



Fighting Sin For the Sake of Our Joy

Romans 6:1-14

January 8, 2012

Pastor Nick Shaffer

Beloved, it is so good to be back together with you and to be worshipping with you. I want you to open your Bibles this morning to Romans 6 and let me tell you where we are going to be going today. I listened to Eddie's sermon from last Sunday and it was a great message regarding the joy and thanksgiving and celebration that should be ours as the people of God, knowing that the power and penalty of sin does not and will not have the last word over us. God has redeemed us by the blood of His dear Son. Our sins have been forgiven, our filth washed away by the blood of Christ. For that reason we should sing in triumphant joy; we should shout for you, rejoicing and exulting in Christ and in the salvation that is ours by grace alone through faith alone in what He has done.

In that sermon, Eddie made the biblical statement that if we are saved; we are going to be fighting sin, that as God's redeemed, we will be compelled by the Spirit of God, who now dwells within us, to live holy lives. It is not that sin and temptation are immediately eliminated from us at the moment of salvation – we know that is not true. However, we now have the power in Christ to wage war against and to be victorious over temptation and sinning in our lives and to become increasingly like Jesus Christ in all that we do. Fighting sin, for the sake of our full joy in Christ, is a vital part of who we are as the people of God. So, what I want to do this morning is to springboard off of Eddie's message last week and I want for us to consider today how we fight sin for the sake of our full joy in Christ. I want you to look with me at Romans 6, beginning in verse 1 and we will look at this together. Read Romans 6:1-14

Paul has just spent the first five chapters in the book of Romans describing the great salvation that God has given to us who believe through His Son Jesus Christ. He began in the first three chapters describe the depth and universality of the sinfulness of man. He describes in bleak terms, ungodly, unrighteous, without understanding, worthless, no fear of God before our eyes. He describes us as utterly deserving of the death and despair of eternal judgment. Then into the midst of this darkness shines the beautiful light of God's promise in Romans 3, starting in verse 21: ***“But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.”*** (Romans 3:21–25, ESV) God justifies the ungodly through faith in His Son – what tremendous news. Paul expands on that in chapter 4 when he describes the nature of true saving faith. Then in chapter 5 Paul begins to describe all of the amazing benefits of salvation – peace with God, access into His presence, the hope of glory – heaven, endurance, and hope, deliverance from the wrath of God, and eternal life in Christ. It is all tremendous gift of grace in Christ.

And now, here in chapter 6, Paul is going to describe what eternal life looks like in the here and now. He is going to talk to us about what it looks like to be in Christ by faith, to be a new creation, to have spiritual life through faith in Christ, to be a people who are not enslaved to sin but who walk in the newness of life, a people who war against sin and who fight for righteousness and the joy of holy living. First I want you to see with me

1) The Theological Foundation for the Fight (v. 1-11) In light of the great grace that has been given to us in Christ, Paul asks the question: **(Romans 6:1–2, ESV)**

The gist of Paul's question is this: Is God's grace made more manifest by our continuing in sin or by transformed lives? Having been forgiven is that how we are to live as the people of God... continuing to sin as a lifestyle and expecting God's grace? Is that how we honor God of do we honor God by the pursuit of holiness? Another way to ask this question is this: Can a person really be saved, yet continue in the same pattern of sinfulness? Paul's emphatic answer to that is “No way!” You are not who you were before you were rescued by Christ. Your whole identity has changed. You are a new creature in Christ. That is a common refrain in Paul's preaching.

