

Freedom From Sin - Part 3

by Roy Hession

The sermon emphasizes the importance of freedom from sin, the relationship between law and grace, and the need for repentance and holiness in our relationship with God.

Duration: 49:33

Scripture: Romans 6:1-6, Romans 6:17-20, Romans 6:22

Topics: "Freedom From Sin"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of presenting our bodies and members to either sin or God. He explains that our actions, thoughts, and words are all influenced by our minds, and we have the choice to yield to sin or to God. The preacher acknowledges that the gospel of grace justifies the ungodly and declares them righteous through repentance and faith in Christ. He also highlights the connection between grace and repentance, stating that when we do things we shouldn't do, we tend to avoid the light that exposes our deeds. The preacher praises God for leading the evening meetings and complementing the messages of grace in the morning with a focus on repentance.

Transcript

We're going to read the whole of this chapter and a few verses of the next. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, not only dead but buried out of sight.

That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man, that is the man of old, the man whose center was self, knowing that that man of old was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed.

I pause there. There's been interpretation put upon that very largely, that the body of sin is the end tale of sin, the last remains of sin, that that should be destroyed and wiped out. And upon that has been built the doctrine of a sanctification whereby the last remains of sinful tendency is extracted from us as you would a bad tooth, that the body of sin should be destroyed.

But if we look at it exactly what it says, it says this body of sin, the body belonging to sin. And when I'm away from God, under the name of sin, my body is sin's body. And God's purpose is that my body, as sin's

body, should cease to be, that it should become God.

So it is that sin's body should be allowed, because it is through the body that we sin. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that sin's body might be allowed, is more literally the word, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.

Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dies no more. Death have no more dominion over him.

For in that he died, he died unto sin once. But in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves 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 you should abed in the last. Neither yield ye, as you used to, 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.

For sin shall not have dominion over you. For ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey? I'm going to translate, you can put that as it really is. Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves slaves to obey? His slaves ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness. But God be fact, that ye were the slaves of sin, that ye have obeyed from the heart, that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

Being then made free from sin, ye became the slaves of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh. For as ye have yielded your members slaves to uncleanness, and to iniquity, unto further iniquity, even so now yield your members as slaves to righteousness unto holiness.

For when ye were the slaves of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What a lovely phrase. See how free, you were completely free from righteousness when you were the slave of sin.

You could be as free from sin as you were once free from righteousness. Extraordinary phrase, the way he had it put in it. For when ye were the slaves of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

What fruit had ye in those things? Well of your now shame. For the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become slaves to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Know ye not brethren, for I speak to them that know the law, how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth. But if the husband be dead, she is loose from the law of her husband.

So then, if while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress. But if her husband be dead, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress though she be married to another man. Wherefore my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of sin, that she should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin which were provoked by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held. Now that is quite clearly a mistranslation in our dear authorised version.

It isn't the law that's died. The literal meaning is, now we are delivered from the law, revised version, having died to that. It isn't the law that's died, it's we've died, like that husband, having died to that wherein we were held, that we should serve in newness of spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

Well, I feel more than normally, usually, inadequate in dealing with this passage. I feel I need to be taught so much about it myself, in understanding it, and in knowing it in experience. It isn't that it hasn't been much preached on, there's been so much said, and some of it has seemed to take away from the simplicity that ought to characterise our understanding of truth.

So we will depend upon the Lord and, well, I trust that he will have understanding given you even beyond what I may say. Now the first thing I want to do is to praise God for the wonderful way in which he's been leading in our evening meetings, and how they have complemented the messages of the morning. It's quite obvious to the most cursory observer that the emphasis in the morning, as we've studied this epistle, is on the grace of God, and that the emphasis in the evening has been upon repentance, and those two always go together.

Indeed, repentance is built in to grace. In a way, it isn't built into any other aspect. Grace requires repentance, even more obviously the law does.

Actually, law only asks you to turn over a new leaf. Grace asks you to turn back the past. You see, grace is God justifying the ungodly, declaring him to be right who admits he's wrong.

Who admits he's wrong? That's repentance. And there's a lot in that, admitting you're wrong. It's just not done like that.

