

Died To Sin

(Rom 6:2)

- Remember Paul's context in this section is the assurance of justification by faith
- I. Rom 6:2- This is actually the complete answer to the question of Rom 6:1
 - A) Paul answers the question of v.1 (as well as the charge against him – Rom 3:8) with his usual reply: God Forbid (certainly not, don't even suggest it)
 - 1. Rom 6:3-14- Paul then works out the details of his answer
 - B) A proper understanding of v.2 is the foundation of understanding sanctification
 - 1. If we go wrong here, we will struggle with the remainder of the epistle
- II. "We"
 - A) Paul uses a double statement of the pronoun here
 - 1. "We, we who died to sin," or "how shall we, we mind you, who died to sin live...."
 - B) The emphasis here is on the position or relationship of the "we" in question
 - 1. Rom 5:12-21- The "we" are those united in Christ by relationship
 - i. If we truly realize what we are, then the question is absurd
 - ii. Can a woman just married now go on as if she were unmarried?
 - iii. The person that asks such a question has not understood Rom 5:12-21
- III. "That are dead to sin"
 - A) This is in the aorist tense- "we that died to sin"
 - 1. Aorist tense points back to a single event in time
 - 2. "Are dead" is a description of present condition
 - i. Yet we aren't "dead" but "alive in Christ"
 - 3. "Have died" could describe a process that occurred slowly over time
 - 4. The same aorist tense occurs in v.6,7,8,10,11
- IV. What does "died to sin" mean?
 - A) 5 different common interpretations
 - 1. Christian is now completely unresponsive to sin
 - i. Just as a dead body can longer react to stimulus
 - a) J. B. Phillips in his paraphrase at v.7 & 11
 - b) This is Wesley's "perfectionism"
 - ii. This takes the verb tense correctly, but goes against the teaching of the N/T completely
 - a) 1 John 1:7-8- "If we say we have no sin, we lie"
 - b) If true, why would Paul write Rom 6:11-13?
 - c) This interpretation wrestles mightily with Rom 7
 - 2. Christian should/ought to die to sin

- i. This takes the wrong verb tense
- ii. This is the Keswick system
- iii. It is correct to exhort Christians not to sin, Paul does so in this very chapter, but that is in no way a point of assurance of salvation which is Paul's context in this section
- iv. This is the "crucify the old man" teaching most commonly held
 - a) No man can crucify himself
- 3. Christian is dying to sin day by day
 - i. This takes the wrong verb tense
 - ii. Sanctification is certain and true, and a true Christian will be more consistent and effective at resisting sin at the end of life than the beginning, but this isn't Paul's context
 - iii. Sanctification is not by "increasingly dying"
 - iv. Why would a person "dying more to sin each day" even ask such a question about sinning more?
- 4. Christian cannot do that which he has renounced
 - i. This is the view of Charles Hodge
 - ii. It takes the correct verb tense
 - iii. Hodge says, "A man that is a Christian is a man that has renounced sin and its horror, and no longer desires to live under it, therefore he could not ask this question"
 - a) Hodge brings in baptism here (v.3-4) and says, "how can we who have renounced sin and come forward for baptism live any longer in sin?"
 - iv. True repentance is a renouncing of sin, but once again, this is not in line with Paul's context of assurance
 - a) Remember it is the teaching of Rom 5:12-21 (relationship to Adam or Christ) that has produced this objection of v.1
 - 1) Paul is not referring to something "we do" but to something that is "done to us"
 - b) Hodge was in fear of being called antinomian, but remember, that is the charge being laid against Paul, so the true doctrine must lend to it
- 5. Christian has died to sin's guilt
 - i. This is Robert Haldane's teaching
 - ii. Takes the verb tense correctly
 - iii. This is certainly true, but it doesn't take sanctification into view at all
 - a) Remember Paul's question is concerning "continuing, or going on from here"
 - iv. This is the view of antinomianism

- B) Correct interpretation- Paul is not referring to something we do that assures us of the finality of our salvation, for if it rested upon our “doing” we would have no assurance
1. He is talking about something that is done to us once and forever
 2. The key to this verse is the “we, we” (position/relationship)
 - i. We who what????
 - a) “We who have died to the REIGN of sin”
 - 1) The Lord’s death has brought the reign of sin to an end for every single believer
 - 2) This is what Paul has worked out in Rom 5:12-21
 - ii. What is the “reign of sin?”
 - a) Its power, its grip, its realm, its sovereignty, its rule over us
 - iii. How are believers delivered from the reign of sin?
 - a) By being removed from its realm and translated into the realm of a new King and new reign
 - 1) The reign of grace and its power, its grip, its realm, its sovereignty, its rule
 - 2) The moment we are justified, we are become dead to sin’s reign by the knowledge and belief of a new reign
 - (a) By faith we enter into the position of a justified man in our minds, trusting what God has already performed on our behalf
 - (b) Thus Paul’s emphasis in these passages in in “knowing”
 3. “As a result of our union with Christ in His death and resurrection, that old life of sin in Adam is now past for us also”- JMB
 - i. “Died (dead) to sin” appears in v.2, 10, 11 in same form
 - a) Yet v.10 refers to Christ and is the example we can take
 - b) How did Christ “die to sin?”
 - 1) He suffered its penalty (this is died “for” sin)
 - 2) He died “to” sin (His relation “to” sin is forever finished)
 - (a) He subjected Himself to the “reign of sin” by departing glory and entering into this world in flesh
 - (1) But that phase of Christ’s life is finished once and for all and can never be repeated (“He died unto sin once”)
 - ii. Now apply this same logic to all those “in Christ”
 - a) Old life= sin unto final death
 - b) New life= grace unto final righteousness and eternal life
 - 1) The “old man” in this context does not refer to the “old nature”
 - 2) Example of man joining the Marines
 - 3) Read J. W. Stott’s example