In fact, in writing to the Corinthians about how they should live in Christ he says to them: **(1 Corinthians 6:9–11, ESV)** Here is Paul addressing the church in Corinth. It was a church that – listen, now – was made up of sinners, sinners desperately in need of God’s grace. He describes them before they believed, before they believed with their whole hearts that Christ was the sinless Son of God sent from heaven to be the propitiation for their sins, before they believed the gospel. They were sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, men who practiced homosexuality, thieves, greedy, drunkards, revilers, and swindlers. But when Paul looks at these dear brothers and sisters in Christ who have been delivered by the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ, he says to them – **And such were some of you.** Such **WERE** some you – but you are **NOT** that anymore. Those sins that once defined you, that once fully identified you, that once mastered you – those sins have been dealt a death blow by the gospel of Jesus Christ. That is who you once were, but by the power of the gospel that is not you any longer. **You were washed** – The old filth of your past life has been washed away. You have been made clean by the blood of Christ. **You were sanctified** – You have been "set apart for God." God has set you apart from the world and from sin and from the dominion of Satan to His good works and to righteousness and to purity. **You were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God** – You were declared not guilty of sin and absolutely righteous before God with the righteousness of Jesus Christ. All of this because of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Those old descriptions of your past life have all fallen away. Those old labels no longer stick. They are not who you are anymore. Instead you are defined by words like – Cleansed, made whole, forgiven, set apart, alive to God, washed, sanctified, justified, redeemed, regenerated, made new, rescued, delivered, righteous, accepted by God, sinner saved by grace, saint. We have to understand who we are, beloved, who God has recreated us to be and the implications of we are in Christ. Specifically Paul wants us to see here in Romans that

We are dead to sin... Here in this text, Paul emphasizes the same idea by saying, you died to sin, verse 11 – you are dead to sin. What does he mean? To say that we died to sin is to say that we have died to the power of sin to master us. We have been set free from the ruling power of sin in our lives. Think of it like this. Imagine an ancient slave market. If you are a slave, you must obey your master's every word. He speaks, you obey. In that sense you are "alive" to his voice because he is your master. But suppose you are sold at an auction to a new master. From the moment of the sale, your old master no longer has any legal right to command you. You are dead to his voice of command. He can speak but you no longer have to obey. You have "died" to his power and mastery and you have been made alive to a new

master. Can you still obey the old master? Yes, but you don't have to because he has no power over you unless you choose to give him power. You "died" to your old master – sin, and you have been made alive to your new master, Jesus Christ. You have not been saved to walk in sin, you can't walk in sin any longer – you are a new creature in Christ -- but you have been raised to walk in the newness of life united with Christ

We were raised to walk in the newness of life... Paul tells us how that came about. He says: **(Romans 6:3-4, ESV)** Paul uses the picture of baptism and this is where a right understanding of baptism is so important. Baptism, remember, is a physical picture, an outward picture of an inward reality. It is a picture of our union, our being joined together with Christ, our being connected to Him in a spiritual manner at the moment of our salvation. It pictures our old man dying with Christ, being buried, and rising to walk in the power of the resurrection.

Now here is what Paul is getting at. The reason that we cannot continue in sin any longer as a lifestyle is because in a way that we cannot fully understand, at the moment that we put our faith in Christ as Lord and Savior, in a spiritual sense, we are crucified with Him. Our old man, our old self, the person that we once were who loved sin and pursued sin, who was rebellious to God and rejected God's promises and was blind to God's glory – that old man – as the way of our life – was crucified with Jesus. But more than – we who are believers – we were raised from the dead and given new life – with a new heart and a new Spirit – the Holy Spirit, a new song on our lips and new desires in our souls. In fact, we are new in such a way that continuing in a life of sin, the habitual practice of sin is unthinkable.

What happens if a true believer tries to live in a life of habitual sin? What happens if a real Christian tries to continue in the habitual practice of sin? Let me tell you. They will be wholly unsatisfied. Sin can never satisfy a child of God, no matter how hard they may try. It will make you miserable, joyless, despairing and weak. It will make you insane. You will find the going hard – God will discipline you, sometimes severely. Their assurance of salvation and confidence in the gospel will evaporate. There will be no peace in their souls. The truth will carry no weight with them. And if someone can continue in a life of habitual sin and never come to repentance, never be brought to repentance by God, never be disciplined by God, it means that they were never a child of God in the first place because the one who has been united to Christ by faith has been made for something greater than sin – worship, holiness, righteousness, joy in Christ, praise, love, peace, and truth. So certain is Paul that we are

made for something greater that he offers this confidence, pick it up in verse 5: **“For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.** Paul is reiterating the belief that just as we have been, in a spiritual way united with Christ in death, God has also united us with him in a resurrection from the dead like His. Then Paul elaborates:

