

Sunday, May 31, 2026

United with Christ: Freedom from Sin's Slavery

Sermon Summary

This powerful exploration of Romans 6 reveals a profound truth about our spiritual identity: we are no longer slaves to sin. The message draws a striking parallel between financial debt and spiritual bondage, reminding us that just as debt makes us servants to lenders, sin once held us in captivity. But through union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, that old enslaved self has been crucified. The sermon walks us through Paul's logical argument that our baptism into Christ isn't merely a symbolic ritual, but represents our complete immersion into Jesus - in heart, mind, spirit, and strength. We died with Him to sin, were buried with Him, and now live in resurrection power. This means sin no longer has mastery over us. The practical application is transformative: when temptation comes knocking like an unwanted solicitor with lies and justifications, we have the freedom to turn away. Instead of making preparations for sin, we can present ourselves to God as instruments of righteousness. The Holy Spirit convicts us in those 0.4-second moments when our minds begin planning how to indulge temptation, giving us the opportunity to choose connection with God over the empty promises of sin. Grace isn't a license to keep sinning - it's the power that breaks sin's hold and opens the door for righteous living.

Scripture References from the Sermon

Directly Cited/Referenced:

- Proverbs 22:7 - "The rich rule over the poor and the borrower is a servant to the lender"
- Romans 5:12 - How sin entered through Adam and death through sin
- Romans 5:18-19 - All constituted sinners through Adam

- Romans 5:20-21 - "Where sin increased, grace multiplied all the more"
- Romans 6:1 - "What shall we say then? Are we to remain in sin so that grace may increase?"
- Romans 6:2 - "Absolutely not. How can we who died to sin still live in it?"
- Romans 6:3 - Baptized into Christ Jesus, baptized into his death
- Romans 6:4 - Buried with him through baptism into death, raised to new life
- Romans 6:5 - United with him in death and resurrection
- Romans 6:6 - Old man/self crucified with him, body of sin no longer dominates
- Romans 6:7 - "Someone who has died has been set free from sin"
- Romans 6:8 - If we died with Christ, we will live with him
- Romans 6:11 - Consider yourselves dead to sin but alive to God
- Romans 6:12-14 - Do not let sin reign; present yourselves as instruments of righteousness

Alluded To:

- Genesis 3 - Adam's sin, hiding from God, expulsion from the garden
- Genesis 6 - Adam's physical death
- Matthew 22:37-39 (or Mark 12:30-31) - Greatest commandments: love God with heart, soul, mind, strength; love neighbor
- John 4:23-24 - Worship in spirit and truth
- Matthew 28:19 - "Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"
- Acts 2 - Peter's sermon at Pentecost, many baptized

Key Points

1. Our Big Idea

**Christians unite with Christ in death and resurrection.
He breaks sin's hold, opening the door for our righteous living.**

Romans 6 is not just theory; it's an explanation of what has actually changed in us because of Jesus.

2. Two Inheritances, Two Outcomes (Romans 5)

To understand Romans 6, we have to remember Romans 5:

In Adam

- We all **inherited sin**.
- We became **sinners by nature and by choice**.
- **Death** entered the world through sin—both physical death and spiritual separation from God.

In Christ

- Through His **death, burial, and resurrection**, we receive **grace** and **righteousness**.
- “Where sin increased, grace increased all the more.”
- Sin is real and powerful, but **grace is greater**. It's not a fair fight.

Romans 6 asks: If grace always wins, should we just keep on sinning so grace can keep on increasing? Paul's answer: **Absolutely not**.

3. What Does “Death” Mean Here?

Paul talks about **death** in two different ways:

Death through Adam (Romans 5)

- Separation from God.
- Eventual physical death.

Death with Christ (Romans 6)

- “Our old self was crucified with him” (6:6).

- The “old man” or “old self” is that **Adam-inherited, sin-enslaved nature**.
- **That part of us had to die** so we could be freed from sin’s mastery.

