

Reckon It Dead

by Don McClure

To live as a new creation in Christ, we must reckon our sin as dead and accept the reality of our new life in Him.

Duration: 49:36

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Romans 6:11-14, Romans 6:23, Romans 8:2

Topics: "Overcoming Sin", "Spiritual Victory"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a personal story about visiting a friend's luxurious home and realizing the emptiness of worldly possessions. He emphasizes that the key to dealing with sin is to have a specific response, as outlined by Paul in the Bible. These responses are not mere suggestions, but commands for believers to follow in order to overcome sin. The speaker also highlights the ongoing battle with sin, acknowledging that victory over sin is possible through knowing and acting upon God's truth.

Transcript

Tonight, Romans chapter 6, I'm only going to read a few verses, beginning at verse 11, and it says, Likewise reckon ye yourselves also to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lust thereof. 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.

Father, we thank you for your word. Lord, we thank you for the power, Lord, of your word, and we ask tonight that as we meditate on these things together, that, Lord, your Holy Spirit would quicken these things, would make them alive to our hearts. Lord, the battle of sin that we have every day of our lives, and so often, Lord, this battle we fight it in the energy of the flesh, we fight it with our own will, our own good intentions, our own effort to be better, and Lord, your word tells us to do other things.

And we ask tonight as we look at your word, and it tells us to reckon, let not sin, neither yield, but yield. Lord, as we look to your word, we ask that you would open it up to us, and speak to us from it, and set us free. In Jesus' name we ask it.

Amen. Now, if you were with us for our last study in the first part of Romans chapter 6, very simply, if you'll recall, we looked at some things there that Paul said, knowing, knowing, you know, knowing your baptism, if you know your baptism, know your crucifixion, know your resurrection, know your obligation, some of these things that the Lord just tells us to know. They're fixed.

These aren't things that essentially have anything to do with us. When I come to Christ, the moment I accept Jesus Christ into my life, there are some things that are just fixed. They are done.

I am the heir of them. I am the beneficiary of them. And there is just as much as every one of us tonight, we could maybe walk out and see the moon, or we can see the stars, the same stars that Adam came out and looked at, and Abraham, and Moses, and the apostles.

They're fixed. They haven't moved, in a sense, in the universe. They're just fixed.

They're just there. Well, so also, the day I accept Christ, there are some things that are as fixed as the stars in the sky. They don't move.

They have nothing to do with me. They're just things that God has done for me, in the sense that the old man, the Bible says, he is crucified with Christ. I am risen with Christ.

I am seated in high heavenly places in Jesus Christ. Those are fixed things. They're true of every single one of us.

If you're a child of God, if you've received Christ, that's fixed. It's not something that waivers. It isn't something that maybe happens now and then.

Or you find yourself having a curve for you, if you're real good. No, these are fixed. They're just there.

God has done them. It's a complete, total event. It makes no difference tonight when you walk in here.

It has nothing to do with being red, yellow, black, or white, or young, or old, or male, or female, or how long I've been a Christian, or how good I've, you know, been at the Christian life. I am baptized into Christ. I am dead in Christ.

I have risen with Christ. I am seated with Christ. If today you happen to walk in here this evening, and you just, you know, led everybody in your office to Christ, and they all prayed the sinner's prayer with you, and you held a little mini crusade in your office, and saved half the building, and you walk in here tonight, after mightily being used, or maybe you walk in here tonight, and you had a nice little fight on the way over here with your husband or your wife, or you, you know, are on your cell phone, telling a few people what you think of them, or you can hardly wait to get home and see your kids, and because boy, have they got something coming from you.

And you may be, but you're, we're all, they're just the same for every one of us. These are fixed. The only difference is, is some of us enjoy the benefits of them, and maybe others don't, but they're fixed for us.

They're done. As we looked at last week, knowing this, just know this. And tonight we want to look at some other words.

These are more or less octave words, acting upon what we know, you might say. Here, these are fixed, and now because they're there, Paul tells us as he goes on, and he says, here's some things I want you to do. I think sometimes we look at chapters, you know, five, six, seven, and eight of Romans is so deep, or theological, or trying to, you know, they're all wrapped up for us theologically, or so difficult, and we can't unravel them and figure them out, and they're really not that difficult sometimes, if almost you just look at some of the operative words.

And here, over and over, he says, no, done, no, it's done, it's set, fixed, for you, finished. And now he says, knowing these things, now he turns, and he says, likewise, here in verse 11, reckon. Reckon ye yourselves, or also yourselves, to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

He says, because of what is fixed, because of what is done, because of the words and the things you want to know, he says, now I want you to act upon them. I want, here is the response that Paul says he wants to have within us. And he gives us now some operative words, some important words.

These aren't just simply suggestions for somebody that just wants to, you know, kind of look at little words in the theological library of the Bible. These are commands for a child of God if you want to deal with sin. If we are not doing these things, we will not deal with sin.

It isn't where God gives different people different ways to deal with sin. There's only one way to deal with sin truly, and that's to know certain things and then act upon those things. And the person that knows and acts ends up seeing victory over sin.

