

# Do Not Let Sin Reign

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 12 April 2015

Preacher: Chris Trousdale

[ 0 : 00 ] I want you, if you have a Bible with you, to open up to Romans chapter 6.

Romans chapter 6. If you don't have a Bible with you, the ones in the chairs will work just fine. And the ones in the chairs, if you're using one of those, we're going to be on page 943 if you're not sure where Romans is. Romans is in the New Testament.

It comes after the four Gospels and the book of Acts. And we're in chapter 6 of Romans, which is close to the middle of Romans. And we're just looking this morning at three verses. Verses 12, 13, and 14.

So if you found it in your Bible, I want to ask you guys to stand for a moment as we read together. The Apostle Paul writes, Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body to make you obey its passions.

Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.

[ 1 : 14 ] For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law, but under grace. We are thankful for these words, Father.

And I pray this morning that you would open our hearts to receive the truth. It's in Christ's name we ask this. Amen. You guys take a seat.

How many of you have ever attempted to explain a joke to someone who didn't hear the joke, and you're about halfway through the joke, and you realize it's not going to land on them in the same way that it landed on you?

Maybe because you can't tell the joke as well as the person who told it, or maybe because just the context in which you're saying it is different, or maybe not a joke. It might be a movie that you thought was great, or a particular scene from a television show that you thought was great or funny, and you try to explain it to someone else, and you know in the middle of your explanation that it's just not going to land on them with any power, with any influence at all, but you have to finish. You sort of just have to finish telling your story. That's why a lot of times, it's rare that I watch a movie just myself. I'm either watching one with Allie, or I'm watching a boy movie with the boys, but it's rare that I see something by myself.

[ 2 : 33 ] But when I do, I don't often try to just explain it to anybody else in the household, because chances are if I really liked it, there's no way in the world that they're going to like it as much as I did just by me telling it to them.

And I kind of feel a little bit afraid this morning because this text that we're looking at this morning is one that has landed upon me with a lot of power in the past.

In fact, about 15 years ago, I listened to a set of sermons on these three verses by John Piper that really influenced, that really shaped how I went about my daily walk of trying to be obedient to God and how I thought about my life as a Christian, whether or not I responded in obedience or disobedience to God.

This really shaped, and those sermons really shaped and helped me to see the right way to pursue obedience to God and the right way to be able to actually achieve some measure of obedience to Him.

And so there's a part of me that has been eager to get to these three verses for the last, I don't know, ten months or so that we've been in this book, and now there's a part of me as we're here that I feel like, oh, there's no way.

[ 3 : 49 ] Number one, I'm not John Piper and I can't preach the way that he preaches, and so this sermon won't land on you the way that his sermons landed on me. But then number two, I'm just not

sure that I can get across to you how much these verses have meant to me.

But nevertheless, I'm going to make an attempt this morning. So I want you to take a look at our passage this morning. It is just three verses, so there's not a whole lot to cover here, but there's a lot packed in to these three verses.

Because in this passage, the Apostle Paul uses a powerful visual image to help us to be able to picture what it means to fight for obedience to Christ.

Now, it can be a little bit difficult to really see the imagery that Paul uses here because some of our English translations, in fact, most of them, obscure it a little bit.

So I want you to look back down at the passage, and I'm going to read it back to you, but in a slightly more literal fashion so that maybe you can key off on the kind of imagery that the Apostle Paul is using here.

[ 4 : 56 ] So reading again, he tells us in verse 12, Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its desires. And do not present the parts of your body to sin as weapons for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life and the parts of your body to God as weapons for righteousness.

For sin will not have dominion over you because you're not under the law, you're under grace. Some of the words that I changed there, I changed the word members to parts of the body because there's an emphasis in this passage upon our physical body.

Literally, the word members refers to the parts of our bodies, whether that be our hands or our eyes or our feet or whatever it may be. It's parts of the body. And then the word that's often translated instrument is literally a word for weapon.

