

# “Sinfulness Undone”

UNDONE Sermon Series | Week Three | Newbreak Church

April 25th, 2021

**This week is about how God’s grace changes that which can control us.** We are all controlled by something, and when we begin a relationship with Jesus we live empowered by the grace of His new ownership so that sin does not have the same power over us. This message answers the question: How does grace help me walk in freedom?

For more insights relating to this week’s sermon, see <https://newbreak.church/blog/>. We post a new blog every Sunday which coincides with the sermon passage or theme from that day.

## Start Here

- What is one new thing that God is doing in your life right now?
- Have you ever experienced God’s grace giving you freedom over a struggle, fear, or temptation? How did you know that God was working?

## Going Deeper Into the Message

Read: Romans 6:1-14

### **Point 1 – Acknowledge the reality of my sin without making it my identity.**

For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been set free from sin. (Romans 6:6-7, NIV)

Before Christ, all of us were dead in our sins (Ephesians 2:1) and in bondage to our sinful nature. Even if we wanted to do what is right, we could only hold on for so long before we succumbed to our wayward desires. In a sense, our sinful nature became a taskmaster to us. Now that we are followers of Jesus, Paul reminds us here that our “old self” was crucified with Christ and that the power of the sinful nature was rendered

powerless. Through Christ, we have been set free from bondage and are no longer slaves to our sinful nature.

In the past, we might have built our identity based on our mistakes and created labels for ourselves based on our struggles. We may have felt ashamed, unloveable, unforgiven, and broken. In Him, we have a new identity that is not defined by the number or severity of our past mistakes but the enormity of His great loves and graciousness. We are loved, we are forgiven, we are cherished, and we are His child.

So, if we have been freed from our sins, why do we still struggle with sin? That's a great question. Although we have been freed from the bondage of our sinful nature and have been made alive in Him, we still have a choice if we want to live like our "old self."

### Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- How do we reconcile the tension of being "free from sin" as Romans 6 states, while also struggling with sin?
- If you have negative labels that you believe about yourself, how do those labels impact the way you parent, the way you treat your spouse, or the way you treat your friends, or the way you interact with God?
- How does Romans 6 (the whole passage) give you confidence to walk the Christian life?

### **Point 2 – Begin to see myself how God sees me.**

Therefore, there is **now no condemnation** for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has **set you free** from the law of sin and death. (Romans 8:1-2)

You can think of condemnation as a way of declaring someone to be doomed. It is a way of not only saying someone is hopeless, but that they are beyond hope. Yet, because of Jesus, all who trust in Him have moved as far away from that label as possible.

Picture a courtroom. Imagine being guilty on all accounts as the plaintiff piles on a case against you. The court moves to deliberation, and you can sense what the verdict will be. Heck, you even admitted to being guilty, knowing full well that you broke the law. The courtroom fills for the reading of the verdict. But just before it is read someone goes up to the judge and slips him a notarized document. The judge reads it silently. And then, grabbing the gavel, he looks you in the eyes and calls out for all to hear: "I declare you righteous and acquitted of all charges. You are free!" And the gavel bangs. It is done. You are free.

The biblical language of "condemnation," "justification," and similar terms illustrate our salvation through the lens of a legal metaphor. After all, "justification" (in Greek) literally means "to be pronounced righteous." And like the courtroom story, you (if you are in Christ), are acquitted and released from the penalty of sin (see additional insight below for more).

### Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- Making the courtroom scene (described above) personal to you, how do you feel when you think of your guilt being acquitted? How does this fuel gratitude toward God in your life?
- Referencing the additional insight below, how does Romans 6 help us better understand the significance of baptism?

#### —ADDITIONAL INSIGHT—

#### HOW GRACE HAS SET US FREE FROM SIN

*\*This insight is an excerpt from the Newbreak blog post associated with this week.*

Identity is everything. And how we perceive our identity is just as important. As Christians, our relationship to Jesus changes our identity in such a drastic manner that it would take years to truly unpack the riches of it! The book of Romans follows a long argument of Paul's in how the righteousness of God has been revealed through faith in Christ because of the faithfulness of Christ ([Romans 1:16-17](#)). And really, the whole sixteen-chapter letter is about salvation; unpacking the plot, drama, and resolution of the gospel. Romans 6 finds itself in the midst of that argument, showcasing how God's

grace has changed our identity. Following Paul's argument, here are the two ways grace has changed our relationship to sin according to [Romans 6](#).

### **1) You died with Christ, and were raised with Him too!**

*<sup>4</sup> We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. <sup>5</sup> For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. <sup>6</sup> For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— <sup>7</sup> because anyone who has died has been set free from sin. (Romans 6:4-7, NIV)*

Paul tethers this part of his argument to the analogy of baptism. We are incorporated into the death and resurrection of Christ.