If you try to do it any other way, it won't work. There isn't, you know, nine or ten ways to skin a cat, in a sense, or to, you know, to have victory over sin. There's just one way.

A person knows what Christ has done, and I respond to it. And here, the first response that he gives to us is the word reckon. He says, now because this is so, reckon.

Now, the word reckon, we know the word, and we use the word kind of, but it's simply, essentially, the word reckon. It just means consider yourself as one who has died to sin. When he says reckon yourselves to be dead, he says just consider that done in your life.

Accept it as fact. Doesn't say figure it. Doesn't say compute it.

He just says accept it. Consider it done in your own heart and in your own life. He said just simply reckon it.

It has nothing to do with, you know, with our life. All the sin, he just says, just whatever its behavior, not that it's died to me, we'll look at that in a moment, but I died to it. I am somebody there that I've died, I want to die to its impulses.

And therefore, I have died to it, the Bible says. I have died to its authority. I have died to its nature.

And therefore, if this is done, it's fixed in heaven. And I am seated in Christ, and my sin is blotted out, and it is gone. Now I'm to reckon that to be so.

You see, the wonderful thing about a Christian is that Christianity essentially tells us that every one of us, no matter where we've been and what we've done, no matter how much time we spend doing it, the most wonderful, the most glorious, the most powerful thing that ever happened in all the world, occurred on the cross when Jesus Christ died for us. And his act of dying on the cross for me outweighs all the sins I have ever done. It outweighs all the sins ever done to me, by me, around me.

All the sins of all the world of all time, the Bible says. Christ died not for our sins only, but for the sins of the world. They are all, you know, something that have been hung upon the cross, and the cross of Jesus Christ outweighs all of my sin.

It is far greater, as terrible as I may feel, as a sin, as wretched, and as guilty, and as many, and as terrible of all the things I've done. The wonder and the glory and the majesty of Jesus Christ on the cross outweighs all of it, not just mine, not just ours here, but the sins of the world. A lot of people obviously have never taken the Lord up on it, but still, you know, that God loved the world, he gave his Son.

But it's done as far as God is concerned. And when I realize that, and if this, you know, has essentially been done with sin, it's given me full access into God's presence. And here, as far as God's concerned, he now tells me, I want you to reckon the old nature that has dominated, that has dictated, that has controlled you, that has attacked you, that has reigned over your life, I want you just simply to reckon it dead.

I want you to, yeah, that's simply what he's saying there. It's a command. Likewise, reckon ye yourselves also to be dead indeed unto sin.

Here God just simply says, I did it, now you accept it. And sometimes, I suppose, of all the things that you and I ever have to deal with, and ever have to accept in all of life, this is, it's understandably the most difficult, in one sense. And the most difficult in a sense to understand that God would do such a work for us.

And, but thus he, but he tells us, no matter how difficult it is, the problem is simple to deal with. You reckon it so. And one time, many years ago, when I was a new Christian, I was one day over at a house of a friend I'd met.

I didn't know him very well at the time, but I'd been getting to know him. And I enjoyed him, and we went over to his home, and when he took me to his home, he had this beautiful home. A couple of acres in Pasadena, and one of those huge, huge driveways, and one of these kind of ranch-style houses, and it had, you know, tennis courts, and swimming pools, and all sorts of stuff all over it.

And beautiful lawns, and rolling, like a, you know, a park almost. It was such a fabulous place. And we're kind of sitting there, and we'd been playing tennis for a little while and things.

We came in, we were sitting in the kitchen and having a Coke, and I'm kind of looking around at this place, and I said, boy, this is pretty neat house you got here. Nice world. And one thing led to another, and I came to realize, he said, well, I'd always, we did always one like this for me.

I said, really? What do you mean? And he said, well, I was adopted. And then his mother, adopted mother, came in and sat down and began to tell me one of the most remarkable and wonderful stories I've ever heard. Because this couple, this family that they were adopted into, wonderful Christian family, loved the Lord, and God had blessed them in many ways, and wonderful walk, wonderful maturity.

They had two children, a son and a daughter, that were older than this particular one. And, but as they just one day looked at all that God had done, it entered their heart a number of years earlier to adopt. They realized, God, you have so blessed us and given us so much, but yet we realize there's so many children in the world that have no such opportunity.

And they began to think and pray about it. And because they're, I'm not sure if they themselves were Hungarian, but they ended up, you know, going to Hungary. They decided we, and they literally found an orphanage in Hungary.

And this orphanage that dealt with, you know, with adoptions there in America. And they actually started with somebody here in Los Angeles that dealt with foreign adoptions. They hooked him up with this adoption agency over in Hungary.

They decided we want a child, but we, but they actually gave very specific instructions to the orphanage. And they said, we want perhaps the, a boy that would maybe be the least likely to be adopted. One that just looks like, you know, they're probably not going to be adopted.

Well, they went and checked things out, came back with a report and told the family, well, we found somebody the least likely we have in the, in the orphanage, but we better tell you seven years old, he has already been placed seven times in foster homes. Each time he's been returned for various reasons. But at this stage, it's very unlikely that somebody is going to come in and take this child.

