

BREAKING THE POWER OF CANCELLED SIN

Shall We Continue to Live Under Sin's Dominion?

Romans 6:1–14 | Romans Series | PBC 2026

30-MINUTE TEACHING GUIDE | LEADER RESOURCE

LESSON SNAPSHOT

Main Text	Romans 6:1–14
Series	Romans Series — PBC 2026
Big Idea	Because believers have been co-crucified and raised with Christ, we are both freed from sin's dominion and commanded to actively live for God — a verdict we must render and a commitment we must make.
Supporting Texts	Psalm 1:1; Romans 5:20–21; Romans 7:6; 1 Corinthians 10:1–2; Romans 12:1–2
Audience	High school through adult; evangelical congregation

DISCUSSION OBJECTIVES

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Explain why Paul's answer to 'shall we continue in sin?' is an emphatic 'Absolutely not!'
- Articulate the three things every believer instinctively knows that make continuing in sin impossible (new identity, sin's power nullified, new purpose in Christ).
- Understand the difference between knowing spiritual truth and rendering a decisive personal verdict on it.
- Identify the specific commands Paul issues in Romans 6:11 and the practical steps in 6:12–13.
- Claim and rest in the promise of Romans 6:14: sin will not have dominion over the believer.

TIMING ROADMAP

TIME	SECTION
0:00–3:00	INTRODUCTION — The Big Question: Can Christians keep living in sin?
3:00–8:00	SECTION I — The Question Paul Answers (Romans 6:1–2)
8:00–20:00	SECTION II — The Reasons Paul Gives (Romans 6:3–10)
20:00–23:00	SECTION III — The Verdict Paul Demands (Romans 6:11)
23:00–27:00	SECTION IV — The Response Paul Commands (Romans 6:12–13)
27:00–30:00	SECTION V — The Assurance Paul Gives (Romans 6:14) + Conclusion

INTRODUCTION (3 minutes)

HOOK: As we move into Romans 6, Paul faces a powerful objection — if grace covers all sin, why not keep sinning? This may sound absurd, but Paul calls it a serious and dangerous conclusion. Use the this question to set the stage.

Introduce the three-part structure of Romans 6:1–7:6 that addresses three big questions:

- Are we to continue to live under sin in our old way of life? (6:1–14)

- Can we make a quiet peace with entrenched sins we can't seem to overcome? (6:15–23)
- Why can't the Law help us in this struggle? (7:1–6)

Establish the main goal for the lesson:

God wants us to walk in the newness of life He granted through Christ — an extraordinary kind of life, lived out radically differently from how we used to live (6:4). And He has given us the Spirit to guide and empower us to serve Him in a radically new way (7:6).

SECTION I — THE QUESTION PAUL ANSWERS | Romans 6:1–2 (5 minutes)

Romans 6:1–2: What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?

TALKING POINTS

- This question arises directly from Romans 5:20–21 — 'where sin increased, grace increased even more.'
- The argument: If grace keeps abounding, why go through the costly process of totally reorienting my life?
- Paul's response is not merely emotional — it is a logical impossibility rooted in a spiritual reality: those who have died to sin **cannot** continue living in it. It is fundamentally contrary to our new identity in Christ!
- Emphasize: This is NOT an easy or obvious answer initially — but Paul's verdict is emphatic. The Greek phrase *μη γένοιτο* = 'May it never be!' (Absolutely Not!!) — the strongest possible negation.

ILLUSTRATION — The ISIS Convert:

A young ISIS fighter who becomes a Christian faces the temptation to ask: 'Can I stay in ISIS and continue my old obligations while trusting in grace?' Paul's answer: Absolutely not! You have changed masters. You have changed sides. And you have done this decisively and declared this publicly at your baptism! To remain under your old master's dominion is to deny the reality of what has happened to you.

1

Why might someone who genuinely hears the gospel be tempted to ask Paul's question in verse 1? What does this reveal about how dangerous and also how valuable the truth of grace really is? How does the ISIS Convert illustration play out in different areas of our lives where we may have behaviors or ways of life that would be very costly to abandon or change?

SECTION II — THE REASONS PAUL GIVES | Romans 6:3–10 (12 minutes)

Paul gives three things every believer instinctively knows — but must fully understand — that make continuing in sin an impossibility:

A. WE KNOW WE HAVE AN ENTIRELY NEW IDENTITY IN CHRIST (6:3–5)

Romans 6:3–5: 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... 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.

- "Baptized into Christ" does NOT refer primarily to water baptism performed after salvation.
- This is the Spirit's baptism that permanently placed believers into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13).
- "United with Christ" (*σύμφυτοι*) = 'planted or grafted together' — the vine-and-branch image of John 15.
- Result: A decisively (past tense verb) new way of life — stunningly different from your old life.

ILLUSTRATION — Israel at the Red Sea (1 Cor. 10:1–2):

Israel stood between Pharaoh's army and the parted sea. The choice was permanent — return to the old bondage or pass through to a new leader, a new law, and a new land. Their 'baptism into Moses' (passing through the sea) permanently changed their identity and their way of life. This is exactly what happened to believers when we were united to Christ.