- (a) A Christian can no more think of returning to old life than a happily married woman can think of returning to former ways
- (b) Same true of happily adopted child, happily freed prisoner or slave, etc.

C) Scriptural proofs

1. Col 1:13- Translated out of darkness into KOG
2. Acts 26:18- Paul's commission to do just this
 - i. "I am sending you into the realm of another strong king, but you are going as a man armed with the power of a stronger king, in order to set my people free from his tyranny once and forever. He will never possess them again!"
3. Phil 3:20- Our citizenship is in heaven"
4. Eph 2:19- Citizens of the KOG
5. Col 3:3- You are dead and your life is in Christ now
6. 2 Cor 5:14-15- Dead and risen in Christian
7. Gal 2:20- I am dead and yet alive in Christ
 - i. Notice these are not simply negative, but positives also
 - a) A Christian is not just a man who has been forgiven and then has decided to live a better life
 - 1) We have been set free and at the same time translated under the greater and more powerful "reign of grace"
 - 2) The "reign of grace" is guaranteed to produce the desired results of the King Who initiated it
 - 3) If "sin" produced its results, more more will grace produce its fruits!
 - ii. 1 John 3:8- The whole purpose of Christ in His work is to destroy the works of the devil
 - a) Phil 1:6- Once begun, He will carry it out fully
 - 1) It is this fact that makes the question of Rom 6:1 so ridiculous, for it is to honor the power of the devil above the power of God
 - 2) 1 John 4:4- "Greater is He that is in you...."

V. "Live" in sin

A) Live- "to continue the same, to abide, to set down roots"

1. 1 John 3:8-9- "Committeth/commit" (practice, habitual, committed unto)
2. John 8:34-36- "If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed"
 - i. The Christian cannot go in in sin unchanged, the Lord will not permit such
 - a) This is why some of the Corinthians had died
 - 1) It is impossible for a Christian to continue in sin's power judicially, for he has been translated from that realm

- 2) It is impossible for a Christian to continue under sin's power and pollution unchanged, for the power of God now works in him
- 3) It is impossible for a Christian to be held under sin's final outcome in eternal death, for he has the Spirit of resurrection in him and cannot be removed from the hand of God
 - (a) Rom 6:14- "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for....."
 - (1) Just as the marine can no longer go on acting like a civilian, for he now belongs to the marines!
 - (2) God- "I am going to deliver you fully from the power of sin. I will start at once by taking you out of sin's realm and kingdom, and placing you into My kingdom and under My care. The progressively I will deliver you from the pollution of sin, washing and sanctifying you by the Spirit through My word. Finally, I will deliver up to Myself, free from the flesh and perfected forever without blemish in a new body."

VI. Objections

- A) How can you say this, when we are still so prone to sin's power and temptation?
 1. Here is the error of the false interpretations of Rom 6:2, for they confuse status with experience
 - i. Paul is focused on us "knowing" certain facts, as God always deals with us through the realm of the mind 1st
 - a) We must first believe what is true of our position before we can ever exercise any of the authority of it in experience
 - 1) Same as the only way the marine recruit begins to act like a marine is in his acknowledging that he belongs to the USMC now
 - (a) We cannot have a foot in each kingdom
- B) Why do we still sin so often and fall?
 1. Notice Paul is exhorting us in Rom 6:11-13, but in v.2-10 he is dealing with FACT
 2. Paul is not saying believers are sinless, he is saying we are now citizens of the KOG in Christ, and only by this realization will we ever begin to "reckon" differently (Reckon is a change of thinking)
 - i. Like slaves set free after Civil War, many could not understand or believe they were free, and returned to slavery
 - a) How would a change ever come for them? BY 1st believing they were free and under new ownership!!!
 - b) Many continued as slaves "experimentally" even though they were no longer slaves "legally"

- ii. 1 John 5:18- The evil one cannot touch you
 - a) Example of 2 adjacent fields with slaves transferred from one to the other
 - 1) Satan cannot touch us, but he can sure whisper through the fence
 - 2) Example of Tom Sawyer
 - b) Therefore every Christian is a fool when we sin
- 3. “But I can’t believe this, it is too staggering a thing to accept, too good to be true”
 - i. Paul has already dealt with this in ch 4
 - ii. Do what Abraham did, and do not stagger at the promise of God through unbelief
 - a) “I see all my sins and failures, surely I am more dead than alive in Christ”
 - 1) This is walking by sight and not by faith
 - 2) When we sin, it is simply our not believing who we are in Christ
 - (a) Imagine a king’s son stealing his food like a beggar