So this is warfare type imagery that is a warfare of the body, a war that takes place within us and has ramifications for the world around us as we impact and affect the world with our physical bodies.

So this is warfare imagery. But before we can understand the imagery here, I think we need to understand the broader context in which this happens. Because Paul is describing in these verses the fight that takes place in the heart and in the life of a follower of Christ.

[ 6 : 29 ] It is a fight for obedience. It is a fight for practical, lived-out righteousness in our lives. But it has taken us a while to get to the point in Romans where Paul is telling us as believers in Christ how we ought to live our lives.

Because if you'll recall, all the way back in chapter 1, Paul began discussing the circumstances of those who have not yet trusted in Christ.

Paul began by describing the heart, the life, and the lifestyle of people who do not yet know Christ. So that beginning in verse 18 and going down to the end of chapter 1, Paul in a way describes just humanity in general with an emphasis on the Gentiles, the non-Jews, and their lives apart from Christ.

And then in chapter 2, he begins to describe primarily Jews apart from Christ until you get to the middle of chapter 3 where Paul sort of sums it up. His summary statement of what a person apart from the grace of God in Christ is, that there is no one righteous.

There is not even one. By which he means that apart from Christ, at work within us through the power of the Spirit, those who are separated from Christ do not have within themselves the power to do righteous things, the power to obey God's law.

[ 7 : 59 ] Now he does acknowledge though that many times God, through what we call common grace, intervenes into the hearts and lives of those who don't know Jesus. So that he says in chapter 2, he acknowledges that sometimes the Gentiles, who do not have the law, that is, they don't have the Ten Commandments, they don't have God's Word, the Gentiles who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires because the work of the law, he says, is written on their hearts.

That's what we call common grace. It's grace that God gives to everybody across the world. And it's why, even though he says, those who are not in Christ, those who have not trusted in Christ, for them, they cannot do anything righteous.

There are none who are righteous. There are none, he says, who does good apart from Christ. And yet, he acknowledges that at least on the surface level, there are times when they do good, when they obey God's law, not from the heart, but that's just God restraining sinful desires.

That's why when you look around the world, you can see places in the world that are devastated by sin. You can see places in the world that are falling apart.

You can see places in the world where horrible, terrible things are happening. And we get glimpses of it sometimes on the news or we read about it on the internet. At times we get glimpses of the depth of depravity that exists in the world.

[ 9 : 31 ] And yet, we also see places where relative peace rules and reigns. We do not look out at the world and see, well, Christians live really good, godly lives all the time.

And everybody who's not a Christian doesn't do anything but sin. But in fact, we see a world in which oftentimes those who don't know Christ are, we would say in biblical terms, restrained by God's common grace.

And they do things that, at least on the level of looking at it outwardly, are good. They feed the hungry. They shelter the homeless. They do things that are good. They love their children.

They love their spouse. We do see those things happening. But that's because of what we would call God's common restraining grace in the world. But at root, in the heart, all of us, apart from God's grace in Christ, could be accurately described as there is no one who does righteous, not even one.

There's no one who does good. And yet, Christ comes in and saves us. He delivers us.

[ 10 : 41 ] Through His death and His resurrection, we are told that not only does He take away the penalty of sin, not only does He make forgiveness available to us, but He also, Paul has been telling us in chapter 6, that Christ through His death has defeated the power of sin over us.

So that whereas once before, sin ruled over our hearts, ruled over our lives, and made it impossible for us to truly, from the heart, do anything good and pleasing to God, now, because of Christ's victory on the cross, now He has defeated that power.

Now, we have been transferred from one kingdom to another. There's a new king over our hearts. No longer sin, but now Christ Himself rules.

In fact, if you look at the end of our passage this morning, I think that's what Paul means when he says at the end of the passage, sin will not have dominion over you for or since you are not under law, but under grace.