So in Romans 6:

- To avoid **death because of sin**, we must **die with Christ to sin**.

Paradoxically, **the only way to truly live is to die with Him**.

4. What Actually Died?

The **old self**—the “Adam” part of you that was:

Under sin’s dominion

Powerless to live righteously

When Christ died, those who are **united to Him** share in that death.

Romans 6:7 – “For someone who has died has been set free from sin.”

That doesn’t mean temptation disappears.

It means sin no longer has **the right to rule** you.

The “debt collector” keeps calling, but in Christ you can say:

“That account is closed. I don’t owe you anything.”

5. What About Resurrection?

Death with Christ is never the end:

Romans 6:4 – “...just as Christ was raised from the dead... so we too may live a new life.”

Romans 6:5 – “...we will certainly also be united in the likeness of his resurrection.”

Resurrection means:

- A **new life** now, not just “going to heaven someday.”

- New power to walk in **righteousness**, not slavery.
- New identity: **alive to God in Christ Jesus**.

6. What Does Paul Mean by “Baptism”?

The word “baptize” literally means “**to immerse.**”

- At a minimum, Paul is referring to **water baptism**—the New Testament pattern is:
 - Believe in Christ
 - Be baptized in water as an act of obedience and identification with Him

But he is also talking about a **deeper immersion**:

- Immersed in **Christ Himself**
- Identified with His **death, burial, and resurrection**
- Immersed in His **Word**, His **Spirit**, and His **ways**

So when Paul says we were “baptized into Christ Jesus” and “baptized into his death”, he’s describing a **total union** with Jesus: His story has become **our** story.

7. Freedom Means You Actually Have a Choice Now

Because your old self has been crucified with Christ:

You are **no longer a slave** to sin (6:6).

You now have a **real choice**:

- Let sin keep calling the shots, or
- Live as someone **alive from the dead**.

Paul gives both a **negative** and a **positive** command:

Negative: Do not let sin reign.

- “Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its desires.” (6:12)
- Don’t “present” your body, mind, and actions to be **used by sin**.
- Don’t plan for sin. Don’t build excuses for sin. Don’t make room for sin.

Positive: Present yourselves to God.

- “Present yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead, and your members to God as instruments to be used for righteousness.” (6:13)
- Make **active preparation** to obey:
 - Turn to God in prayer when tempted.
 - Arrange your life to make righteousness easier and sin harder.
 - Offer your mind, your time, your body, your gifts as tools in God’s hands.

You will still feel temptation. Your mind may try to pre-plan sin in milliseconds. But the Holy Spirit interrupts with a new option:

Turn to God. Present yourself to Him instead.

8. Under Law? Or Under Grace?

Romans 6:14 – “For sin will no longer have mastery over you, because you are not under law but under grace.”

- The **law** can expose sin but cannot free you from it.
- **Grace** not only forgives, it **empowers** you to walk in newness of life.

Grace is not a license to sin; it is the **power and position** that makes righteousness possible.

Discussion Questions

- How does understanding that we inherited a sin nature from Adam change the way you view your own struggles with sin and temptation?
- Paul argues that grace is not a license to keep sinning. What practical boundaries or disciplines help you avoid using God's grace as an excuse for ongoing sin?
- What does it mean to you personally that your old self was crucified with Christ, and how does this truth impact your daily battle against sin?
- The sermon describes baptism as being immersed in Christ through our heart, mind, soul, and strength. In which of these areas do you feel least immersed in Jesus, and what might change that?
- Pastor Chris admits to sometimes making preparations for sin. How do you recognize when you are mentally preparing to sin, and what helps you redirect those thoughts?
- What does it look like practically to present yourself to God as an instrument of righteousness rather than presenting your members to sin?
- How does the truth that you are no longer a slave to sin change your response when you face your most persistent temptation?
- The sermon emphasizes that sin still leads to death even after we are set free in Christ. How does remembering the destination of sin help you make better choices in moments of temptation?
- What specific practices or preparations for righteousness could you build into your life to replace the times you might otherwise prepare for sin?
- How does being united with Christ in both His death and resurrection give you hope and power to live differently than you did before knowing Him?

