

Victorious Christian Living

(A Study Based Upon Romans Chapter Six)

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In Thessalonica, Greece, stands the grand old church of Saint Demetrius. At one period it was taken over by the Moslems. They plastered over the lovely old Christian paintings on the wall. Many years after, the Moslems left and it became a church again. By that time, everyone had forgotten about those old Christian pictures. But one day the church caught fire and the fire cracked the plaster. After the fire was put out it was discovered that the lovely old Christian pictures were once again seen. The fire had burned away the plaster and left the beautiful pictures viewable to the people.

In a similar way, we need to burn away our own plans and efforts for victory and once again see God's beautiful plan for Christian victory that is given in Romans chapter six. We must allow the Scriptural truths about victorious Christian living to be resurfaced from the old plaster walls of church tradition. We must free ourselves from the methods of self-discipline and self-improvement to produce victory in our lives. True victory involves a doctrinal understanding, doctrinal reckoning and then a practical outworking or application of the doctrinal teaching in our daily lives. We need to once again see the beautiful picture of God's victorious plan resurfaced for our own Christian living.

God's Record

The Biblical record of what God has done teaches that you have been joined or united to Jesus Christ in a spiritual union. You cannot see this union that you have with Christ but it is genuine and life changing. You must believe it by faith. Victory is only by faith! Faith is the victory! Since believers are united to the Son of God (Jesus Christ), now they can have victory over sin and Satan by this new relationship with Jesus Christ. Each believer must understand or know about God's record in order to have victory.

Romans 6:3-4

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized (*by the baptism of the Holy Spirit*) into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

I believe it was Dr. William Pettingill who said:

“If all you see in this text is water (water baptism) then you have missed something.”

Paul is not specifically talking about being baptized into water but being baptized into Christ in this text of Scripture. Water baptism is in the background but not in the forefront. Paul is not teaching or emphasizing the ritual sign of baptism but the reality of what water baptism pictures – the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 3:28; 1 Cor. 12:13). Through the operation of the Holy Spirit I have been positioned in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Christ’s history has become my own history! This is an amazing wonder of grace.

The Biblical record teaches that you have actually died with Jesus upon the cross (Romans 6:3-4, 5a, 8a). This of course refers to an unseen spiritual union which we all had “in Christ” when He died upon the cross. The Bible also teaches that we were actually buried and then rose again with Jesus Christ (Romans 6:4, 5b, 8b). This is part of the message of Easter! Christ arose and we arose with Him. We are tied to the risen Christ and can now experience His resurrection power for living! Our co-resurrection with Christ is God’s amen to our life of victory!

All of these wonderful truths can only be possible through our spiritual union and tie with Christ. The Bible says that when Christ died and rose again some 2,000 years ago, I actually shared in His death and resurrection as well. Because of the amazing truths connected with this unified transaction, we can now live the kind of life that is free from the power of sin. The Bible teaches that when you died with Jesus upon the cross, He actually won a victory over the “old man” or the unregenerate person that you used to be before you were saved.

Romans 6:6

“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin (*the individual’s slave relationship to sin through their body*) might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”

This “old man” refers to the unsaved person we used to be, when you were mastered or controlled by all of our bad habits and sinful tendencies. The “old man” is what we were positionally in Adam, sharing his corrupt human nature and living under the power and sway of that human nature. When you were unsaved or unregenerate, you held the position of a slave to your old sinful nature. The old nature was your master. Paul teaches about our past unsaved position in Adam by likening it to the marriage relationship that has been severed through death.

Romans 7:2-4

“For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law (*dead to our old slave relationship to the law*) by the body of Christ (*His death and resurrection*); that ye should be married to another, even to him (*Jesus Christ*) who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”

As a wife is bound to her husband, so we were once bound to our old slave relationship to the law in our unsaved past. This was when we lived under the law’s condemnation and were bent on doing the very things that the law forbid. This was because the law, as a standard of living, only stimulated more sinning within our lives and then condemned us for doing it. Our old nature would continue to try and work against God’s holy standard and stimulate us to sin even more. As a result, sin became a bondage to our lives.

Romans 7:5 says:

“For when we were in the flesh (*in our lost estate as a slave to the flesh or old nature*), the motions of sins (*sinful passions*), which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.”

In our lost estate the law said, “Thou shalt not” but the old nature said, “Thou shalt” and the old nature reacted against the standard of the righteous law and became a stimulating force that kept us under sin’s power and sin’s condemnation. So how can it be said that that the believing sinner has died to the law (“ye also are become dead to the law” – Rom. 7:4)? Of course, God’s law cannot die. The law is good (7:12). Therefore, the situation of being freed from this enslaving law relationship in our unsaved life seems hopeless. Unless the woman dies! And we are pictured as the woman.

Romans 7:4

“Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ...”

The woman represents the believing sinner who has to die by being linked to the very death of Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:5-6). This is the only way that the lost sinner’s enslaving relationship to the law can be severed. The new husband relationship that the woman enters into is with the resurrected Christ! What a liberating message this is for our lives today! The point is this. The old unsaved slave relationship that people have with the law keeps them in bondage and under God’s judgment. However, since the believer has died to the old slave relationship to the law, through their union in Christ’s death, they can now experience a new living and dynamic relationship with Jesus Christ. This is because Christ has died for us on the cross and freed us from our old unregenerate state or position when we were enslaved to the law.

Only when our old, unregenerate relationship to the law is put to death can we be free to be married to the resurrected Christ (Romans 7:4b “married to another”) and receive His very own life, which will produce fruitful living and allow God to become our new Master. Think of it, we are married to Jesus Christ who is alive! Buddha is dead. Mohammed is dead. The Easter Bunny is dead! But Jesus Christ is alive and the Bible teaches that we are married or joined to

the living person of Jesus Christ. Our first husband was the law. This old marriage relationship existed when we were lost and in our unsaved state. But now, since we have died with Christ, the old marriage relationship is severed and Christ has become our new husband. Only death can break the marriage relationship and each believer has died to the old slave relationship that they once had with the law. The implications of this truth are this. Each believer has been brought into a new victorious relationship with Jesus Christ who is risen and alive. Victory is not found in a *legal* relationship to the law but a *living* relationship with a person – Jesus Christ.

We no longer must try to live victoriously by merely looking at the law, rules, or the Sermon on the Mount, as the liberal churches try to do. We have been freed from our past enslaving relationship to the law that provided no means for salvation or sanctification (holiness). We should be very grateful that we have been released from this old slave relationship since there is no power in the law or any commands to give us victory. There is no power in any religious system, any set of rules, or any standards that men could write down. There is only power under grace, in this new glorious provision of being united to the living Christ, who infuses us with constant power for daily living and new life.

Romans 6:4

“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

My friend, Jesus Christ arose from the grave. Furthermore, the Bible says that I arose with Him and have entered into a new living union and relationship with Christ. I now have His resurrection power residing within me on a daily and constant basis (“the power of his resurrection” – Phil. 3:10).

Phillips Brooks once said:

“The great Easter truth is not that we are to live newly after death--that is not the great thing--but that we are to be new here and now by the power of the Resurrection; not so much that we are to live forever, as that we are too, and may, live nobly now because we are to live forever.”

Romans 6:14

“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.”

This implies that if we are living under the law as a rule of life, then sin would have dominion over us. The law relationship which we had in our unsaved past was a relationship to a system of rules that could not produce holiness in our life. It was only a legal system. The law could only stimulate our old nature to sin against God’s holy standard. Therefore, to live under the law as a rule of life, would mean constant bondage to sin and no victory or fruit that would be unto holiness.

Paul likened this old slave relationship to the law as a legal relationship that had no power to promote victory in a person’s life. He was in fact “held” under the powerful bondage of sin that the law introduced to his life by stimulating the old nature (“being dead wherein we were held” - Romans 7:6). There is no victorious power in the law. The power for victory is in the manifestation of the grace of God as seen in the believer’s union with the risen Christ.

Please note that when we are married to the resurrected Christ in this new living and life changing union that we can now produce fruit that will last for eternity (7:4 – “fruit unto God”). When we were a slave to our old disposition or nature, under the law, we only produced fruit that would eventually lead to spiritual death (“fruit unto death – Rom. 7:5). This was because the law had no power to deliver us and make us holy. But when we became united to Christ and were severed from our old relationship to the law, it’s only then that we began to experience this newfound freedom from sin and victory in our lives.

This should remind you that rules and regulations will not give you freedom. You might have a list of good rules and standards to follow. In fact, we have certain standards that we follow in the church where I pastor. There is nothing wrong with good standards that are biblically based and which unify the people. But we must be careful that our standards do not become our focus so that they turn into mere legality and we miss out on our liberating union with Jesus Christ. We can pile up rules or legality a mile high and still come up on the short end of the stick. This is because legality does not give us victory. We

need to have a relationship with a person in order to possess victory. And this person is the risen Lord! Victory is not in a list of do's and don'ts, however good that list might be. Victory is in the living person of Jesus Christ.

Romans 6:6 goes on to say:

“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”

We must remember that Jesus actually “crucified” or put to death the old unregenerate person or “old man” that we used to be, when the sin nature controlled and enslaved our past life and body (Romans 6:6). The Bible teaches that we have died in the sense that we are no longer an unregenerate person. The “old man” is the person we used to be in our old, unregenerate state when we were dominated by sin. And this “old man” died through being linked to the death of Christ. Therefore, by contrast, the “new man” is the new regenerate person that we now are in Christ. We are “born again” in view of our living union with the risen Christ or “made alive unto God” (Rom. 6:11, 13).

Romans 6:6 says that when we died upon the cross with Jesus, the old sinful person (“old man”) that we used to be before we were saved was in some way given a deathblow. The old person that we used to be was forever crucified. Now Jesus has made each one of us into a “new man” (Eph. 4:24) or “new creation” (2 Cor. 5:17) by defeating the old sinful self that was once enslaved to sin's power under the law.

Romans 6:6 goes on to explain the result of your union in Christ's death. The result of our union with Christ's death means that we have lost our old slave relationship to the sin nature, which is still indwelling our body. The terminology “body of sin” is an expression which portrays the human body being used as an instrument or vehicle for the sin nature. In the context, it points to our own human body (6:12,13; 8:11) which is possessed and controlled by our old sin nature. Through the death of Jesus Christ, our body's old slave relationship to the sin nature has been severed or dissolved. No longer must we remain in bondage to the dictates and drives of the old nature. Our physical body terminated its slave relationship to the sin nature through our union in Christ's death upon the cross.

Our body in some sense ceases to be a “body of sin” or a body dominated and controlled by the old nature. Our body is no longer obligated to function as the instrument of sin (“that henceforth we should not serve sin”). Before you were saved, the sin nature controlled your life by expressing itself through your body (eyes, ears, hands, feet). It was like a reigning king or master within your life. Well, it was this old enslaving or master relationship that the sin nature had with your body, which was actually “destroyed” or made powerless, ineffective or taken out of business as a result of Christ’s death upon the cross.