To be under law is to be in the old way of life, before Christ. And we've seen that law, apart from the work of the Holy Spirit, the law does not necessarily produce righteousness in us.

[ 11 : 59 ] In fact, the law often does the opposite. It makes our sinning worse because now it's not just sin, but it's law-breaking, and it also increases the frequency of our sin. Because, as sinners, we are naturally inclined to rebel against rules.

You give your children rules, and you're giving them new ways to earn punishment. That's essentially what rules are primarily for kids. New ways to earn punishment. That's true, though, for adults as well.

That's just reality. But Paul says, those who've trusted in Christ are not under the law. In other words, you're not living in that system anymore. You've been transferred to another system.

There's a new ruler in your heart and life. You are now, he says, under grace. So, with that in mind, with that picture of being moved from one who was unable to truly do anything righteous, to now those who are freed from the power of sin that kept us in bondage to sin, freed from that and now enabled to do righteous, we're in that part of the experience of the Christian life here in Romans 6. There is, of course, in the future something even better. Even better than freedom from the dominating power of sin. There is absolute, complete freedom from sin in the age to come.

[ 13 : 22 ] When we join Christ in the resurrection of our physical bodies and he removes completely from us all vestiges of our sinful nature. So that you could describe it like this.

You could say that before trusting in Christ, we are unable from our natures to do anything truly good and pleasing to God.

Then, in Christ, but still in this life, we are able now to do good and do things that are pleasing to God, yet we still struggle with abiding sin.

Sin that remains. Sin still seeks to regain its throne as we'll see in a moment. But then in the future, when we are raised from the dead, we will be fully set free from sin so that then, just as before we were not able to do good, now then we will not be able to do sin, to do evil.

So you move from unable to do what is good to able to do what is good to only able to do what is good and not able to sin anymore. But we're in the middle right now.

[ 14 : 35 ] We're experiencing life if you're a follower of Jesus. You're still struggling with temptation. You're still dealing with the reality that you're not fully set free from sin.

So let's look at the imagery that Paul uses. I think it's helpful if you try to visualize the picture that he's painting in your minds here because Paul has in mind a kingdom, a realm.

And that realm, that kingdom, is your body. It's your body. It's who you are. Take a look at what he says in verse 12. Therefore, do not let sin or let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body.

So you're in a mortal body. That is, you're not resurrected yet. You're not what Paul says in Romans 8. You're not yet glorified. You're in a mortal body.

You're in a body that is destined to die, which is to say you still live in a fallen world and you still struggle with sin. That's what he means when he says that you're still in a mortal body.

[ 15 : 38 ] But he commands us, don't let sin reign in your mortal body. So your body is the kingdom and sin used to be the ruler of your body.

Sin used to rule over you before you came to Christ. Yes, at times, God's common grace, in fact, much of the time, God's common grace came in and restrained sin's ability to direct you into more sin.

But nevertheless, sin ruled and reigned over your heart, over your life, and over your body. Sin ruled in that realm. But sin has now been dethroned.

Sin has been defeated by the death of Jesus. In fact, you can see it clearly if you just look up to the beginning of chapter 6 where he says in verse 3, Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

We were buried, therefore, with him by baptism into death in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. We died with Jesus.

[ 16 : 43 ] Died to what? Died to sin. Verse 6, We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing.

So, there has been a real change when you come to Christ. Yes, the most fundamental thing that happens for you when you put your faith in Christ is that your sins are forgiven.

That is, he takes your sins upon himself and receives your punishment on the cross and his righteousness is counted as yours. That's the most fundamental thing that happens when you trust in Jesus.

That's what Paul calls justification. That's what we have talked about and talked about and talked about throughout Romans. But more happens to you and in you at the moment in which you trust in Christ than justification.

And one of the things that happens to you is freedom. The power of sin as a ruler, as a king over you is broken.

[ 17 : 51 ] Broken. So, the kingdom is your body. The former ruler who once sat on the throne of your body and your life was sin and he has been dethroned.

