

## The Lord Jesus said ... “My Sheep

Romans presents three aspects of God’s salvation.

**Justification-** salvation from sin’s penalty 1-5

**Sanctification-** salvation from sin’s power 6-8

**Glorification-** salvation from sin’s presence 8

Romans chapters one through five deal with the sinner being saved from the penalty of sin which is death. It is the death of God’s Son, Jesus Christ the Lord, that fully paid that penalty for the one who trusts Him.

For example, a son gets a traffic ticket and then joins the military and goes overseas. The father sees the ticket and, rather than ignoring it and letting the law prosecute the son, pays the ticket by sending in his own money on his son’s behalf. Now that the law has received the money, it has no desire or power to judge the son for his violation. The penalty of his crime was paid in full by another. He is free from judgment.

Believers in the resurrected Christ are told, “being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him” (Rom. 5:9). His blood paid the penalty.

Romans 8:16-39 also teaches that the believer will be glorified with a new body at resurrection day. That body will not have sin in it and will be incorruptible and immortal – like the Lord Jesus. Then the believer will be free from the very presence of sin.

However, until that happens, the believer does not only have Christ in him, but also has a dying body because of sin (Rom. 8:9,10). As Paul discovers in Romans 7:21: “sin that dwelleth (lives) in me.”

Overcoming sin is the subject discussed in Romans 6-8. Here we learn how the gospel provides power over sin in our daily lives. Not power to eliminate its presence yet, but power to overcome its deeds now.

**The death of Christ deals with sin’s penalty. The coming of Christ deals with sin’s presence. The Spirit of Christ deals with sin’s power to control a life.**

It is the truth of winning the war over sin (6-8) that we want to consider in this chronicle.

## hear my voice, and

Romans 6-8 is a trilogy of thought.

### Chapter 6 - *why we shouldn’t sin*

*Key question:* “shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?” (6:1)

*The subject:* the Christian’s life-style – not destiny

*The purpose:* to give the logic of “why” a believer should not sin – not *how* to overcome sin

*Dominant thought:* Christ is our representative, not substitute – Christ *as* me, not *for* me

*The Negative:* “our old man,” not our lower self but our former self. Here sin is a master

*Logic:* judicial – not experiential

### Chapter 7 - *what activates sin*

*Key question:* “Is the law sin?” (7:7)

*The subject:* the discovery of indwelling sin

*The purpose:* to vindicate God’s law. Law is good – but we (the flesh) is bad.

*Dominant thought:* we cannot keep the law because of indwelling sin. Law arouses sin. Why?

*The Negative:* “sin that dwelleth in me” (7:17). Now it is our lower self (the flesh - natural body). Here we will see what drives our indwelling sin.

*Logic:* a civil war – inside the believer’s body

### Chapter 8 - *what overcomes sin*

*Key statements:* “no condemnation ... in Christ,” and “Christ in you” (8:1,10)

*The subject:* Christian victory – not only from our body of death (future), but from sinful deeds (now).

*The purpose:* to show means of righteous living

*Dominant thought:* fleshly mind = death / spiritual mind = life. Christian *has* the “Spirit of God”

*The Negative:* “body is dead because of sin” (8:10). Sinful deeds need to be put to death – and can be.

*Logic:* two opposite spiritual laws and mind-sets

## they follow me ... .” John 10:27

## Romans 6

### WHY WE SHOULDN’T SIN

**6:1** What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

There are a variety of answers to the question of verse one: why a “Christian” shouldn’t continue in sin. Some say so you don’t lose your salvation. Others, so you don’t burn in purgatory. (These would certainly produce a fear to hinder sinning, one would think). Others will say it doesn’t matter because God is love. But none of these are the answer that Romans six reveals.

Romans six sees the believing sinner as already justified before God (1-5). Romans six explains to the saved the doctrinal machinery of sanctification (6:19): living righteous in overcoming sin. Romans seven deals with what causes the machine to malfunction. Romans eight reveals what causes the machine to function properly.

For example, one that previously only owned a horse is now given a car. In order to use the car to its potential, he first needs to understand its principles: how a car operates (ch. 6). Secondly, he needs to understand what won’t make it work; water and oats in the tank will damage the car, not help it (ch.7). Thirdly, he needs to know what will make it work; gasoline is what causes it to function properly at full power (ch. 8).

Romans 6, in presenting the doctrinal machinery of the Christian life, will take us into a judicial setting of heaven’s courtroom. Here one must think in terms of legal authority – what is binding.

Two authorities with legal rights are presented.

