

## **Being Set Free from the Enemy Within**

### **Romans 6**

#### **Introduction:**

1. As a nation, we won our independence in 1776. Tomorrow, we celebrate Independence Day.
2. Since 1776, America has yet to be overcome by enemies without, although there have been many nations who would have loved to defeat and destroy us.
3. As we look throughout history, we find that most great nations are ultimately destroyed from within. They are weakened from within.
4. In the same way, our enemies without (Satan and his world system) can **influence** believers, but they can't defeat and destroy us.
5. If a believer in Christ is to be defeated and destroyed, it will happen by the enemy within us. The Bible calls it "*the flesh*." The power of sin is said to dwell in our flesh, and in our flesh, dwells "*no good thing*." **Romans 7:18**
  - This is why kids don't have to be taught to sin or be selfish.
6. Paul describes this battle in Galatians 5:17. We can all relate to this. But how can we be **set free** from these fleshly desires and this fleshly pull towards sin which will ultimately destroy our life?

#### **First, understand your union with Christ.**

1. No more than you can stop your car by dragging your feet outside the door, can you stop the power of the flesh through your own sheer will-power and strength.
  - You must understand the function of your brake system and how to apply those brakes.
2. In the same way, in order to overcome the enemy within, we must know and understand that God has given every believer a divine brake system when it comes to our sinful actions, tendencies, and addictions.
3. Romans 6:22 declares that we have been made free from sin. We no longer **have** to obey its pull to go our own sinful way. Why? Romans 6:3-4 provides the answer.
  - We have been immersed or included in all the activities of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. We are recipients of every benefit.

4. God considers it as having happened to us and wants us to consider it the same way. Verse 6 says – “*Knowing this...*”
5. Before being united with Christ, we had no choice but to serve sin. If we were better served to sin, we did it – lusting, lying, being selfish, etc. We were the **servants** of sin.
6. But Paul says that the control and power of indwelling sin has been destroyed. Our flesh itself is not annihilated, but its power is broken. Romans 6:7
  - In the same way, you are no longer required to obey the flesh. You don’t have to serve the flesh’s desires. Romans 6:14
7. The flesh’s power to demand obedience has been broken. You can still obey its desires if you want to, but your life is under new management. You are no longer under the power of sin. A new Landlord has taken over.

**Second, live in the reality of your union with Christ.**

1. I can know something mentally, but then live my life in a way that completely contradicts what I know.
2. In Romans 6:11, Paul uses the word “*reckon*” which means “to count it as reality.” God knows you have freedom from indwelling sin, but you must live in that reality every day. You must count it true for you!
  - You can continue paying the old landlord if you choose to, but there is no need to.
3. We “*reckon*” things every day.
  - **Illustration:** speed limit sign.
4. You say, “But I don’t **feel** free.” It may feel like you have to give in to sin, but that is not reality. You can’t make decisions based on how you feel in the moment, but by the **facts** of God’s Word.
5. What happens when you reckon a thing to be true only when it feels like it is true? This kind of living results in a roller-coaster type of Christian walk. We display total instability – up, down, moody, and unpredictable. James 1:7-8
6. Your feelings will lead you astray. They will many times result in selfish, fleshly thinking. They will keep you trapped in a world of make-believe.
7. So we need to know some things, reckon them to be true, but also...

**Third, yield to the truth of God.**

1. You can know the truth and count it as reality, but there comes a decision time when you have to choose what you will yield to – the old landlord or your new Lord – Jesus Christ.
2. You say, “But that is precisely my problem. I’m no good at yielding.” Sure you are. Paul reminds us that we have all been experts at yielding. We have done it for years, only to the wrong master!  
Romans 6:13, 17
3. What is the result of this kind of yielding? Romans 6:21
4. So Paul says in verse 19, “*As ye have yielded...*” What are the results? vs. 22
5. So when faced with fleshly temptations, we have a clear choice: “Will I deny God and say “No” to Him, or will I deny self?” Will I please God or please myself? Romans 6:16-17
6. This is incredibly simple. Paul does not give a long, complicated series of therapy steps. He says, “You got into this mess by obeying the flesh and denying God, and the only way out is to start denying the flesh and obeying God.”
7. It is so true. How do sinful, fleshly habits occur? One decision at a time. There was a time when a person took their first drink, took their first puff, lost their temper for the first time, had a critical spirit, gossiped, etc.
  - The world would call it a lack of self-discipline, but the Bible calls it a lack of obedience to God.
8. We get in bondage to fleshly attitudes and actions one decision at a time, and you get out the same way. We have His Word, and we have His Spirit to lead and convict us, but we aren’t listening. There has to come a point when we decide to listen and yield to God, to His Word, and to truth.

#### **Fourth, feed the Spirit, not the flesh.**

1. When your flesh is constantly being bombarded with ungodly influences, and if the believer is not exercising their will against these things, the Bible is clear that it will wear you down. 2 Peter 2:7-8
2. If you are desiring to restrain your flesh, then you are foolish to feed it. 1 Peter 2:11; Galatians 6:7-8
3. When you feed your flesh, you make it extremely hard to say “No” to it in any area. Its pull and control is stronger. It is like sending ammunition to your enemy. 1 John 2:15-17

4. Personal separation from those elements of the believer's environment that feed the flesh is not optional; it is critical. Believers naively say, "I've grown in Christ and can indulge in these things. I have liberty in Christ."
5. By indulging your fleshly appetites, you wear down your spiritual immune system and it ceases to function. You quench the Spirit by indulging and feeding the flesh. You can never overcome the enemy within until you stop your contact with the contaminating elements around you.
  - "*Mortify*" – it indicates the process of deadening the power of the flesh – literally Paul meant that we are to drain the life out of the flesh through the power of God's Holy Spirit. Romans 8:13; Colossians 3:5
  - Without mortification, sin darkens the mind. And if left unkempt, the lusts of the flesh grow like weeds. Mortification is the soul's vigorous opposition to the fruitless self-life.
6. Whatever is dragging you down must be put off. And then you must build your immune system up through feeding on truth. Romans 13:14
7. How flesh-free is your lifestyle? If you starve your spirit and constantly feed the flesh, the enemy within will overcome you.
8. But if you starve the flesh and consistently feed the spirit, you will be set free from the enemy within.