And he's had some difficult social structures and everything else, of course, with it. And they there thought about it, prayed about it, and they instructed them do it. At that point, they paid all the costs involved in having somebody from the adoption agents here, go over to Hungary, do all the paperwork, get all the legal things done, you know, pick up the child, bring the child back to the United States for them, and handle all of this work.

And literally the moment that that plane landed in the United States, the adoption was legal and complete. That boy, though he didn't know, you know, didn't speak a word of English, absolutely no idea what it was that had transpired. The moment he landed, he was now part of that family.

He had been adopted into the family. He had an United States birth certificate. And he was an heir to the wealth of the family, though he didn't speak a word of English.

They met the airplane there. And as he got off, they all introduced themselves to him. They had been trying to explain you're being adopted.

There's a family that loves you. They don't speak English. We're going to another portion of the world and all these things.

But he didn't grasp much of this at all. And in the translation, they learned a few Hungarian words, not many. And he didn't know any English, but there a translator kind of helped explain to them, you know, mom and dad and your brother and your sister.

And then they told him his name, his new, you know, American name. He had a Hungarian name that they couldn't fit. And so they just gave him their family name, of course, and said, this is who you are.

And as they gave him that, you know, this name and said, this is who you are. He's kind of looking around and wondering what's going on. They get in the car, drive home, this beautiful place.

They decided they had it set up where there was a picnic there where they had the immediate relatives, cousins, and uncles and aunts there for this little welcoming into the family. And so they drive up and they're trying to explain who everybody is. And this is so-and-so and this and so-and-so.

This is Harold. And as they're explaining and greeting Harold, he's looking there. He didn't know who Harold was.

He didn't know who they were. But he's, you know, they're looking and saying you're part of our family. And they're hugging and, you know, wanting the kids to all play and have a nice time.

He's there totally bewildered. Didn't speak any English. They didn't speak any Hungarian.

And so they're just going on. They just, they had this barbecue going. And there, as they were making hamburgers for everybody, they, first thing they did was kind of came over and they gave him a hamburger and kind of set it up for him.

And they noticed when they gave him the plate, he grabbed it, he pulled it right into himself. He put his hand over it and his eyes went back and forth and he backed up into a corner, holding onto this hamburger. And they realized, boy, this kid's had a tough life.

And, but as they're saying, you know, they tell everybody, don't worry about it. Don't pay any attention. Let him go.

And so they give all the kids hamburgers. And then they all sit down and go over to be friendly with him. And he's sitting there watching all this.

And one of the kids took his eyes off their plate. The moment he did, he reached over and he grabbed the hamburger, put it on his plate and he made a fist. And he looked at the kid, and they look at it and real, boy, he did have a tough, you know, and one thing.

So they let him have it. We'll give you another one. And so he's there kind of eating and holding on.

Another kid take his eyes off his plate and he grabs it. And he ended up, I think he had seven or eight hamburgers before they just said, let him do it. Don't worry about it.

And until he's full, we're going to listen, whatever it is. And he's grabbing everything, making them, waiting to fight. Nobody's fighting with him.

And they're trying to convince him and everything. And he's losing something in the translation. They take him in.

Here is your room. He never had a room. He never had a bed.

And they show him, here's your bed. And they'd gotten some clothing for him. He never had, here's a closet.

And they got all these toys and they're saying, here it's yours. And they even wrote his name on all this stuff and around here, this is you and Harold, whoever Harold is, you know, and they realized as time was going on, he's even wondering, you can almost read it in him. He's almost there.

I don't know who this Harold is, but when he shows up and they find out I'm not him, I'm going to be thrown out of here quick. But anyway, he's going on with this thing and they go through a day and it was kind of awkward, but they loved him and they were so excited. They realized he came in with a lot of baggage and a lot of trials and a lot of problems and a lot of history.

Didn't know a word of English, but there's, they set him up that night and he's got his own bed. Everything's there. Here, all your toys and here's everything.

And by then he's so tired, he goes to bed, falls asleep. They all kind of go and go to sleep. But the one mistake they made that they never calculated was, is that his room was right off the kitchen.

And they didn't realize what they'd done until the next morning. They woke up, went in, looked in the cupboards and the refrigerator, everything was stripped. He spent all night taking all the food, you know, out of the kitchen and he went and he hid it somewhere in his room.

It was in the closet, it was under his bed, it was in the drawers, everything, you know, he had. You know, just, and he'd eaten a bunch, all he could eat sitting up there at night. You know, just, I'm getting the best out of this until they find me out or whatever.

You know, but he literally did this. And then they, they, they sat there and realized he, but so they, uh, they said, no, we got to put it back. But they let him keep all the stuff that wasn't perishable.

And then they, even in the refrigerator, they, you know, with everything that had to be in there, they wrote his name here. This is yours. We won't touch it.

You have it. Don't worry about it. We've got to keep it fresh.