The slave relationship that the body once had with the old nature has been changed forever. The old nature no longer has the same power and effect upon our body and life for it too was crucified positionally with the death of Christ (Gal. 5:24) along with the unregenerate person. The old man with his sin nature was “put off” as the time of conversion and we became a “new man” with a regenerate nature (new nature) as Ephesians 4:22 and Colossians 3:9 teach. As a result, God changed our relationship to the old nature within us. The old and previous slave relationship to the sin nature has been put out of business, so that we no longer have to obey sin. This means that you no longer must allow your body to be controlled or mastered by the power of the old sin nature within you.

Carl Armerding recounted his experience of watching a wildcat in a zoo. "As I stood there," he said, "an attendant entered the cage through a door on the opposite side. He had nothing in his hands but a broom. Carefully closing the door, he proceeded to sweep the floor of the cage." He observed that the worker had no weapon to ward off an attack by the beast. In fact, when he got to the corner of the cage where the wildcat was lying, he poked the animal with the broom. The wildcat hissed at him and then lay down in another corner of the enclosure. Armerding remarked to the attendant, "You certainly are a brave man." "No I ain't brave," he replied as he continued to sweep. "Well, then, that cat must be tame." "No," came the reply, "he ain't tame." "If you aren't brave and the wildcat isn't tame, then I can't understand why he doesn't attack you." Armerding said the man chuckled, then replied with an air of confidence, "Mister, he's old--and he ain't got no teeth!"

Through Christ's work on the cross, the sin nature has lost its position of rule over our body and no longer needs to conquer our lives. You might say that the teeth or bite has been taken out of the old sin nature. You are no longer obligated to follow its enslaving power like you once did when you were unsaved. This is a life changing truth. It will truly transform your life forever. Christ not only paid the penalty for sin but He broke the power of sin over our lives. Christ has died in order to give us freedom over the old slave relationship that we once had to sin through our human body ("the body of sin"). His death is the ground or basis of this freedom, and through the resurrection of Christ we now have the power, so that our body does not have to be controlled by sin.

Some people promote the holiness doctrine called "a second work of grace" and actually teach that the old nature dies within your life (eradication). This is not a Biblical teaching. All of us continue to have the urge to sin after we are saved. This inclination to sin is provided by the old nature, which continues to reside within you in an ongoing battle with the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:17; Romans 7:15-25; 1 John 1:8,10). Eradication of the old, sin nature is sometimes termed as the "deeper life." My friend, I have not gone that deep! None of us have lost our inclination to sin. The flesh is still in us as we move about in these earthly bodies. We should not try to fool ourselves about our own sinfulness and sin. None of us have arrived! John dealt with this Gnostic attitude.

1 John 1:8 says:

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

1 John 1:10 goes on to explain:

"If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

A man once told me that he had not sinned for an entire year. When I told him that he was fooling himself, he began to get mad at me. I then shared with him that his sinless streak had ended because of his mean spirit toward me. Another fellow told me that he never had a fight with his wife during all the years that he was married! People can fool themselves some of the time, concerning their sinless living,

but they can't fool their own wife! These people who claim that they never sin are living out their own "Alice in Wonderland" dream.

The book of Romans does not teach the eradication of the old nature or some second work of grace. Romans 6:6 is simply teaching that when Jesus died on the cross, it resulted in the death of the old unregenerate person (the old self) that we used to be under the power of the sin nature. Our "old man" (the unregenerate person under sin's power) and our old sinful disposition experience a positional death in Christ through our identification with Christ (Rom. 6:6; Gal. 5:24). But this does not mean that we no longer have the sin nature and tendency to follow the old way of living. What it means is that Christ's death actually changes the enslaving relationship our body once had with the old nature. The sin nature is no longer our master. We no longer are a servant of the sin nature which ruled our body in the past. The old slave relationship that we once had with sin, when our physical bodies were controlled by sin's power ("the body of sin") has been forever put out of business and rendered powerless because of our spiritual identification with Christ's death and resurrection.

Romans 6:7

"For he that is dead is freed from sin."

This means that when we are born again and become a slave to Jesus Christ, we are no longer a slave to the sin nature and sin's power. In Romans 6, Paul is teaching that the old person (the old self) is dead. The context of Romans 6:1-13 is talking about people being crucified or experiencing a positional death in Christ's death. This is what Paul teaches in Galatians 2:20 ("I am crucified with Christ" – as a person). In Romans 6:7, Paul clearly teaches that the person ("he") has died. Furthermore, Christ died as the substitute for people (human beings) and not as a substitute for the sin nature. In addition, Paul also tells us to reckon ourselves to be dead as a person; he does not in this section of Scripture tell us to reckon our sin nature as being dead (note 6:11 – "yourselves"). Paul teaches that we as a person have died to sin or the power of the sin nature, but the sin nature is still very much alive within us (Rom. 6:2,11).

Of course, elsewhere in Scripture, positional and identification truth also reveals that our sin nature was also put to death when we died with Christ. This was part of the result of the believer being united with Christ's death.

Galatians 5:24

“And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.”

The believer's identification with Christ's death not only crucified the old self but also the sin nature which is directly linked to the old person we used to be under sin's power. The entire enslaving relationship we previously had with our human body, through the ruling tyrant of the sin nature, has been put to death. However, the positional crucifixion of the old self and sinful disposition does not mean that they are non-existence in our Christian life. The old, sin nature is not dead in the believer for we still struggle with sin (Romans 7:14-25; Galatians 5:17). If you actually believe in the eradication of your old sinful disposition or nature, then I want to talk to your wife or husband!

Our death with Jesus Christ does not do away with the sin nature (eradication) but it does render it powerless over our lives due to our position and identification in Christ. This is because our old, enslaving relationship we once had with our physical body through the sin nature has been crucified or put to death. As a result, we are made into a spiritual, newborn person (1 Peter 2:2) that is now able to have victory over indwelling sin by the risen life of the Son of God. This is the marvel of grace teaching for the present dispensation.

Do you remember the story of the Christian Indian who had recently been saved through missionary efforts? The Indian said he noticed that he had a good dog and a bad dog within him. When someone asked which one was the strongest he replied, “The one I feed the most.” Every honest person that is not deceived knows that they still have the old dog residing within them. The old nature flares up and overpowers our lives if we feed it the menu of the world system.

The point is this, through Christ's death you can be delivered from the old person that you used to be (the old man), when our body was

used as a helpless vehicle through which the old nature could work. Your body was once a helpless pawn in the hands of the sin nature. Now, as a result of Christ's work upon the cross, He has changed the position and master relationship that your body once had with the old nature called the "body of sin." Jesus has put to death the old person that you used to be, when the old nature had full ruling power over your body. What a marvelous liberating truth this is to contemplate and then put into practice.

Martin Luther was often very graphic in his description of the activities of the devil. Asked one time how he overcame the devil, he replied, "Well, when he comes knocking upon the door of my heart, and asks "Who lives here?" the dear Lord Jesus goes to the door and says, "Martin Luther used to live here but he has moved out. Now I live here." The devil, seeing the nail-prints in the hands, and the pierced sides, takes flight immediately."

We remember by the nail prints in the hands of Jesus, that He won a victory over sin and our enslaving relationship to that sin nature, through His death upon the cross. Jesus defeated our old slave relationship to our bodies, through the power of the sin nature, and made us into a new man who now has God as a Master. In the time of temptation within our own Christian life, the devil flees, when he is reminded of the nail prints of Jesus that brought victory for us ("they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb" – Rev. 12:11). We need to remember that the nail prints are in the hands of Jesus and not your hands. Jesus Christ has already done the dying and not you! In other words, Jesus provided the victory over sin through His own death and our union with this death has already provided us with the victory of sin and the sin nature.

We cannot do the work that Christ has already accomplished for us. This means that we cannot actually crucify ourselves and make ourselves dead to the power of sin and the devil over our lives. As a regenerate person we are already dead in Christ! We have already died as a person to the indwelling power and dominion of sin within our lives. Christ has already declared that He has made us into a new person in view of our position in Him. Therefore, it's an impossibility for the regenerate believer in Christ to live in an antinomian manner

or a continual lifestyle of license and lawlessness without showing any signs of fruit or holiness.

Romans 6:1-2

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid (*let is never be possible*). How shall we, that are dead to sin (*the old slave relationship we once had to sin*), live any longer therein?”

Since we have died to sin’s slavery and power over our lives, in view of our death with Christ, we no longer should make excuses to live in sin. This is because we have been given victory over it and a new heart, drive, and desire to live for God. So, it can be said that grace changes us and transforms our living. Grace does not deter us from spiritual living.

Titus 2:11-12

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.”

The grace of God, as seen in the actual death of Jesus Christ upon the cross, teaches us that God hates sin. God hated sin so much that He had to manifest His grace by crucifying His own Son. Furthermore, it’s this same display of grace that teaches us to live soberly and righteously and godly in the present world in which we live. The message of grace (Christ on the cross) teaches us to hate sin since God hated sin and offered the gracious provision of His Son on the cross.

Grace never teaches us nor motivates us to live a sinful life, whether it’s reflecting on the grace of Christ’s cress (Titus 2:11-12) or the new manifestation of God’s grace through our union with Christ’s death and risen life (Rom. 6:14-15). The grace of God is not a pie in the sky religion, it is for the here and now, and it teaches us how to really live and not just exist. The same grace that saves us also trains us in the school of holiness. The same grace that redeems us also reforms our lives and makes us godly. We are disciplined by God’s grace and trained to be the kind of people that glorify Him!

Those who make the claim that salvation by grace alone gives a person license to sin had better reread the contract! God has saved us by His grace and He is busy transforming us by His grace. It's grace all the way. Give me those eagle wings!

Romans 6:6 goes on to say:

“Knowing this, that our old man is (*has been*) crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed (*rendered powerless, inactive*), that henceforth we should not serve sin (*allow sin to dominate our lives*).”

Romans 6:7

“For he that is dead is freed from sin (*it's power, dominion and mastery*).”

Romans 6:8 goes on to say:

“Now if we be dead with Christ (*participated in Christ's death on the cross*), we believe that we shall also live with him (*in new victory through regeneration and the implantation of Christ's life*).”

Romans 6:11

“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin (*it's power and mastery*), but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord (*alive by regeneration to experience newfound victory with God as our Master*).”

All of these verses connote that believers will change and live differently in view of the indwelling life of Jesus Christ. This is because the Bible teaches very clearly and unmistakably that the old person that we used to be (“old man”) has already died. It teaches that the slave relationship that sin and the sin nature had with our human body (“the body of sin” – Rom. 6:6, 12) has already been severed, rendered powerless or taken out of business. The personal pronouns (we, he, ye) indicate that the person has died to sin in view of their identification, positioning, and placement in Christ but sin and the sinful disposition did not actually die in the person (eradication of the sin nature).