5-Day Devotional: United with Christ in Death and Resurrection

Day 1: The Debt We Cannot Pay

Reading: Romans 5:12-21

Just as financial debt creates a master-servant relationship, sin creates spiritual bondage. Through Adam, we inherited a debt we could never repay—a slavery to sin that permeates our nature. But where sin increased, grace abounded all the more. This isn't a fair fight; God's grace is infinitely greater than our sin. Today, reflect on areas where you feel enslaved—to habits, patterns, or destructive behaviors. Recognize that you cannot pay this debt yourself. The first step toward freedom is acknowledging your need for grace. Jesus didn't come to help you manage your debt; He came to cancel it completely through His death and resurrection.

Reflection Question: What "debts" are you still trying to pay that Christ has already canceled?

Day 2: Dying to Live

Reading: Romans 6:1-7

The paradox of Christian faith is profound: to avoid death, you must die. Our old self—the part inherited from Adam that's enslaved to sin—must be crucified with Christ. This isn't symbolic language; it's spiritual reality. When you united with Christ through faith, your sin nature was put to death. Verse 7 declares that "someone who has died has been freed from sin." You are no longer obligated to obey sin's demands. Today, identify one area where you're still living as though you're enslaved. Remember: that old master has no legal claim on you anymore. You died with Christ, and death breaks every chain.

Reflection Question: What would change in your life if you truly believed you were dead to sin?

Day 3: Baptized into New Life

Reading: Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12-14

Baptism represents immersion—not just in water, but in Christ Himself. When you were baptized into Christ Jesus, you were baptized into His death, buried with Him, and raised to walk in newness of life. This isn't merely ritual; it's union with the Savior in every dimension—heart, soul, mind, and strength. Consider how you're immersed in Christ daily. Are you soaking in His Word? Saturated in prayer? Submerged in worship? Just as baptism is a one-time event with ongoing significance, your union with Christ is established but must be experienced continually. Let yourself be immersed in His presence today, knowing you are united with Him in resurrection power.

Reflection Question: In what practical ways can you "immerse" yourself more fully in Christ today?

Day 4: Presenting Yourself to God

Reading: Romans 6:11-14; Romans 12:1-2

Freedom requires decision. Though you're no longer enslaved to sin, temptation still has your contact information. Sin sends emails and leaves voicemails, lying about your identity and destiny. But you get to choose. Paul's command is clear: don't present your members to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; instead, present yourself to God as one alive from the dead. This means stopping the mental preparation for sin—the planning, the justification, the creating of environments without accountability. Replace that planning with preparation for righteousness. When temptation comes, turn immediately to God in prayer, worship, or Scripture. Make plans for the Spirit, not the flesh.

Reflection Question: What preparations are you making—for sin or for righteousness?

Day 5: No Longer Under Sin's Mastery

Reading: Romans 6:14-23; Galatians 5:1, 13-16

"Sin will have no mastery over you because you are not under law but under grace." This is your declaration of freedom. The battle against sin isn't over, but the outcome is certain. You don't fight for victory; you fight from victory. Christ has already broken sin's hold. Now you walk in the freedom He purchased. Grace doesn't give license to sin; it empowers you to live righteously. Today, stand firm in your freedom. When the Holy Spirit convicts you of sin, don't ignore it—that's His love protecting you. Turn to God immediately and experience His transforming power. You are alive in Christ, instruments of righteousness for His glory.

Reflection Question: How will you live today as someone who is truly free from sin's mastery?

Closing Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank You for breaking sin's hold on my life through Your death and resurrection. Help me daily to remember that I am united with You—dead to sin and alive to God. When temptation comes, remind me of my freedom and draw me close to You. May I present myself as an instrument of righteousness for Your glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.