

SERMON

Justification: Love Slaves Fight To The Victory

Good Morning OIC.

Today , I want to us to see how Romans 6 teaches us to understand more about what it means to be united with Christ. But first, I will begin by reviewing a point from my message last Sunday quoting from (Romans 6.4) *Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.* Christians can consider or reckon themselves as having died to sin. **Reckoning or considering ourselves buried with Christ and dead to sin, by faith, is a great weapon against a Christian's old nature. When it makes noise in our hearts, we need not obey it. The Holy Spirit will enable us to believe we have died to sin, and therefore how can we { or why should we} continue to live in it.**

Rom. 6.5 *For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection.*

Paul points to our future, as far off as only God knows in time. *Likeness of His resurrection* means our resurrection from the grave. What does being like the resurrected Jesus look like? We see what we will become by the words of God's angel in (Revelation 2.18):

“And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this:

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. As we read what God has promised all Christians in (1 John 3.2) !

How foolish we Christians often seem to be when we cower at Satan's influence in Japan. An experienced pastor friend of ours in Japan told us, when we ministered in his church during our first visit to Japan: “The devil shakes with fear every time a Christian lands in Japan!” He told us this fact to prepare us for what he knew was coming, spiritual warfare as we aimed for Japan. I believe that the devil realizes better than we, what we already are, “*children of God,*” and what we soon will be, “*Like Jesus.*”

Romans 6.6 -7 *... knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; 7 for he who has died is freed from sin.*

Now Paul reiterates that a Christian has been buried with Christ. This , as (Romans 6.4 above) , makes a powerful teaching for Christians when sin starts to overtake them. Because our old self has been crucified with Jesus, *our body of sin can be done away with.* It is important also that Paul never taught that Christians must always be stoic regarding life in this world, as he said *body of sin* and not **our physical body.**

Jesus had been accused of being a drunkard as he drank wine in the typical Jewish cuisine.

The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, Behold, a Man Who is a glutton and a wine drinker, a friend of tax collectors and notorious sinners.

He even created wine from water at a wedding feast. In (Luke 2.7-9),

*7 Jesus *said to them, "Fill the water-pots with water." So they filled them up to the brim. 8 And He said to them, "Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it to him. 9 When the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew) .*

Today we need to remember that the Holy Spirit is **not a spirit of gnosticism**. **Gnosticism / Gnostics believe that God is Spirit and holy, but that all things not purely spirit, all physical things, including human bodies, are evil. Therefore, they refuse to accept that Jesus came in the flesh, a human body.**

The Apostle Paul, the mentor for Timothy the pastor, was concerned about Timothy's instructions to the wealthy in the church. He instructed Timothy in (1Timothy 6:17/AMPC) *As for the rich in this world, charge them not to be proud and arrogant and contemptuous of others, nor to set their hopes on uncertain riches, but on God, Who richly and ceaselessly provides us with everything for [our] enjoyment.* God still has kept some blessed things from the Garden of Eden in everyday life to bless Mankind, and especially His Born-Again Children.

Slavery to men is a terrible thing in today's world. Slavery to sin, is even worse! This evil master wants to eat away at your spiritual Life in Christ....Life itself. God has provided the **faith to master that villain, sin, consider our body of sin dead.**

When I was a young boy my Mother did telephone answering work for my uncle when he went on vacation with my aunt. His business phone might ring day or night, so she had to live in their apartment. I stayed with my Mother as I was too young to take care for myself ; and my dad worked about 60-70 hours most weeks. The reason the phone rang day and night was that my uncle was a *Funeral Director or undertaker*. Of course I loved my Aunt and Uncle's huge apartment to play in. I would drive my toy cars and trucks all over, even down to the office where a secretary sat typing. I was welcomed by the staff. Well, one day I drove my little toy into an open room with a dead man, a corpse, laying on his back on a table. "That is a dead man, I said to myself. I guess I would be disrespectful to drive my toy here." **A side NOTE:** Children don't fear many things, even dead bodies, until their parents teach them to fear. **BUT:** My main point today is that the dead man wasn't bothered at all that I drove my toy car near him. If someone offered him an illegal drug, he would not take it. If pornographic pictures were placed before his eyes, he would not commit the sin of lust. He Was Dead..and so are we *by faith*. As Paul says next in (Romans 6.7) *...for he who has died is freed from sin.* My fellow Christians, you, with Holy Spirit help, can be just as dead to sin as that man I saw as I played with my little cars in my uncle's Funeral Parlor.

