

LIVING BY GRACE

STUDY TWO

Since We've Died, Let's Really Live!

Romans 6:1–5

We have a power within us that is greater than the power of sin.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

DURING the US Civil War, hundreds of thousands of Americans lost their lives over the issue of slavery. It was the bloodiest conflict in United States history. Even as battles raged and soldiers died, President Abraham Lincoln declared freedom for the slaves in his Emancipation Proclamation on New Year's Day, 1863. When the smoke of war finally cleared in 1865, the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution was officially adopted, forever abolishing slavery in the United States.

Many years earlier, another battle for freedom was waged. Jesus Christ, our Great Emancipator, won our freedom from sin and death when He died on the cross and rose from the grave. Purchased by the blood of Christ, our liberty has value beyond measure: it cost God's Son His life. And yet, God freely offers liberty from sin and death to anyone who receives it by faith.

How tragic that many Christians remain enslaved to sin and shackled to shame, despite the precious blood Christ spilled to set them free and God's declaration, "You are free from your slavery to sin" (Romans 6:18).

Are you experiencing freedom from sin's mastery? Perhaps you think you can't live free or you don't know how. In this *Searching the Scriptures* study and the next two studies, we'll examine Romans 6 and discover God's plan for freeing us from sin's control.



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PREPARE YOUR HEART

In prayer, thank the Lord that He has freed you from your former captor and express your deepest desire to serve Christ. Ask Him to reveal the “grace” way of living as you study His Word.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Romans 6 is the Christian’s emancipation proclamation, the foundational document announcing our freedom from Satan’s power and sin’s domination. It’s where we learn how to live free from fear, guilt, shame, and defeat.

In Romans 6, Paul highlighted two groups of people. Those who say, “It’s too good to be true,” fail to claim their liberty, and they continue to live like slaves to sin (Romans 6:1–14); and those who say, “If we’re free, let’s sin and not hold back!” and turn their liberty into a freewheeling license to sin (6:15–23). The first group nullifies grace. The second group abuses grace. When both groups asked if grace permitted sin, Paul’s response was the same: “Of course not!” (6:2, 15).

Whether we surrender to sin in *defeat* or indulge in *debauchery*, we reattach the chains that Christ has broken and make sin our master again. Why do that? It’s irrational . . . and tragic. But can we be *certain* we are free? What assurance can we claim? That’s the subject of 6:1–5.



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Observation: Our Union with Christ

The task of observation is to examine Scripture as if through a magnifying glass, carefully detecting every detail. Note key words, the thought progression, cause and effect, and figures of speech. In interpretation, you'll seek the meaning. For now, simply observe what the passage says.

Read *Romans 6:1–5*. Notice the theological tone of the verses. Paul wanted to build our freedom on a solid footing. The passage opens with a question he may have heard from a sin-defeated Christian. What assumption do you perceive was behind the question in *6:1*?

So stuck is the defeated Christian in a cycle of temptation, sin, and guilt that he or she can't even imagine stopping sinning. What was Paul's response in *6:2*? What key words stand out?

What key concepts did Paul add in *6:3–4* to elaborate "died to sin" in verse 2?



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What conclusion did Paul make in *Romans 6:5*?

Joined with Christ . . . baptism . . . died to sin . . . new life. These vital theological concepts guarantee our freedom. Let's discover what they mean.

Satan doesn't want you to believe you are free. He wants you to believe you are still a helpless victim of your old nature and when temptation comes, you're going to fall again. That's not true! —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: Joined with Christ in His Death, Burial, and Resurrection

In interpretation, we seek to understand what Paul intended his readers to understand. How would they have defined these key words? How did Paul teach them in other contexts? To find out, you may need to consult your Bible-study tools, Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Insights on Romans*. *Constable's Notes* at netbible.org is a reliable online resource.

“Joined with Christ Jesus in Baptism” —Romans 6:3

Consider the phrase, “joined with Christ Jesus in baptism” (Romans 6:3). Paul addressed those who had placed their faith in Jesus for their salvation. Not only had God “counted [them] as righteous . . . because of their faith” (Romans 4:5), but also God had joined them with Christ through spiritual baptism.



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Romans 6:1–5

What does *baptism* mean in this context?

When you came to Christ, you were positionally dipped into His life, and your identity was changed to be like Christ. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

“We Died and Were Buried with Christ” —Romans 6:4

Paul’s readers would have understood baptism to imply a change in identity, just as a garment changes its color when it is dipped, or “baptized,” into dye. Our spiritual baptism into Christ linked us to Him so that His experience became our experience and changed our identity from slave to free.

What spiritually transpired when we were joined with Christ, according to [Romans 6:4](#)? What spiritual benefits followed?

We have died to the power of sin and the authority of Satan. He doesn't want you to know that! Satan doesn't want you to know you're free and that you don't have to be afraid of him. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



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“Just as Christ Was Raised . . . We Also May Live New Lives” —Romans 6:4

Water baptism is a physical symbol of the spiritual reality of our death, burial, and resurrection with Christ. When Christ died, we died. When Christ was buried, we were buried. When Christ was raised, we were raised to “live new lives” (Romans 6:4).

What does new life in Christ mean in this context?

You don't have to sin. You don't have to be under the authority of the enemy, Satan. Because you are identified with Christ, you have a resurrected life at work within you.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: No Longer a Slave but God's Own Child

In correlation, we explore other passages on the same themes. What did Paul say about our new identity in Christ in the following verses?

2 Corinthians 5:17



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Romans 6:1–5

Galatians 4:4–7

Colossians 3:1–4

Our identification with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection puts our past behind us. We're no longer slaves, so we can live without fear, guilt, shame, and defeat. We're not victims of sin, we're victors.

You can live without the shackles of guilt and shame because you've been rescued. You have triumph over these things through the death of Christ. He liberates us from the domination of sin. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Application: Now That You Know

To live by grace, we must fully embrace our new identity *in Christ*—a concept Bible teachers refer to as “positional truth.” Christ redeemed us from slavery by paying the penalty of our sin through His death, burial, and resurrection. Consequently, in Christ, we occupy a *position* of freedom.

Satan has no authority over Christ, so he has no authority over us since we're in Christ. And since we're in Christ, sin has no power to separate us from God or control our lives.



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What does it mean to you personally to know these truths?

What truth can you declare when thoughts of fear, guilt, shame, and defeat attack you?

Knowing the truth about our position in Christ is just the beginning of walking in freedom. In the next section of Romans 6, Paul explained further steps, which we'll examine in the next *Searching the Scriptures* study. Until then, go through the day considering this thought: "In Christ, I am dead to sin and alive to God. Sin has no control over me." When tempted, remember your position in Christ. You're free!



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, thank You for coming to my rescue by sending Your Son to die in my place. In the mystery of Your will, You joined me to Him so that His death is my death. His burial is my burial. His resurrection is my resurrection. Oh, how glorious is this truth! May I revel in it today and always give You praise. In Jesus' name, amen.