How wrong? And in what matters? And on what occasion? And in putting it, and admitting it, is there something God wants you to do to put it right? Not that my restitution can be at peace with God. That's by the blood. But having got peace, it may well be necessary for me to make restitution, make apology, do something he may lead me to, to put it right.

And so it goes very much together. We've understood these days that the gospel is good news for bad people on condition they acknowledge they're bad. But that's not done like that.

Bad? In what matters? And on what occasion? And it's only brokenness that is really willing to admit that. It's only when you stand strict as a sinner that you appreciate this rightness with God, which is counted to the one who confesses it. I've often thought that that wonderful hymn we sometimes sing, Jesus Christ is made to me all I need, wisdom, righteousness, and power, is really the hymn, or the message of it, applies to the one who stands strict before God and sometimes is fellow without a stitch of righteousness.

He's shown up to be what he is, and that in his own acknowledgement. And in the very hour that he sees he's stripped of all righteousness, God says, now Jesus Christ is made to you all the righteousness you need. Grace only comes into play.

Grace is only seen when man is in the place of complete abasement. And so how wonderfully God's letters. I want to spend a moment emphasizing this wonderful combination of grace and truth.

Do you like to turn to John 1 14? Verse 17, rather. John 1 17. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

The contrast between Moses and Jesus. Law and grace. The law came by Moses and condemned the Bolivars.

Grace comes to point us to Jesus and the finished work. It comes to us from Calvary. But will you notice, it isn't only grace that's come by Jesus.

Otherwise that could be too sentimental. God's patting the sinner on the head, all right, no, no. It's grace and truth that's come to me from Calvary.

Truth being the truth about myself. When I look at the cross, I see what I must be, how foul I must be, how desperate my condition, if it needed that remedy to put me right. And I begin to see myself in the light of the cross.

Grace and truth. And God knows how to blend the mix. Sometimes you need more grace than truth.

You know too much about yourself. You're sighing and struggling. And if I keep on repenting, you'll never get peace.

You need the message of grace. Sometimes we know all about grace, we're singing about it, but it isn't working. Things aren't happening in our lives.

Do you know why? You and I need an extra big dose of truth. And it's amazing to see how the Spirit knows how to do it. Sometimes a gathering comes, everybody's praising, and then something happens.

Jesus comes in, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, and sin is judged. Only that grace like the manifest limit knowledge. And so it is, so God knows how to, how to give us the righted mixture of grace and truth.

But understand this. Truth is as much opposed to law as is grace. It's not minimizing grace for one moment.

As I said, the law says, turn over a new leaf, try and do better. Truth says, turn back where you are. In contrast to what law asks.

And you know, just to admit the truth is amazingly restful. Now, I want to, it occurs to me to bring you another verse on the same line, because this is worth something getting, getting hold of. In Genesis, in John, rather, three, verse twenty.

For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deed should be reprov'd. Is that clear? When a man's doing things he shouldn't do, when a man doesn't want the other Christians to know what, how he's been going on, he doesn't like the light, for the light shows up everything as it is. Certain types of fellowship are very full of light.

And somehow you find it of spotlighting. And you don't like those meetings. Everyone that doeth evil shuns the light, lest his deed should be discovered.

But everyone that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they're wrought in God. Now, you would have thought that the opposite to doing evil is doing good. That verse

twenty-one would have said, but he that doeth good cometh to the light.

It doesn't say that. What it says is he that doeth truth cometh to the light. In God's economy, the opposite on the human level to good, to evil, is not good.

The opposite to evil is truth. He says, now look, don't try and do good at the moment. Leave that for the moment.

What I want to do is to do truth. Oh, now, face it out, right to the bottom. And the man who's willing thus to judge himself in the light of God doesn't fear the light of fellowship.

He comes out into the light. He's done truth in the secret place before God. Therefore he that doeth evil hateth the light.

Now, to come to the light, but he that prepared to judge himself to do truth comes to the light. And that with a penitent sinner's testimony of what grace has done for him when he was prepared to do truth. Well, now we're taking quite a bit of time, but I think, I hope it's possible, in showing how God is giving us both grace and truth in these days.

And they're both come by Jesus. And as I say, doing truth is as much opposed to law as is grace. It's so restful.