**1. the dominion (rule) of master SIN** (14,16, 20, 22).

We are legally bound to sin’s dominion; condemned to judgment. The source of our status of sinnership is from being ‘in Adam’ in chapter 5. It is called “our old man” (in contrast to being in Christ) in chapter 6. This is our former position not our lower self.

**2. the master of righteousness: GOD** (13,18,19, 22).

Those who are ‘in Christ’ are looked at as being legally joined in union with God and His rule of righteousness. This is called “newness of life” (in contrast to being in Adam) in chapter six. It is not our higher self but our new position before God.

## “... Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not

The logic of Romans six is, the dominion or master you are legally joined to or connected with is the one that reason would expect you to obey (6:11-14).

For example, you legally terminate your employment with company A and sign a legal contract making you a member of company Z. Company Z now tells you to go to Siberia for a project. But company A calls and tells you to go to Hawaii for a project. Who will you obey? Reason will tell you that you now have a position with Z not A. Therefore, you are to obey Z. There certainly might be a tug of passion but it’s who you are joined to that will determine who is to be obeyed. And if company A threatens to withhold your paycheck if you don’t go to Hawaii, you then realize that this is an empty threat. Why? “A” doesn’t control your pay because they are no longer your legal authority.

Romans six reveals that the believer is connected to Master God and no longer to master Sin. Therefore, one simply obeys whoever they are bound unto.

“... Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God” (Rom. 6:11-13).

### How did it happen?

The question that Romans six answers is this: How does the one in Adam under the dominion of master sin where all die, get joined to the dominion of Master God? The answer is the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is not rituals or asceticism, but Christ. Keep in mind the legal meaning of the work of Christ:

**Death** = a legal separation from authority. Such as when a husband dies, the wife is now legally free to be remarried (7:1-3). She wasn’t before.

**Burial** = a formal putting away, out of sight.

**Resurrection - Life** = a union to an authority. Such as when a baby is born. The possession of that family’s life brings the babe into a *legal* union of that family with all its assets.

fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the

Romans six points believers to two areas to help us understand our new legal position and different authority to obey: the logic of baptism and conversion.

### **The logic of our baptism** 6:2-14

Baptism symbolically identifies us with what we are being baptized into. The believer is baptized *into* Jesus Christ: His death, burial and resurrection.

Since Christ “died *unto* sin,” He is free from sin’s dominion and power – never to die again. Since the believer is in union with Christ, the believer is also dead (legally separated) *to* sin (its dominion or authority).

Since Christ was buried, so all that the believer was “in Adam” is separated and out of God’s sight.

When the Lord Jesus arose to life, “He liveth unto God” and is in union with Him. Likewise the one in Christ is alive unto God: a new position and authority.

In summary, the good news concerning our “old man” (what we were in Adam) is: In co-crucifixion (death) with Christ, our old man has already received the judgment he deserves and his existence has ended. In co-burial with Christ, God sees our old man no more. In co-resurrection with Christ, God sees us only in Christ: alive unto Him and righteous. Praise the Lord!

Crucifying our old man or being dead to sin is not something we do now, but a position we have. We simply are to yield to our new authority: God.

**Is our God a grave digger? We are buried with Christ. God doesn’t see our old man. By faith let us no longer live in self debasement.**

### **The logic of our conversion** 6:15-23

Now logic is brought before us that a slave in the Roman world could especially relate to. Master-servant is a legal bond. When a person offered himself as a slave to a master, he was bound to obey his authority.

Paul reminded the Romans that they were converted by having “obeyed from the heart” (6:17). By the act of *obeying* God’s gospel doctrine of faith alone, they had confessed His authority and therefore it is logical to now obey Him. Furthermore, master sin provided the fruit of shame with the wage of death, while Master God provides the fruit of holiness with the gift of life.

flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the

## **Romans 7**

### **WHAT ACTIVATES SIN**

**7:5, 6, 7** ... The motions of sins, which were by the law ... But now we are delivered from the law ... What shall we say then? *Is the law sin?*

**7:1-6** Here we learn that we are also legally separated from the authority of the Mosaic law by death: the death of Christ Jesus. Likewise we, by life (resurrection of Christ), are in a legal union with another authority: the Lord Jesus Christ. This is so we can “bring forth fruit unto God” in “newness of spirit.” And this fruit did not exist when we were in the flesh because the passions of sins were aroused by the law.

But now we are not in the flesh, but in Christ or the Spirit. So why does it matter if we operate by the law in our new life? How can the letter of the law, with all its rituals, holy days, dietary regulations, customs and required commandments, hurt? If it does, is it because God’s law is somehow sin? The answer is in the rest of chapter seven. Following are key truths revealed.

