

## Romans 6:8-18

**Romans 6:8:** “Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.”

In this passage Paul begins by talking about a very precious promise that has been given to Christians – the promise of everlasting life. The topic of the resurrection and everlasting life is a tremendously important one, and it is worth spending some time on.

First of all, it is important to realize that this promise has *only* been given to those who are Christians. Jesus has promised everlasting *life* to those who believe on Him, and everlasting *wrath* upon those who do not. Those who trust Him will find mercy and forgiveness; those who reject Him will find judgment and condemnation.

If we have put our trust in Christ then there are two possible outcomes. If the Lord tarries and does not return in our lifetime, then the day will come when we will die. When that happens our body will be put in the ground, but our spirit will return to God. The Bible is clear about this:

**2 Corinthians 5:6:** “Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.”

Some people teach the idea of “soul sleep”, which says that when you die you simply stay dead until the Lord returns. That belief is false; as you can see, when we die we go to be with the Lord. Our body may be dead, but we are not; instead we will be with our Savior.

However, this is not the end. The day will come when the Lord will return for His Church. When that day comes, all of the saints who are still alive will be transformed; they will become immortal, incorruptible, and perfect:

**1 Corinthians 15:51:** “Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.”

As you can see, God will raise all of the righteous dead. Their bodies will be brought back to life, and they will live again. Just as Jesus' dead body was raised from the dead and made more glorious, so our bodies will also be raised from the dead. There will be a grand Resurrection. Right now our bodies are corruptible and are prone to disease, but one day they will be incorruptible. Right now

we are mortal, but one day we will be immortal. That day is coming, and every day that passes brings it closer:

**Romans 13:11:** “And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.”

As Paul pointed out, if we are dead with Christ then we believe that we will also live with Him. In this life our bodies are subject to aging, disease, and death, but that will not always be the case. After the Lord returns He will change our bodies, and we will become very different from what we are now. While it is true that one day we will die (unless the Lord returns and Raptures us), when Christ raises us from the dead we will no longer be faced with disease or death. Death will no longer have any sort of dominion over us.

There is something else that should not have dominion over us either, and that is sin:

**Romans 6:10:** “For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Here the apostle Paul commands us to consider ourselves to be dead unto sin but alive unto God. To understand what that means, let's stop and think for a moment. How does a dead person respond to a situation? If you tell a dead person a joke, will he laugh? If you tell a dead person some bad news, will he cry? If you insult a dead person, will he become angry? If you threaten a dead person, will he become afraid? Of course not; after all, he's *dead*. He is beyond caring about anything you might do. Because he is dead he will not respond to you in any way. It is *impossible* to entice a dead person to do anything. After all, *he is dead*.

Paul tells us that we should treat temptations the same way a dead person treats temptations. If you tempt a dead person to sin, he isn't going to do anything. He is not going to find the temptation enticing. There will be no response from him whatsoever. When it comes to sin, we should consider ourselves to be dead men. Sin should mean absolutely nothing to us. There should be nothing tempting or desirable about it. Just as a dead man would never even consider giving in to sin (because he's *dead*), we should be the same way.

You see, Christians are called to pursue holiness. This is repeated throughout the Bible:

**2 Corinthians 7:1:** “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

**1 Thessalonians 4:7:** “For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.”

**Hebrews 12:14:** “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:”

God could not possibly have been any more clear about this: we are called *to holiness*. Christ did not save us so that we could dive into sin and do whatever we want; instead He saved us so that we

could do whatever *He* wants. Earlier in Romans 6 the apostle Paul attacked those who said “Well, since I’m a Christian God will forgive me, so I can do whatever I want and it doesn’t matter”. The truth is that it *does* matter. God’s grace *is not a license to sin*, and those who treat it as such are not Christians at all:

**1 John 2:3:** “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.”

As Christians we should have a deep and abiding hatred for sin:

**Jude 1:23:** “And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.”

Christians should have no tolerance for sin in their lives; they should fight it and consider themselves to be dead to it. In other words, we should be at war with the sin in our lives. We ought to be dead to sin – not just to some sins, but to *all* sins. We should not allow it to have its way with us:

**Romans 6:12:** “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.”

Notice how Paul says *do not let sin reign over you*. Do not allow sin to do as it pleases. Do not give in to temptation. Paul wants us to fight sin.