In other words, the Bible is simply teaching here that in some sense, the believing sinner has already died as a person (we, he, ye), to the

old slave relationship to sin that they once had. Paul is not asking believers to practice dying to sin in order to produce their victory. The fact is this; we have already died! We are not in some kind of continual process of dying as various holiness teachers suggest. Paul says that he was already dead to sin or that he had lost his slave relationship to sin that he once had in his lost estate (Rom. 6:2). The death is already past. There can be no more dying to sin in order to actually produce victory in the Christian life. The dying has been done by another One, Jesus Christ, and the victory has already been won.

Reginald Wallis said:

“The triumphant Christian does not fight for victory; he celebrates a victory already won. The victorious life is Christ's business, not yours.”

This means that we cannot actually do the work of dying to sin. Why? It's because Christ has already done that work for us upon the cross! We, as a regenerate person, have already died to the old slave relationship with sin and can today claim our “new creation” position in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17) as being the only way for victory. In Christ, we have already died to the old person we used to be. In Christ we have already ceased to be an old man where the sinful disposition rules us as a king and master. We are already a new man who has been freed from the old slave relationship to sin. We count this to be true already! Christ already fought the war for us on the cross and He won the victory for us and freed us from our old, slave relationship to sin in view of our death and resurrection with Christ. The war is over. The battle is already won!

The last battle of the American Revolution was the Battle of Blue Licks, fought at the stream that bears that name. It was a battle that should never have been fought, for it was fought after the war was over! News traveled slowly in those days. Blue Licks is in Kentucky, and there was no means of quick communication over the Appalachian Mountains. No one knew that the war was over. In a sense, Christ won the victory over sin at Calvary and then rose from the dead to reassure this victory and apply it to our daily lives through His risen power. The war is already over. Jesus Christ won the war for us. All that is left for us to do is claim the victory over sin by faith.

Romans 6:11 says:

“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

We must “reckon” as being true the doctrinal teaching of our death and resurrection with Christ so that it can become a life-changing truth that we can apply to our lives daily, hourly, and moment by moment. To “reckon” means to count or calculate something as true. It is a banking term. We must go to the bank called Jesus Christ and see what Jesus already has in the bank for us, or what He has already done for us (Eph. 1:3). Jesus has already made us into a new person by destroying the old unregenerate person that we used to be under the power of our sinful disposition and evil desires. We can’t do something that Christ has already done for us. In fact, we can’t do anything! All we can do is reckon (count it to be true) what has already transpired and by faith claim it to be true in relation to our victory over sin and temptation.

We cannot do something that God has already done for us. We cannot crucify ourselves to win the battle over sin. This is because it takes the work of somebody else to perform the actual crucifixion on someone’s life. However, we must in a practical way, reckon this powerful release from sin to be ours through our identification with Christ. There is a practical side to this positional truth.

Romans 8:13 says:

“For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify (*put to death*) the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”

Colossians 3:5 says:

“Mortify (*put to death*) therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.”

1 Corinthians 9:27 also states:

“But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”

We can in a practical sense apply the positional truth to our lives by claiming the death of our body to sin or as a body used for sinful purposes and enslaved by the sin nature. We can claim by faith that our body which was once ruled by sin and the sinful disposition is now positionally dead sin and the sin nature. We can actively claim for our own lives what Christ has already done for us. This is done when we practice our position in Christ. To “mortify the deeds of the body,” “mortify your members,” “to buffet our body” or give it an old-fashioned black eye, metaphorically means to refuse to sin on the basis (ground) of what Christ had already done for us. Paul is saying that we must come to the point where we, in a practical sense, die to our selfish ambitions and sinful inclinations, and refuse to allow them to overpower our lives. In other words, the dying to our sins and sinful disposition in the most practical way means to say “No” to their power over our lives. Because we have a new victorious position in Christ, we can say “no” to sin by reckoning or counting our positional victory as being true and claiming this victory by faith.

Remember that we cannot in our own human strength die to ourselves (surrender) in order to gain victory, since Christ has already provided the victory for us, when he died in our place and made us into a new man or regenerated person. All my dying and surrender in the world could never provide victory for my life. However, I can obviously die (surrender) in a practical way to sin by saying “no” to sin, refusing sin to rule my life, by claiming Christ’s victory over it through our shared victory with Christ and our identification with Him. We cannot do the actual dying which provides the groundwork of victory or release from sin’s power and bondage. None of us would stand any chance for victory, if we had to depend upon our own dying to sin, or our own human efforts to gain the actual victory over sin.

Only through what Christ has already done upon the cross and our dependency upon the risen life of Christ can we have victory today. We have already died as an old unregenerate person. The death has already taken place. The death and breaking from sin has already occurred! I can’t die to provide victory since Christ has already provided victory for me through my past death with Him. My death to the old slave relationship to sin was broken when Jesus died and severed it for me. And today it is already severed and put to death because I died with Him and shared in this victory. Now, all I must do

is “reckon” or count this to be true, claim by victorious ground in my identification with Christ, and refuse to sin. So, when we “mortify” or put to death the deeds of our body we are surrendering to the completed work of Christ and the victory He already provides for us when saying “no” to the power of sin. What an amazing revelation of God’s grace this is for us today.

Colossians 3:9-10 gives the same story:

“Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have (*past tense*) put off the old man with his deeds; And have (*it’s already accomplished*) put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.”

These verses in Colossians suggest that through the operation of God, we have once and for all “put off” the old man that we used to be (v. 9) and once and for all “put on” the new man which we are today in Christ (v. 10). This simply means that Jesus has done something wonderful for His saints. We have already gone through the operation! Since we have already been united or identified with Christ in His death and resurrection, this is a glorious transaction that has already occurred. In view of our position and union with Christ, the old person with the sinful disposition has been put to death.

Once and for all, through the work of Jesus Christ, we have been delivered from the old man or unsaved person that we used to be. This again was the old person we were in Adam with all of our sinful habits and bondage to sin. Because we have shared in the death of Christ, we can claim our emancipation from the old, slave relationship that we once had with sin. We share in the victory that Christ has provided through His death. Now we have been liberated to a new position of freedom and way of life called the “new man” because of our spiritual connection with the risen life of Jesus Christ. We are born again. We have become a regenerated man that possesses God’s life, power and control in our own life. And this “new man” relationship with God is manifested by the presence and power of the risen Lord. Dear friend, we must believe all of this by faith! And we must live on resurrection ground!

Ephesians 4:22-24 points to the same positional truth:

“That ye (*have*) put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye (*have*) put on the new man, which after God (*God’s nature*) is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

The aorist tense of the verb is the same as that in Colossians, which indicates the event has already occurred in the past as a completed transaction. Because of the position or union that we had in Christ’s death, the old person we used to be has been defeated and a new person has emerged or been created which is after the likeness of God! Once and for all, through the unified transaction of the death and resurrection of Jesus, we have been created or made into a new person that is now under the control of God’s power and influence. No longer must we live like the old person which was controlled by the power of sin and the devil. God has made us into a new person with new drives, desires and determination to live holy.

For this reason, we can SURRENDER in a practical way in our Christian life and REFUSE to sin. This is what it means to “mortify” the members of our body which are once again trying to be ruled by sin and the sinful disposition (Col. 3:5). We can essentially surrender our body to Christ’s victory and stand on the victory ground that Christ already won for us.

Victory comes from your spiritual tie or union with Jesus Christ, which is described as the death, burial of the old self (old man), and the resurrection of the new self (new man) walking in newness of life (Rom. 6:4). In Christ, the old self no longer exists as it had in the past; the new self is created in the very likeness of God.

Ephesians 4:24 again explains:

“And that ye (*have*) put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

This verse is telling the story of what God has already done for us and why we can now walk in a different manner as a born again Christian. God has made us into a “new man” in view of our connection with Christ’s risen life of power. We are now a

regenerated person with God's very own life within us. Through the new birth, we have been given the life of God. Our new life is "after God" because it reflects His character of holiness and righteousness. And Christ's life within us is God's life within us because Christ's life is God's life. We now have God's very own nature dwelling within us through the risen life of the Son of God. This new nature is only full of holiness and righteousness ("created in righteousness and holiness"). Therefore, we have become by virtue of the new birth, a brand new person with a brand new nature. What an amazing revelation of God's grace this is. New life in Christ! New union with Christ! A brand new creation in Christ!

2 Corinthians 5:17 says:

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

2 Corinthians 5:17 is referring to the same positional truth about the defeat of the old person that we used to be and the spiritual life of the new person, which was created through the new birth or regeneration. Being "in Christ" speaks of our spiritual union or identification with Christ which was also spoken about in Romans 6. Through the instantaneous event of the new birth, we have been created into a new person that has all the potential for a new way of life. The fact that we are a creation of God speaks of the marvelous truth of regeneration, whereby the risen life of Jesus Christ comes into our human spirit and instantaneously makes us into a new spiritual creation because of our identification with the risen Lord. We become "alive unto God" (Rom. 6:11). As a result, positionally, the old life of slavery to sin and the sin nature is gone. Because of our position in Christ, we have been given new life, the very life of the risen Christ Himself.

"New life in Christ! Abundant and free!
What glorious shine, What joys are mine,
What wondrous blessings I see! My past with its sin,
The searching and strife, Forever gone,
There's a bright new dawn!
For in Christ I have found new life!"

Second Corinthians 5:17 is teaching what we have already learned in the epistles of Colossians and Ephesians. The “old things” dealing with our life of slavery to self and sin have been forever defeated. Our old value systems, priorities, beliefs, loves and plans have been defeated. The old person (the old self) that we used to be has been done away with forever. This again is speaking of positional truth. Now “all things are become new” referring to the new man or creation that God has made us to be “in Christ.” We are a new man, a regenerated man, with built in new attitudes, outlooks, loves, ambitions and desires to live a new life of devotion to Jesus Christ.

Because of our position in Christ we are a “new man” or person. We are like a newborn baby, who has been born, not physically, but born spiritually with the life of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:2). We are simply a new person in Christ, created with new desires and a whole new outlook on life. As a result of this new life, we have the full potential to grow and become more like Christ. Through creation or regeneration, we have been united to the very life of Christ and now share His own character traits of holiness, godliness and goodness (“created in righteousness and true holiness” – Eph. 4:24).

Ephesians 2:10 says:

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

This is all a positional reality because of the great transaction that has occurred at regeneration. We became a “new man” a “new creation” and “his workmanship.” This means that we are God’s regenerated masterpiece and design because He has given us a new life through our identification with the risen life of Jesus Christ. We become identified with Christ by sharing the resurrection life of Christ. Yes, we share in His own risen life of power and victory, so that we can experience His victory through our daily life. A new man, a new life, a new nature, and a new power! This was a glorious transaction that occurred when we came to faith in Christ.

