

Sin No Longer Reigns in Me ...

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Romans 6:1-14

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ² Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ 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.

⁵ For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, ⁶ 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. ⁷ For he who has died has been freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹ knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. ¹⁰ For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹ **Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

¹² Therefore do not **let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.** ¹³ And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. ¹⁴ **For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.**

We used to be slaves to sin, controlled by the devil, controlled by the world, controlled by our old sinful nature ... We defended sin, selfishness, self-centeredness, sinful lifestyles ... we used to give excuses, we would die for the things we loved, the sinful things we thought were what we should live for.

Sin held us captive - we loved it, and loved the desires of sin - we loved what sin loves (Heb. 11:25)

Then, when we were set free by Jesus Christ, we were **no longer slaves to sin any more.** Those old strongholds of sin could now be defeated in our lives. We used to defend those strongholds. We felt it was our duty to defend those strongholds which God hated ... because we were enemies of God. But, when Jesus Christ set us free, when we became **born again**, we joined Christ's Army ... we enlisted and became warriors for Christ, in training, learning ... etc. We were babes in Christ, for sure, but we are being trained to be warriors for Christ. We will have to unlearn some things that the world system taught us, and learn some new things. The what the world highly values, God doesn't value it. What God highly values, the world hates and makes fun of, mocks and scoffs. They are at war with one another ... the sinful, fallen world system is under the sway (or power) of the devil
1 John 5:19 - We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.

The longer that we were slaves of sin, the more ingrained the "ways" and "habits" of sin are ... the deeper they are. They were a part of us, and very much our friend. It was a part of our identity, intertwined and integrated in us. Christ set us free ... but that does not mean sin does not try to influence us. Our old sinful nature still exists in us, and tries to get us to disobey God.

Psalm 37:4 - Delight yourself in the LORD and He will give you the desires of your heart

I will NOT want to Obey God, **unless I WANT to** ... unless it is my desire to. If I have a new Heart from Christ. So God gives me New Desires as I grow in my relationship with Him. When I was born again in Christ, that instant He gave me a New Heart for Him. I immediately desired Him (to have a deep relationship with Him), to know His Word, and to Obey Him. I never had those desires before.

Sin's desire is to control us, to destroy us, to rob us, to kill us ...

The Thief only comes for one thing: to Steal, Kill, and Destroy (John 10:10)

In Genesis 4:1-8

Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, "I have gotten a manchild with the help of the **LORD**." ² Again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. ³ So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground. ⁴ Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the **LORD** had regard for Abel and for his offering; ⁵ but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. ⁶ Then the **LORD** said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? ⁷ If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, **sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.**" ⁸ Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and **killed** him.

Notice how God Himself characterized SIN as a **living thing, personified**, like an animal that want to devour us, to control us ... it is crouching at the door ... like a LION crouching down, waiting to POUNCE upon its prey. It is like a LION seeking someone to devour (does this remind you of anything)? By the way, that word or phrase **its desire** ... is the same as when God was pronouncing judgment upon Eve ... "and your DESIRE shall be for your husband, be he will rule over you" (Gen. 3:16) ... that is the same phrase/word in Hebrew ... **a Desire to Control, to take over, to master** ... like a Predator does with its Prey. **Notice** how God counsels Cain in verse 7 above ... God tells Cain "**but you must master it**". The sinful nature must be controlled, it must be mastered, or it will master and control us. Cain did not listen to or obey God. Cain could've mastered that sinful desire of revenge against his brother Abel, because God said he could. When God says you can master sin, with His Power, we CAN. . . so even way back in the beginning times, God allowed people to have the power over our sinful natural desires.

So, when God says that "**sin shall not have dominion over you...**" **He means it.** We, who are in Christ, who have been **set free from Sin**, no longer need to obey its desires. It cries out for us to obey its desires. Since, we used to be enslaved to sin, we know its voice as if it is our own heart's desire... it seems so right and good ... no one will ever know ... just this once, one more time for good times sake ... the Voice of the Sinful Nature is powerful ... but remember God is **more** powerful. **God can only be more powerful than sin, if we let Him be. We must Surrender to Him.**