They're doing everything they can. They got it pretty well cleaned out, but it was about a week before they realized he hid cheese between the mattresses and, uh, that had the obvious results of a new bed. But anyway, the thing is, is this went on here with somebody there that, that, as you look at this kid, all of us, what had happened in a moment's time is that he had literally been picking up, picked up at one end of the globe.

He had been translated from one end to the other. And in that a process occurred legally. He had a new identity.

He had a new family. He had a new language. He had a new world.

He had a new culture. He had all of this was given to him in a moment, just like that. When the plane landed the ground, it was done.

And because it was done, he now had a process. He had to learn to reckon it done. He had to come to grips, the fact that this was really true.

He was honestly, this new creature, he was this new person. He had this new identity. He had this new world.

He had a new family. And it's something there. The Bible doesn't say, figure it.

The Bible doesn't say, compute it. It doesn't say, comprehend it. It doesn't say, understand it.

The Bible nowhere suggests that you and I try to figure out the love of God like this. You can't do it. I mean, when you stopped to think of his story, he was just moved from one end of the planet to the other.

We were moved from one end of eternity to the other. Our sins were all blotted out of all of our life. In a moment, we are made a new creation in Christ.

We were seated in high heavenly places. The spirit bears witness with our spirit. There were children of God, of children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

When the plane landed, when I accepted Christ and I was born anew, at that point, that's all imparted. It's done. But now the process that God says, all you can do, don't try to figure that out.

It isn't a mind job. It isn't a brain job. It isn't something that you sit there and say, now, okay, how did all this happen? You can't.

Trying to understand and grasp the love of God is the most endless process, I suppose, there may be in all of time and eternity. You cannot reason it. I suppose this is one of the reasons that you don't see many rich or many noble or many great following after Christ.

People that are using their brain to try to figure out the Christian life and why such a thing could be true will spend most of their life doing it. But the person, the simple person that just simply can look in the eyes of those people and see there is a dimension and a power of love that they had within them for me to redeem me or to love me or to adopt me. And you can't rationalize it.

You can't reason it. You reckon it. You just accept it.

It is just done. And so true with every child of God. The process there of just realizing this is what has been done for me.

I am crucified with Christ. The sins are forgiven. It is buried.

It is dead. It is gone. And it is something there and the only way you really solve it is you just reckon it is so.

I think a lot of people, we tend, you know, we find ourselves sometimes when we are going through difficult times in our life and why do I do this? Why am I this way? Why am I having this problem? You know, and you sit there and watch this kid, why are you stealing those hamburgers? Well, let's see. We probably need to go back into your childhood. Let's all get in a plane and let's go over to Hungary and let's sit down in the orphanage and let's work all this stuff out.

As if we got to go back into healing of the memories or something. And we got to go back to our old life or back to the old world and try to, you know, understand why I am a sinner. Why do I do these things? Why do I lie? Why do I cheat? Why do I steal? Well, I maybe I was born in a dog eat dog world and with a fallen human dog eat dog nature.

But the thing is, God still loved me when he looked at me and his mercy and his grace. And he chose me fully cognizant of all those things. And we was aware he was forgiving us of every one of those things.

He doesn't look there anymore. He wants to have some sort of psychology or where I've got to go back into my old life. And why do I steal hamburgers? He just says, reckon it done.

Just reckon it done. And when you begin to see what you have begun, you are now you reckon the old man to be dead and you are now alive unto God through Jesus Christ. You don't have to worry why you steal hamburgers.

Just go open a refrigerator that's been given to you. Just begin to draw upon the life that is there now. You don't have to go back to the old life, the new one.

You know, you could never have stolen anything in Hungary that compares to what you're freely given every day here. And what we are given in Christ, the power of it, the glory of it. There's nothing in the world we could ever beg, steal, borrow, trade or do anything to get that touches the glory of what he gives to his child.

And I'm alive in him. And he says, just reckon it to be so. And here it's not, it's as difficult as it is.

Maybe, you know, to as to why would he love me? As many questions that can bring up, you can spend eternity figuring that out. But we're not. But the fundamental thing is to stop and realize all I know is he does.

Jesus loves me. This I know for the Bible tells me so. And he did it.

And he did it. And he did it for me. And he did it for you.

He did it for every one of us. Paul then goes on. He says, now reckon this so.

But then he goes on to verse 12. He says, let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body that you should obey it and the less thereof. A second operative, you know, operative word.

He says, first, I want you to reckon yourself to be dead. Reckon the old man to be gone. Reckon the old life gone.

Reckon the old, you know, experience there to be gone. And he said, now he says, and he says, let not sin reign. There is, he says, I just want you after you reckon the old gone.

Now I want you to say sin is not going to remain, you know, within me. It's not going to reign within me. And here he looks there and God says, this is your decision.

You're the one to put a stop to it. This is your personal choice, your personal decision there. You hear so often we pray and we appeal to God, Lord, take this away from me.

Take this nature away from me. Take this love for sin away from me. Take this desire for this way.

Take this all away from me as if that's something that the Lord kind of does. But here he looks essentially when I'm saying, take the trial away. And the Lord says, no, I'm not going to do that.