**Your physical baptism is a tangible picture of what spiritually (but really!) happened the moment you trusted Jesus.**

You see, the act of being dunked underwater resembles dying with Christ, being buried in the tomb with him. But of course, the act of baptism doesn't end there, because Jesus's story didn't and neither does yours! The act of being brought up from the water resembles the new life of resurrection. Yes, what happened to Jesus on that first Easter will happen to you too! And in some sense, it already has. Not that your body has been resurrected to immortality (that is for a future day). But your inner-self (call it your spirit or your soul) has already been elevated to a new form of life, following the pattern of Christ's resurrection and stamped with the authenticity of the presence of the Holy Spirit (see [Ephesians 1:13-14](#)).

And I would highlight, circle, or underline verse 7. The fact that we have vicariously died with Christ means that sin no longer holds us in captivity. The penalty of sin, being "death" ([Romans 6:23](#)), has been rendered ineffective. Sure, we may die but not really, as death becomes a comma, but not a period to our story. We are given eternal life, with the future promise of resurrection!

### **2) You are under new management.**

*<sup>17</sup> But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance.<sup>18</sup> You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. (Romans 6:17-18)*

Everyone is a slave to something—or someone. Why not fall under the ownership of God? He is the only "owner" who makes His slaves into sons and daughters (see [Romans 8:14-17](#)). Plus, being under "new management," so to speak, means that sin does not have the power over us it once had.

**Admittedly, we still are tempted to sin every day, and we give in to temptation far more than we wish we did. But that struggle does not change the objective fact that we are not slaves to sin anymore!**

If we believe the Bible we need to believe the tail end of Romans 6:18 when it says that we "have become slaves to righteousness." Remove your categories of perfection for a moment. And if you think legalistically—put that aside too. Because our new identity doesn't mean we are now suddenly perfect. What it *does* mean is that we have a new identity and with that identity comes new power to live a new way. It will take time to learn to walk in the empowerment of grace, and the Holy Spirit will help, but that is the focus of another conversation. For now, rest in the truth that grace has set you free from sin.

**Through the powerful act of grace, God has rid us of sin's penalty, power, and presence.**

The penalty of sin is dealt with decisively since we died with Christ. The power of sin is steadily losing its grip on us as we learn how to walk in this new life empowered by the Holy Spirit. And the presence of sin—well—that will one day be absent from God's universe when God finishes what He started in making all things new ([Revelation 21:5](#)). And until then, we can hold tight to an identity that does not call us "sinners," but saints—not because of who we are or what we have done but because of who Jesus is and what He has done. After all, that is the whole point of our identity being "in Christ."

### **Point 3 – Slowly overcome sin by submitting to Jesus daily.**

Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. **For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.** (Romans 6:13-14)

In Romans 6:13-14, Paul instructs us that each of us has to choose daily whether we will surrender ourselves to God's will, or if we will resist the work that He wants to do in our hearts. Paul refers to these daily decisions as "offerings." We can choose to offer ourselves to Him as instruments of righteousness, or we can offer ourselves to the sinful

flesh as instruments of wickedness (or sin). This journey towards personal holiness and spiritual formation takes time. It is often a slow process that begins with a willingness to let God do a great work in your life. It starts with a heart of surrender.

In another place, Paul refers to this battle as “walking in the Spirit” versus satisfying the “desires of the sinful nature” (read Galatians 5:16-26). Paul states plainly that if we “live by the Spirit,” or live under the power of the Spirit, we will not satisfy the desires of the flesh. The “flesh” was Paul’s way of talking about who we are apart from God. When we try to live life on our own terms and apart from the Holy Spirit we are walking in the “flesh.”

As we follow the direction and guidance of God in our lives, He will help us to fight temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13) and show us a better way of living life.

### Questions for Group Discussion or Personal Reflection

- How do you invite God into your daily struggles? Have you ever invited another believer in your life to support you in your struggles?
- Do you agree with the above statement that spiritual formation takes time? Why or why not?
- What role do spiritual disciplines currently play in your journey toward Christ-likeness? How does beginning the week in worship, belonging in a Life Group, and being the church through service play an important role?

#### —ACTIVITY—

Read *all* of Romans chapters 3 - 8 for the next week and allow the powerful truths to encourage you to live in the light of your Christ-identity.

Take note of the phrases that resonate with you. Also, take note of the parts that are uncomfortable or hard for you to accept. Then, pray through it, allowing the Holy Spirit to minister to you and encouraging you to live in light of the grace that frees you from sin’s control over your life.

#### —SUMMARY—

God's grace gives us a new identity in which sin does not hold us as slaves anymore.

- 1) Acknowledge the reality of my sin without making it my identity.
- 2) Begin to see myself how God sees me.
- 3) Slowly overcome sin by submitting to Jesus daily.

**—FINAL CHALLENGE QUESTIONS—**

1. How are you going to think differently in light of what you have read, heard, and discussed this week?
2. What is one thing you are going to change in your life in light of the sermon?
3. BONUS: For those of you with kids or around kids: What is one truth from this message that you can share with your kids?