“Tis done, the great transaction’s done,
I am my Lord’s and He is mine;
He drew me and, and I followed on,
Charmed to confess the voice divine.”

Our union in Christ's death results in the defeat of the old person that was once enslaved to the sin nature. But our union with the risen Christ and His resurrection power becomes the practical outworking of our victory. This is the victory that we have already gained through Christ's death. The death of Christ is the ground of victory whereas the resurrection of Christ becomes the way to apply and experience this victory in our personal lives. This should become a liberating truth for us today. We now have a new freedom from the power of the old, sin nature and the way we used to live, as an old man, who was under the slavery and dominion of sin. This new freedom can now be experienced, as a new man through our day to day reliance upon the resurrected Christ.

Someone once remarked:

"Too many Christians are betweeners: they live between Good Friday and Easter, believing in the Cross but not entering into the power and glory of the Resurrection."

Jesus has given you His very own life-giving power through His resurrection so you can daily combat the old nature. This is His resurrection power which He supplies to your life (Romans 6:4,10,11,13). The emphasis is upon our union and identification with the life of the risen Lord. The Bible teaches that we are made alive spiritually, as a new man, through our regenerated union with the resurrected Christ.

Colossians 3:9-10 once again speak of this liberating transaction:

"Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.'

Ephesians 4:24

"And that ye (*have*) put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

We actually become a "new man" through our union with the resurrection of Christ. This is a positional truth and positional freedom that is given to us. Your position as a "new man" must become your practice. Your new freedom from your prior slave relationship to the sin nature must now be made a living reality in your life.

We all have seen floating markers in navigable lakes and waterways. These buoys are firmly anchored in strategic locations, and even though the waves of the sea splash around them, they float serenely in their appointed places. The tides rise and fall, but they are never carried away. When the great swells of the ocean come, they mount up and ride upon them as they cascade along. Often the mighty billows descend, submerging them for a moment, but immediately they rise to the top and bob back into their proper positions. This is a picture of the believer's victorious life in Christ. In Christ's strength the believer ascends with the buoyancy of faith over all spiritual opposition. The comforting power of the indwelling Christ gives our well-anchored soul victory even though at times we are almost overwhelmed by the fretful sea of outward circumstances around us. The whole point is this. We can live for God today in a victorious way through the risen power of the indwelling Christ.

Romans 6:10 says:

“For in that he (Christ) died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he (Christ) liveth (present tense – “keeps on living”) unto God.”

When Jesus died upon the cross, He died only once. There is no Mass or continual sacrifice in the Bible! When Jesus died He took all of sin's wages, its demands, its penalty, and its power upon Himself (“he died unto sin once”). He took every aspect of sin upon Himself and finished the work that He needed to do as our substitute. He died to take away the penalty and power of sin from our lives. The perfect sacrifice of Jesus satisfied the demands of a holy God and provided us with freedom from both the penalty and power of sin. The fact that He died only once would indicate that His death was sufficient to provide complete deliverance over sin. It never has to be repeated again.

Of course, Jesus also rose again and in some sense possesses a new resurrection relationship with the Father. Christ always lived in perfect relationship with God the Father, but now He has a new relationship with the Father as the Risen Savior and Victorious One, which means sin can never again be placed upon Him, sin can have no power over Him. So here is Paul's point. Jesus Christ arose from the dead and keeps on living with God in this new victorious

relationship. In a similar way, we can also possess a victorious relationship with God through our union, identification, and relationship with the risen Christ and the power that comes from His indwelling presence. This amazing truth when accepted by faith is a bondage breaker. We can know that Christ is not far from our personal struggles in life. We know that this is true because His risen life indwells us (Gal. 2:20) and is available at any moment to assist us in the times of temptation.

In one sense, Christ's own victorious and eternal resurrection relationship before the Father becomes our relationship with God as well through our union with Christ. Through Christ's victorious resurrection and our identification with Him, we become a "new man" or "new creation." As a result, like Christ, we have a new victorious relationship with God as our newfound Master.

In the Austrian town of Waidhofen an der Ybbs, there is an impressive clock tower with a clock that doesn't run. The tower was built in 1542 to commemorate the successful repulsion of a Turkish invasion, and the clock has been stopped at 11:45 a.m., the exact time of the victory. It seems that for believer's, time stops at Easter, the day of Christ's victory and ours!

Romans 6:6 explains how all of this took place:

"Knowing this, that our old man (*unregenerated person that we used to be in our lost estate*) is crucified (*co-crucified through identification*) with him, that the body of sin (*human body controlled by the sinful disposition*) might be destroyed (put out of business), that henceforth we should not serve sin (*be a slave to sin in our practical day to day living*)."

Romans 6:7 then goes on to say:

"For he that is dead (*he that positionally died with Christ*) is freed from sin (*the old slave relationship to sin*)."

Here is the reason why we should no longer allow sin to control us in our everyday living. It's because through our identification or union in Christ's death, we have been forever freed from the old slave relationship that we once had with sin. We have been freed from the powerful grip of the old nature upon our lives.

Romans 6:18 & 22 promise this:

“Being then made free from sin (*the old slave relationship to the sin nature*), ye became the servants of righteousness.”

“But now being made free from sin (*the old slave relationship to the sin nature*), and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”

These verses are once again teaching that we have been made a new person (“new man”) who is now set free from the old relationship that we once had with the sin nature. The practical results of this wonderful transaction mean that we can now live for God and righteousness instead of being dragged down into a life of sin by the old nature. Christ has made us into a new creation! We are a new creature who has been given the privilege to live free from the bondage of the devil and enslavement. What a marvelous work God has done for us!

“How marvelous! How wonderful!
And my song shall ever be:
How marvelous! How wonderful!
Is my Saviour’s love for me!”

Colossians 2:12 says:

“Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.”

Since the believer has been wonderfully identified with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, through the identifying, spiritual operation of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, he has become a “new man” and can now live a whole new way of life. The Bible teaches that we have been risen with Jesus Christ and are seated in heaven with Him (Eph. 1:3). Therefore, we should seek to live according to our heavenly relationship with Christ (Col. 3:1). Furthermore, since Christ’s life is residing within us (Col. 1:27), and we are in Christ (John 14:20), we possess His nature and power to live holy and righteously in this present world. We have God’s power and nature through our identification with Jesus Christ and this provides us with

everything that we need for godly living and victory. Divine power and a divine nature spell victory!

2 Peter 1:3-4 says:

“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

There is an old legend of a preacher who found a branch of a thorn tree twisted around so that it resembled a crown of thorns. Thinking it a symbol of the crucifixion, he placed it in his church on Good Friday. Early on Easter morning he remembered what he had done. Feeling it was not appropriate for Easter Sunday, he hurried into the church to clear it away before the congregation came. But when he went into the church, he found the thorn branches blossoming with beautiful roses. My friend, the cross is not the end of the story! Christ arose! Paul says that we arose with Him, so that through faith in His finished work, we become experientially identified to His new life and power. This is what it means to be under grace (Rom. 6:14-15).

Think of it this way. Jesus came out of the grave so we could join Him in the heavenlies (Eph. 1:3; 2:5), where at this very moment we are united to the living Lord and sharing in His victorious life and power. Within the very throne room of God, we are positioned in Christ, sharing His risen life and victory.

Colossians 3:1-3 says it beautifully:

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above (*the character and nature of the risen Christ*), where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead (*identified with Christ’s death and therefore have died to the old slave relationship to sin*), and your life is hid with Christ in God” (*double safety that ensure our salvation and sanctification*).

The believing sinner has been united to the life of Christ up yonder in Heaven. We are seated “in heavenly places in Christ” Jesus at the

right hand of God and have a “new man” position in Christ. Therefore, we should reflect and act upon the person who we are united to within this heavenly realm. We should think like the heavenly Christ and live godly like the heavenly Christ who we are associated with in the heavens. Furthermore, we should draw upon His endless resource of power as He manifests His risen life in our life down here on earth.

Ephesians 1:3

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”

Ephesians 2:6

“And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

The believer has an earthly address and a heavenly address! My earthly address at the present time is 31 South Market Street. But my heavenly address is at the right hand of the throne, where I am spiritually identified with the risen, ascended and victorious Christ, who is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high (Hebrews 1:3). We have already received multitudes of “spiritual blessings” in Christ which are the blessings bestowed within our human spirit by the saving work of the Holy Spirit. We have a living identification with the life of the risen and ascended Christ in Heaven that can never be erased! Because of this spiritual union we can share Christ’s very own life of power and victory today. This is because the heavenly union we have with Christ is experienced in our earthly union with Him (John 15; Gal. 2:20). What we possess at the right hand of God in our union with Jesus Christ must translate into our present earthly existence. T

The word “heavenly” speaks of that which is celestial or related to the atmosphere of Heaven. Christ is in Heaven seated at the right hand of the Father. Living in the heavenlies with the resurrected and ascended Christ (our union and identification with Him) means that we can be like Jesus and live altogether different than we used to live. Since His life is ours, we can live a whole new way of life when the riches of this heavenly position are experienced on earth where we live with Christ (“Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith” - Eph.

3:17). We now can possess new thoughts, attitudes, and motivations. We now can produce new godly actions and speak new words from our lips. Increasingly our life should begin to express the life of the Lord Jesus because He is our new life. We should be more like Jesus since we have entered into this new living relationship with Him.

“Be like Jesus, this my song,
In the home and in the throng;
Be like Jesus, all day long!
I would be like Jesus.”

Because of our union with the risen and exalted Christ, we are seated with Him in Heaven in a spiritual sense and also share in His victory over the spirit world of demons. Satan knows this! But do we really know this?

Hebrews 1:3 says:

“Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

The Old Testament priest could never sit down after offering the sacrifice because the work of sacrifice in the Old Testament was never finished. When Christ died upon the cross and rose again, He went back to Heaven and sat down beside the Father to indicate that His work was forever finished. Christ sat down and indicated that His work upon the cross was complete. Nothing could be added to His work. What He had accomplished was finished. He had paid for the penalty of our sin and rescued us from our old, slave relationship to sin. But Jesus also proclaimed by His resurrection that He had won the victory over the devil’s scheme of keeping men in spiritual death and bondage to their sins (Hebrews 2:14-15).

Ephesians 1:19-22 goes on to tell us about the victory we have over the devil and demons through the risen Christ and our co-resurrection with Him. “And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working (energizing) of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far

above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church.”