(v. 6-7) Our old self was crucified – put to death just like Jesus, spiritually along with Jesus – so that sin’s power over us would be put to death. Having died – our old man, who we used to be – since that guy is dead, we are set free from the power of sin to rule over us. John Stott explains: **“Our biography is written in two volumes. Volume one is the story of the old man, the old self, of me before my conversion. Volume two is the story of the new man, the new self, of me after I was made a new creation in Christ. Volume one of my biography ended with the judicial death of the old self. I was a sinner. I deserved to die. I did die. I received my deserts in my Substitute with whom I have become one. Volume two of my biography opened with my resurrection. My old life having finished, a new life to God has begun”.** You are no longer the person that sin used to rule over. Then Paul explains further:

(v. 8) The confidence that **we will also live with Him** is no doubt talking about the fact that we will live with Christ forever in heaven, but the context here, which focuses on living righteously, is suggesting something even more – that we will live with Him here, living a life that is like His, a life that is in fellowship and unity with Him and in agreement with His character.

Building on that idea, Paul goes on to say, (v.9) The point being is that because we have died and been raised with Christ, we, too, shall **never die again.** And the this: the sin that causes spiritual and physical death is no longer master over us, just as it has no mastery over Jesus. He suffered once the wrath of God in our place, He died a real death, but He rose from the dead never to die again and united to Him we have the same future. Sin does not have power over us any longer.

Then Paul finishes this section by saying: (v.10) What does it mean that Jesus died to sin? It is kind of a strange statement, but the idea is this: First, He died to the penalty of sin by taking

upon Himself the sins of all the redeemed of every age and meeting the legal demand for all who would trust in Him. Second, Christ died to the power of sin, forever breaking its power over those who belong to God through their faith in His Son. Sin is the venom that brings death to all, but for us who are in Christ, Jesus forever broke the power of sin over us by breaking the power of death through His crucifixion and resurrection from the dead. And he did it, **once for all**. He achieved a victory that will never need repeating, so powerful is Christ and His defeat of sin. And now He lives to God – which is just another way of saying – He lives to the glory and praise of God. The point Paul is making is this – we are united to Christ. His victory over sin is our victory over sin. And just as He lives for the glory of God, joined to Him, we do the same thing. Christ has done it all. He has conquered the penalty and power of sin and now what we must do is

Walk by faith and consider ourselves dead to sin but alive to Christ... That is what Paul means in verse 11: **“So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 6:11, ESV)** Believe the truth about who you are in Christ. Believe that the old man is dead and that the new man has come. Believe that you have died to sin and now that you are alive to God through Christ, that you have been freed to live for His glory. Count on it. Consider it and reckon it to be true. That is the power of the gospel, beloved – not just to take away by the sacrifice of Christ the penalty of sin that hung over your head – but it is freedom from the power of sin and freedom to live the abundant life of obedience, righteousness, and holy joy that Christ came to give.

We have to understand that this text is not teaching that as a result of the new life that we have in Christ we are now immune to sin. That is not it. As both Scripture and experience clearly, our remaining humanness retains certain weaknesses and propensities to sin. Sin still fights to master us. Our human weakness makes us capable of yielding to sin’s temptations when we do not fight in faith and trust in the Word of God and in the Spirit’s power. John MacArthur says it well: “A Christian is a new, redeemed, holy creation incarcerated in unredeemed flesh.” For that reason, we must continually be fighting in the power of Christ so that sin will not reign in our mortal bodies. The full work of the gospel is what God wants for us and it is Paul wants for us and so he calls us to battle. He calls us to holy war and he gives us this exhortation for the fight.

2) The Exhortation for the Fight (v. 12-14) Paul says to us: **“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions.” (Romans 6:12, ESV)** Don’t let sin master you.

Don't give it power over you. Refuse to obey sin and be led into fleshly passions. Understand something beloved, though you have died to sin's mastery and power and you have been given a new life in Christ, sin does not ever give up trying to master you again. It will still try to reign over you and master you and make you its slave. It will try to make you believe that disobedience and self-rule are to be preferred over obedience and submission to the rule of Christ and so give to it your allegiance. Sin will try to make you believe that the promises of sin's reward are more to be believed than the promises of God. It will try to make you believe that the pleasures of sin are more to be desired than the favor and the blessing of God, that fellowship with sin is better than fellowship with Christ. Sin is a deceptive usurper, an illegitimate master that seeks to commandeer the Lordship from Christ over your heart and life. Sin is a liar. Do not let it reign. Do not let sin seize the throne of your heart. Refuse to let sin reign in your body. Do not give in to temptation and sin. When you are tempted, remember that you don't have to obey sin.