Lord, I'm a flop. It's no good me striving. I'm just hopeless.

All right, that's it. Do truth. And then grace comes in and does for you what you can't do.

Instead of striving to be right, acknowledge how wrong you are. And peace comes, and Jesus comes, and takes over. And then things can happen.

And so there is that great admixture with grace, truth. And by the way, that same mixture is to be manifest in our relationships to others. God brings us grace and truth, and we're to manifest the same.

We're always thinking about manifesting grace. More about Jesus would I know, more of his grace to others show, and that's very important. But, is it in Colossians? I haven't looked it up, but you can.

Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt. Salt. The salty tang of loving challenge that can't tell a lie, and can't pretend everything is all right when it isn't.

It has sometimes been full grace to be truthful, and help a brother. And that's how our fellowship is to be. Always with grace, but seasoned with salt.

Only seasoned with it. Don't put too much on the dish. We'd all die.

You see, God only seasons grace with salt. You can't live on salt. And you can't live on mere exposure.

But that exposure is necessary for tasting the sweet grace of God. And we are said, called to be the salt of the earth. You see, our very presence would be a challenge to sin.

But, in the opposite, salt speaks of a different taste in contrast to truth. Well now, we're going to try and get a little further into Romans 6. You know the reason why. I'm a little frightened.

A little out of my depth. And yet, we're not going to have anything that isn't simple, because God's truth is simple. Now, when you address yourself to this chapter, Paul is facing a problem which is raised by the very gospel he's been preaching.

The gospel he's been preaching is of the grace, as he says, that justifies the ungodly. That declares him to be right, who confesses himself to be wrong. He's told us how God, for Christ's sake, and because of the blood of Christ, is pleased to impute righteousness, apart from works, to the one who repents and puts his faith in Jesus.

He's made it clear that he does this while we're still sinners. You're not accounted right with God when you've improved something. Even while you're a sinner, on the condition you fully acknowledge that thing, he's pleased to count you right with himself.

And then, too, this righteousness is imputed. It's not imparted. At least, the one he's speaking of, there's an impartial, imparting a much, but when he talks about this glorious initial great work of grace, it's an imputed righteousness.

It's reckoned. You impute motives to people which they may not have. And God imputes a rightness with himself to the believer which he hasn't got in himself.

And he does it while he's a sinner, but on this condition, he repents and acknowledges. And more than that, this rightness with himself is unconditioned, being justified, declared right with God, freely, gratuitously, by his grace. Now, that is the gospel that he's been proclaiming.

And whereas it certainly gives sinners a chance, opens up possibilities for a man like me, it raises problems. And the problem he is facing now in Romans 6 is how to secure practical, daily holiness under such a system. A man may say, well, that's how it is.

What I do, whether I act wrong or right, doesn't seem to matter. I'm reckoned right with God apart from woe. And if I do sin, I can always repent.

There's grace. And he recognized that fact. Shall we continue in sin, you might well say, that grace may abound.

And it wasn't merely a theoretical difference. It was something desperately practical. Because whereas it was only this message that could have brought hope to the pagan Gentiles, there were very disturbing movements in the early Church, where looseness was coming in.

And because of this very fact, it's great, it's all right. We talk about the Pentecostal Church and the Church of the Acts. It was not one bit better than the Church today.

You wouldn't have had three quarters of Paul's epistles if it had been a perfect Church. All his epistles, 75% of them are correct. Because of things going wrong.

And one of the things, Paul says to you, there are certain men crept in unawareness, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness. That was a very practical thing. They said, oh, it is wonderful, this thing.

You can commit adultery. It doesn't matter about sexual impurity. It's all right.

Under grace. Our relationship with God is unconditional. We can do what we like.

And so Paul really had to address himself to this. He knew it was happening all over Asia Minor. Mercifully, not everywhere.

Not in every person. But there was this movement, creeping in unawareness. There's no doubts about its origin.

It's of the devil. And they were of old ordained under condemnation. They turned the grace of God into lasciviousness, denying the Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ practically, if not theoretically.

They're denying him. And so he has to address himself to this problem. I would like to say, I'm sure those of you who lived with Paul, will know that there are two, there were two tremendous anxieties in his heart.