Here we see some of the most wonderful truths mentioned in the entire Bible. The risen Jesus is the great Victor! He won the victory over the hordes of hell and now we can share in that same victory through our spiritual identification with Him – His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. We can shout today, “Victorious Lord, victorious Lord!” Since all spiritual beings are “under his feet” we can be sure that Satan and his emissaries are also under our feet. In Christ, we possess full authority and victory over Satan and the underworld. This authority and victory is experienced through our union with Christ, when we draw upon the same power that brought forth Jesus Christ from the dead. Today, Christ’s resurrection power is shared with us through our identification with His resurrection and resurrection life (Rom. 6:6-11; Phil. 3:10).

Christ’s power is more than enough to provide us with victory in the trenches of daily living. The text says that He is sharing this power to “us-ward” through the working (energizing) of His own inherent power or strength. My friend, if you need spiritual energy, then you had better tap into the spiritual outlet of Jesus Christ, who is distributing His resurrection power to those of us who walk by faith in this endless power source.

Paul mentions three manifestations of God’s power that are seen in the life of Christ.

1. There is the power of God that raised Christ from the dead (Eph. 1:20a).

The Father’s tremendous power raised Christ from the dead and placed Him at His own right hand. Christ by the power of the Heavenly Father has been raised into the “heavenly places” or this celestial dwelling place of God’s throne. What tremendous power it took to accomplish this glorious feat! God’s energetic power which resurrected and exalted Christ in the past (Rom. 8:34; Eph. 2:6; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 12:2; 1 Peter 3:22) is the same power available to

believers in their present daily living (Phil. 3:10 – “The power of his resurrection”). The same power that raised Christ from the dead is inherently His own power and therefore is available for us today. What an amazing source of spiritual vitality, power, and strength for living the Christian life!

Colossians 1:11 says:

“Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.”

2. There is the power of God that gave Christ victory over all the creation (Eph. 1:21-22).

Jesus was raised in a powerful and victorious way. He went back to Heaven as the Victor over the entire created world. This includes all angelic powers and earthly powers as we know them today. The fact that Jesus Christ is seated high above or “far above” all angelic beings indicates His complete victory and authority over them. The power of God, seen in Christ’s ascension to the right hand of the Heavenly Father, results in Jesus Christ being exalted above every order of authority, both human and superhuman. Christ is the absolute Lord or sovereign ruler over every being. There can be no mistake about it! Christ is Lord of all, the absolute Victorious Sovereign ruler over all the creation. This is true in this present Dispensation of Grace (Col. 2:10 – “head of all principality and power”) as well as the future Kingdom Dispensation to come (1 Cor. 15:23-28; Phil. 2:8-11).

The words “principality” (rule), “power” (authority), “might” and “dominion” refer to the hierarchy of angelic beings (Rom. 8:38; Eph. 3:10; 6:12; Col. 1:16; 2:15). The power of God has raised Christ to the place of complete victory and rulership over the evil angelic forces that are against Him in this world. The outcome is indisputable. Jesus Christ is far above all rival powers. He is the Victorious Lord! Christ is the Mighty Conqueror! He is seated in Heaven above all the evil, spiritual rulers of this age. His work is finished.

Through His death on the cross, Jesus has paid the penalty for our sins, provided deliverance over the devil’s power and bondage (Col. 2:15). He then rose again to demonstrate the finality of this defeat

and rule over the hordes of hell as the Risen Victor. He is now ascended "far above" all the earthly powers that try to haunt and hurt our lives. This speaks of Christ's absolute, undisputed and unrivaled victory and authority over the demonic world. Since Christ is alive today, before the presence of God the Father, He becomes the self-proclaimed Victor over Satan and his entire evil host. Furthermore, because of our union with Christ, we also share in His victory over Satan.

The wonderful thing that we must comprehend is that we are also in Heaven right now with Christ and actually share in His victory. Because of our union and identification with the risen and ascended Christ, we share in His same victory over the evil world of spirits. We are personally identified with Christ's victory because today we are seated in the heavenlies in Christ (Eph. 1:3). We are spiritually tied to Christ and share His victory. What a transforming truth this can be for our lives. Satan knows that when we fully understand our victorious position in Christ that we will move on to higher ground in our Christian experience. To think that we are seated with Christ in Heaven and share in His victory over the world of demons and can experience this victory through His resurrection power is the ultimate truth that foils Satan's attempts to defeat our lives.

When the Moors set out to invade Spain, their general had them ferried across the narrow mouth of the Mediterranean. He set up a beachhead on a narrow ledge of rock below Gibraltar. Then he sent his tiny fleet back. Marching northward, the Moors met the Spanish defenders. The Moorish general said, "Before us is the enemy; behind us the sea. We have only one choice: to win!" And they did.

In a similar way, we can win the daily battles that we encounter with Satan because of the victory that we have already won through Christ in the heavenlies (before God's throne). We are winners through Christ! We must claim the victory that we already have and rely upon the resurrection power that is granted to "us-ward" (Eph. 1:19), by the heavenly Christ, who also manifests His life within us on earth (Gal. 2:20), to help us do combat with Satan and his evil forces.

Romans 6:4-5 says:

“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.”

Did you catch what Paul is saying? We have been raised with the Victorious Lord and share in His victory over our old slave relationship to sin and the evil hosts of the devil. This is why we can walk in newness of life today. We can live differently because we actually share the risen life of the Lord Jesus Christ who is now seated “far above” every demonic spirit in the world. We have participated in Christ’s victory and equally share in His position of victory over the evil world. Today we can claim our victory over the devil and all demonic spirits. There is victory in Jesus!

When I was in college, I used to attend the basketball games and play my trumpet. I would play that song “Victory in Jesus” in order to try and summon our school basketball players on to victory. It was a lot of fun. However, the real victory we have in Jesus is in Heaven! We are seated above every spiritual enemy, even the devil himself. Satan no longer has authority over our lives. We have absolute authority over the devil’s power as we claim Christ’s victory in Heaven and then go on to experience His resurrection power in our lives.

A traveler left Los Angeles just past midnight to fly to Atlanta. Midway in the trip, he saw a red blush in the eastern sky. With each minute the light grew brighter. Soon the entire sky was red and the earth below bathed in light. He looked at his watch. It was 4:10 a.m. in Los Angeles. His family was still in darkness there. He had been flying into the dawn! My friend, as we apply the victory of Christ to our lives through prayer, Bible study, and faith, we begin to fly into the dawn of Christ’s resurrection victory. The darkness of sin and Satan will be left behind us and we will fly into the sunrise of great of victory and blessing.

The Bible declares that every power is under the feet of Christ.

Ephesians 1:22 says:

“And hath put all things under his feet...”

If that doesn't indicate victory and authority, then nothing does! Listen, Christ has every force and foe under His feet. His exalted position in Heaven indicates His unmistakable authority and power over the demonic world below. He is Lord and Victor over the devil and all his powerful forces. He has them all under His feet. In fact, Christ stripped or disarmed these evil forces of their power over believer's lives through His death upon the cross.

Colossians 2:15

“And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”

1 John 3:8

“... For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil (*the sinful works of the devil upon our lives*).”

The victory was won on the cross. But the resurrection and exaltation of Christ in glory proves the finality of His work upon the cross. His risen, seated, and exalted position in the heavenlies indicates that all of Christ's work on the cross was sufficient to defeat the devil. His risen position indicates that Christ has successfully and finally given the believing sinner release from the devil's strongholds upon his life. Without the resurrection there could be no application of Christ's victory and authority to our lives. Remember that we are seated in God's throne room with Christ (Eph. 2:5). We share His life of victory and authority over the devil. We are inseparably identified with the life of Christ. Since the enemy is under His feet, then the enemy is under our feet as well, because we share in Christ's victory through our union with the risen Lord in Heaven.

“And hath put all things under his feet...” (Eph. 1:22).

This means that Satan and all of his demons at this very moment is also under your feet! This is true because we have entered into the realm of victory with Christ. We share His very life in Heaven and can claim this truth for our own life today. In Christ, through our heavenly

identification with Him, we have a legal authority over demonic forces. But we draw upon the power of His resurrection life within us to actualize this victory in our lives (Christ liveth in me” – Gal. 2:20). Think of it, the same power that gave Christ victory over the spirit world is the same power that we have residing within us today to give us victory in our day to day living.

3. There is the power of God that has made Christ head of the Church (Eph. 1:22b-23).

Ephesians 1:22-23

“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”

The Bible teaches that Christ is head (not king) of the church. The church is pictured as His body that He directs and leads and empowers. Here Paul emphasizes how Christ is head over His people (the church – the body of Christ) by empowering them with the fullness of His own living power. The word “fulness” (pleroma) depicts Christ’s complete abundance of power. This particular word was used for a ship that was filled full of freight merchandise, sailors, oarsmen, and soldiers.

In the New Testament, the body of believers is pictured as being filled with the presence, power, agency and riches of God in Christ. Christ’s own complete power resides within us, as His people, so that He “filleth all in all.” This suggests that Christ, who is the Head of the body, “fills” the church with all of His spiritual blessings. We do not complete Christ in any fashion but Christ completes us with His multitudes of blessings – power being one of those blessings. The church is filled with Christ in the sense that He meets all of her needs. As His body, the church manifests Christ to the world, but it can do so only as He fills it with himself – His gifts and power. So Christ fills the church in every way – “filleth all in all.” Again, this speaks of our abundant provision in Jesus Christ. We receive of His complete power and victorious blessings in life, as the life of the risen Christ is made available to each one of us, who are part of His living organism called the church.

We have now seen the demonstration of God's exceeding great power (Eph. 1:19). They range from raising Christ from the dead, seating Him on the throne, putting His enemies under his feet and forming and filling the church with His power. All of these actions demonstrate that God can empower us every day to grant us victory.

My friend, psychology can't do it, psychiatry can't do it, humanistic self-esteem can't do it, worship teams can't do it and emotionalism can't do it. If you want power for daily living then you must look to the risen life of the Lord, who sits victoriously over the enemy, but also lives within you to empower you when Satan and the sin nature try and defeat you. This power is the same mighty power of God that raised Jesus Christ from the dead, seated Him upon the throne, put all hell under His feet and formed the church. Yes, this "same exceeding greatness of his power" is channeled to you and me ("to us-ward" – Eph. 1:19) through our identification with the risen life of the Son of God.

Scientists have long believed that there were only four forces in nature: gravity, electromagnetism, the binding force of the atom, and the weak force of radioactive decay. Now they are debating the possibility of a fifth force. Christians have always believed in a fifth force. They believe in spiritual power. Of course, the end result of God's wonder-working power is to make us more like His son Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 3:18 says:

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Since we have Christ's life indwelling us, now we are to progressively grow into the likeness of Christ ("from glory to glory") or "from one glory into another glory." This means that the Christian life is to consist of progressive sanctification or holiness. We are to be changed from one manifestation of Christ's person likeness into another. We should be able to look in a mirror and see Christ's reflection in our lives. Although we are far from being completely like Christ, we should be changing our looks. We should increasingly manifest Christlikeness in our lives. Paul is merely using the physical

illustration of beholding our reflection in a mirror (“glass”) to demonstrate the need for each believer to keep check on their spiritual progress in life.

