once we have made our choice to stick with it unless there are extreme circumstances.
- k. She followed what God wanted and they are still married amost ten years latter.
- l. Don't be stupid.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones offers a helpful illustration of the believer's relation to his old sinful disposition (*Romans: An Exposition of Chapter 6* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972], pp. 26-27).

He pictures two adjoining fields, one owned by Satan and one owned by God, that are separated by a road. Before salvation, a person lives in Satan's field and is totally subject to his jurisdiction. After salvation, a person works in the other field, now subject only to God's jurisdiction. As he plows in the new field, however, the believer is often cajoled by his former master, who seeks to entice him back into the old sinful ways. Satan often succeeds in temporarily drawing the believer's attention away from his new Master and his new way of life. But he is powerless to draw the believer back into the old field of sin and death. MacArthur