Paul says: ***“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.”*** (Romans 6:13, ESV) Instead of yielding to the sin and presenting yourself as a gift to sin and wickedness, allowing yourself to be used as an instrument for unrighteousness, present yourself instead to God who saved you to be used for his purposes. That word for instrument is a word that is used to speak of a weapon. You can use your body either as a weapon for unrighteousness or a weapon of righteousness. If you are tempted to speak slanderously, you can defeat Satan and sin by instead using that tongue to pray and to speak praises of God. If you are tempted to use your eyes to view something that is unholy and sinful, you have the power in Christ to turn your eyes to what is good and holy. If you are tempted to think upon sinful things, instead take your thoughts captive to Christ and ***“whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”*** (Philippians 4:8, ESV)

Now, that will mean a battle, because the strength of sin is very strong. When we start to turn away from evil in our bodies, the flesh patterns of our lives are sometimes so deeply persistent that oftentimes it is very difficult, but beloved we are equipped for this fight. Peter says: ***“His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,”*** (2 Peter 1:3, ESV) When Peter says we have been granted all things that we need for godliness, he has in

mind the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the Word of God that has been given to us, the right of access to the throne of grace, a full and free forgiveness through the shedding of Christ's blood in our place. Peter is thinking of the mind of Christ which is now ours, the gifts of the Spirit purchased by His blood, the gifts of apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherd and teachers for our edification and building up in spiritual strength.

It is not automatic. God has given us all we need for godliness, but you must fight for godliness in your life. God is at work in us to will and to do for his good pleasure. But we must work out our own salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12-13). You must take personal responsibility to deal with sin in your life. We are in war. Galatians 5:16 and 17 tell us that. And we should not deal with sin in a half-hearted manner. We cannot negotiate or compromise with sin. If you are going to overcome sin, you must fight! You must be decisive and aggressive. There will be a battle; it is not always easy, but we have Christ's strength to prevail. And if we fight, we have this promise from God: **“For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.” (Romans 6:14, ESV)** Sin will not have dominion and rule over you, because you are not a sinner, shut up under the law, condemned by the law and under the power of sin anymore; you have received the grace of God in Christ. You have received grace upon grace and sin, though it is powerful, is no longer our master, Christ is. Therefore, this not a hopeless struggle in which the believer is engaged, but one in which victory is certain. Beloved, we have not been made for sin, but for the joy of holy and Christ-like living, so how do we fight sin and refuse to allow sin to reign in our mortal bodies? How do we fight this holy war? Let's think about some

3) Practical steps to fight sin. This is not necessarily in any order. Instead these are all parts of a multi-pronged assault against sin in your life, which is the battle to which all of us are called.

Know who you are as a Christian. You've been crucified *with Christ*, buried *with Christ*, and raised *with Christ*. *With Christ* means you are united with Him and *in Christ* you have participated in everything He accomplished. You are free from condemnation and you are free from sin's reign because you are Christ's and He is yours. Know who you are in Christ, where you stand in His grace, and all that you have to win the fight. The reason that sin seems so strong many times is because you've been accustomed to thinking like a slave rather than a free man or woman in Christ. You've been used to thinking like a slave of sin rather than a slave of Christ and righteousness. If you understand who you really are in

Christ, you undermine sin's ability to deceive you and gain a foothold in your life.

Immerse your mind in Scripture. John Bunyan (and apparently a whole lot of other people ☺) wrote in the cover of his Bible, "Either this book will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from this book." Jesus prayed, **"Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth" (John 17:17)**. The truth of God's Word is the instrument the Holy Spirit uses in sanctification. Load your mind with it. Fill your heart with it. Consider it carefully and let it direct your walk. The Word of God cuts through the fog of Satan's lies and shows me where true and lasting happiness is to be found. And so the Word helps me stop trusting in the potential of sin to make me happy, and instead causes me to trust in God's promise of joy.