I hear God squarely in his word puts the responsibility might say we're squarely on our shoulders. He says, no, this is your decision. I brought you out of that nation.

I brought you out of that world. I brought you out of that language and that culture and that dog eat dog world and that corruption and how I'm living that way. But in terms of being delivered from it, once now you're here and you reckon yourself to be dead, but now don't you let it reign within you.

And this is somewhere you see, he looks at us and I'm saying, take it away. He says, no, you let not sin therefore reign within you. On one hand, we come, we only know one language.

We only know one behavior. We land here, it's all done. But we also come with a nature that now as a child of God, I've got to go to battle with.

And he looks at me and he says, you want to be free from sin. Number one, you reckon the old man to be dead and then you let not sin therefore reign. And here is something there that he looks, he says, the battle and the desire that God wants to see within us as a battle against this nature, this flesh that we have within us that wants to reign within us.

And here, as he suggests, almost when he says, let not sin, it's all the word has in the Greek, the sense of saying, stop it. It's almost like somebody just putting their foot down. It's almost as just there.

Somebody is just saying that's enough. Is the, is the suggestion that Paul has here when he says, let not sin, therefore reign. And there's something there when, when he says, if you want to deal with sin, number one, you reckon yourself to be dead.

And then number two, you find within your own heart, you're genuinely, deeply, profoundly sick of it. And you want to put your foot down. It's not just going to go away to simply because it embarrasses you.

It's going to go away because you're sick of it. And you have gone to battle and you're determined. It's not going to rain number of years ago and a home that we lived in.

We had an elderly neighbor, a lady who she loved cats. She had a lot of cats and her cats had cats and those cats had cats too. And she just seemed to feed them all.

And then because of her age at one point, her kids came and put her into some sort of a retirement facility, cleaned up the house, put the house on the market, sold the house, and then came and took her stuff out. New people moved in, but the cat stayed. The family didn't say, Oh, we got to collect these cats and do some.

No, they just sold the house. And so the cats all found new homes. Well, one of them decided it wanted to hang around our place, but it was a wild cat.

You couldn't touch it, you couldn't get near to it, but it always hung around our house. For some reason, it just picked up, I'm going to live there. But I'm going to stare at everybody there.

And we had a cat. Our cat was, you know, well, mall cats are kind of pathetic animals, really, I think. Nothing personal.

Well, it is personal, I guess. I mean, some of you have cats and you actually think you own a cat. How many of you own a cat? Just out of curiosity.

See, that's, you do not own a cat. A cat owns you. The person that does the obeying is the ownee.

The one that does the commanding is the owner. And I've never seen cats, they don't do, you do what they want. And you've picked up with, Oh, you want this.

You've always played guessing games with your cats until you fix it, then they do it. You know, whatever they want. But anyway, that's your own business.

But the thing is, is that this, so this cat, though, we had a kind of a pathetic cat. It was not a fighter and domesticated and just, you know, cutest little thing. My wife loved it, but it couldn't defend itself from, you know, fly, I don't think.

But this cat would come over. I didn't care much for our cat. But when this cat came, I'd fight our cat.

And it'd beat our cat to a pulp all the time. And, and I, you know, and again, I wasn't crazy about our cat, but I didn't like that. And, and then it was, then it got a little bit more bold with time and we had a cat door so that our cat could come in and out and get his food.

And we had a dog as well. And, but the next thing, you know, this cat five figures out the cat door is coming in and eating our cat food and our dog food. And, and then I'm looking at this thing, Hey, would you get, I'm shooing it away.

Get out of here. If you're not going to be nice to us, I'm not nice to you. You'll get your own food.

I'm not feeding you. And, and next thing, you know, then it even gets so bold is one night I'm sitting there in my den. I watched it come through the door, but anytime he got near you stood up, boom, it shot right out.

You can never get near it. And, but this time it comes in, goes past the pantry where the dog and the cat food was, walks right in the kitchen and goes up on the sink going for my food. And at that point, at that instant, I, I stood up, that cat took off, but I said, I just hit a limit.

And I said, that cat is history. And at that point, something snapped inside of me. And I was, no matter what it took, that cat was gone.

Wasn't gone yet, but it was a goner. And at that point I began plotting and planning full warfare on how to get this thing. And it would always come in at night when we're sleeping and eat the dog and cat food.

So I went and we had one of these little intercoms, you know, that you kind of plug in the house and you can talk from room to room on. So I got one of these little income, plugged it in. I put that chewy, hard, hard cat food right on it.

So when the cat came in at night and I had it by my bed, turned up loud. So when I started chewing, I'd hear it. We had a door going outside our bedroom door.

And then the kitchen door was over there on the other side. And so I've got this thing all planned. I've got a towel right near the door.

So when I heard this thing, I could go out the door, jam the thing in the door so it couldn't get out, the cat door. And then I'd go finish the job. But the, uh, so sure enough, one night, about three in the morning, the cat, I hear the crunching.

I go running out the door. I'm running across to stick this in. Just before I got there, this cat flew out and, you know, just beat me in there.