And yet, this former ruler wants to regain his throne. He wants back in the game. He wants to storm the castle.

He wants to take back over. He wants to sit on the throne. So, Paul begins with a command. Do not let sin reign in your mortal body. Do not do it.

Do not let him ascend to the throne again. So, this is warfare imagery. We're fighting against a former ruler who wants to take up rule again.

Do not let him do it. Fight against him. But how do we fight? Well, first we have to understand sin's methods. How does sin seek to gain a foothold?

[ 18 : 52 ] How does sin seek to enter back into the kingdom and take back over? Notice what Paul says. He says, therefore let sin reign in your mortal bodies to make you obey its passions.

So, sin has a plan. Sin wants to force you into obedience to desires. Now, the ESV says passions. The NIV and some other translations say evil desires. But the word here is actually a neutral word. It just means desire. It's used over and over throughout the New Testament and it refers to desires. It can refer to bad desires. It can refer to good desires. It's just a neutral term. It's not bad in and of itself. And the word its, to make you obey its passion, does not refer back to sin.

That's how I initially read this passage when I just read it out of my English Bible. It sounded to me as if Paul was saying don't let sin reign in your body so that it makes you obey sin's desires.

[ 20 : 00 ] But that's not what it's referring back to. The word its refers back to your body. That's clear in Greek. I won't explain to you why, but that's clear in the original language.

The word it refers back to body, not sin. And so what Paul is saying is don't let sin rule. Don't let him force you to be obedient to your bodily desires, to the desires of your body.

So the weapons that sin intends to use are your own desires. They are neutral in and of themselves. There's nothing wrong with these desires. But if sin can force you into obedience to them, then sin can get a foothold and regain the throne in your body.

What do we mean? What are some examples? Well, some of these desires are just things that you might think of off the top of your head. Sexual desire in and of itself is good. There's nothing wrong with it, but it can be used for evil purposes.

Or how about the desire for food? That's a good desire. We need food. We have to eat in order to live. It's a desire that God has given to us. It's fine.

[ 21 : 13 ] It's really neutral at the end of the day. But it can be co-opted. It can be used against you so that when desire for food is abused, we end up with gluttony.

We end up with bulimia and anorexia. We end up with all sorts of things that are harmful to us, that are bad for us. So that sin would take a good desire, just simply a desire to eat, desire to have food, desire to be satisfied in our bodies, and sin would corrupt those desires, make you a slave to those desires, and then use those desires to push you further into sin, into disobedience, into unrighteousness.

But it's a neutral desire in and of itself. Or consider the desire for sleep. Our bodies need sleep. You need to sleep. I need to sleep a full eight hours, or I'm mean grumpy.

I need some good sleep. We all need sleep. But sleep, when it's abused, becomes slothfulness, laziness. Find ourselves laying around doing nothing, not getting anything done.

The desire to sleep, or the desire to have rest, is a God-given desire. It's given to us. I mean, God himself rested on the seventh day, and then commands us in the Ten Commandments to rest, as representing the pattern of God and creating the world.

[ 22 : 40 ] So the desire that we have within us to rest and sleep is good, it's fine, it's not harmful in and of itself, until sin co-ops it, places you in obedience to that desire, and you become slothful, and you become lazy.

Because we could multiply examples. There are natural desires in our body for certain chemical reactions to take place, and we can achieve those chemical reactions in various ways.

Some of them come from just normal foods that we eat, others come from naturally occurring elements within the foods that we eat. Think of caffeine, for instance. Nothing wrong with caffeine. It has a lot of positive benefits for your body. It really does a lot of good things for you. But the desire for caffeine that your body has naturally can be easily abused.

used. There was a point in time where I had really on an average day no less than three big Dr. Peppers. On a bad day it could be four or five really big Dr.

