

Brand New Man

Brian Carroll / General Adult

Unashamed - A Study of Romans / Romans 6:1–14

In Romans 6, Paul addresses the question of Christians continuing on in sin despite their faith in Christ. He answers it in two different ways. The first answer has to do with our new life in Christ. The old man is crucified and a brand new man lives in his place.

Introduction

- So there's an Instagram page that goes and grabs clips of churches doing irreverent things and secular things as part of their worship services.
 - Here's the catch - they only show the offending section and they never provide context for whatever it is the church is doing.
 - A church may have a perfectly good reason for performing "Livin' on a Prayer" during their worship service.
 - I'm afraid we may make that page today.
 - A few weeks ago, I asked John Hill to help me plan out the sermons through chapter 6 and we settled on the title for this sermon - Brand New Man.
 - And my 90's Country radar went off and I couldn't get that old Brooks and Dunn song out of my head.
 - Then I started thinking about the lyrics.
 - You change about five words, and the whole meaning flips.
 - But the more I thought about it, the more I realized there was more going on here than just a funny parody.
- In the original song, the wayward cowboy met a woman and she rearranged his life.
 - For him it was almost a spiritual experience as he was baptized in their romance.

- He traded his carousing for a front porch and a steady woman.
 - The man who used to close down every bar in town is suddenly home before dark.
 - His buddies probably don't even recognize him.
 - As far as he's concerned, he's been born again.
- And honestly? That's a real change.
 - Love can do that to a man.
 - We've all seen it happen.
 - Some of you married a man like that, and some of you *were* a man like that.
- But changing a man's habits isn't the same thing as making him new.
 - You can give the same old man a better reason to behave.
 - And that's exactly what a lot of people think Christianity is.
- You meet Jesus, He rearranges your life a little, you clean up your act, and you try real hard to stay on the straight and narrow, as long as the feeling lasts.
- Some of you may even be playing by those rules in your own life today.
- But if you've been born again, that's not what Paul says happened to you.
 - Paul doesn't say your old self got reformed.
 - He doesn't say it got rearranged, or redecorated, or talked into behaving.
 - Paul says your old self was *crucified*.
 - It died.
 - That doesn't mean the old temptations stopped calling.
 - It means the old master lost his claim on you.

- Last week, we pulled out a smaller section here in chapter 6 and talked about the significance of baptism.
- Baptism becomes the PHYSICAL picture of what has happened to you.
 - When you go under the water, it pictures your old self dying and being buried with Christ.
 - When you come up out of the water, it pictures you rising with Him to walk in newness of life.
 - That's why we take baptism so seriously around here.
 - It isn't a box to check or a ritual to get through.
 - It's a public declaration of a union with Christ that's already taken place in your heart.
- But remember what I said: baptism doesn't make it happen.
 - Baptism shows that it happened.
 - The water doesn't save you. It tells the story of the One who did.
- And that's the thing about a picture.
 - It's only as good as the reality behind it.
 - A picture can be beautiful and meaningful and true, but if there's nothing real behind it, it's just a picture.
- Paul didn't stop at verse 5. He doesn't just want you to understand the picture.
 - He wants you to live in the reality of it.
 - What does it actually mean that your old self died?
 - What does it mean that you've been raised?
 - And what difference does that make on Monday morning, when the tub is empty and the sin you thought you'd left behind comes knocking again?

- This week, I want to zoom out just a little and consider the broader picture of what all this means.

Scripture Reading

Romans 6:1–14 ESV

¹ What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?

² By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?

³ Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

⁷ For one who has died has been set free from sin.

⁸ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.

⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him.

¹⁰ For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.

¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

¹² Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions.

¹³ Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.

¹⁴ For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

Prayer

First the question (vv. 1-2)

- One of the things that makes Paul such a profound thinker is that he anticipates questions to the arguments he's making.
 - He just said back in chapter 5, verse 20:
Romans 5:20 ESV
²⁰ Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,
 - One could attempt to argue that sin makes God look good because it puts his grace on display.
 - If grace covers it all anyway, why not keep on sinning?
- Paul's answer is three words: By no means!
 - Not because grace has limits, but because grace has changed your relationship to sin.
 - "How can we who died to sin still live in it?"
- If you ever took a philosophy class, then you likely learned about the law of noncontradiction.
 - It means that something can't be both A and not A at the same time and in the same way.