We should be growing more like Christ from one level of Christlikeness to another. The “glory” of the Lord speaks of the beauty, magnificence, splendor, and loveliness of Christ’s character. In short, we need to be gaining new victorious ground and becoming more holy and like Christ in our daily lives. We need to be making progress in our Christlikeness as the years pass by. Of course, we will not be perfect until we get a glorified body like His (1 John 3:2; Phil. 3:20-21). Until then, there will be many struggles and failures, but there must also be advancement. No advancement means that there is no steady growth. This means that we will remain stuck in the same unholy quicksand of our fleshly sins instead of becoming more like Jesus Christ.

“More like the Master I would ever be,
More of His meekness more humility;
More zeal to labour, more courage to be true,
More consecration for work He bids me do.”

I remember what an old Bible teacher once said to me:
“There is not victory all the way, but there is victory along the way!”

Our Responsibility

As Christians, we are now responsible to put this great record of truth found in Romans chapter six into everyday practice. Christ has put to death the old sinful man that we used to be when we were enslaved to the sin nature. He has also made us into a new man that can live for God through the power of the risen Christ. Now we must by faith claim all of this to be true. Faith is the victory! We have mentioned this already but at this point in our study, we need to reemphasize it and expand on it.

Despite the powerful passions that rise within us, God still holds us accountable for our actions. Behavior scientists think that people are animals. Therefore, they are not responsible for their actions. But this

is a theory that came from the doghouse! No pun intended. Galatians 2:20 explains the same positional truth as Romans chapter six. It also speaks of our responsibility to have faith in this new union and identifying relationship which we have with Jesus Christ. Paul states: "I am (*have been*) crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me (*the risen Christ*): and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God (*expressing faith in Christ's power*), who loved me, and gave himself for me."

The work of our crucifixion has already been accomplished in view of our crucifixion with Christ's death. Through our co-crucifixion with Christ, the old unregenerate person that we used to be has been defeated. In addition, we also live in a continual union and new relationship with Christ and His power. This occurs when we place our faith in the risen Son of God who lives within us and provides us with power for daily victory. The expression "faith in the Son of God" means that the Son of God is to be the object of our faith. The living Christ within us becomes a moment by moment source of instant, supernatural strength to overcome sin. Our faith in the Son and His power is to be a daily and continual experience in our lives. Christ's power is constantly available to us on a daily basis. We must place our faith in His risen life to receive the victorious power we need to refuse temptation.

Some time after the conversion of Augustine, he came face to face with the woman who had been his evil genius for many months, having dragged him deeper and deeper into the slavishness of sin until he had been freed from its bonds by the regenerating power of the cross. When he would have passed her with only a formal nod, she stopped him and said, "Augustine, do you not know me any more? See, it is I." Looking at her a moment, and knowing that she no longer held him in her evil spell, Augustine replied, "But it is not I."

This is what Paul says in Galatians 2:20. It is no longer I that lives ("yet not I"). This speaks of the old self of Paul and his human legalism and efforts to combat sin. The old man was put to death (Rom. 6:6). The old "I" is gone and a new relationship has emerged ("Christ liveth in me"). It's no longer I but Christ! We are now identified with the risen Christ and it is Christ within that provides us with victory and makes us into an altogether different person – a "new man" and

“new creation.” He has set us free from the power of the old slave relationship to sin. However, this verse is stressing the importance of applying the victory that Christ has provided to our own life by possessing a living and dynamic faith in the risen Christ (“and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me”).

We need to have faith in what Christ has done for us on the cross and believe that He is alive today, communicating His life and power to us on a daily basis, so we can possess victory today. Other verses also place responsibility upon every Christian to apply these positional and union truths to his everyday living by reckoning and mortifying (putting to death) the sins that are seeking to overtake his life (Rom. 6:11; Colossians 3:5, 9, 12-14, 18-20; Ephesians 4:25-32). In other words, by faith we embrace these truths and claim the victory, and we surrender our bodies to God, making the choice to not follow sin (Rom. 6:12-13; 12:1; 2 Cor. 7:1). In doing this, we do not fan the flame of sin but extinguish it.

The only way we can put out the temptation is to mortify or put to death the sin (Col. 3:5) that is stalking our lives. Christ already did the work to crucify the old self (Rom. 6:6) and flesh (Gal. 5:24) but when we claim our identifying victory with Christ, by surrendering our bodies to God, we refuse to allow sin to rule us and put it to death. Sin is already conquered by the great Conqueror (Jesus Christ) but we are called upon to apply this victory to our lives through faith, reckoning, yielding, and surrendering (Rom 6:11, 13; 12:1).

All these verses remind us of our responsibility to apply this new victorious position over the old way of life and sin nature to our own daily lives. We must by faith believe this to be true and put it into practice. Faith is the victory that overcomes the world! It is only through the power that we receive from our spiritual union with the risen Christ, that we can really put our new position of victory into practice and walk in a different and new way (Romans 6:4 - “newness of life”). Through the presence and power of the risen and indwelling Christ, we can experience our new way of life, which involves new power, new desires, new goals, new ambitions, new loves, new habits, new direction and a completely new outlook on life.

The hymnwriter said:

“Oh what a salvation this, that Christ liveth in me!”

Jesus Christ simply makes this new position of victory practical in our everyday life by giving us the power of Christ’s own resurrected life. His resurrection life provides each one of us with inward power so that we might claim our victory over the sin nature within us and the devil outside of us. The slave relationship has been broken by Christ’s death, now the day to day experience of this wonderful liberating truth can only be realized through Christ’s abiding, resurrection power within you.

Philippians 3:10:

“That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection...”

We need to know more of the power of Christ in our lives. His resurrection power is available to us on a daily and moment-by-moment basis. Our responsibility is to simply apply the victory to our own life.

How do we do this. Let’s look once again at Romans chapter six.

- a. We must believe the record is true (Romans 6:11a).

Romans 6:11

“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

As we have already mentioned, the word “reckon” means to count something as being true and trustworthy. The word “reckon” is actually a banking term. We might say it this way. We can bank on this as being true! We must remember that victory is not what we feel but what we know or count to be true! God says that He has given us a new position. God says that He has released us from the old person that we used to be and from a position of slavery to the sin nature. He has given us a new position of victory over the old nature and old self that was once controlled by sin. Now we must believe that this is all true. We must count on it as being true. Our feelings will deceive us and not give us the true picture of what we have in Christ.

We should not rely upon feelings. Instead, we must put our faith in the factual record of God's Word.

“Feelings come and feelings go,
And feelings are deceiving.
My warrant is the Word of God,
For nought is worth believing.”

The believer has died to the power and controlling dominance of the sin nature within his life. If you honestly do not believe this is true, then you will not experience victory. Each Christian must activate their faith in this positional truth and then he must put it into practice. This command is actually in the present tense (“keep on considering yourself to be dead indeed unto sin”). Have you heard the expression, “Put your money where your mouth is?” Well, in another sense, we must put our practice where our position is. We must practice this positional truth in our daily lives. We can only do this as we, by faith, reckon all of this as being true. In the time of temptation, or the evil day (Eph. 6:13), we must reckon or count these spiritual realities as being true and act upon them. If we don't reckon Christ's victory to be true, then we won't receive the benefits of it. Reckoning is really believing. It's the attitude that says, “Lord I believe, I believe it's true!”

Romans 8:13

“For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify (*put to death*) the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”

As the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit within our life reveals the power of Christ to us, it's only then that we can truly experience victory over the old sins of our past lives. This victory can only come about through a daily reckoning process, whereby we put our position in Christ into practice. We must learn in a practical way, to mortify or put to death the old sins of our life as they seek to invade our heart and body. This involves saying “no” to sin as we, by faith, yield to the power of the risen Lord. In a very practical way, we can “mortify” or put to death the sinful deeds that overtake our bodies by claiming Christ's victory, which He has already accomplished for us.

Colossians 3:5 also speaks about the practical reckoning of this positional truth: “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.” As mentioned previously, Christ has already crucified the old person (the old self) that we used to be by defeating the power of the sin nature over our body and life (Romans 6:6). We cannot do the actual spiritual work of crucifying the old self and person. However, by faith, we can and must reckon this crucifixion to be true and in a practical way put to death those sinful deeds which haunt and seek to overtake our life. This is accomplished by saying “no” to sin as we accept by faith what Christ has already done for us on the cross, freeing us from our old slave relationship to sin. Yes, faith is still the victory!

“Faith is the victory!
Faith is the victory!
O glorious victory,
That overcomes the world”

b. You must yield to the power of Jesus Christ.

Romans 6:11-13

“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin (*through your identification with Christ’s death we are no longer subject to the power and bondage of sin*), but alive (*spiritually alive*) unto God (*we are born again, receive new life, possessing a new Master relationship with Him*) through Jesus Christ our Lord (*our union in His death and resurrection*). Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members (*members of your body*) as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God (*as your new Master*), as those that are alive from the dead (*spiritually alive through sharing the risen life of Christ*), and your members (*members of your body*) as instruments of righteousness unto God.”

We are spiritually “alive unto God” (possess a new Master relationship with God through our regenerated life) “through” our union with the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Because we have been raised with Christ, we have been given His own life and regenerated or born again. In other words, we cease to be an unregenerate

person and have now been regenerated “through” the indwelling, risen life of the Son of God. This means that we now possess a new relationship with God, a relationship of obedience and loyalty to a new Master. We can now follow God in obedience and holiness because of this new life. Because of our new Master relationship to God, through our union with the risen Christ and His new power, we should no longer allow the sin nature to reign or master our lives as a Christian.

We have been supplied with the powerful life of the risen Son to assist us in our daily battles, so that we do not have to obey the lusts and desires that the old nature generates. This also means that we should honor God as our Master by continually yielding the members of our body to Him such as our feet, hands, mouth, eyes, ears and sexual organs. We are to keep on yielding our bodies to our new Master instead of to the sin nature. Since God is our new Master we are to obey and honor Him as our Master through the power of the risen Christ.

We are “alive from the dead” which means we have been rescued from the realm of spiritual death by regeneration and given the new life of Christ. The message of New Testament, positional, and identification truth means that we have the power of the indwelling Christ, so that we can keep yielding to God as our new Master, and present the members of our body in a holy fashion to Him (Rom. 12:1). This action of presenting the members of our body (eyes, ears, feet, tongue, hands, sexual organs) to God must be done on a daily and consistent basis.

Romans 6:14

“For sin (*expressions of sin that stem from the sin nature*) shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law (*as a way of living or sanctification*), but under grace (*as a way of living or sanctification*).”