Went over and sat about 10 feet over there. Licks its chops looking to say, well, my good shot, buddy, but you lose, you know, one of those things. And that just infuriated me more.

And night after night till finally I decide I'm leaving my door open. It hears me open the door. That's its clue.

So I'm leaving the door open. Gene's go to bed and it's winter. It's 30 degrees or something.

Gene gets in, goes closer. I said, no, you can't close the door. Don't close the door.

She said, what do you mean? Don't close. I said, don't close the door. Why? That cat, you know, is out there.

I'm getting the cat and hears me open the door. Well, it's freeze. I don't care.

I'm getting that cat, you know, and, uh, and then Gene sits there and she said, come on, it's cold. I gave her a lecture. I said, you know something, this is what's wrong with the world today.

Nobody, you know, there's stuff that's wrong, but nobody's willing to fight for their principles and what's right and what ought to be done. And this is why the whole nation, why our country, why everybody, nobody has anything to fight for any longer. And I found something, you know, saying, and that door is staying open.

She's okay. And she piles on blankets. She goes to bed, but about two or three in the morning, I hear the crunching.

This time I sneak out. I jam that thing in there. It hits on the other side.

And then I go running back, shut the door inside. And then my dog, I hear it barking upstairs, took everything, you know, got a blanket up there, went down to it over, got in a box and I won big time. But the, uh, put that thing at, in my car and I drove across the Santa Ana riverbed over across the other side of Norton Air Force Base, drove way out of nowhere in Nowhereville.

And in there, when I looked at cat and I opened the thing up and I let it out and it gets out, trots off a few steps, looks at me and just went off. But I, and I went back home. I got into bed and I can remember about four 30 in the morning.

This, I get in there. My wife says now she can go to sleep, but she's still a little awake and I'll never forget it. She's you great white Hunter.

You just showed you how little she understood the triumph that had happened. But you know, the thing is that thing hung around and it mocked you and it ridiculed and it, it ate up everything and it beat up everything. And it just, we just let it go and let it go and let it go until something that's stacked inside.

And all of a sudden the determination, that's it. That's done. That, this is what Paul is saying.

In a sense there, he's looking there and he says, until something happens within you, he says, you reckon it dead. But he says there, you've got to, something's got to stomp within you where the sin behavior, the nature, the character, the attitude, the vocabulary, whatever it may be, that it's, it's just like our sin nature. It struts around, it mocks us, ridicules us, you know, as human beings so often.

That's what sin does, breaks us down. We'll never get along with it, never fits in, but it's always lurking around sort of a thing, just mocking, reigning, ridiculing. And here Paul, he looks there and he says, listen, if you want to know a victory in your life, there's got to be that sense of battle.

You know, we'll go to war on the other side and we will lay our life on the line in war. We will do many things that are worthy things so where whatever we got to do, we'll do it. We can put our foot down a lot of ways in our life, but Paul says, until you do that over sin.

I think one of the reasons the Christian world today is in as much trouble as it is, is we have given up on sin. We just, we just live with it. We just tolerate it.

It ridicules and mocks and hangs around all of our lives so many times so easily. And we kind of took a few shots at it. We were upset and Lord, take it away.

And Lord, I'm sorry about this. And we can still let it dance around. It still has a place in our life.

We can go on for years and we can be angry at our wife, angry at our husband. We can have tempers, we can have desires, we can have a lust, we can have, you know, something towards pornography. But well, I mean, it embarrasses me.

And it, yeah, and I, God, I wish you could take this stuff away. And I, and the way I am towards my children or the way I am in this area of my life or that, we look at it and we, we, you know, we get upset and we want to shoo it away. And it, and when it ridicules us and it mocks us, but oftentimes nothing rises up to where we know what it is to be up all night long before God, weeping over it or longing or going to battle.

Lord, this is not going to rain in my life. I wanted something transformed within me. You tell me it's so in heaven.

I want it on earth. Let not sin therefore rain. This is his concept.

That we look there in the Christian life. I think one of the reasons the way the church today, we were so lukewarm. We're so user friendly.

We just kind of given up and oh, well, let's just all get together and love God the best we can. But we don't talk much about sin and going to battle against sin and really dealing with sin because we've almost given up on the topic. But here the Bible has, and then the Christian, the true Christian should never do that.

I should be one that with a great longing, if I want real victory in my life, that I reckon the old man to be dead. Jesus did an awesome job to get the job done. To do such a thing that I could be forgiven and I could, and my sin could be reckoned.

And it ought to be an awesome thing to my heart that I can enjoy the benefits of it. But it ought to be the noblest battle I would ever be in. The one if I say, oh, if man, if all go through this to fight for my marriage sometime when it's in trouble or to help this or to go to the ends of the earth for this or to go to put my life on the line here to fight this, how much more ought I be willing to be somebody that my foot goes down and I say, this is not going to rain within me.

And I think until we look at it this way, we'll be victimized by it and mocked by it. It'll hang around, it lurks around, and it ridicules and mocks and beats us down. But then he goes on, interestingly enough, and now with his next word, verse 13, he says, neither yield ye your members.

