



**“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” (Romans 6:13).**

## **Sanctification Explained**

**Central Truth:** Spiritual union with Christ provides victory over sin.

**L421. Date:** September 1988. **Text:** Romans 6:1-7, 12-14.

**Topic:** Law: Of God; Sanctification.

Salvation means that the believer in Jesus is delivered from the penalty, the power, and the presence of sin. He is delivered from the penalty of sin (present and eternal separation from God) at the moment of conversion. He is delivered from the presence of sin when he goes to be with the Lord. He is delivered from the power (the dominion) of sin day by day as he lives in the Spirit.

Deliverance from sin is called “sanctification.” Deliverance from the penalty and presence of sin is *positional sanctification*. That comes because one's position is in Christ. Deliverance from the power (the daily control) of sin is called *experiential sanctification*. It is the experience of victory in Jesus in the midst of daily affairs. To be sanctified is to be set apart as belonging to God alone.

Romans 6 — 8 explains sanctification. Chapter 6 teaches that sanctification means that one lives a life of holiness. Chapter 7 teaches that sanctification means that one is delivered from obedience to law codes. Chapter 8 teaches that sanctification means that one lives a life indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The lesson comments which follow will review those three chapters, reaching far beyond the Scripture text of this lesson.

This study shows the scope of victory the believer has in Christ. It is a cause of rejoicing in the Lord.

## I. SANCTIFICATION MEANS A LIFE OF HOLINESS

Romans 6 deals with two questions concerning the lifestyle of the person who is a new creature in Christ Jesus.

**A. “*Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?*”** (Romans 6:1). The question arises because of the statement, “*Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound*” (Romans 5:20). Someone might ask, “If abundance of sin brings an abundance of grace, shall we keep on committing sin that God's grace will be the more obvious?” Paul replies, “*God forbid*” (Romans 6:2). He presents valid reasons why we must not continue to sin.

(1) We have died to sin. Union with Christ broke our bondage to sin (Galatians 5:24). Christian baptism, with its burial in water and raising again from water, pictures our death to sin and our new life in Jesus Christ. We share the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ by which the claim of sin on us is eternally broken (Romans 6:1-4). We who have died to sin can continue to practice it no more.

(2) We have a new life in Jesus Christ. The believer testifies, “*The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me*” (Galatians 2:20). The life of Jesus Christ is incompatible with a life of sin. Sin has no dominion over Him, so it should have no dominion over those of us who are in Him.

We have been raised to live a new spiritual life in Christ (verse 4). The old sin nature in us is dead because of our union with Christ; so, it has no more claim on us (verse 6). Having died with Christ, we now live His resurrection life (verse 8). Christ's atonement cancelled the claim of sin and death on us (verses 9, 10). What a reason for holy living!

(3) Sin has no more control over us because we are in Christ (verses 12-14). We can refuse to surrender the members of our bodies as instruments of sin, if we choose. We can surrender members of our bodies as instruments of righteousness, if we choose. Grace rescued us from sin; grace makes possible a lifestyle apart from sin.

**B. “*Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace?*”** Romans 6:15-23 answers that question. It is based on the statement, “*Ye are not under the law, but under grace*” (verse 14).

The first question was, “Shall we continue in sin as our lifestyle?” The second question is, “Shall we commit occasional acts of sin without it being our lifestyle?” In both instances the answer is an emphatic “*God forbid*” (verses 2, 15).

(1) Slavery attends obedience. To yield to the reign of sin in the life is to become the bondsman of sin (verse 16). The child of God and servant of

Christ must not be a slave to sin.

(2) The believer was changed in conversion to Christ. He who was the servant of sin was made free and has become a servant of righteousness (verses 17, 18). What a miracle! A bondsman of sin has been set free (that is what redemption means!) as a child of God. The doctrine of salvation in Christ brought that freedom (Romans 1:16). He serves righteousness with great profit now as he served sin with great loss then. That is the difference Jesus makes.

(3) Live in the light of what you have become (verses 19-23). Remember the principle of lordship, and serve Him who is your Savior and Lord (verse 19). Remember the shame which sin produced and the joy which righteousness produces (verses 21, 22). "Sin is a sovereign (verse 21) who demands military service of his subjects, levies from them a quota of arms (verse 13) and gives them death as their soldier's pay (verse 23)" (Lightfoot). How much better it is to serve Jesus!

Look back over Romans 6. It teaches that we can neither live in occasional acts of sin nor in the repeated practice of sin, if we would be true Christians. Jesus has delivered us from sin. We can live a life of holiness to the glory of God and the good of our souls. Do not argue with that blessed truth. Holiness is possible in your life. *"Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord"* (Romans 6:11), and live like a Christian.

