

Doing Battle with Sin

In this world we will struggle with sin. No need to be convinced of that, right? It's sort of like saying, "The sun will come up tomorrow." This month, this week, TODAY, you've felt this struggle. Sometimes we can feel so helpless and defeated in this struggle. Why not just give up? Regardless of what we may feel at times we are not helpless. Today, we are looking at Romans 6:1-11 where Paul defines our relationship to sin. At the heart of what he says is that our relationship to sin is found in understanding Jesus' relationship to sin, because as believers we are united to Him. And what is true of Jesus' relationship to sin is true of our relationship to sin. May these truths about who we are in Christ encourage us to continue to do battle with sin.

Brian said:

Sometimes in this struggle with sin, it can feel so hopeless. Dallas Willard, in his book, *The Divine Conspiracy*, says this about how it can feel at times:

If we think we are facing an irresistible cosmic force of evil, it will invariably lead to giving in and giving up – usually with very little resistance. If you can convince yourself that you are helpless, you can then stop struggling and just 'let it happen' (343).

Does it ever feel that sin is an "irresistible cosmic force of evil" in your life? Do you ever feel helpless in this battle with sin? It's possible that some of you are right in the spot that Willard describes right now. You've given in and given up and you're not even struggling against sin anymore.

Do you ever feel this way about sin? Explain.

Read Romans 6:1-11

1. Given what Paul has taught in earlier chapters, why might someone be tempted to say what is expressed in verse 1?
2. How does Paul make the case that we have died to sin?
3. How would you summarize verses 6-7?

4. How is it that we are “freed from sin” (v. 7), but we continue to struggle with sin so much? How would Paul answer this question?
5. What does it mean that we can “walk in newness of life” (v. 4)?
6. What does Paul mean when he says that “we believe that we shall also live with Him” (v. 8)?

Brian said:

Though we have a real taste of this life now, our full experience of it is still a future thing. Our bodily resurrection at the return of Christ is when we will experience in full the life of Christ. But this is something that a believer can have full assurance of because of what Christ has done and because of the fact that we are united to Christ. And the assurance of this truth is something that should bleed back into our present. We see the destination. And knowing this can help us walk in newness of life now.

7. How can the hope of our future bodily resurrection and perfect fellowship in God’s presence help us in our struggle with sin in the here and now?
8. In verse 11, Paul gives the command to consider oneself dead to sin but alive to God in Christ? What does it mean to “consider”? What are some practical ways that you can do this?
9. What in this study has been the most helpful in encouraging you to stay engaged in the battle with sin?