[ 23 : 46 ] Peppers. And the caffeine is what kept me coming back to it, but the real problem is that the caffeine was bound up with mounds and mounds of sugar. And so that the desire in of itself for a little bit of caffeine is not bad, but then when you become a slave to that desire, sin can use it to do bad things in your life.

Any area of your life, any natural desires that you have, particularly in mind in this passage, natural bodily desires can be used by sin as a means of infiltrating the kingdom of your body and attempting to take over again.

So that sin takes your own desires and uses them like spies. And sends them back into the kingdom and we don't know that they're spies because they're normal desires.

They've not caused us any harm so far. Everything's normal about them. Nobody would want to lose their sense of hunger. You might starve to death. Nobody wants to lose a sense of thirstiness. Nobody wants to fully lose sexual desire as an adult. Nobody wants to lose those things. So they're not immediately suspect. But many times sin co-ops them.

[ 25 : 03 ] Sends them back in as spies. Sends them back in as insurrectionists ready and waiting to make an entrance for sin to come in and take over the throne of your life.

So that's the battle. That's the battle laid out before you. Sin trying to get back into the realm of your body and take back over by using your good or neutral desires as a means of doing so.

The question is how do we fight against that? What do we do? How do we respond to that? Which is what verse 13 is really all about.

How can we obey Paul's command to not let sin rule and not let sin force us into obedience to our own bodily desires?

Look down at verse 13. He gives us a second command which is really the means by which we will accomplish not letting sin reign. Do not present your body parts to sin as weapons for unrighteousness but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life and your body parts to God as weapons for righteousness.

[ 26 : 25 ] So you are not left defenseless. You have an arsenal. You have weaponry. But if sin is able to get to those weapons first, if sin is able to use your desires as insurrectionists and get to the parts of your body and use those as weapons, then you will begin to produce unrighteousness.

So sin's goal is to take your neutral desires, use them to gain control of your body and use your body to perform unrighteous things. And Paul says, stop it before it happens.

Take the weapons that you've been given, the parts of your body, whether they be your eyes, your ears, your hands, your feet, whatever it might be. Take the parts of your body and use them as your own weapons in service of righteousness, not unrighteousness.

And then you use those weapons to defeat sin before sin gains a foothold. So why not, just for a moment, let's get very practical.

How can this happen? How can I use the parts of my body as weapons in this battle against sin? How can that happen? Well, remember the goal is for you to maintain control over your desires.

[ 27 : 51 ] desires. You do not want your desires to control you. You want to control those natural bodily desires. If they control you, you've become a slave to them and then sin can enslave you.

But you need to control your desires. So you can use your body, you can use the weapons that you've been given by God to give you strength and power over those desires.

So consider the power that God has given you by giving you a set of eyes. consider the things that you can do to strengthen yourself against the onslaught of sin with your eyes alone, just with your eyes.

The most important thing that I can think of is the fact that you can, with your eyes, you can read God's word. You can open it on a daily basis and you can read his word.

That's powerful. That's more powerful than you and I often realize. And yet we don't do it like we ought to. How many of you started a Bible reading plan this year and we're just in April, we're not halfway through the year and you've already abandoned it?

[ 28 : 58 ] Abandoned it, why? You just didn't devote the time to reading. You didn't use your eyes as frequently, as often as you needed to in order to continue in that.

How many days has it been since you read your Bible? How many days has it been? Maybe some of you at Sunday you got up and read a little bit before you came to church. Did you read your Bible yesterday on Saturday while you were busy trying to get done all the projects around home?

Did you read your Bible during the week? I know it's busy, I know you have to get up and you have to get ready and you have to go to work and come home or a lot of moms stay home and the kids wake up and they wake you up in the morning and then it's from the moment you start it's go and you're dealing with kids all day long.

I know that, I get that, I understand that. How long has it been though? Since you used the weapon that God gave you to strengthen yourself against sin.

How long has it been? It's not a guilt trip or anything. I'm asking you to assess whether or not you're using the weaponry that God has supplied. Or let's just stick with the Bible.