- In this case, it is impossible for something to be both dead to sin and alive to sin at the same time.
- It is either one or the other.
- Of course, we recognize that Paul isn't saying a Christian can never fall into sin.
 - He's saying we can no longer treat sin as our rightful master.
 - We've died to that old life.
 - Why would we hand ourselves back over to it?
 - Paul said it this way in [2 Corinthians 5:17](#):

2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

- All of this points to another change that happens when someone gives his or her life to Christ.
 - Earlier in Romans we talked all about being justified.
 - That's the legal change that happens.
 - But we see here that there is another fundamental change that happens within us.
 - And it really comes down to dominion.
 - Those who have not professed faith in Jesus are under the dominion of sin.
 - But for those who have given their life to Christ, sin's dominion has been broken, and they walk in new life under the Lordship of Christ.
 - The gospel doesn't hand you a better reason to behave.
 - It breaks sin's hold on you.
 - And in that way, it makes you a brand-new man.

- So what is true of this brand new man?

First - you only become a new man once you've dealt with the old man (vv. 6-7)

- Take a look at verse 6:
- “We know that our old self was crucified with him...”
 - Right out of the gate, Paul is not dealing in speculation or uncertainty. He is stating a settled gospel fact.
 - “We know.”
 - Some of you may have come into this room carrying a kind of spiritual insecurity.
 - Most of the time, you feel okay, but you are never quite certain.
 - *I think I've been born again—but I'm not sure.*
 - *I feel like I've been born again—but that feeling may disappear the next time I stumble into a sinful mess.*
 - But Paul does not point us toward the strength of our feelings.
 - He points us toward something Christ has already accomplished.
 - “We know that our old self was crucified with him.”
- It reminds me of the old revival preacher who would ask during every invitation, “Do you know that you know that you know that you've been born again?”
 - That was probably one “know” more than he needed—but he was trying to communicate certainty.
 - And Paul speaks here with certainty: if you have been united with Christ, your old self was crucified with Him.
- Notice what Paul does not say.
 - He does not say, “We know that our old self was corrected.”

- The gospel does not sit the old self in the corner so it can think about its bad behavior and eventually emerge as a better version of itself.
- The old self cannot be rehabilitated. It cannot be remodeled. It cannot be trained into submission.
- It has to die.
- “We know that our old self was crucified with him.”
- Someone might hear that and think, *Isn't that excessive? Why does it have to be so severe?*
 - Paul answers in the next clause:
 - “...in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.”
- If all you do is reform the old self, all you end up with is a cleaner version that still clocks in for its old master.
 - It is just like the cowboy in that Brooks & Dunn song.
 - His habits changed.
 - His friends saw a better version of him.
 - But the better version of the same man still stands up and salutes when sin walks through the door.
- The gospel does something much deeper than changing a man's habits.
 - The old self is crucified so that sin's rule over him might be broken.
 - Verse 7 says:
 - “For one who has died has been set free from sin.”
 - That does not mean a Christian will never sin again.
 - It means sin no longer owns him.
 - Sin may still call his name, issue its demands, and pound on his door—but it no longer has a rightful claim on him.

- Sin cannot command a dead man.
- And notice the finality of Paul's language.
 - The old self was crucified.
 - Crucifixion is decisive.
 - It is irreversible.
 - Rome did not put people on crosses to improve them.
 - Rome put people on crosses to end them.
 - That is what happened to the old man when you were united with Christ.
- So let me ask you this morning: Do you know that this is true of you?
 - I am not asking whether you always feel saved.
 - I am not asking whether you have reached a place where you never struggle with sin.
 - I am asking whether you have entrusted yourself to Jesus Christ.
- If you belong to Him, your confidence rests not in how well you have behaved this week, but in what Christ accomplished at the cross.
 - And if you have never been born again, stop trying to renovate the old man.
 - Come to Christ.
- You cannot reform yourself into new life.
 - But when you are united with Jesus by faith, His death becomes the death of your old self—and His life becomes your life.
 - **As Paul said in [Gal. 2:20](#)**

Galatians 2:20 ESV

²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

- And when His life becomes your life, we find that...