Now isn't this something? First he says, reckon yourself to be dead. And he said, now he comes back and he says, just to hit it again. He says, let not sin therefore reign.

I said, now yield. It's how you ever been to a carnival or something where you go and they give you one of these mallets and, you know, a head little pops up and you're supposed to hit it and then it pops up another, you know, you're just banging, you know, all over, you know, trying to see how many times you

can hit it in a minute or something. There's these little games.

It's like, you got it there, but as soon as you hit it down here, it's going to pop up. You're going to find another place where it can work. And then you knock it down here and it finds another place.

And the guy that's just going to hit it once is if sin. I'm just going to take a shot at it. If it doesn't come back, great.

But here the concept here, almost a lifelong battle potentially there of somebody that is determined. I'm going to reckon it dead, number one. Number two, I'm going to go to to battle with it with all my heart.

It is not going to reign as king in my life. I don't care how I've got to sit before God, what it is to weep and to pray that God help my marriage, help my home, my spiritual life, my walk. I'm toying and tinkering with it instead of with all of my heart longing for victory.

And when I long for it, as I would long for anything worth it in this life, this is the greatest longing in all the world. And then he goes on, he says, neither yield. Neither yield to it.

First you reckon it dead, then you don't let it reign. He says, neither yield. And you're wondering there, what do you have to do to finish it off? You remember, I remember as a kid, they used to have these monster movies, you know, that always had a sequel.

You know, it was like the blob. If you ever remember that, I remember that as a kid. Have you ever had this Martian ooze or something gets in, lands in the planet and it starts rolling around and everywhere it just gets bigger and bigger.

And then because it's destroying everybody and everything, they got to try to stop it, but they couldn't stop it. And the blob just gets bigger and bigger. It's rolling over houses, consuming, you know, anybody and everything as they did this back in the fifties or, you know, or something.

And somebody accidentally sprayed it with some, something cold and they realized cold stops it. And so they get the, you know, the, the whole world comes down on this blob and, you know, to freeze the thing. And this huge battle, this, the whole movie is trying to freeze this blob.

And then finally they freeze it. And then the biggest planes in the world come and pick this thing up and they're taking it to, you know, the North pole and dropping it there or something. But just as the plane takes off and at least this little teeny drop of ooze goes down and you realize sequel, you know, sort of, I mean, it's like, it's coming back.

There's another movie already in the works, you know, and, and here this is, I mean, Paul has this concept here in the sense there of a battle that yes, the sin is there, but you learn to fight it. And if you learn to fight it with all the heart, yes, there'll be sequels until you go to heaven. But if you learn the formula, then you just don't let it have a place.

Once you've had the great victory, it begins to realize, and you begin to take territory, but you'll still constantly have it around as this concept here. And because it kind of doesn't go away as a way of returning, even after you've reckoned it dead and it won't rain. I remember the morning that I came home that after this thing with the cat, it's about four 30, six 30.

I'm meeting with some fellows. I had a discipleship group, some men that I meet with. And I came in, I was beat to death, but I came in a few minutes late in there.

And, uh, but I was, I was proud, you know, I had died. This was a big thing to me. And I came in, of course, where you've been, you won't believe it.

I won big time. And I told him the story. And one of the guys, he's sitting there, I'll never forget Jimmy, his name.

He's looking at me and he says, wait a minute. What'd you do with the cat? And I said, Oh, I took it across the Santa Ana river. But I went on the other side of Norton air force base over there.

And I dropped it over there. He says, that's it. I said, yeah.

He said, Don, that cat is back home by now. He said, no, no, no. He said, yes.

He says, they, they know for sure that it's back. I said, no, they can't little their planes will hit it. I mean, it's got a river to go through.

It cannot do this. You know? And he says, yes, they do. And then I started hearing these stories.

The cat came back. Remember that old song, cat came back. They thought it was a goner back in the fifties, sixties.

And this guy, the whole song is about the cat coming back. No matter what he did, tried to get rid of this cat. Then he finally blew up the planet at the end of the song, but the cat came back, you know? And, but anyway, they say he gave me the record.

He had it and he gave it to me just to mock me. But a few nights later, I'm sitting there at the dinner table. It's very quiet.

And I'm sitting at the table. One of the boys says, dad, and Jean says, not now. And I said, what do you mean not now? She says, not now.

Nothing. Everything's fine. Not now.

Not now. I said, what's going dad? No. And I said, well, what is it? Tell me I got it.

What's going on here? Dad, the cat's back. No. They say, yes, it's back.

No. I said, honey, yeah, we, I'm sorry. We saw it.

And I had to go through the entire scenario again. I mean, the whole thing, you know, leaving the door open, towel and everything. It went through and it took me another couple nights to do it, but I already, I'd known victory in the past.

You see, I think the reason it got away from me a couple of times is this time I was definitely going to finish it. And then I made a deal with the Lord. All right.

If you just let me have it, I promise I won't kill it. I'll let it go in the fast lane, the freeway. And if you want to save it, that's your business, but I won't kill it.

