

**Facing Eighteen:
Facing our Sin (Folly)
Romans 6:1-23**

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Text Introduction: For a couple of weeks now we have been thinking about things that we face. We have talked about our future and our fears. Today, though perhaps uncomfortable, I want to talk about “facing our sin.” Our text is Romans 6. The author is the Apostle Paul. Talk about facing his sin, Paul was well acquainted with that. In fact to Timothy, Paul described himself, in reference to sinners, as “the worst of them.”

The phrase, “The Roman Road,” has been used in various ways as a gospel presentation in helping someone to see what Jesus has done for them. The Roman road usually refers to Romans 3:23, 6:23, 5:6-8, and 10:9-10. These Scriptures tell us that (1) all of us are sinners, (2) only Jesus by His death on the cross can remove that sin, and (3) what we must do in order to receive Jesus’ forgiveness.

Let us begin with just setting the stage by reading verses 1 and 2, but keep your Bibles ready to continue looking at this entire passage as we move along this morning.

Text: What should we say then? Should we continue in sin so that grace may multiply? ² Absolutely not! How can we who died to sin still live in it?

Introduction: Ricky Lee Claycomb, 37 years old, was serving in the Colorado State Prison System on a conviction of robbery. While serving his time, the State of Ohio had Ricky extradited on a more serious charge. After a jury trial, Ricky was acquitted of the charge in Ohio. He was told by the judge at that point that he was free to go. Ricky indicated that he should return to Colorado to continue to serve his sentence. Unbelievably, Ricky was told that getting back to Colorado was his problem. At that point, Ricky could have made a run for it, but instead he called his mother who bought him a bus ticket back to Colorado. After two days on a bus, he ate breakfast and lunch with his mother, before having his brother drive him back to the prison in Colorado, even calling on the way to tell them he was returning. By this time, the Ohio authorities had discovered their mistake and called Ricky’s mother to ask her if she knew the whereabouts of Ricky. She told the detective the story, that he was on his way back now. Ricky’s mother reported that the detective simply said, “Well, bless Ricky’s heart.”

Now, I grant you, most people do not return to prison that way, but the prisoner recidivism rate in the United States is a real problem. According to the National Institute of Justice, 76.6 % of prisoners are re-arrested within 5 years. Over 56 % are re-arrested within 1 year. Returning to prison is a problem.

We do the same thing. Even as Christians, having been released from sin by the cross of Jesus Christ and through the forgiveness of sin that comes as result of faith and grace, we have a way of returning to our prison of sin. The message of Romans is that we, who are in Christ, are free not only from the penalty of sin, but also from the prison of sin. So, why do we so often return? Our text today helps us to see some factors that will help us to live in victory over sin. We have to face our sin. If we only deal with the consequences of sin with never dealing with the cause of our sin, we will continue to deal with cycle of sin.

Read the Text: ³ Or are you unaware that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been united with him in the likeness of his death, we will certainly also be in the likeness of his resurrection. ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be rendered powerless so that we may no longer be enslaved to sin, ⁷ since a person who has died is freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him, ⁹ because we know that Christ, having been raised from the dead, will not die again. Death no longer rules over him. ¹⁰ For the death he died, he died to sin once for all time; but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹ So, you too consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Here is how we face our sin.

1. **Face Your Real Commitment to Christ (Romans 6:1-11)**

Perhaps the first reason that people still struggle with sin is that they have failed to truly commit themselves to Christ. In Romans 6, we see the imagery of baptism. You see what ought to be the vows of your Christian confession. Here is what your commitment to Christ should entail.

- Should reflect that you have died. You have died to your selfish desires and your sinful desires.
- Should reflect that you have come to life. You have come alive to the Spirit of God.
- Should reflect a once and for all commitment. The New Testament says nothing of some kind of commitment that is partial or temporary. The New Testament only reveals a complete commitment to Christ.

2. **Fight against and for what Really Controls You (Romans 6:12-19)**

Read the Text: ¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, so that you obey its desires. ¹³ And do not offer any parts of it to sin as weapons for unrighteousness. But as those who are alive from the dead, offer yourselves to God, and all the parts of yourselves to God as weapons for righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin will not rule over you, because you are not under the law but under grace.

¹⁵ What then? Should we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? Absolutely not! ¹⁶ Don't you know that if you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of that one you obey—either of sin leading to death or of obedience leading to righteousness? ¹⁷ But thank God that, although you used to be slaves of sin, you obeyed from the heart that pattern of teaching to which you were handed over, ¹⁸ and having been set free from sin, you became enslaved to righteousness. ¹⁹ I am using a human analogy because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you offered the parts of yourselves as slaves to impurity, and to greater and greater lawlessness, so now offer them as slaves to righteousness, which results in sanctification.

We can only live in victory over sin because of the grace of Christ. However, as this text indicates, we must present ourselves to Christ and not to sin. Paul revealed these three principles.

- Do not let sin reign in your life.

And . . .

- Do not allow sin to have the opportunity.

Proverbs 6:27 “Can a man embrace fire and his clothes not be burned?”

Ephesians 4:27 “and do not give the devil an opportunity.”

But . . .

- Present yourself daily to God.

In presenting yourself either to God or Sin, you can control what controls you!

Reading the Bible is presenting yourself to God. Rick Warren said it this way, “We can’t watch TV 3 hours a day and read the Bible 3 minutes a day and expect to become Holy.”

3. **Fear the Consequences of Sin (Romans 6:20-23)**

Read the Text: ²⁰ For when you were slaves of sin, you were free with regard to righteousness. ²¹ So what fruit was produced then from the things you are now ashamed of? The outcome of those things is death. ²² But now, since you have been set free from sin and have become enslaved to God, you have your fruit, which results in sanctification—and the outcome is eternal life! ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Disaster in this life. What fruit does sin bring? You know the answer to that question. Disaster! Disease! Divorce! Guilt! Addiction! Jail! Why would we want to bring any of that into our lives?
- Death in eternal life. Without the forgiveness of Christ, the ultimate consequence of sin is death in eternal life.

This is not about the law. This is about grace. This is about not going back to prison—often times a prison of your own making.

This is Psalm 32. The context of Psalm 32 is probably one of the most widely known sins of history—David’s sin with Bathsheba. All of us can be thankful that our sins are not as publicly known as David’s.

But here is what he said on the other side of God’s grace.

How joyful is the one
whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered!

²How joyful is a person whom
the LORD does not charge with iniquity
and in whose spirit is no deceit!

³When I kept silent, my bones became brittle
from my groaning all day long.

⁴For day and night your hand was heavy on me;
my strength was drained
as in the summer's heat.*Selah*

⁵Then I acknowledged my sin to you
and did not conceal my iniquity.

I said,

"I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,"
and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

Some of you need to do that today!