The Word of God fortifies the soul in the battle against sin. It is a far superior weapon to human wisdom. In fact, human wisdom is worthless against sin because it does not have divine power. **"For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds." (2 Corinthians 10:4, ESV)** By yourself you may be no match for sin, but sin is no match for the Word of God. William Gurnall, in his book, ***The Christian in Complete Armor***, says: A pilot without his chart, a scholar without his book, and a soldier without his sword, are alike ridiculous. But, above all these, it is absurd for one to think of being a Christian, without knowledge of the word of God and some skill to use this weapon.

This is especially significant because the "word of God" is called "the sword of the Spirit" in Ephesians 6:17. And swords are used for killing. So immerse your mind and heart in the fountain of truth and life and power – the promises of God, the commands of God, the exhortations of God and when the temptation comes, take this all-powerful word, this sword of the Spirit, and believe it, and by it kill sin.

Put on Christ and weaken sin. Later in this book Paul will write: **"But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires." (Romans 13:14, ESV)** To put on Christ is to put on faith in, hope in and love for Christ. Putting on Christ means trusting in Him and all that God is for us in Him fully and completely – that is faith; it is hoping in Him as the supplier of every need of yours according to his riches in glory including the very fullness of salvation – that is hope; and taking Him as your supreme treasure – that's love. Love for Christ grows as we meditate much upon His love for us revealed in His atoning work on the cross and His continuing work of intercession, of shepherding our souls, as mediator and

faithful high priest, forever securing our salvation before the throne of God. We put on Christ by meditating upon the gospel and His glorious beauty as the lover of our souls.

Put on Christ and make no provision for the flesh. Make no provision. Don't feed and strengthen sin. Starve it out; weaken it. Richard Baxter said, **“Lay siege to your sins, and starve them out, by keeping away the food and fuel which is their maintenance and life.”** Wear down sin by refusing to feed it.

Repent of your sins – Turn away from your sins and turn to God for forgiveness and for renewal of your soul. In order to truly repent, we must hate our sin. We have to see sin as what it is – as deep-rooted, thankless rebellion against God and an unwillingness to find our greatest satisfaction in Jesus Christ, who is God's greatest and best gift of His grace. We need to **call sin what it is**. Call it what God calls it, that is the foundational meaning of the word confess – homologeo – say the same as... It is sexual immorality, not “a little temptation or a trip up”. It is impurity not “a struggle in my thought life”; idolatry, not “problem with my priorities”; unbelief, not “a little worry”; murmuring and gossip, not “personal concerns about some things”. Calling sin what it is unmasks self-deceit — and helps us to unmask sin hiding in our hearts. The power of sin is in its disguising and redefining of itself. Call it what God calls it. Drag it out into the light of God and expose it to God's truth. Paul captures one of the most vivid descriptions in the Scriptures of genuine repentance in 2 Cor. 7:9-11. Turn there with me. **(2 Corinthians 7:9–11, ESV)** In worldly grief, the sinner feels bad for himself – his pain, his shame, his damaged reputation or relationships. The regrets that he got caught but inwardly they would still commit the same sin if they could do it and avoid the consequences. But in godly sorrow, the sinner feels the weight of his sin against the holy God and wants to see justice done and wants to restore relationships, first with God and then with his fellow man. The truly repentant man or woman grieves that he has offended God. He or she hates the sin that he has committed. They turn from their heinous sin – in mind, heart, and hands – to a gracious God. They know that God is merciful. They know that true repentance involves a constant endeavor to walk with God in obedience. Look at the words that Paul uses to describe the nature of Godly mourning and repentance that comes from it.

Earnestness – indifference and complacency toward sin comes to an end. **Eagerness to clear yourselves** – a desire to clear the name of the stigma of sin. **Indignation** – that is anger over sin and what it does to the name of God in the world. **Fear** – reverence toward God, awe toward the God who demands payment for sin and offers it Himself in the blood of

Christ. **Longing** – desire of the sinner to restore the fellowship with God that has been broken – to find comfort and joy in his presence. **Zeal** – passion for God and for God’s kingdom and His fame and His name based on the great forgiveness He has given and the comfort and fellowship He offers. **Punishment** – this is better translated as “avenging of wrong.” It is the desire of justice to be done. **Innocence** – It is the desire for purity and holiness.