He has to combat these two all along. The one is law. All the time, these Judaizers, these supposed heathen Christians would dog his steps, come to the assemblies, and try and add law to grace, and thus destroy grace altogether.

And so many of his epistles are on that line. But there's another anxiety of his, and that's lucidness. Law and lucidness.

There's not an epistle in which he does not talk in very plain terms about impurity, and about practical relationships. He's counselling against carelessness. He has to show them that now they're saved by grace.

Grace commits them to a life of practical holiness, and quitting sin, and putting things right. It came to me only this morning, but those are the two big anxieties. All the time you see on the apostle Paul, law on the one hand, and the sixth stole grace, and keep grace to be grace, and yet he's concerned that grace should lead to lucidity.

And now he gives us his answer in Romans 6, to this great problem. Does grace lead to lucidity? Well now, we saw yesterday that he doesn't safeguard grace by tightening up on grace, by minimizing grace, by making the blessings of grace conditional on behavior. Whereas that might do some of us good, perhaps.

It would do others of us ill. It might challenge some, but it would make others this bad. Whatever answer he's got with it, you're going to be quite sure it's going to be consistent with grace.

Grace is still going to be grace, although holiness must be the result. He's not going to go back to the other rules. Now that is the normal way of doing it, I think, very often in our teachings.

Now praise the Lord, you're saved by grace. Now if you're going to be a successful Christian, we give them rules. We tell them what they must give up, or suggest things, and so on, and so on, and so on.

But then we're back to the paths of do, do, do. We've left that sweet place of done by Jesus on the cross, and as we try to do, we find we don't succeed. And we get back to the feeling that our peace with God is dependent on our doing.

As we don't do, we're condemned again, and we're under dominion of sin again, and the devil builds that great superstructure again that overshadows us. So the way of holiness must be and is consistent with

grace. Well now, in this passage, twice over, he states this problem and asks the question.

You notice it comes twice, virtually the same thing. In the first verse, shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? And then, in verse 15, he almost says the same thing again. Shall we sin because we're not under the law, but under grace? So he asks the question twice, and he gives two answers.

Now, the answer to the first is, he tells us, something has happened to us, which severs our connection with sin. He says, you have died to sin. How shall we that are dead to sin? Now, so often, if you have a revised version, you will notice that the tenses are changed consistently.

In many places, when he gives it in that part, you have done sin, you have sinned. Not in every place, but in certain places, where the authorised says, you have sinned, the revised rightly puts, you sinned. And when it says, you are dead, the revised says, you died.

For instance, in Romans 5, it says, death passed upon all men for all that have sinned. That might mean we have sinned, but it isn't literally that. The revised says, for all sin.

No, all sin. That sounds as if they all did it together. They didn't.

When did all sin? There were records of all sin. That's difficult to receive sometimes. Why should I be accounted a sinner because of Adam? But we've tried to deal with that.

Now here, it isn't, you are dead to sin, which would describe, perhaps, a condition that you say isn't as true as me. But you died. You have died.

You died to sin. When did I die to sin? When Christ died. Please turn the cassette over now.

Do not fast wind it in either direction. Enter that at the moment. Here is the method of rest.

Paul says, something has happened to you. Something is a fact for you. Now act accordingly.

Now the normal way would be, try and crucify the old man. Try and crucify your sinful penance. And when you've really done that, then you can regard yourself as having died to sin.

But that's law. Me trying to crucify the old man. Trying to get myself into a certain condition.

But Grace says, I tell you at the beginning, you have died to sin. You are in that condition. Now simply be what Grace says you are.

Now to see this method of Grace, perhaps, I mean, it's all over the New Testament. But perhaps you can see it the clearest in Ephesians 5 verse 8. This method of Grace. Ephesians 5 verse 8. Verse 7 it says, be not therefore partakers with these workers of darkness.

And then in verse 8, for ye were sometimes, at one time, darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. Walk as children of light. He doesn't say, now if you walk as children of light and give up sin and give up darkness, you will then qualify to be called a child of light.

No, he says you are that. By virtue of the fact the blood of Christ has cleansed you. You pass from death unto life by grace, you are a child of light.

As much as the blood can make you. Now simply be what you are. You are that even if you don't make it or succeed to be what you are.