To not allow sin to have dominion over our lives is our own personal responsibility. We can say “no” to the power of the sin nature since we share a risen union with Christ and His indwelling power. The sin nature no longer must dominate or control our life. The reason is because we are no longer under the law as a governing principle for

our lives. As believers we are now living under grace. This is good news!

The context of Romans chapter six is dealing with sanctification. So, obviously Paul is talking about our relationship to the law as a means of sanctification. The point seems to be that we do not have to live by the law for sanctified living and meeting God's requirements for holy living. Living by the law without the risen indwelling of Christ is the way Paul existed in his past, unsaved life. Therefore, he is handing out a new pattern of living in the present Dispensation of Grace, which focuses on the risen life of Jesus Christ within the believer to produce all the power needed to live holy and victorious before God. The old way of life was to try and use the external law as a means of sanctification and ultimate acceptance before God. The new way of living under the present Dispensation of Grace is to live totally dependent upon the risen Christ to provide power and victory, so that we can live a sanctified or holy life.

Paul is teaching that the believer is no longer under the external law as a means to obtain a victorious life of sanctification or holiness. This was a picture of our unsaved past. No external law can set us free from our slavery to sin. Only the new manifestation of God's grace, as seen in the life of the risen Lord, can provide victory over sin and freedom from its bondage ("sin shall not have dominion over you"). Paul implies by this statement that living under the rule of the law would allow sin to have dominion over our lives. This is illustrated in the next chapter (Rom. 7:7-14). Paul discovered that the law only compels us to sin more if we view it as our rule for living. Therefore, the believer's rule of life today is not to be found at Mount Sinai but at Mount Calvary. Being "under grace" speaks of the victory of sanctification won at the cross (Romans 6:6) and the constant flow of that victory into our lives through the power of the risen Lord (Romans 6:4, 8-10).

Law can provide none of these things for our lives. Only God's grace, as seen in the New Testament wonder of the believer's identification with Christ's death and resurrection, can bring these grace blessings into our lives. The law has no delivery power. Trying to follow the law for victory is like trying to take a bone from a rotweiler dog that has not eaten for three days! It takes the new governing principle of

grace, which is the indwelling life of the risen Christ, to bring victory and holiness into our life.

The expression of “grace” focuses on and highlights what we have been studying in Romans chapter six. We have died with Christ. Our “old man” or unregenerate person relating to the person that was under sin’s slavery and bondage has been crucified with Christ and put to death. We have been raised with Christ and share His life of power and victory as a “new man” who is freed from sin’s power. Therefore, we can put our “new man” position into practice through the indwelling power of the risen Christ. This is the magnificent wonder of the grace of God being displayed in our lives today within the present dispensation. The Grace Dispensation obviously centers on the indwelling life of Jesus Christ which provides us with victory and sanctification. Instead of possessing an “old man” relationship enslaved to sin, we have a “new man” relationship with God through our risen identification with the risen Christ.

Romans 6:4

“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

Newness of life! How can this be? It’s because we have been spiritually identified with the resurrection of Christ and have received of His own resurrection life and power to give us daily victory and a new way of life. Furthermore, because of our union in the death and resurrection of Christ within the new dispensation, we have also been set free from the external law as the means for victory and holy living (sanctification). It’s new life – not law! This is because we are no longer under the law as a primary ruling factor for Christian living! We died to the old slave relationship that we once had with the law in our unsaved past. According to Paul, this was also a relationship of dependency upon the law for holiness, sanctification and ultimately a legalistic approach to salvation. Paul had this relationship to the law in his unsaved past (Phil. 3:4-6). Paul even learned that living the Christian life by the law, through looking at the law for assistance and power, could not sanctify him or make him holy (Romans 7).

We must remember that through regeneration we have been brought into a living union with the resurrected Christ and can now depend totally and completely upon the power of Christ (not law) for victory in our Christian living. This is what it means to be under grace. What grace is this!

Someone has remarked:

“The proof of Christianity is not a book but a life. The power of Christianity is not a creed but a Christian character; and wherever you see life that has been transformed by the grace of God, you see a witness to the resurrection of Jesus.”

The resurrected Christ living within us, infusing us with His divine power on a daily basis, is the grace way of living or rule for living today. I like to call this spiritual biology. Through Christ's victorious work upon the cross and the outworking or application of this work to our lives, through His indwelling presence and resurrection power, we can walk in newness of life. The grace walk of the present dispensation is that new relationship that we have with Christ. It's that relationship which provides us with new, daily assistance and power that in some measure was not previously realized by the saints in the past dispensations. It certainly was not experience in our lives before salvation. There is a new revelation and new power constantly available and noticeably different in the present Grace Dispensation. It is the victory and power that we have through our identification with the death and resurrection with Christ. The grace walk is the resurrection walk which relies upon the resurrection power of Jesus Christ within us (Phil. 3:10).

Let's make some application of grace living to the overemphasis on rules. Some Christian try and follow a list of rigid rules in order to produce holiness in their lives. They feel that cold conformity to a set of rules is a safety zone for holiness. Attempting to follow these rules becomes a way for them to maintain holiness. However, they soon discover that the old nature still overtakes their lives. The problem with rules usually is not the rules. There are many commands in the Bible and many rules which are absolutely necessary for our Christian life. There is also a need to formulate Biblical and separated standards to help discipline our lives so we might not participate with worldliness (2 Cor. 6:14-17). However, the problem arises when

people get their eyes on their own human attempts to follow rules as the way to possess victory. Paul tried this in his own Christian life and failed miserably when he tried to embrace the rules of the law.

Romans 7:1

“Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?”

Romans 7:14 says:

“For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.”

Romans 7:24

“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

This is the result of trying to live under law or make the law a ruling factor for our daily living. The law brings defeat into our life instead of victory. General speaking, laws and rules themselves are not the way of victory. Attempting to follow rules without divine assistance is an endless path of defeat. What every true believer must do is turn to the grace of God for victory as displayed in the person of the risen Christ who lives within us! We must have faith in the risen Son of God who lives within us to provide us with power for daily victory (“faith in the Son of God” – Gal. 2:20). Whenever we get our eyes off of this wonder working power of grace in this present dispensation and focus our eyes on a system of laws for victory, it’s then that we will find ourselves living in defeat.

Romans 7:6 says:

“But now we are delivered from the law (*its slavery, bondage and condemnation*), that being dead (*spiritually dead*) wherein we were held (*held under its sinful bondage*); that we should serve in newness of spirit (*Holy Spirit*), and not in the oldness of the letter” (*relying on law to sanctify us*).

Here is the secret of victory! Instead of depending upon external rules or regulations for help and power to make us holy, we must trust in the inward presence of the Holy Spirit to provide us with the power to live holy and victoriously. The context determines if the “s” should be capitalized, since there was no capitalization in the Greek language.

Here it seems to point to the New Covenant ministry and power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The believer in Christ has a new way to serve God and bring forth the fruit of holy living. It is through the Holy Spirit revealing and unleashing the power of the risen Son of God to our lives.

From the standpoint of New Testament revelation, we no longer live under the law, which is best explained in this way. We do not possess a legal relationship with a legalistic system or code that could not save or sanctify us but can now possess a saving and sanctifying relationship with Jesus Christ, while living under grace during the Grace Dispensation, which is the GREAT and most glorious dispensation! (2 Cor. 3:8-10).

The new expression of grace for today is that power comes internally – not externally. New Testament grace comes with “batteries included!” There is a marvelous, transforming wonder of the grace of God that is being manifested in our lives today. The Holy Spirit transforms our lives from within and not from without. This means we cannot depend upon the “externals” themselves to bring about holiness and victory. Furthermore, this new inward power to live victoriously through the Spirit keeps us from what is termed as “the oldness of the letter” (the law) which only brought defeat, bondage and condemnation into our lives. Looking to the law for victory means defeat and condemnation. Mount Sinai provides no power for change and fruitful living.

“Run, run and do, the Law commands
But gives me neither feet nor hands.
Better news the Gospel brings,
It bids me fly and gives me wings.”

Out with the old and in with the new! Out with the “oldness of the letter” and in with the “newness of Spirit.” The “oldness of the letter” will constantly spell defeat in our lives but the “newness of the Spirit” spells victory. This is the story of the grace of God in the present dispensation. God has in one sense internalized the law or moral absolutes of God within our own human spirit through the moral directives and will of the new nature (1 John 3:9). The Holy Spirit writes the sensitivity of God upon our hearts. But God has also

provided the power from within by the Holy Spirit so we can serve in (“newness of life – Rom. 6:4) and (“newness of Spirit – Rom. 7:6”).

As a result of the New Covenant work of the Spirit taking place in our hearts, we can now serve and live for Jesus Christ out of love, gratitude and joy instead of the fear of being condemned and judged by God’s legal code and standard, and we can also by the Spirit’s divine enablement or power live victoriously over sin, experiencing a newfound freedom and liberty from sin’s bondage. This is the “newness of the spirit” which is contrasted to the “oldness of the letter” (the old unloving, insensitive, enslaving, legalistic, powerless, condemning and futile relationship we had with the law in our unsaved state).

There is a significance placed upon new things in the present economy of grace – new life, new Spirit, new creation, new wine. The permanent residency of the Holy Spirit in our lives today brings us into a constant awareness of the presence of Jesus Christ, so that we can walk differently and live for the glory of God. And this is accomplished by the infusion of God’s power within us.

Romans 8:4 says:

“That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

In the present dispensation God’s law is written on the inside of our hearts through the Spirit’s permanent residency. This means that the desire to live according to the law comes from the inside as the Holy Spirit leads us to live according to God’s truth. You will notice that the law is not fulfilled “by us” but “in us” as the Holy Spirit produces a new dynamic of power within our personal lives to live righteously and according to God’s holy pattern.

Galatians 5:18 also says:

“But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.”

To walk in the Spirit is to depend upon His power and fruit to produce a new life of holiness and victory. When we are trusting in the provision of the Holy Spirit within our lives, then we will not trust in the outward external codes of the law (“the oldness of the letter”) or any

laws, for that matter, to provide victory and holiness in our lives. The Holy Spirit produces so much fruit and holiness in our lives that there is no reason to try and use an external law to bring holiness and victory into our lives. The law was never created to bring victory into our lives.

D. L. Moody used to say:

“Law tells me how crooked I am; grace comes along and straightens me out.”

Of course, the law did not die, because God’s law still rules over men in their lost estate and shows them how sinful they are before God (Romans 3:19; Gal. 3:24; 1 Timothy 1:9-10). The law still motivates people to sin even more as it stirs up the old nature to rebellion (Romans 7:5). Therefore, to try and use the law as a means of power to create holiness and victory is like throwing a match into a can of gasoline. It actually will ignite the passions of the old nature and stir up the old nature to rebel even more. It will not provide any ground for victory. However, the believing sinner has died to their old, enslaving relationship to the law, which was a relationship that spelled bondage, defeat and by itself gave no assistance for holy living.