## **II. SANCTIFICATION MEANS A LIFE OF FREEDOM FROM LAW (Romans 7:1-25)**

Many people are bound by rules of religion: "If I do this, God will not love me." "If I fail to do that, God will not bless me." What bondage! We have been set free from rules and regulations in Christ Jesus. We are no more under law codes to gain approval of God than is Jesus.

**A. The believer is free from the law** (Romans 7:1-6). Law has dominion over a person only as long as he lives. But at conversion the believer entered into the post-resurrection life of Jesus. He has died, taking away the ordinances of the law and nailing them to His cross (Colossians 2:13, 14). The life we live now is a life freed from rules and regulations. We have died to the law to be united to Christ (verses 4, 5). We are free now to live and serve in the new life of the Holy Spirit, not in the old life of obeying rules (verse 6). Think how that applies to you personally, and rejoice in it. Jesus has set you free!

**B. The sinner is convicted by the law** (Romans 7:7-13). The great

purpose of the law is to reveal sin (verse 7). It is like a mirror which shows the dirt on a man's face but is helpless to cleanse it away. The presence of a prohibition by the law arouses sin to demand its satisfaction (verse 8). A "No Smoking" sign reminds the smoker how long it has been since his last cigarette and how he would like to have another. The law is pure, demanding holiness before God, but it brings condemnation to the sinner who is impure (verses 12, 13). Why would one who is delivered from sin need the law to continue its ministry? He does not. The life of the believer is a life of freedom from law.

**C. The believer is free in Jesus Christ** (Romans 7:24, 25). He who cries out, "Where can I find deliverance?" will hear the glad response in the gospel, "*through Jesus Christ our Lord*" (Romans 7:25).

The law was a guide to direct sinners to Jesus Christ in whom they can find forgiveness (Galatians 3:24). When one has met Christ, he needs the law no longer. Let no Christian put himself under bondage to rules and regulations when he has been set free in Jesus. "*Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. . . . If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed*" (John 8:32, 36).

"Free from the law, O happy condition,/Jesus hath bled, and there is remission;/Cursed by the law and bruised by the fall,/Grace hath redeemed us once for all" (Philip P. Bliss).

### **III. SANCTIFICATION MEANS A LIFE INDWELT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT (Romans 8:1-39)**

The Holy Spirit is the key to Romans 8. He is mentioned twenty-one times in that chapter, more often than in any other chapter in the Bible. That is why the chapter is filled with victory and joy. It begins with "no condemnation" and ends with "no separation," and all in between is "no defeat." The teaching of sanctification as a life indwelt by the Holy Spirit is gathered under four great principles in the chapter.

**A. The Christian life is a life of victory** (Romans 8:1-13). There is victory over sin. "*What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*" (Romans 8:3, 4). We do not have to keep the law in order for its righteousness to be met in us; we must trust Jesus.

Victory over sin guarantees victory over death since "*the wages of sin is death*" (Romans 6:23). Death is conquered for the Christian because the

life he lives is the life of Christ (Galatians 2:20) and Jesus never dies again (Revelation 1:18). Oh, victory in Jesus!

**B. The Christian life is a life of sonship** (Romans 8:14-17). Sonship is assured the believer by two things: the leading of the Spirit of God and the witness of the Spirit of God. Divine sonship has great privileges, one of which is to be an heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ. That means if you are a Christian, you are able to enjoy all the blessings God has given you in Jesus. Think about that!

**C. The Christian life is a life of hope** (Romans 8:17 -30). So assured is our hope that it persists through deepest troubles here on earth. It looks past the sufferings to the glory ahead and rejoices. The eager expectation strengthens us in trouble. We look constantly to the inheritance which awaits us in glory.

**D. The Christian life is a life of assurance** (Romans 8:31-39). Five great principles undergird our assurance. (1) Verse 31 says that God is for us. (2) Verse 32 promises that God provides for us. (3) Verse 33 announces that God justifies us. (4) Verse 34 testifies that Christ died for us and is now interceding for us. (5) Verses 35-39 assures us that God loves us forever. What greater ground for assurance could one desire?

Look back over the material we have surveyed in this study. The Christian life is a life of holiness, a life freed from restraints of codes of law, and a life indwelt by the Holy Spirit. That is your life in Christ today. Live it!

Praise the Lord for His provisions. He brought us out of sin (salvation) and into holiness (sanctification). We are set apart as belonging to God (positional sanctification) at our conversion. We grow in the likeness of Christ (experiential sanctification) as we mature spiritually day by day. Having been sanctified, we live today as saints of God!

## Questions

1. What is salvation?
2. What is sanctification?
3. How do you explain positional and experiential sanctification?
4. Why is the Christian life a life of holiness?
5. How does Romans 6 teach that we are to live holy lives?
6. What does it mean to you that the believer is free from the law?
7. What does it mean to be indwelt by the Holy Spirit?
8. How does one know that the Holy Spirit dwells in him?
9. What assurance do you get from Romans 8:31-39?

10. How can you live more like a saint of God?