You are that. Grace tells you. You no longer belong to the dead.

You have been translated from darkness to light. Now walk and be what you are. Now that is the method of Grace.

Grace is still Grace. Grace tells me what is done for me. Now be what you are.

Walk as a child of light. A child of light doesn't hide. Why don't you hide? Walk as a child of light.

You see, I am that. I remember Fred Barthes giving a talk once, he put on the blackboard, one line down the center, kingdom of darkness was written on one side, kingdom of life on the other. And he said if you receive Christ you belong to the kingdom of light.

But you can be, if you like, walking as a child of darkness. Belonging to one kingdom but walking in the other. And when I repent of that I come to be in experience what I always was by grace.

And I become consistent with my calling and grace. So I am that in any case. And whatever your experience is, you have done with Christ.

Now yesterday we tried to explain and give some illustration on what this business of dying to sin, having died to sin with Christ is and how it brings freedom. We thought of the illustration of the man who volunteered for another and when the substitute died, the one for whom he was a substitute was regarded by the Lord to have died to and therefore was free from any further obligation along that line. And then we saw the illustration of Daniel, illustrating I through the Lord dead.

He couldn't go into that pit anymore for that breach of the law of the means and purposes. He'd been there when he'd come out of there. He was free from the law.

And we saw that this question of dying, having died with Christ is simply an extension of the truth that Christ died for me. If he died for me, it's as if I died. If he paid the price that I was owing, it's as if I paid it.

And God records me to have paid it. No wonder he says he that is dead is free from sin. Payment God cannot twice demand.

First at my bleeding Saviour's hand and then again at mine. I've paid it in my Saviour, in my substitution. But he says that's not just a nice little theory.

A nice little way of putting it, you're going to take that theory. You have died with Christ to sin. You've paid the price.

You've finished. Jesus didn't have to pay it again. He says so.

In that he died, he died for sin once. His blood was enough. God I believe where sin is more.

And sands upon the ocean shore thou hast from all atonement made. You don't need to go again and do the job again. One debt, one shedding was enough.

They're free. And I can be free. I'm free.

Free from the law. Free from condemnation. Free from that superstructure.

No happy condition. Jesus is there. And there is remission.

Yes he says now that's that's the way you get free. But he said now you take that practically. God regards you as you yourself having died.

Oh there's so many implications. As we saw yesterday, one implication is he doesn't expect any any good from a dead man. The man who centers himself, God has judged him.

Ended him rather than mended him. His hopes for holiness are not from you. But from the Lord Jesus, whose life you share, who lives in you.

But then another implication, the one he seems to be dealing with mostly, is it how absolutely contrary to reason it is for you to play with that to which you're dead. Take your stand. This is something that I've been judicially severed from.

It's very interesting to note the three things he says about our Lord Jesus in Romans 6. He says he died, verse 3, in his death. He was buried, verse 4, he was raised from the dead. And God says I count all that as having happened to you.

I count you in my reckoning, that nice good man who's hoping for a piece of respectability is so hopeless and rotten that I've had to crucify him. Something's already happened. A lady went up to a preacher once and said would you please pray that I shall be nothing.

He says madam, you're that already. Take it by faith. It's happening.

And do you know this work of me being crucified is as much a finished work as my sins being put on Christ. If someone here repenting of their sins and coming to Jesus for the first time says oh God please put my sins on Jesus. God will say I won't.

You won't put my sins on Jesus. No I won't. Why not Lord? I've done it already.

Take it by faith that you're free. And the same way when a man is struggling with an old eye, and I remember the time years ago when God showed me the first, I was struggling with jealousy. It was supposed to be dead but it wouldn't lie down.

I couldn't suppress it. And I said oh Lord crucify, just eye, it's just eye trouble. I was an eye specialist.

I said I'll crucify him. And the Lord said I won't. You won't crucify this old depraved guy.

No he says done it already. Take it by faith. And I remember the morning when I took that by faith.

Relations to repentance. And I was reading there, the revised version. Not I am crucified, I have been crucified with Christ.

When was I crucified with Christ? That morning? No! Calvin, 1900 years ago. I took it by faith. And I began to act.