The new man is a living man (vv. 8-11)

- If we stopped at point one, we might think the Christian life is entirely about what has died...
 - ...what we've left behind
 - ...what we don't do anymore.
- But Jesus didn't just die. He rose.
 - And if you've been united with Him, His death isn't the end of your story either.
 - Verse 8: “Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.”
 - There is life with Christ now, and there is life with Christ beyond the grave.
 - The One you're united to is alive—and He will never die again.
- Remember the law of noncontradiction?
 - You can't be dead to sin and alive to sin at the same time.
 - It's one or the other.
 - But here's what Paul wants us to see: you *can* be dead to sin and alive to God at the same time.
 - That's not a contradiction. That's the Christian life.
 - Because we died with Him, we now get to live with Him.
- Again, we are working with a tremendous amount of certainty and confidence.
 - Paul is making this direct parallel between Jesus' own death and resurrection and our own spiritual rebirth.
 - (Remember, all of this is portrayed symbolically in baptism).

- And if we were united with Christ in death, then we too are united with him in his resurrection.
- But what is the nature of Jesus' resurrection?
 - It is a permanent arrangement.
 - He says in v. 9 - he will never die again.
 - Last week in Sunday School, we talked about the story of Jesus raising a 12-year-old little girl from the dead in [Luke 8](#).
 - It was a powerful story because that young lady was restored to life.
 - The unspoken truth about her, however, is that she would eventually grow old and she would have to face death.
 - All of Jesus' miracles of healings and raising the dead came with a clock.
 - Because all of those people were still under the dominion of death.
 - The only resurrection that didn't come with a clock was His own.
 - His resurrection, his new life, is for good.
- And Paul tells us something else about that life in verses 10-11: "The life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus."
- Don't miss those words: "alive to God."
 - Christianity isn't just a funeral for the old life.
 - It's the beginning of a new one.
 - We spend a lot of our spiritual energy trying to work on the list of all the things we need to stop doing.
 - It's practically a joke among Baptists - people know more about what we're against than what we're for.
 - The old quip expresses it well: "I don't drink, don't smoke, don't chew, and I don't go with girls who do."

- I certainly don't want to make light of any kind of legitimate prohibition associated with our Christian life.
- But according to Paul, those prohibited behaviors are associated with the self that we've crucified.
- We've been made alive.
 - But how much time do we spend thinking about what we've been made alive to do?
 - You're alive to know God. To love Him.
 - You're alive to hear His Word and respond.
 - You've been given new life to walk with Him on Monday morning, not just sing about Him on Sunday.
- And Paul says to consider yourself that way.
 - He isn't telling you to pretend.
 - He's telling you to take what is true in Christ seriously.
 - When temptation comes knocking, you don't have to answer, "Well, this is just who I am. I've always been this way."
 - That isn't the whole truth about you anymore.
 - Your old self was crucified with Christ.
 - You are alive to God in Christ Jesus.
 - Your past doesn't get to tell the whole story of your future.
 - And that brings us to the third point.
- Because if sin no longer owns you, and you've been made alive to God, how do you live that out?

Finally - he's a free man (vv. 12-14)

- There is a fundamental difference between someone who is free and someone who is enslaved.

- The person who is enslaved doesn't have a whole lot of choice or agency.
- Remember from chapter 5: if you've not been born again, you're still under Adam.
- His rebellion against God is your rebellion against God.
- And you can't break sin's power by cleaning up your behavior.
- That's the cowboy all over again. He can change his habits, but he can't change his master.
- Jesus said in [John 8:34](#), [36](#)

John 8:34–36 ESV

³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.

³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

- But the free man has got some decisions to make.
 - I remember when I first got my driver's license.
 - I had this strange taste of freedom that I had never known.
 - I didn't have anywhere I needed to go... but I had to go somewhere.
 - So I hopped in my red and white Dodge Dakota and drove down Hwy. 27 to the K-Mart in LaFayette.
 - The taste of freedom was sweet in my mouth.
 - And what did I do when I parked and got out of the truck on my very first solo drive?
 - I locked my keys in it and had to call Dad to come rescue me.
 - I may have had some freedom, but one thing was certain: I was still free to make dumb mistakes.
 - I was free to drive. That didn't mean I suddenly knew how to handle that freedom.