**7:7-14** God’s law is good and holy – alone. However, to mix it with something fleshly (natural sin) produces a negative reaction. Fire can be very helpful alone, but mixing it with gasoline can be destructive. For something sold under sin (self, the flesh) to be told it can’t do something or must do something, or else incur a penalty (this is law), suddenly arouses lust for its rights and freedom. At that point sin is revealed, by the law, for what it truly is: rebellion. And then that same law demands the sinner must die. (Isn’t it tremendous to be delivered from the authority of law?)

**7:15-25** Here an active spiritual law is discovered which many have since experienced. ***A Christian has indwelling sin.*** It’s our lower nature, here called “sin ... in my members” or “my flesh” or “the body of this death.” *Therefore, a Christian cannot live under or by the law.* Paul discovered his inability to do so, as well as the source, when he tried to live by the law principle: a command must be done or a penalty is incurred. He found the principle of sin *in* his very body alive with its full desire to rebel against God’s holy law.

And so this present civil war between sin in him and his new mind caused him to realize his wretchedness and need for deliverance outside himself: *Christ Jesus.*

Spirit against the flesh ...” Gal. 5:16,17

## **Romans 8**

### **WHAT OVERCOMES SIN**

**8:4** That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

This chapter contains not one direct command but victory principle after victory principle in Christ.

- though sin is in us, we are in Christ so there is no condemnation (judgment).
- we are not connected to the principle of law: disobedience (sin) = penalty of death, but in Christ we have the Spirit Himself which is life.
- when we walk after the Spirit in us (not law, religious rituals, self-confidence, isolation from society, etc.) we fulfill the righteousness of the law: its right goal of love to God and man.
- through the Spirit (with His power and holy desires) we can put to death “the *deeds* of the body.” Not the body (flesh) of sin can be put to death, but its actions. That is all God asks. The sinful desires live and will continue, but they can be stopped before a deed is carried out.

**So grace does not continue in sin, but gives the means to overcome sin.**

- the full solution for our body of sin and death: since we are in union with Christ Who rose from the dead, then the same Spirit that gave Him life will raise us up with new bodies.

In one sense the war is already won. We are already alive unto God and can never be separated for we are in Christ Jesus our Lord (8:39). Yet there are daily battles with the flesh, but we have the Spirit which, when followed by faith, overcomes sin’s desires. Isn’t it wonderful to be in Christ: under grace and not law?

Chronicle #5 of ‘*The Christian Life*’ series looks at the OT picture stories for lessons on winning the war

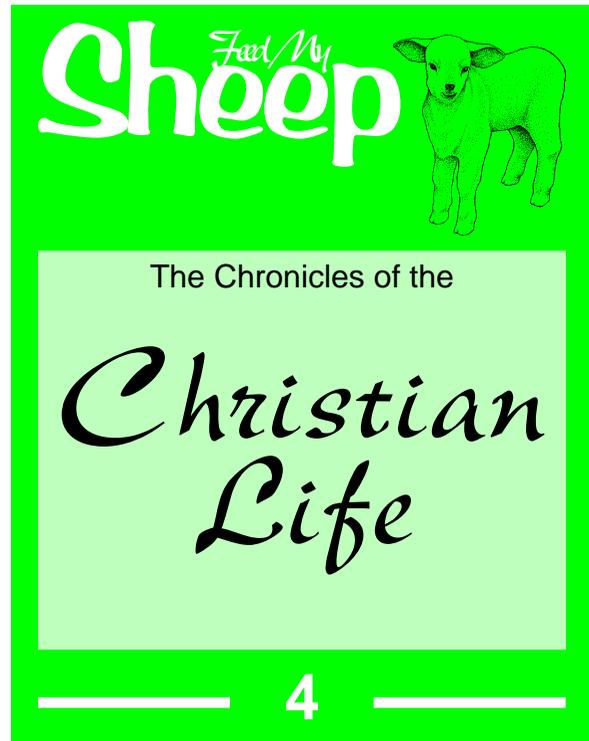
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## **Winning the War**

The spiritual war between good and evil in the body of a believer is not a sign that he is not saved or has lost his salvation, but an assuring fact that he is saved.

After the initial joy and euphoria of being saved, it doesn’t take a new Christian very long to realize that there is something inside him that didn’t get changed or removed. That something is “the law of sin which is *in* my members,” with all its evil desires, anger, lustful thoughts, etc. Often this sin presents a distressing dilemma for the believer. Yet there is hope.

God’s gospel not only saves from the penalty of sin but also from the power of sin. And someday it will save us from the very presence of sin in our bodies. The book of Romans reveals how by doctrinal explanation. The Old Testament shows how through historical picture illustrations of the children of Israel.

This chronicle (#4) will look at the doctrinal truth in Romans and #5 will look at the pictures of the OT.