

**FRESH START - 3**  
**“Getting Rid of Bad Habits”**  
**Romans 6:1-10**

*O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God - through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. Romans 7:24-25*

Resolutions to quit some bad habit can range from biting ones fingernails to stopping destructive lifestyles. We all struggle with sin and therefore need to apply God’s principles or victory in this area.

### 1. UNDERSTANDING GOD’S GRACE

*What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Romans 6:1-2*

- **The misuse of grace** A proper understanding of grace does not encourage sin. Throughout church history, many have twisted the Scripture to teach that since God’s grace is manifested because of our sin, it brings glory to God to sin for His grace is continually being dispensed. Around the turn of the century, a man named Rasputin who was the religious adviser to the ruling family of Russia, taught that the more one sins, the more God gives grace. Therefore, the more you sin with abandon, the more you give God opportunity to glorify Himself. Rasputin declared that if you are simply an ordinary sinner, you are not giving God an opportunity to show His glory, so you need to be an extraordinary sinner. Today, most people are not quite as blatant in their views regarding sin yet this spirit still exists. The modern version goes something like this: “Sure I sin; doesn’t everybody. After all, you know the old saying, ‘Nobody is perfect.’ Don’t bother me with preaching against sin. That makes me feel bad about

myself. Does it really matter how I live my life? God understands.” There is definitely an urgent need for believers to understand the inseparable connection between justification and sanctification, between new life in Christ and the living of that life in the holiness Christ demands and provides.

- **Legalism is not the answer.** Legalism says that conformity to external law is what makes a man holy. Throughout church history there have been those who insist that conformity to countless manmade regulations and ceremony is necessary for true godliness. Whether in the form of extreme ritualism or of strictly prescribed codes of conduct, men have presumed to protect and bolster the pure gospel of grace working through faith alone by adding legalistic requirements of their own making. In other words, the legalist teaches that a man is spiritual because he keeps certain rules. The problem is he is missing the point. A man can never be made spiritual from the outside in. It must always start on the inside (the heart) and it must be a work of God not man. A man is spiritual only if he is controlled by the Spirit of God. Legalistic rules are often confusing and inconsistent because they are based on human opinion rather than the working of the Spirit. They can also lead to false spirituality when individuals regard themselves as right with God because they keep the rules yet their hearts are not right with God.
- **Understanding God’s grace** While a believer will fall into sin at times because of the weakness and imperfection of the flesh, sin will not be an established pattern of life. The believer who has a new life and is indwelt by God’s own spirit, has no excuse to continue habitually in sin. Can a person receive a new life and continue in his old way of living? Christians obviously are able to commit many of the sins they committed before salvation, but they are not able to live perpetually in those sins as they did before.

*Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God. 1 John 3:9*

It is not merely that Christians should not continue to live in the realm and dimension of sin but that they cannot. A genuinely justified life is and will continue to be a sanctified life. Holiness is as much a work of God in the believer as any other element of redemption. When a person is redeemed, God not only declares him righteous, but also begins to develop Christ's righteousness in him. Thus salvation is not merely a legal transaction, but results inevitably in a miracle of transformation.

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 2 Corinthians 5:17*

Growing in the Christian life is always a process, not to be perfected until the day of Christ Jesus  
*Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:6*

But there is no such thing as a true convert to Christ in whom justification has been accomplished but in whom sanctification has not already begun. In other words, if a person is truly saved, God will do a work in his life. This may involve conviction when the believer sins or chastisement when he fails to heed the voice of God, but it is important to remember, a true believer cannot continue to live in sin.

The phrase "dead to sin" expresses the fundamental premise of this entire chapter. It is impossible to be alive in Christ and also still be alive to sin. It is not that a believer at any moment before going to be with Christ is totally without sin, but that from the moment he is born again he is totally separated from the controlling power of sin, the sin life from which Christ died to deliver him.

## 2. UNDERSTANDING NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

*Or Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Romans 6:3-4*

- **We are baptized into Christ** - immersed into Jesus Christ. In other words, we have been made one with Him Water baptism does not bring this to pass, but it is symbolic of what takes place at salvation. It is a mark of salvation because it gives outward evidence of an inward faith in Christ. It is not the means of salvation but rather the demonstration of it. Water baptism symbolizes the spiritual reality of being immersed into Jesus Christ.

*I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. Galatians 2:20*

*For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, Romans 6:5*

- **We are identified in Christ's death and resurrection.** By trusting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, we were, by an unfathomable divine miracle, taken back 2,000 years, as it were, and made to participate in our Savior's death and to be buried with Him, burial being the proof of death. The purpose of that divine act of bringing us through death (which paid the penalty for our sin) and resurrection with Christ was to enable us henceforth to walk in newness of life. Our union with Christ in His death brings new life and inevitably brings a new way of living.

*Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed*

*from sin. Romans 6:6-7*

- **Our body of sin has been destroyed** “You should be well aware that in Christ you are not the same people you were before salvation.” Do not go on living as if you were still that old man, because that old man has died. Do not go on living as if he was still there.” No Christian has the excuse that he cannot help but sin. We are still capable of sinning and we often follow the memories of our sinful ways, but we are no longer under the absolute power of sin. The “body of sin” has been destroyed - has been made ineffective by having its power of control removed.

*Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Romans 6:8-10*

- **The one death of Christ was a death to sin**  
**Christ died to the penalty of sin** by taking upon Himself the sins of the whole world. He met sin’s legal demand for all mankind who would trust in Him.  
**Christ died to the power of sin**, forever breaking its power over those who belong to God through their faith in His Son. The sin that made us subject to death is not longer master over us.  
**Christ died to sin once and for all.** He achieved a victory that will never need repeating. Our freedom from sin has been made possible by His death.

**About this Sermon:** The above is a sermon outline prepared by Pastor Michael Switzer and was preached for the family of believers at Cornerstone Baptist Church, Middletown NY. It is published here for instructional purposes. Although it is copyrighted to protect from abuse or misquotation, it may be quoted in-part or linked freely from other websites. When using more than 33% of the text or if using in any printed format, please contact us for permission. All Bible references from the New King James Version (NKJV). Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved. ©2005 Cornerstone Baptist Church