- And being set free from sin doesn't mean you automatically make the right decision every time temptation comes around.
- But it does mean you don't have to obey it.
- Look at verse 12: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions."
 - That word "therefore" matters.
 - Because your old self was crucified with Christ, because you're alive to God in Christ Jesus, don't let sin rule you.
 - And notice the word Paul uses: *reign*.
 - Sin is pictured as a king. But it's a king who has been overthrown.
 - The cross took its throne.
- The problem is that a deposed king will still walk around issuing orders like nothing happened.
 - Sin will still make demands.
 - But you don't have to treat those demands as orders.
 - A king without a throne only has the power you hand back to him.
- And Paul doesn't stop with what we refuse.
 - Verse 13: "Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness."
 - That word "instruments" can also be translated "weapons."
 - Every part of you is going to be put to use in somebody's service.
 - The only question is who's wielding it.
- So give yourself to the One who made you alive.
 - These hands can serve Him.

- This mouth can speak truth.
- These feet can go where obedience takes them.
- The question isn't just, "What sin do I need to stop?" It's also, "How can I give myself to God today?"
 - That's what it looks like on Monday morning.
 - When the old temptation shows up and starts barking orders, you don't negotiate with a dethroned king.
 - You present yourself to God before you ever present yourself to it.
- And underneath all those commands is this promise in verse 14: "For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace."
 - Do you hear that word? *Dominion*.
 - It's the same word Paul used about Jesus back in verse 9: "death no longer has dominion over him."
 - Death has no dominion over Him.
 - Sin has no dominion over you.
 - Same word. Same victory.
- And notice why: you are not under law but under grace.
 - The law could tell the old man what to do, but it could never give him the life to do it.
 - Grace doesn't just tell you to live.
 - Grace makes you alive.
- Which brings us all the way back to the question Paul started with: "Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?"
 - Now we see why the answer is "By no means!"
 - Grace isn't the reason you keep sinning.

- Grace is the reason sin can't rule you anymore.
- You're not trying to obey your way into freedom.
- Christ has set you free.
- Now use that freedom to obey.

Invitation - Title Slide

- Let's go back to that cowboy one more time.
 - Everything new about him depended on her.
 - Her love. Her patience. Her staying power.
 - If she ever packed up and left, the old man would be right back where he started.
- Here's the good news for the Christian this morning: everything new about you depends on Jesus.
 - And verse 9 says He will never die again.
 - He's not going anywhere.
 - Your new life is as secure as His.
- So I want to speak to two kinds of people who are in Christ this morning.
 - Some of you are struggling with assurance.
 - You've trusted Christ, but you keep looking inward for proof, and some weeks you don't like what you find.
- Hear me: Paul never told you to find your confidence in how strong your feelings are.
 - He said, "We know." Your assurance doesn't rest on the strength of your grip on Christ.
 - It rests on the fact that you were united to a Savior who walked out of the tomb and will never walk back into it.
 - Hebrews reinforces this:

Hebrews 7:25 ESV

²⁵ Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

- And don't assume that the presence of a struggle means the absence of new life.
- Being tempted doesn't mean sin still owns you.
- Grieving your sin and wanting to obey Christ can be signs of His work in you.
- Bring that struggle to Him.
- Your confidence rests in the Savior you're trusting, not in a perfect performance.
- And some of you really are struggling with sin.
 - You know you belong to Christ, but there's an old master who keeps showing up and barking orders, and lately you've been listening.
 - You don't have to keep obeying a dethroned king.
- Today, you can tell God the truth about it.
 - [1 John 1:9](#) says that "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
 - And then present yourself to Him again: your hands, your mouth, your feet, your Monday morning.
- And don't fight it alone.
 - Sin loves to stay hidden.
 - Talk to someone this week.
 - A pastor, a Sunday School teacher, a trusted friend.
 - Bring it into the light.

- And as I said earlier...there may be some in the room today who are trying to reform or rehabilitate your old self.
 - You don't need self-help with a guru or a program.
 - You need to come to the cross.
- In a moment, we're going to sing "O Come to the Altar."
 - The altar is open.
 - Whether you need to settle your heart, confess a sin, or ask someone to pray with you, come.
 - If you belong to Christ, you're not coming to start your salvation over.
 - You're coming back to the One who made you new.
- And if you've never trusted Him, come.
 - We'd love to pray with you and help you understand what it means to turn from your sin and trust Jesus.
 - You cannot make yourself new. But Jesus can.