At the root of SIN is a lie or sets of lies ... they are mixed in with some truth ... but that is the root, the seeds and it bears fruit in sinful actions, behaviors, and attitudes. **SIN** is selfish, self-centered, self-gratifying, self-exalting and self-deifying. So, the various strongholds in our lives are sinful areas that we used to be enslaved to. We used to fully **defend** them, feed them, and **fortify** them. They are like little cities, with lives of their own, and they grew in us **deeply**. Strongholds are like castles, with high walls, fortifications, a moat around it with a draw-bridge ... full of defenses and weapons. The old sinful nature set these up in our lives over the course of our lives while we were in sin, before we came to Christ. They can exist even after we come to Christ, although the Old Sinful nature is crucified and its power disarmed, **it still exists** and it can use those old strongholds, those old fortresses (**Fort Desire**) to summon up old feelings, memories, **oh those good 'ole times** ... it still seems to echo & have a voice and a life. **BUT** Remember it was crucified in Christ. Why are they still around? **Lies we still think might be true**, or we don't know yet those **lies are lies**, so we hold onto those old things. Just like a SLAVE who's been set free - think of the African slaves set free by Lincoln → it took many, many years for many of them to actually enjoy their freedom. Many did not know what to do, did not know how to be free. Some actually went back to their old slave owners and "hired on" again ... because they did not know what to do with their freedom. They allowed themselves, in some cases to be re-enslaved, in some way. In the same way ... Old Warriors for Sin,

who used to defend the strongholds of sin, still need to be set free more and more, gradually, increasingly, etc.

Jesus said that if we ABIDE in His Word, we would truly be His disciples, and we would KNOW the Truth and the TRUTH would set us Free. (John 8:31)

I am set free, more and more, as I allow God's Truth to be implanted in my mind and heart, more and more ... because TRUTH with eventually DISPLACE LIES ... The More I get God's Truth in my mind and heart, the more my **DESIREs** change to become more and more the Desires God wants me to Have. **My motivation grows more & more to Please God. Sin wants to keep me from the Bible**

Do you see the connection here? My Desires drive me, motivate me, cause me to move toward doing things that Please God (doing His righteousness, doing Good ... loving people the way He wants me to, etc..) Even my Faith in God pleases God ... **Hebrews 11:6** : "Without Faith it is **Impossible** to Please God ..." So, my personal Trust in God exists to Please God, not me. Sin displeases God, but personal Trust in God, pleases God. **So, I LIVE to PLEASE GOD.**

My heart & my motivations are changing, my wants and desires are changing as I am being more and more **set free** from Sin's Power in my life. **God's Truth Implanted & Embraced in My Life** – actually **DISPLACES the LIES in my LIFE** ... **TRUTH** destroys the strongholds in my life.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5

³For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴For **the weapons** of our **warfare** are not carnal (not human/earthly/worldly) but **mighty in God** for **pulling down strongholds**, ⁵**casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God**, bringing every **thought into captivity to the obedience** of Christ

Strongholds ... powerful fortresses ...

Sin can hold various areas of our lives hostage, even after we are saved, after we are born-again. **Similar to how some of the Canaanites held on to certain pockets of areas even after Joshua and the Israelites conquered most of the land of Canaan.** In that same way, some remnants of pockets of "**powerful strongholds**" may hold on even after you were born again. These strongholds are based upon **lies** → **vain speculations, vain imaginations, empty arguments against God and His Word ... high things or high ideologies/philosophies that exalt themselves against the true knowledge of God.** Those **lies are worldly, demonically powerful aiming to keep folks enslaved by sin and in disobedience to God.** They are "high things", "exalted things", counterfeit knowledge that lifts itself up and argues that it is true and God and His Word is false. Does this sound familiar? → for example: God's Word says that stealing is wrong. Our old sinful nature says that it is OK to steal that donut as I walk by. I know that donut is not mine, but sin tells me, it is OK, no one will ever know about it. It seeks to deceive me, control me, get me in trouble, and send me to hell, eventually (while it laughs at me for eternity). Sin wants to be KING in my life.

God is saying to us today ... don't allow those strongholds to exist one more day in your life, starve them out of existence, defeat them with the TRUTH of God's Word, ignore their cries out to you to obey them ... Because God says we can ... we can and will do so ...

For sin shall not rule you as king and control you, for you are not under law but under grace.

God Grace is more powerful than any **force of sin** in the whole universe. The **Free Gift** of Salvation in Christ in our lives, is His **POWER** → The Gospel for Christ is **the Power of God unto Salvation = Rescue = Deliverance --- Jesus came to set the captives FREE!!!**

So what's our part? → **Trust and OBEY** for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus ... **Believe Him! AND Read, Study & Memorize Scripture AND Obey Him.** The more we obey Him from the heart, the more He sets us free & replaces sin-strongholds with Himself.