TAKEAWAY #1

Living for Christ enhances God's temporal gifts as we live holy lives. We can consider ourselves dead to sin, our old self, our sinful nature, truly as dead to sin as a corpse in a funeral parlor. This may require some prayer for God's help, but knowing that this is a promise for Victory encourages us that God will cause it to happen.

This is a wonderful truth for winning victory over sin in or life because we are united with *the dead Christ before He was resurrected*. Even more wonderful is our glorious future, and that we are united with the *resurrected Christ*. Reading (Romans 6.8 &9) **8** *Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him.* **9** *Knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him.*

We are already living with Jesus by the indwelling Holy Spirit. When we accept that we died with Jesus by *faith*, we may *believe that we shall also live with Him*.

Reading v.10 *For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.* I like the details added in the “Amplified Bible Translation” (AMPC) **10** *For by the death He died, He died to sin [ending His relation to it] once for all; and the life that He lives, He is living to God [in unbroken fellowship with Him].*

Jesus is alive! Other man-made religions have dead leaders...ours is Alive and Wellforever! *He lives to God...*and God loves us with infinite love, a love better than physical life. As the Psalmist wrote: in (Psalm 63.2-4/ AKJV)

2 *to see thy power and thy glory,*

so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.

3 *Because thy lovingkindness is better than life,*
my lips shall praise thee.

4 *Thus will I bless thee while I live:*

I will lift up my hands in thy name.

Jesus has unbroken fellowship with God, and so can we. Because we , of course, are not yet *sons of God*, our unbroken fellowship depends so much on God's calling us back to a closer walk with Jesus. But, it is still teaching to live by *faith to faith* to say that unbroken fellowship is most experienced by those who want it the most. It is truly a gift from God to want *more of Jesus*. This is confirmed by (1Chronicles 16.11/ AMPC) **Seek the Lord and His strength; yearn for and seek His face and to be in His presence continually!**

There is an old hymn called *Satisfied* with the words:

Hallelujah I have found Him ,

Whom my soul so long had craved,

Jesus satisfies my longings,

By His Blood I now am saved.”

This hymn expresses the deep sense of being satisfied after a sinner finds Jesus. **Actually, He found us.** Knowing that makes the *satisfaction even more full of joy*. But, the desire to have unbroken fellowship with our Lord means a different kind of seeking Him than before we were born-again. It is truly a desire for unbroken fellowship with our Lord Jesus. It has no sense of fear of punishment, but as a spouse or wife desires her husband.

In (Song of Songs 7.10) *I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me.*

And, in the Newer Testament in (Ephesians 5.31 quoting Genesis 2.24) :

31 *FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. 32 This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.*

As a good teacher, Paul now repeats the summation , shown to us by with the phrase: *Even so*, of the last sentences in his Letter to the Roman Church (**Romans 6.11**) : *Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

TAKEAWAY#2

Christians need not be stoic, self mutilating people in order to crucify their old sinful nature. Holy Spirit is not a Gnostic spirit.

DEATH TO SIN- VICTORY OVER OUR OLD EVIL NATURE -

ALIVE IN CHRIST – ACCEPTING JESUS LOVING US AS HIS ESPOUSED BRIDE, SOON TO HAVE A COMPLETED MARRIAGE CEREMONY IN HEAVEN.

Now for (Romans 6.12) let me refer to my illustration in my last message (Romans 5.11-6.5) titled, *Justification: Friends with God*. “My analogy of two citizen-ships and two Kings fits , that is, {King} Adam, by one sin caused death to rule over many , {his citizens in sin}. But King Jesus, by one act of Righteousness (His Cross) now rules to bring to His citizens { the Church} *the gift of righteousness, triumph over sin and death, right relationship with God, and new life.* In our right relationship with God, 'He calls us friends.'”

(Romans 6.12) *Therefore do not let sin **reign** in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, **13** and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.*

Here the keyword, *reign*, forces or begs the question...”Who is your KING?”