Romans 7:4 once again reads:

“Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law (*our old salve relationship to the law - when we tried to use the law as a source for holy living*) by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead (*Jesus Christ*), that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”

To be “dead to the law” does not mean that we should now lead lawless lives and fail to obey God’s moral codes and commandments (antinomianism) or fail to have any rules and regulatory principles that enable us to apply Biblical commands and principles to our lives. It simply means that we no longer use the law as a rule for victorious living. The law (nor any rules) are the central point or focus for our New Covenant way of living. We no longer are dependent on the law for sanctification or holy living. In short, to be “dead to the law” simply means that the motivation and dynamic of our lives does not come from the law or any legal code of rules or regulations. It comes from God’s grace through our union with the risen Christ, as the Holy Spirit

reveals the wonder and power of Christ's life to us. Our victory is only by God's gracious provision through our union in Christ's death and resurrection. Our old slave relationship to the law has been severed and we no longer are dependent upon an external code for victory. Paul likens his past, unsaved life to living under law and his new way of life as living under grace.

It is the grace of God being revealed within us, through the presence of the Holy Spirit, which allows us to be free from sin's powerful enslavement. The Holy Spirit helps us to know and experience the provision we have through our union with the risen Christ. The Holy Spirit brings us to the place where we must trust in the power of the Son of God to whom we are joined. This is why the Holy Spirit is called "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:2). It's because the Holy Spirit unleashes and reveals the life of the Son of God to our own lives in a wonderful way. The Holy Spirit wants to reveal the things of Christ to our lives (John 16:13-14).

When tempted, learn the lesson of the dog. Anyone who has trained a dog to obey knows this scene. A bit of meat or bread is placed on the floor near the dog and the master says, "No!" which to the dog means – don't touch it. The dog will usually take his eyes off the food, because the temptation to disobey would be too great, and instead will fix his eyes on the master's face. What is the lesson of the dog? Always look to the master's face! We are to realize that through regeneration, we have been brought into a new relationship with God. God is now our Master and we should obey Him instead of our old nature. We must keep our eyes on the Master instead of the morsels of this world! We can now yield ourselves to God as our Master by trusting in the power of Christ's victorious provision for our lives through the Spirit's inward ministry.

The point is this. We are now "alive" spiritually or regenerated (Rom. 6:11, 13) and can possess victory over sin, something that we could not do in our unregenerate state. Regeneration means that we have the very life of Christ living within us to grant us victory. You can now make God your Master instead of sin because of the risen life of Jesus Christ within us. We can now yield our body to God as our new Master. The Master has called us into this new relationship with Christ.

Since Jesus is dwelling within us, there is new power available to us to live for God. We can now say “no” to sin (Rom. 6:11) and yield our life to God as our Master instead of the old sins that once ruled our lives (Rom. 6:12-13). When we were unsaved, the sin nature used our body as an instrument for sin. Now, God wants us to yield to Christ’s power within and use the members of our body (the ears, eyes, mouth, feet) as an instrument for righteous living. What a change this is! This is something you could never do before, until God gave you this new position and power to live victoriously.

At this point, let us review the victorious truth about our identifying death, burial, and resurrection with Jesus Christ.

- As Christ died once, so we have died only once to the old unregenerate person (the old self) we used to be. This means that we are no longer under the power of the sin nature, the old slave relationship we had with sin has been severed (Rom. 6:6, 6:10).
- Our death with Jesus is something that has already happened in the past. According to God’s reckoning, we have already gone through this death with Jesus Christ (Romans 6:2-3; Galatians 2:20).
- By faith, we are to reckon ourselves dead to the old slave relationship that our body once had with the sin nature (“the body of sin”) and dead to the power of the old nature through our identification or union with Christ’s victorious death (Rom. 6:6; 6:11a).
- We By faith, we must also reckon that we are spiritually alive and possess Christ’s resurrection life and power to give us victory (Rom. 6:4, 11).
- We must yield to God as our Master and put into practice the truth about our victorious death and resurrection with Jesus Christ, relying upon the resurrection power of the Lord to grant us victory (Romans 6:13-14).

Romans 12:1

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is your reasonable service.*”

Each one of us as believers must take the initiative to surrender and sacrifice our bodies to God if we are going to have real victory. Again, this is the practical side to the positional truth of our co-crucifixion and co-resurrection with Christ.

If we know about the positional victory provided through the cross and resurrection of Christ, but refuse to act upon this positional victory by faith, then this victory will not be actualized and experienced in our lives. We must reckon it to be true, yield to God as our Master, by trusting in the victorious provision of the indwelling Christ (Rom. 6:11-13).

Daniel 1:8

“But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat ...”

2 Corinthians 7:1

“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

This means that we can refuse to sin when we apply this positional victory to our lives through faith, which is sometimes accompanied by aggressive prayer and reciting God's truth (Eph. 6:10-18). Here is an illustration to simplify the wonderful truth about the victory that is presented in Romans chapter six. A car will not move anywhere if it stays in the park position. You must actively put the car in gear before it will take you to the appropriate destination. In a similar fashion, you must engage the victory that Christ provided for you. The gear shift is in your hand. What are you going to do with it? By faith, you must move the gearshift out of the neutral zone by actively yielding to the resurrected Christ for power and apply His victory to your own daily walk. Nothing will happen if you remain in neutral! When you remain in neutral you will be defeated. You must put the gearshift into drive and yield to Christ's power and victory so it will be applied to your life.

The application of victory to our lives ultimately involves loving God more than our sinful inclinations and temptations. If we do not have victory, it's because we love the darkness more than the light (1 John 1:7). It's because we enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season (Heb. 11:25) more than expressing loving obedience to our Lord. Jesus asked in John 21:15: "lovest thou me more than these?" We might apply what Jesus asked Peter to the way that we sometimes love our sins more than Christ (John 14:15). All power is at our disposal through our identification with Christ's victory but we must love our Master more than our sins.

Philippians 2:13 reminds us:

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

In the present economy of grace, we are given both divine determination and divine power to live victoriously and godly. The will or incentive to live for God comes from the new nature whereas the power comes through the indwelling presence of the resurrected Christ. But all of this new determination, drive and power will not help us if our heart decides to go on sinning. Psalm 42:1 says, "As the hart (deer) panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." God is still looking for yielded hearts and lives. This is why God instructs His people in Romans 6:13 to "yield yourselves to God."

A Summary Outline of Romans 6

- The old position ("old man") - (6:6a) = an unregenerate person without spiritual life, whose body was controlled by sin and the sin nature ("body of sin").
- The new position ("new man") - (6:11b) = a regenerate person who has been given spiritual life ("alive unto God"), who now has God as his Master and the risen Christ as his Victor.
- The new power (6:4-5) = a believer who is now under the operating and ruling factor of sanctifying grace whereby the risen life of Jesus Christ is constantly available for daily victory.

- The new purpose (6:6b) = to be free from sin's power and rule in our body and life ("that body of sin might be destroyed").
- The new plan (6:11-13) = to believe ("reckon") what God says about this new position and "yield" to God as our Master through Christ's indwelling power.
- The new dispensation (6:14-15) = to live under grace, the new method of sanctification for the Dispensation of the grace of God, which is described as possessing a sanctifying union and identification with Christ's death and resurrection.

Remember that everything that God asks us to do is possible because of what Christ has already accomplished and done for us!

The Summary Statement on Romans Chapter Six

The death of Christ upon the cross takes away the "old man" (unregenerate relationship) which we had with sin and provides the groundwork for our salvation and victory. The resurrection of Christ provides the "new man" (regenerated relationship) which we now have in union with the risen Christ. This new position we have with the risen Christ provides power for us to live in daily victory over self, sin, and Satan.

The new prayer for victory

"Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you died and made me a new man or person in Christ. I believe that your death upon the cross has put to death and defeated the old person that I used to be, when I was a slave to sin. I believe that sin no longer must conquer my life and bring my body under its rule. I believe that You have released me from the power of the sin nature. I believe that I have Your own risen life indwelling me. At this moment, I want to draw upon Your power to give me victory. I yield to your indwelling person and power and claim the victory that you have provided for me already. I can't do it without You, dear Lord Jesus. I need Your resurrection power operating in my life today and right now. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Remember:

You are not fighting for victory; you are fighting from victory!

Really, the victory is already ours! This is the victory that Christ has already provided for us in His death upon the cross and through the application of His resurrection life and power to our lives. By faith we must claim the victory by relying on Christ for His power and help.

2 Chronicles 20:15 echoes the wonderful truth:

“Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God’s.”

While Jehoshaphat was king of Israel, the land was being threatened by the enemy. The natural plans would have been to recruit more men, step up the production of ammunition and improve their military strategy. However, the king knew that the victory was in God’s hands (2 Chronicles 20:3). This applies to our study in Romans chapter six. You can’t win the battle because the battle is God’s. He has already won the battle for you!

British writer Guy King told of standing on a railroad station platform, waiting for a train from London. Another train pulled into the station from the opposite direction, and the members of a soccer team got out. The players were returning from a game in another city. News had not reached home as to the outcome of the game, so those awaiting the team didn't know if they had won or lost. A small boy wiggled his way through the crowd and asked one of the players the score. As soon as he heard it, he ran excitedly up and down the platform shouting, "We won! We won!" That youngster was brimming with joy because he identified himself with the players. In one sense, their victory was his victory.

Because of our identification with Christ’s death and resurrection, we too can say, “We won!” Each believer can live triumphantly today because approximately 2,000 years ago Jesus died on the cross and defeated the “old man” we once were under the power of sin and the sin nature. In rising from the dead, Jesus now provides us with His own living power, so we can put into practice the new slave relationship which we now have with God. As the little boy shared in

the victory of the sports team, so we share in Christ's victory today through faith in His death and resurrection work.

Bill Mann was one of the great singing voices in the Christian church in this nation. Some years ago he told a pastor about the most special concert in his life. It was after the concert was over and he returned to his dressing room. Waiting for him there was a woman who was blind, deaf, and mute. Through the lady who was with her, she asked if he would sing for her the last song he sang in the concert. "Surely," he said. And standing only five inches from his face--and placing her fingers on his lips and on his vocal cords, he sang again, "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?" As he finished singing, a tear trickled down the face of Helen Keller. Indistinctly, she said, as the words were repeated by the lady with her, "I was there!"

Dear friend, we were there too! Romans chapter six tells the story that every Gospel believer died with Christ to share in His victory over the old sinful life. Furthermore, we have been risen with Christ in order to experience the victory that Christ won for us on the cross. We were there! What a gracious provision has been made for New Testament saints living under the New Covenant. What a joy it is to experience God's wonder working grace in our lives today!

A prison inmate scratched on the wall of his cell his philosophy of life: "Born to lose." But this is not the philosophy of the Christian life. Christians believe that they were born to win!