[ 30 : 07 ] Let's stick just for now for a moment with the Bible and other parts of our body that we can use so that we can wield this other weapon that God has given us. How about your ears? If you read the Bible aloud as you read it and you hear it in your ears it will stick with you longer.

And then you begin to use the most important part of your body. You begin to use your mind, your brain. And you see it, you hear it, and you memorize it. So now you're making full use of the weaponry that God has given you.

Eyes, ears, brain. You're using all of that and you're getting the Word of God to stick and stay with you so that even when you can't use your eyes maybe you're driving down the road.

It's not safe to read your Bible while you're driving down the road. Alright? You cannot use your eyes. You don't have an app on your phone that will read the Bible out loud to you so you can't use your ears that easily.

What can you do? If you've used eyes, ears, and brain you've got Scripture memorized. You can recite the Bible while you're going down the road because there's nothing else for you to do on your commute to work.

[ 31 : 11 ] So why not do that? Why not use the members of your body? Why not use the weapons God has given you throughout the week so that when it comes time to actually do battle with sin, you're fully prepared?

So, maybe you memorize part of 1 Corinthians chapter 6. And maybe what stands out to you is that one phrase, flee sexual immorality.

Flee from it. Run away from it. So that when temptation comes, and what is a good desire, tries to be co-opted by sin.

Now, if sin wins this battle, alright, if sin co-ops your normal desires, then sin will use your eyes to look and lust, and sin will have gained a weapon in its own arsenal.

But what if you've already used your eyes? What if you know 1 Corinthians 6? And what if in that moment you say to yourselves, with your mouth another weapon, and you hear it in your ears another weapon, you say, flee!

[ 32 : 22 ] And you divert your eyes. You divert your attention to something else. or you begin to recite to yourself scriptures to keep your mind on track and away from lustful thoughts.

You have prevented sin from using your eyes as a weapon against you, and you have used the full arsenal of weapons that God has given you to actually do battle in that moment.

Or, perhaps, perhaps you're just shopping at the store. You went into the store because you needed to buy one simple thing. One thing. That's all you needed.

And yet, you look around and you see a lot of other things. You see some clothes, and you really like those. You don't need those particular clothes. In fact, you've got too many clothes in your closet right now that you've got to get rid of.

And you really don't have the money. You need to spend the money on something else. But you want to buy that dress, you want to buy that suit, or whatever it happens to be, because you see it. And sin at that moment is going to try to use just a normal desire to have clothing, right?

[ 33 : 29 ] Nothing wrong with that. Sin is going to try to use normal desires and cause covetousness to well up in you, and sin will use your eyes to cause you to covet the things that you don't need to waste your money on, and sin will win a victory.

Unless, of course, unless, of course, you've already done battle previously. You've already prepared. You're ready for battle. And you've already used the weapons God has given you. Maybe it's your eyes, again, and looking at scripture. Or maybe it's your ears as you listen to a sermon on covetousness or greed or any number of things.

And in that moment, rather than allow the desire to have that thing to rule over you, and then use the members of your body like your hands to pull out your wallet and pay for things as a weapon against you, so that you sin by coveting and you sin by misspending your money.

You didn't have to explain to your spouse what happened to that \$50 that you had that you were supposed to pay a bill with. Rather than do that, what if you were ready? What if you had spent time meditating on God's word?

[ 34 : 36 ] Or what if you had spent time thinking about, using your brain to think about what it means to be satisfied in Christ and not need more stuff around you all the time?

You cannot expect, in the moment that sin rears its head, you cannot expect in that moment all of a sudden for you to be a spiritual giant and be able to always win the war against sin.

Because sin is a powerful thing. It wants ruled over you. It wants its throne back. It is powerful and it is capable of using your own desires against you and staging an insurrection and before you know it, you are once again in service to sin itself.

This is just the normal Christian life visualized with warfare imagery. Do not let sin reign.