Is it sin (King Adam) or righteousness (King Jesus of Heaven and Earth). Although our sinful bodies which must die as the result of our sins , the activity of our sinful bodies can still be holy living. We have a choice to exercise our wills over our physical bodies for **the King that reigns** in our physical - here on Earth - mortal bodies! We need Holy Spirit, the Helper God gave us, to assist us; but, Paul makes it clear that it is **our responsibility** to chose King Jesus over sinful desires or lusts. This responsibility is the simple **response of love** to Him who died for our forgiveness, our *justification*.

Instruments of unrighteousness or righteousness...Similarly I will make a few examples of instruments.. Instruments such as a knife may be used to prepare a meal or to heal in the hands of a skillful surgeon. This same instrument is frequently used for murder.... Or the musical instruments including the human voice: Our worship team makes music pleasing to Jesus. We need not look far away to hear vocal music filled with perverse and sinful words. Every member of our physical body is now intended to be an instrument for God's Glory.

Romans 6.14 *For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.* In the original Greek language as written by Paul, *master over you* has the word **kyrieuō** from the word, **Kurios** or **LORD**.

We should now recall that Satan had possessed the snake to tempt Eve to take a fruit from the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil* and **thus bring sin into the world (Genesis 3.3-4)** **3** *Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?"* **2** *The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; 3 but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'"* **4** *The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die!*

Choosing sin to be your King and Master, is not only choosing "King Adam" but actually is **choosing Satan, that Serpent of Old, to be your lord!** I am confident that this was in the mind of God and Paul when he instructed Roman Christians to not let sin **reign (Romans 6.4)** or **be your master or LORD (Romans 6.14)** Ever since Jesus appeared Satan is in a jealous struggle against God to get sinners and even Christians to submit to him as "Lord!!!!".....

Next, Paul encourages the Romans that they shall win this victory over sin. His confidence in them, as for himself, is that the fearful consequence of breaking the Law of God did not bring salvation. Being under *grace not Law*, has a mental effect of freedom of choice, to chose righteousness. Being under Grace not the Law also has allowed us to receive our Divine Helper, Holy Spirit, assisting our decisions with His Almighty power. These words in v.14 are words of "Confidence in Jesus!"

Romans 6.15-16 **15** *What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!* **16** *Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?*

Thus, as previously in his letter, Paul repeats his exhortation or encouragement against any excuses to chose to sin! The willful presenting of ourselves to sin is actually presenting ourselves to Satan as our "Lord." Why is this so? Because willfully choosing to be *slaves to sin* makes us more vulnerable to Satan's control, though still Children of God and kept by His Love. Again, God sees the heart to please Him, not the weakness of our being soldiers to crucify our sinful desires, nor waging battle against Satan, the Adversary. But, as I like to preach, "PRAYER IS THE VICTORY."

God will cause us to have *obedience resulting in righteousness* as we continue to pray earnestly to present

our mortal bodies to Jesus our Lord, and as we desire constant fellowship with Him.

Romans 6.17 *But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, 18 and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.*

Paul wisely, as Holy Spirit breaths the Word of God into him, turns our **focus** back to God away from our weaknesses and sin.

But thanks be to God The word, **But**, shows this intent and priority in Justification leading to our Glorious Future. It is usually a weak word in English, not so in Greek. It conveys a **turn of focus** important to correct theology and truth.

Thanks be to God. It is God who gave us new hearts when we believed in Christ's Cross for our forgiveness, *justification*. Holy Spirit caused our hard hearts to soften, so we could repent, and obey **from the heart** the Good News of Jesus by believing it. God has not gone on **VACATION after that glorious day of re-birth**. He continues to be active through our Lord Jesus in all and every part of our lives. Thus we can trust His Help by Holy Spirit to live as **having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness**.