And I began to deal with every rising with it as a man who was just a prisoner coming out of prison. That's just prison. And he went back.

He did so in the name of the Lord. He came out again and I said that's great. You see? So dear one, you have.

You have. And this attempt to crucify the old man is trying to do what God's already done. He knows how to make it through.

He knows how to practically implement it. He says you've got to be what you are. You deal with these things as things to which you have died.

You repent those things as things have no part in you. There's no dominion over you. They didn't condemn you.

You repent quickly that this is finished. No part in this new life. This is the answer of grace to this thing.

How it is a pure holiness under grace. Grace says you have finished. Now act as if you had.

Act. Well, it says if you had, you had. Be what you are.

Then he says he was buried. And the same truth is written to us. Out of sight.

I don't know if it's a wonderful read to me when I'm so worried about myself. Really accept this again. I'm finished.

It's lovely to believe in your own judgment. It's lovely to believe that the sentence has already been executed on you. No more to go milling over that man who got already finished.

If he's tired of him, won't you rest from him too? Bury him. Out of sight. I suppose it's possible to be sort of trying to display one's holiness.

No, no. We don't want to see. We don't want to even see your wonderful struggles.

Our connection with that man of old whose self, whose center of self is legally determined. But then he says, Jesus was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. That too is written to us too.

God doesn't see me struggling, only having myself to allow. He sees me, if I don't see myself, united to Christ, like a branch to the vine, sharing his life. And he says, you have to see yourself, sir.

We're always seeing ourselves joined to the old man. Instead of joined to Christ. Now that is the great illustration that Paul gives us in Romans 7. It's the illustration that Paul gives us in Romans 7. I've given you two.

At least, yes, the one about the soldier, and even Daniel. That's a Bible story, but we've taken as an illustration. Now Paul himself gives us an illustration of this.

And he gives us the picture of a woman married to a husband. And she's bound to that husband by the law as long as he lives. If she shouldn't even live with somebody else, she'd be an adulteress.

And maybe he's a very unpleasant old man. She tries to improve him. Maybe you've heard the story of a little boy, and a visitor came to their home, and he asked the man, where was his wife? And he said, I haven't got a wife.

He said, well, who teaches you then? Who teaches you? Well, I guess this woman tried to teach the old man and improve the old man. But he wouldn't be improved. And she was bound to that old man.

Now, the law binds you to your old man. And he's a nasty old man. You try and improve the old man.

You try and teach the old man. But he's incorrigible. Oh, when shall I be free of this cruel cell, for how it strives within my breast.

You know, those hymns of sighing for deliverance. Oh, if only this old man could die and I'd be free. Jesus says it's happened already.

You have become dead to the law by the body of Christ. When Christ died, God says, I regard it as you have died. And you can come into freedom from that old man.

God regards you. He says, I want you to regard yourself as your first marriage as having been terminated by death. And you're free now to marry again.

To whom? To him who's raised from the dead. And there you have a consistent picture in scripture, haven't you? Of the child of God as the bride of Christ. And the result, fruit unto God.

The result of marriage is children fruit. And fruit comes when I learn to count on the fact that that old man, that man I love of old, who seems to be unimprovable, is where God's putting him. He is what God says he is.

And I cease to expect good from him. At the same time, I cease to let him operate. If he does, he may.

He's not eradicated. Back to where you were. You go back to the cross yourself and know this is part of that man that you crucified.

Of course, you won't be surprised if the old man proves himself to be what he is. You say, I thought he was improved to say these things come up again. No, that old man doesn't improve.

God's purpose is not to improve self, but to impart Christ. This is where we have the impartation. But it springs basically from our justification.

And so he gives us this first answer to his first question. We have to do two, three things. We have to know this fact.

We have to count on it in all its implications. If you look there, you'll see those three words, knowing. Verse six, knowing that that man of old has been crucified.

Secondly, reckoning. Verse 11, reckon, count on this fact in all its implications. Let not sin reign is he deferred.

And then the third is yield. The word yield doesn't mean a thing to me really. Some come and came to me, not here, but some other time, and said, thank you so much for letting me.

I see it all, the secrets in yielding. And that's become a cliché. I don't know what's meant.