Over and over the Bible calls Christians to a life of holiness. Many people today don’t really care very much about holiness; they figure that since they’re saved they can live as they please and there won’t be any consequences. People simply don’t take sin very seriously anymore. They don’t even feel the need to *read* their Bibles, let alone obey them. But the truth is that holiness is not optional. While we are not saved by our works, God *does* call us to give our lives to Him:

**Romans 12:1:** “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, **holy**, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

God has commanded us to give our lives to Him – to offer ourselves not only as a living sacrifice, but as a *holy* sacrifice. Jesus Christ said the same thing. If we love Christ then we should demonstrate that love through obedience:

**John 14:15:** “If ye love me, keep my commandments.”

**John 14:21:** “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him,

and will manifest myself to him.”

**1 John 5:2:** “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”

It is true that Christians still struggle with sin in their lives, and it is also true that Christians do commit sin. However, there is a tremendous difference between a person who is trying to obey God, and one who refuses to obey God. There is a difference between someone who has submitted themselves to God and is trying to serve Him, and one who has refused to submit and is doing whatever they please. God has called us to *keep His commandments*, and He is very serious about that. If we refuse to keep His commandments (as many so-called Christians have done today) then we do not love Him and are not Christians at all.

Another thing to notice is that Paul says we should not *let* sin reign over us. In other words, we should not give sin permission to do as it pleases in our life. Notice that Paul does *not* say “Oh, don't worry about your sins; God will fix them in time. Just live your life and let God deal with it.” The apostle talks as if our sin is something that *we can control* and is something that we are supposed to be fighting:

**1 Corinthians 9:27:** “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”

**Hebrews 12:1:** “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,”

Notice how Paul says that he *works hard* to keep his body under subjection. Notice how he urges men to *lay aside* their sins and run with patience. Nowhere does Paul say “Your sin is God's problem, not your problem; don't even give your sin a second thought.” Instead Paul tells us that we need to be *fighting* the sin in our life. We should be at war with it, striving against it, and seeking to live a holy life.

Do you remember what Jesus told people after He did a miracle in their lives?

**John 8:11:** “She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.”

**John 5:14:** “Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.”

Notice that Jesus *never* said “I have removed all sin from your life; you will never sin again. You're all good to go.” Instead Jesus commands them to *stop sinning* – as if they had a choice to make, and He wanted them to make the right choice. The truth is that as Christians we *do* have a choice to make.

You see, when we were lost we really were slaves to sin. There was no way we could overcome the sin in our lives. However, now that we are Christians the situation is very different. Now we really

do have a choice. We can fight sin, *if we want to*. We can overcome sin, if we wish. Since we are no longer slaves to sin we can defeat sin. The temptations will still come, but we can overcome them. We will never face a temptation that is impossible to defeat:

**1 Corinthians 10:13:** "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

Let me repeat that: the temptations in our life *can be defeated*. God Himself promised us that every temptation we will ever face is one that we can overcome. The real question is, are we willing to fight against our sin, or would we rather take the easy road and give in?

Paul tells us that we do have a choice, and he commands us to choose to serve God:

**Romans 6:13:** "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

Notice the stark terms that Paul uses! *We have a choice* – we can yield ourselves unto God, or we can yield ourselves unto sin. We can choose to do good, or we can choose to do evil. *We have a choice*. Paul is clear about what we must do: we must choose to do right. We must yield to God and not to sin. We must choose righteousness.

You see, our lives do not belong to us. The truth is that they belong to Someone else:

**1 Corinthians 6:19:** "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?"

20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

We have been bought with a price – a very high price. We were purchased by the blood of Jesus, who died to save us:

**1 Peter 1:18:** "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;

19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:"

Our life *is no longer our own*. We now belong to Jesus, and *He* is our master. Since we are His servants, we ought to serve Him instead of ourselves. Our body is *not* our own, and we are *not* free to do with it as we please.

*This is a big deal*. There are many people today who call themselves Christians but who would never even dream of obeying God. They think that they can do whatever they please, whenever they please, and there will never be any consequences. They think that you don't have to give your life to God in order to be saved; as long as you ask God to keep you from going to Hell you will be just fine.

But that is not what Christ taught. He was clear that in order to be saved we *must* repent of our

sins:

**Matthew 4:17:** "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

**Matthew 9:13:** "But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinner to repentance."

**Matthew 11:20:** "Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:"

**Mark 1:14:** "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,  
15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

**Luke 13:3:** "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Notice how clear Jesus was! If you do not repent, *you will perish*. A person who says "God, I'm not sorry about my sins and I'm not going to stop sinning" is *not* a Christian. It doesn't matter if that person believes that Jesus was the Son of God who died and rose back to life again. It is true that you do have to believe that, but guess what? Even *demons* believe that. You have to do more than just believe, *you must repent*.