Pray purposefully and pointedly. Some people call it warfare prayer – specific time in prayer to confess sin and to pray against it. Prayer is an effective and necessary means for heading off sinful temptations before they can attack. Look at prayer as a preemptive strike against fleshliness in this way – drawing a believer near to the Lord and communing with Him and abiding in Him so that temptations are weakened when they come.

Fellowship with the saints. Actively seek godly, spiritual company. We should fellowship with God-lovers, with people who are on fire for God, people who will cause us to think righteously. People that will labor and war with you against sin. If you find someone who loves you enough to say, "Brother, that is not the righteous way. Sister, that is sinful thinking. That is not the way of wisdom, the way of Scripture. If there is someone who loves you enough to come and say such things, take advantage of that and seek to receive loving, godly correction well.

Know the relentlessness and wickedness of your enemy. John Owen is particularly helpful in this instance. He wrote, “As sin is never less quiet than when it seems to be most quiet...” In other words, our sinful nature is always hard at work to destroy us, even at moments when we feel that we are safe and secure and there is no way we can fall into temptation. He also wrote, “Sin will not only be striving, acting, rebelling, troubling, disquieting; but, if let alone, if not continually (put to death), will bring forth great, cursed scandalous, soul-destroying sins.” In another place he writes, “Sin aims always at the utmost: every time it rises up to tempt or entice, might it have its own course, it would go out to the utmost sin of that kind. Every unclean thought of glance would be adultery, if it could; every covetous desire would be oppression; every thought of unbelief would be atheism, might it grow to its fullness...” Sin always aims at the utmost. Why do we have to fight sin? Because sin is not just out to make us into “bad people”. Sin is out to kill us and to destroy our relationship with God.

Do not be fooled by counterfeit ways of dealing with sin. I am indebted to John MacArthur for pointing out these counterfeit ways of dealing with sin: *Sin is not killed when it is merely covered up.* A Christian can hide his sin from the sight of others, but that is not the same as killing it. **“Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.” (Proverbs 28:13, ESV)** You have dealt with sin until you have confessed and forsaken it.

Sin is not killed when it is only internalized. Just moving your sin from your hands to your heart only is not the same as killing sin. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for this very thing. They avoided murder, but continued to hate. They refrained from fornication, but allowed lustful thoughts. Jesus declared them worthy of eternal hell.

Sin is not killed when it is traded for another sin. What good is it to trade the lust of the flesh for the lust of the eyes? That lust has not been killed; it has only changed form.

Sin is not killed until the conscience is clean. Part of the process of killing sin is to work through the issue of guilt. To feel guilty regarding sin is right. To rightly kill sin, you must understand the guilt of it and realize what it took for your guilt to be lifted and what Christ graciously did to lift that guilt from your head. Those who are flippant about the guilt of sin, who claim the promise of forgiveness, and who just quickly reassure themselves they are all right without any real consideration of Christ and the cost of grace are exposing themselves to the heart-hardening deceit of sin. Let sorrow do its full work in your heart to produce a deep, honest repentance, and sin will be put to death.

Be confident that God is for you. He gave His Son to deliver you from the penalty and power of sin. He has given you His Holy Spirit and His Word to train you in righteousness. He has given to you the full armor of God described for us in Ephesians 6. Put it and know that God is for your consistent victory over sin. Bring your struggles before Him and know with confidence that He will not turn you away. **“Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” (Hebrews 4:16, ESV)**

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength... and your neighbor as yourself. Bottom line, it is always an issue of love. When I consciously make my response to temptation an issue of my love – love for God and love for my neighbor... it causes everything to come into focus.

Beloved, you have been made to fight and by God's grace to triumph over sin. You have been made to fight this holy war for holy joy.

If you find yourself enslaved to sin today, I beg you to call upon Christ and believe the gospel – be cleansed, be freed, repent of sin, trust in Christ.

If you have called upon Christ in faith, consider yourself to be dead to sin and dead to sin's power and engage the fight, beloved. Engage the fight and win.

© West Salem Baptist Church, 2012

Permissions: You are free to reproduce and distribute this material but you may not alter its contents in any way or charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction. If you are posting online, a link back to this original document is preferred. Anything beyond these guidelines will require prior approval by West Salem Baptist Church.