Yield. Yield yourself. Not because it's wrong in the Bible, but because we've used it in a cliché way.

It comes all fresh to me when you see the revised version, which is present yourself, and present your members, present your body. You see, the body is that through which we sin. You think, thought, it's your mind, through your mind.

If you do wrong things with your hand, you go to wrong places with your feet. You speak wrong words, it's with your mind. And you can yield, present that body and its members to either one or the other, to sin or to God.

To sin, the central little word sin is I. God, do as you like. And I make a present of my touch to the place of a dreamer I like, and how unsavoury it all is. I make a present of my mind to sin.

Oh, I confess myself sometimes to have done that in the night preaching, to make a present of my mind, do what you like to do, get the pleasure out of it and go Have you done that? Oh, we've presented our members. And we are the slaves of it, the law binds us to it, says, that's you, that's you. You've got to take responsibility and accuses you.

And as we see, they've come under dominion. Huh? Being made free from sin. How? By what Jesus has done.

He's eradicated the foundation on which the building is built. The thing could topple out and as you repent, you've come into freedom right now. That's not enough.

You were the slave of sin, but you make free from sin. You now do another thing. You don't merely rejoice in the fact you're claiming to be, you make a present of those same members to God, to be his instruments for righteousness.

And he says, when you do that, you become a slave of the one to whom you possess yourself. You were a slave of sin, now you become a willing slave of God. It's another thing, he said, in one place he talks about being a slave of God, in another place he talks about being a slave of obedience.

That's a lovely thing. You see, you think you're a slave of God, no, no, to be a slave of God is to be a slave of obedience. Which means a willingness to repent, to break, to bow the head, not to answer, but to put it right, to judge it.

And grace, he says, now you have been liberated from the one master. Now from the ground of your heart, present yourself a slave to me. And the result is the fruit of the host.

I want to tell you, if you and I are willing to be slaves to Jesus, because we love the one whom we are there, because his grace has reached us, and I've become a slave to Jesus, without striving for holiness, I'll walk right into it. The man sees jealousy, he abandons that, sprinkles the blood of Christ upon his heart. He sees resentment, hastiness, dishonesty, and breaks.

He walks right into holiness, because he delivers from jealousy, puts it right, he delivers from dishonesty, delivers from resentment. He's not striving to be holy, he's just walking with his sabre, he's a slave of obedience, he breaks, breaks, breaks. And grace then produces tracts of authority.

That is the second answer to the second question. The first was, something's already happened. Act accordingly.

You have to act. Count on that. Refuse to let a dethroned monarch have any right over you.

Repent and take him, put him back where he belongs. And the second answer is, don't you know, to whom you present yourself for service, to obey his service, you are to whom you obey, and then if you're indignant, delineate all the blessed fruit that comes out of it. Well, this is Paul's answer to the problem of lucidity.

That grace would seem to give us life. Oh, grace has bonds upon us, which we love death. Sometimes we're tripped up, we know what to do, back we go.

And so praise the Lord for his simple way. Grace was never intended to lead to lucidity. Where there were such, where there were teachers, all the condemnation of the very preacher of grace, to abuse his sweet, precious grace by going on and playing with it, sometimes we do.

Oh, there needs to be a deep visit to the cross, judge it again. You can hardly believe that grace is there for your tears, and that very fact makes you love him more and want to go on, slave to obedience, and as we do that, bringing forth truth unto righteousness, unto hope. Lord Jesus, leave with each one of our hearts just that thought, that one impression you want out of many things that are said.

Forgive us for playing fast and loose with sin. Forgive us for abusing that grace. Forgive us by subconsciously thinking the very thing that Paul raised.

Lord, we not only need to be forgiven the sins we've committed, but to most of them have fought back. Lord, we thank you that grace tells us we're those that have been set free and settled from that old marriage, that we are married. We don't need to go through another wedding ceremony than that which took place when we first met the Epiphany.

We just need to count on the fact. Lord, forgive us on the one hand of paying and letting the old man operate, and on the other hand of trying to improve the old man. Save us from both these, Lord, as we see ourselves crucified already through you, already married to you, already with thy life in us.

Help us to count on thee and let me have thy way. We ask it in thy dear name. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, leave with us all forevermore.

Amen.

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