Do not let sin take your desires and use them against you and then gain power over your body so that it uses your eyes and your hands and your ears and your mouth and whatever it may be to commit sin.

[ 35 : 49 ] Do not let that happen, Paul says. But instead, engage in preparation for battle by presenting the members of your body to God as weapons for righteousness.

How might you, let me just ask you, this can be your sort of application question you go home thinking about. Okay? Because I can't possibly, think of an example that's going to hit in every

person's life this morning.

But I want this to be practical as you walk away with it. So I want you to begin thinking, how is it that you could use on a regular basis, maybe first thing when you get up in the morning, maybe last thing before you go to bed, maybe while you eat lunch, whatever it may be, at some point in your day, how can you use some part of your body, whether it be your eyes or your mouth or your ears or your hands or your feet or whatever, how is it that you can use some part of your body, present it to God, this belongs to you, these hands are yours, whatever you want me to do with them, I will do, they're yours, and then have them used by God in service of righteousness.

Think, what can I do? what can I do daily to prepare myself for the moment when sin tries to use my natural desires against me?

I don't know what that will look like for each of you. There are some things that we should all commonly be participating in, like reading our Bibles regularly, spending time in prayer regularly, gathering together here as a church regularly.

[ 37 : 28 ] Those are things we should all be doing in common, but think of what is it specifically for you, and maybe it's just specifically how you're going to do one of those things. Maybe you have a very tough schedule and you need to really give some thought to how can I, how can I really devote myself, not for a day, or not for three days, for two weeks, but how can I devote myself consistently to spending time reading and memorizing the Bible?

How can I do that? You may be able to think of a great plan that prepares you for battle, but I can't tell you specifically for you what that should be.

So I want you guys later on as you're going home and as you're going about your day, I want you thinking, thinking hard about what you can do to interrupt your normal routines now and create new routines that prepare you for battle.

And one more thing before we close, because if we stop now, then all I have saddled you with is another to-do list.

If we stop now, I've just given you more rules, I've just given you more commands. And that's terrifying to those of us who failed to obey rules and commands.

[ 38 : 49 ] So let's listen real quickly here to what Paul has to say at the end of our passage. He says in verse 12, don't let sin reign, but in verse 14, he doesn't give us another command.

He gives us a promise. For or because sin will have no dominion over you.

The foundation, always, of our ability to obey the commands that God gives us is that we understand who we are in Christ.

You are not fighting against sin in your own strength. Yes, you're using your own body. You're planning out your own day. You're figuring out your own times, but you're not doing this in your own strength.

And what you need to understand is at the end of the day, sin will not rule over you. Sin will not be your Lord. Sin will not be your master.

[ 39 : 50 ] And you have to cling to that promise. You have to believe that promise. This is, for us, oftentimes, backward thinking. Because Paul says, I want you to fight against sin because God has already defeated sin on your behalf.

And that's strange thinking to us. I prefer to just call it biblical logic because we find this kind of thinking throughout Scripture. Let me show you one other place before we close.

Turn over. Hold your place in Romans. Turn over to Philippians chapter 2 because this relates to what we're talking about now. Philippians chapter 2 verse 12.

Paul says, therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now not only is in my presence but much more in my absence. Here's a command. work out your salvation with fear and trembling. Very similar to do not let sin reign. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling. And now here's the ground. For, because, it is God who works in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

[ 41 : 01 ] So work out your salvation with fear and trembling because God's already at work in you to accomplish that. He's already changing your heart and changing your actions, so change your actions, you see.

God is doing this to you, so do it. And that's what Paul is telling us in Romans 6. God has defeated the power of sin. Sin cannot rule over you. Sin can no longer be your master.

Sin has been dethroned. So therefore, do not let sin sit on the throne of your life. You want to have some victory in your life. The key is not buckling down.

The key is trusting promises. Trust the promises. Engage in the battle. And then celebrate the victory that has already been won.  
Let's pray. You