

“No longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.” (Romans 6: 13 & 14)

Your sins are gone, nailed to the cross, forgiven. You are no longer under the law. A higher authority has superseded the one before. For almost 1500 years, from Moses to Jesus, the law reigned supreme. The law was the limiting factor of what humans could do and where humanity could go. The law said, you can go this far, but no farther.

Examples:

You will love God.

You will honor God’s name.

You will honor the Sabbath.

But what if you didn’t. What if you failed. What if you willfully hated, dishonored, or disrespected God or the Sabbath? Then you paid a price. A blood offering, a sin offering, a sacrifice to match the sin. Ultimately death. Your very own. Your sin caused you to deserve it.

You were under the law and the law took no prisoners. The law had one penalty. It was the penalty of capital punishment - death.

More Examples:

Dishonor parents - disrespect authority.

Fail to protect your brother’s stuff - steal.

Fail to protect your sister’s life, or take it.

Lie, about your neighbor.

Jealousy over what your neighbor has.

Again, the penalty is sacrifice and death. Your death. You were under the law and the law won. EVERY TIME.

Do we still know the law? Of course we do. It is one of the hallmarks of civilization. We **know** the law. In many ways we know it better than most cultures through out human history. But if we are no longer under it why even know it? So that we can follow it. You see now we follow it, closer than before, out of gratitude. We are grateful because Jesus has taken our slavery to sin and its punishment away, and replaced it with freedom. Here, Paul would say, **“What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!”**

(Romans 6: 15) Now we are free to follow the law for the sake of others. For the sake of civilization. For the sake of honoring the one who gave his life so that we will always have life. Jesus! Since we are no longer slaves to the law we are free to follow it. Since you are no longer under death you can now live. The question is, how will you choose to live, obedient to the one who gave you life, or follow the same path as if you were still under a death sentence. **“But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted, and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.”**

(Romans 6: 17) We do this no longer out of burden, fear, or demand, but out of love and gratitude for our God who rescued us from the tomb. Who chose the cross, for all.

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For Whom Christ Died

A 21st Century Approach to:
The Letter of Paul to the Romans
By: Rev. David L. Stoner



Freedom From Sting & Destruction

I’m guessing, that we’ve all had people tell us, they wish we were dead, or told us that our sin is destructive, and perhaps we’ve told them the same thing. Also, I’m guessing, we have all heard that death has lost its sting and that sin has been destroyed. But do we know how it happened? Do we have the words to tell our fellow sinners how their death’s are stingless and their sin has been destroyed? Do we have the faith to live as if this were true?

Here’s a question, if death were truly a thing of the past and sin had zero penalty, would we **sin** more, or less? Would we **live** more, or less? Would we be burdened by the information, or freed to live grateful lives?

First, we’d have to be told that it’s true. Second we’d have to believe that it’s true. Only then could we live in the truth.

For Whom Christ Died #6 “Sin? By No Means”

Romans 6: 1 - 5

“What then are we to say? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.”

Here in these words, Paul takes two burdens away from us literally with the stroke of a pen. The first burden is that grace abounds and sin is no more. The second is that we are not to fall into the trap of sinning and be burdened by the first ever again. The death we experienced in baptism was not only our first death, but also our last. Sharing his death in the waters of baptism we were indeed buried with him.

Now that may take a bit of imagination. Once they placed the body of Jesus in the tomb and sealed the tomb by rolling the stone against the opening, Christ was alone in his death, with the exception that every living soul on the planet earth, (past, present, and future), shared his grave. The Christ of God, allowed us to share his grave, so that we do not have to experience our own. Our own graves are empty, because his was filled with the children of God. That is how death lost its sting.

Now if it is simply that our tombs will be empty, then indeed Jesus rescues us from death and the grave has lost its fear. More than that, baptism is the beginning of an amazing life that has no end. This non-ending life is a complete new way of being. The new way, is born of crucifixion which destroyed the sin with-in, so that freedom from it is eternal.

Now think about that for a minute. The destruction of sin, does not mean that we can never sin again...for indeed we not only sin, but also can't stop sinning. Therefore the destruction isn't of the ability to sin, but rather the penalty of sin. Death, sin's intrinsic penalty, is thus destroyed with the death of Jesus through crucifixion.



At One Time Or Another, Almost Every Youth In A Youth Group, Has Participated In Writing Their Sins On A Piece Of Paper And Nailing The Paper To A Cross.

Now this may take a bit of imagination. Once they placed Jesus on the cross, and nailed his flesh to the wood, Christ was alone on the cross, with the exception that every sinner on the planet earth, (past, present, and future) shared his crucifixion. The Christ of God, allowed us to share his cross, so that we do not have to experience our own. Our own crucifixions are not necessary to atone for our sins, because his punishment fulfilled sin's punishment for all the children of God. That is how sin was thus destroyed.

“We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 6: 9 - 11)

Please, notice the tense with which Paul writes. It is not that some day you may be dead to sin and alive to God in Jesus Christ. Nor does Paul say, “You use to be dead to sin, and use to be alive to God, but now...” No, the truth Paul wants you desperately to know is that Jesus lives to God and so do you - NOW! Not some idilic past and not some possible future. NOW!

That is why we walk in newness of life. We are not hoping to walk, nor are we grieving that we use to walk. Today we walk in newness of life. It's what we do. It's how we live. Therefore we do not, **“...continue in sin in order that grace may abound”**. How can it abound more than all and every?