It all comes down to an issue of authority. People today don't want to go to Hell, but they also don't want to give God control over their lives. They foolishly think that they can be saved without repenting of their sin and without ever seeking forgiveness for it. They think that they can be saved without giving God control over their lives. They believe that as long as they've asked God to take them to Heaven, they are covered and they can go back into the world and continue living like the devil.

*But they are badly wrong.* In order to be saved Jesus must be our Savior *and* our Lord. If we refuse to make Him our Lord then He will not be our Savior either. If we tell Jesus "I will never, ever obey you; your commands mean nothing to me" then we are lost. Those who mock the words of God and who refuse to obey Him are lost. The Bible is very clear about this:

**1 John 2:4:** "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

Now, this does *not* mean that we are saved by our works, or that we keep our salvation through our obedience. Our salvation has been purchased for us by the blood of Christ; it was bought by His works and imputed to us. We are saved by His death, not by our works:

**Galatians 2:16:** "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

However, true salvation *always* results in a changed heart and a changed life. It creates people who love God and want to obey Him. Anyone who mocks the commands of God is not a Christian at all.

In order to become a Christian you *must* submit yourself to God's authority. If you will not do that then you cannot be saved. Either God is your master or He isn't. You cannot have it both ways.

The apostle Paul makes it clear that God requires Christians to fight the sin in their life and choose to serve God instead of their own fleshly lusts. We have a choice, and He commands us to choose righteousness. The reason we have the power to choose righteousness is because sin no longer has dominion over us:

**Romans 6:14:** “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.”

We are no longer slaves to sin, so we should not act like we are slaves to sin. Since sin is no longer our master, we should not serve sin. Instead we should consider ourselves to be dead to sin and we should serve God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Verse 14 has another powerful truth – we are no longer under the law. Before Christ died, the Law of Moses reigned supreme. Men were bound by its decrees – to its laws of purification, to its system of sacrifices, and to its many commands. This Law proved to be a heavy weight that no one could carry. No one could keep the Law, so all men were condemned by it. Since no one could keep the Law perfectly, it was impossible to be saved by it. Instead men constantly fell short.

But that does not mean that the Law was pointless. Paul tells us that the Law was intended to show us our need for Christ:

**Galatians 3:24:** “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”

You see, since we could not keep the Law we could not obtain salvation by the Law. This meant that we had to look for salvation from another source – and that source is Christ. Jesus *was* able to keep the Law perfectly. Since He was sinless (and therefore had no sins of His own to suffer for), He could suffer in our place and die for our sins. He – and He alone – could be our Savior. Since we are saved by Him, we are no longer under the Law; instead we are under His grace. Instead of trusting in our own righteousness to save us, we trust in His righteousness. Since His righteousness is perfect and spotless, our salvation is assured. (This is why we no longer have to obey the Law of Moses; since we are not under the Law its decrees are not binding to us.)

However, this does *not* mean that we have a license to sin:

**Romans 6:15:** “What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.”

This goes back to what was said earlier – there are some people who use God's grace as an excuse to indulge in sin. They say “Well, since God will forgive me, I can do whatever I please and all will be well”. There are others who say “Well, since I'm not under the Law anymore that means that everything is just fine; God no longer has any commands He expects me to follow”. Both of those thoughts are utter foolishness. God gave us His grace to save us *from* sin, not save us *to* sin! God did not free us from the Mosaic Law so that we could be lawless; instead He freed us so that we might obey Him. While it is true that we are no longer bound by the Law of Moses, it is *not* true that God has

freed us from all commands. The New Testament is full of commands that *are* binding on the Church, and God commands us to obey them. Sin is still sin, and it is still wrong. We are *not* free to sin. No man can serve two masters:

**Romans 6:16:** “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?”

Sin is not harmless, nor is it a “victimless crime”. Sin leads to *death*. It is fatal. We can choose to serve sin or we can choose to serve righteousness, but we *cannot* choose both. Do we want to be the servants of God, or the servants of the devil? Our choices have very real consequences. In the past, before we became Christians, we were the servants of sin, but God saved us from that:

**Romans 6:17:** “But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.  
18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”

God has freed us from our sin. We are now the servants of righteousness – so we should seek righteousness. If we refuse to seek righteousness and instead live a life of sin, then we are not Christians at all.