I won't do it. But anyway, but here, this thing, I have, it took me another battle all over again, but I got it only this time. I took it a long way.

I took many, many freeways out towards Barstow from Redlands where I live. I do. I, and I literally dropped it, you know, in a, in a huge, you know, wash concrete wash, you know, that went off and I dropped this thing in and it starts treading up the wash towards Sacramento.

And I threw some rocks at it and get going, you know, and things. And it's this time I wanted all the distance I could possibly have between it and me. I wanted no way that cat can get back.

Well, this is sin. So Nate, when somebody there, you know, when you look there and realize I've made battle, but it's, it's, it's attempt to come back. Sometimes you see people for a time, they have a battle over one area or thing in their life, and then they just think it's gone.

But here he says, let not sin reign. And he says, neither yield. Don't ever yield to it.

Don't ever give into it. You know, and, and the thing is, true story. And it was several months later, I'm sitting there.

It's quiet at dinner again. True story. You got it.

I'm sitting there and when I'm no, no, don't tell me. And Gene said, yeah, it was back. I said, no, it can't be.

I couldn't believe it. A few nights later, there's a knock on our door. True story.

Knock on our door. I opened it up and there's a guy there standing with tears in his eyes. And he says, sir, he said, do you own a black cat? It was white on the front.

I said, why? You know, and he, and he said, well, the neighbors next to me told me it was yours. He said, I just came around the corner. And when I drove around the corner, the cat was in the street and I hit it.

I said, you did? And he says, it's dying. I don't know what to do with it. And so I go out there and there it is.

I mean, it's laying there, dying, right? And I'm looking at this thing. And as I get down near to it, the cat goes, the guy looks at me and he says, oh, it doesn't even know you. So I think it does, but I didn't go into it with him.

But ultimately Roman, Paul goes on in Romans eight and he says, mortify the deeds of the flesh by the spirit. But we'll get into that later. But the point of it is in closing night, I didn't get to yield.

We'll pick up yielding next week. But, but here he looks at you. He says, you want victory in the Christian life? Do you really want it? Do you want, do you want what Jesus fought in his entire existence? What he laid his life down for, what he was willing to pay his blood for, what he shed, you know, to cleanse and forgive and to atone and to present us, follow us and seat us in heavenly places.

And he looks at us to say, how desperately do you want it? Do you want it so much? So you'll believe it. You'll reckon it. So Jesus, you did love me that much and you did forgive me and you did cleanse me.

And there, you know, Paul, another place, he says, you know, you haven't even brought your own faith to sweating blood yet. You haven't even shed blood for your faith. But I suppose the greatest area where we do exhibit our real faith is sometimes that God wants us, I believe, to shed a tear.

He wants us to come in. Lord, I don't want this to rain. And if I sit up and I go through your word and I cry out, I want this transformed.

It mocks me. It ridicules me. I want it out of my life.

And it's not necessarily a two or five or a 10 minute little prayer or have somebody go, you know, a little thing as much as it's the great longing. And I believe when somebody longs for something like this, when they look there and I will, it's not going to rain in me. I'm determined whatever it is that to find the power and the sufficiency in Christ to be set free.

If I just call it a little habit, if I just call it, well, it's kind of my weakness and I just let it hang around. It will my whole life. Or I can look and say, this is sin and it breaks heaven's heart and it breaks my heart and it breaks other people's heart and it mocks me as a Christian.

And I want freedom. I want power. I want victory.

I want a transformed life in Jesus. And then he says, then rather than saying, Lord, now do this. He says, no, you, you get the, you, you get the, the ax.

You will put your head on the chopping block. You be, you know, reckon yourself to be dead in Christ. You let not sin therefore rain.

You come, not that it's by our power. It's already done. But he says, and then when you see it creep back, then when you see it begin to kind of come back around, he's, oh, I thought it was gone.

No, but I know who you are and I know how to deal with you. I've had victory over you before, and I'll have it again and again and again till I awaken his likeness. The battle will be over then, but not till then.

And when we look and say, this is victory, and then the great key, now yield. You got to be, if you don't start yielding, we'll look at that next time, then it'll be, that opens the door for things to come back. So there's the very positive.

But first he says, do you want freedom truly? Lord Jesus, how we thank you for your word. How we thank you for your love. And I thank you for the victory that you have battled for.

Your victory on the cross over sin, death, hell, and the devil. And the work is finished when you said finished. We are seated in you.

The old man is dead. We are risen in you. This is all done.

Now you look at us and say, now you, you reckon my love to be this great. You reckon my mercy to be this great. You reckon, you accept it.

Don't reason it, don't rationalize it, don't earn it. Just reckon, accept it. And then look with all your heart, when the old Hungarian language or behavior comes back, you look at the world you're in now and say, no, I won't talk that way.

I don't want that language. I don't want that behavior. It embarrasses me and those that have, in the family I've been adopted into.

I want this one with all my heart. Lord, I pray that you would, the church seems to have lost this. May we find it and may we be free.

May we know your victory in your power in Jesus name. Amen.

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