Reading together Romans 6.19 ... The apostle sounds almost arrogant in the NASB version. He loudly often proclaimed as in (1 Corinthians 15.10) *But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.*

The amplified version catches his true attitude as God's servant :

(Romans 6.19 /AMPC) 19 *I am speaking in familiar human terms because of your natural limitations. For as you yielded your bodily members [and faculties] as servants to impurity and ever increasing lawlessness, so now yield your bodily members [and faculties] once for all as servants to righteousness (right being and doing) [which leads] to sanctification.*

What can we be more familiar with than our own flesh and blood, our body parts, if you please? I like how the Expositor's Bible Commentary (EBC) exposes this verse's true intent:

“After all, Christians { in Rome } have just come from lives characterized by slavery to "impurity" and "ever-increasing wickedness." The readiness and zeal with which they once served sin now become the basis for a challenge. Surely the new master is worthy of at least equal loyalty and devotion! That new master is not described in personal terms but in personified terms of righteousness and holiness—a lifestyle demanding one's complete attention.”

As I had also mentioned above, where I connected the two opposite moral choices of unrighteousness to righteousness as the Old Master -Satan to the New Master – Jesus. We easily forget how perverted early Rome was in the pagan world. Paul was reminding the Romans in Romans 1 of this. He is speaking with God's compassion, not arrogance, when he considers their recent deliverance from that life as expressed in this EBC quote.

...resulting in sanctification (v.19) Sanctification means having a life style set apart from the world and for the Lord Jesus. Born-Again Christians have changed at re-birth and will continue to change as they follow

Jesus.

(Romans 6.20-21) *20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. 21 Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death.*

..free in regard to righteousness Paul uses an idiom or a change of perspective or view for a direct opposite to Christian behavior. This reversal of desires is to get the message clearly in our minds. When sinners lived in sin, they had no thought nor cares regarding righteousness, or the Lord Jesus, the Saviour of all who will believe in Him. They had *felt carefree*, in fact, as is often the case. But feelings are often deceiving. They were slaves of sin and Satan who kept them feeling safe in sin as they rushed towards Hell. Paul knows that Christians often feel the pull back to the sins that *felt so good*. He emphasizes the current shame for these sins, and the *outcome of sins { as an accepted way to live} is {spiritual} death*.

(Romans 6.22) *But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.*

That wonderful word “But” turns us away from *death* to the reality of “*now*.”

Unlike earlier when Paul was speaking to an imagined Jewish heckler or objector of the Gospel, these chapters address the Roman Church as “you.” When he wrote of Water Baptism, he used the pronoun “we.” Thus he was clear to identify his gifting as Teacher, Apostle, Prophet, Pastor as from God to a former sinner. His confidence in his salvation shines bright in this letter, and especially with the “*But now*.” The next phrase - “*freed from sin and enslaved to God*.” Redefines freedom as being Slaves to the God who is LOVE. **Christians are “love slaves” with something worth fighting for: A Life on Earth close to Jesus and a Glorious Entrance into Heaven forevermore.**

(1 John 4.8) *The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.* Contrary to sin, this relationship as “Love slaves” of God causes Christians to receive benefits which result in *sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.*

TAKEAWAY #1

Living for Christ enhances God's temporal gifts as we live holy lives. We can consider ourselves dead to sin, our old self, our sinful nature, truly as dead to sin as a corpse in a funeral parlor. This may require some prayer for God's help, but knowing this is a promise for Victory encourages a prayer that God will cause it to happen.

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TAKEAWAY #3

Despite our battles against inner sin and outside demons, Jesus justified us by His Sacrifice. We can now praise our Great Redeemer Jesus as we are freed from sin. We can freely chose to be God's Love Slaves. His Holy Spirit will continually enable us to live a life pleasing to God , sanctified or separated from the sinful world with our glorious outcome , Eternal Life. Christians are “love slaves” for God with something worth fighting for: A Life on Earth close to Jesus and a Glorious Entrance into Heaven forevermore.

The next hymn sung by our Worship Team wonderfully declares Charles Wesley's desire to Praise Jesus for his salvation. Let's sing in agreement to that,Church!

O For A Thousand Tongues

Let Us Pray:

Our God is so gracious and powerful hat I want to encourage all of us to ask God our Father in the Name of Jesus Christ His Son for a Glorious Entrance into Heaven!

REFERENCES

{ } - Pastor Bruce's added notes for clarity

AKJV - Authorized (King James) Version KJV reproduced by permission of Cambridge University Press, the Crown's patentee in the UK.

AMPC - Amplified Bible, Classic Edition

EBC - Expositor's Bible Commentary (Abridged Edition): New Testament

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OED – Oxford English Dictionary, Oxford University Press