2

How does understanding your union with Christ as permanent and organic (like a branch grafted into a vine) change how you think about sin's hold on your life? What things in your life might be represented by Pharaoh and his army that threaten to keep you in their grip? What changes need to be made now that you have fully and publicly identified as a follower of Christ?

B. WE KNOW CHRIST HAS NULLIFIED SIN'S POWER OVER US (6:6–8)

Romans 6:6–8: We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free [justified] from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.

- My Old Self (desires, orientation, values, priorities, guilt and condemnation) — all of it — died. It was co-crucified with Christ.
- Three results of this death:
 - The power of sin over our body is NULLIFIED (v. 6)
 - We are LOOSED from former slavery to sin (v. 6)
 - We are DECLARED FREE — “justified”— from sin (v. 7)

ILLUSTRATION — The Freed Prisoner:

If a prisoner escapes, the law demands he be returned. But if his penalty has been paid and he has been legally cleared of all charges, when he walks out of that prison, no one can force him back. Sin has lost its rights over me! Death has lost its claim on me! Satan has lost his power over me!

3

Since sin has been stripped of its authority and its power nullified, why do so many believers continue to live as if they are still prisoners? What is the gap between truth known and truth applied? What kinds of sins tend to be so powerful in people that they find it almost impossible to break free from? Why is this so?

C. WE KNOW CHRIST HAS RAISED US FOR A NEW PURPOSE (6:9–10)

Romans 6:9–10: We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.

- When Paul says 'we died,' it is always linked to Christ's death — a positional and judicial co-crucifixion.
- Which means, though we didn't physically experience it, we continue to experience its ultimate benefit.

ILLUSTRATION — The American Revolution:

In 1775, American colonists won freedom from Britain — purchased at great cost by men and women who suffered and died. Though none of us were there, 250 years later we fully enjoy that freedom. We say 'We won our freedom from the British in 1775' even though we weren't present. Similarly, when Paul says 'we died with Christ,' there is a real sense in which we were co-crucified with Him 2,000 years ago. The effects continue to be experienced by us today. As a result, we no longer serve our old master — we are alive to God and are to live for His pleasure and purposes! (Rom. 12:1–2)

4

The American colonists would never go back to paying taxes to Parliament. What would it look like for a believer to act as if the old regime of sin still had authority over them? What are some practical examples?

SECTION III — THE VERDICT PAUL DEMANDS | Romans 6:11 (3 minutes)

Romans 6:11: So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

TALKING POINTS

- Note the URGENCY: "you must" — this is not a suggestion.
- "Consider" (λογίζομαι) = to reckon, to render a decisive verdict. This is more than understanding and thinking rightly about salvation — it means believing these truths enough to GROUND YOUR WHOLE LIFE IN THEM.
- This is the FIRST command in the entire book of Romans.
- It isn't enough to know these realities. It isn't enough to admire what they have produced in others. You must render a personal verdict.

ILLUSTRATION — The Financial Advisor:

Imagine someone who fully understands the stock market, completely trusts their financial advisor, and has seen amazing results — yet keeps their money under the mattress. The problem is not lack of knowledge; it is a failure to believe enough to act. At some point they rendered a verdict: 'It's great for others, but it won't work for me.' This is exactly what Paul is commanding us not to do spiritually.

5

What is the difference between knowing a spiritual truth and 'rendering a verdict' on it? Can you think of an area in your own life where you know the truth but haven't yet entrusted your life to it?

SECTION IV — THE RESPONSE PAUL COMMANDS | Romans 6:12–13 (4 minutes)

Romans 6:12–13: 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.

TWO COMMANDS

A. WHAT ARE WE TO DO? (v. 12) — Take a definitive step: Stop allowing something that is currently going on

- Stop letting sin REIGN over your mortal body — ruling it through the same lusts that drove you before.
- Examples of unchanged areas:
 - Approach to conflict and hurt
 - Approach to lust
 - Approach to money
 - Approach to how you treat your spouse
 - Approach to sexual temptation
- Sin still seeks dominion even though it has been deposed — just as Pharaoh's authority over Israel was nullified at the Red Sea, yet Israel still had to live in the old world.

B. HOW ARE WE TO DO IT? (v. 13) — Make a fundamental change in your approach

- STOP presenting your body to sin as an instrument for unrighteousness.
- DEDICATE yourself entirely to God — a formal, intentional presentation (cf. Romans 12:1–2).
- Determine to use your body as an instrument of righteousness for Him.

6

Paul uses the word 'present' or 'offer' — a formal, deliberate act. What would it look like to formally and intentionally present your body to God as an instrument of righteousness? Is this a one-time act or ongoing?

SECTION V — THE ASSURANCE PAUL GIVES | Romans 6:14 (3 minutes)

Romans 6:14: For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

TALKING POINTS

- This is God's PROMISE to every believer who renders the verdict and acts on it.
- Grace is more than unmerited favor extended to you.
- Grace is more than a realm you now occupy.
- GRACE IS POWER AND ENABLEMENT.

KEY INSIGHT:

The power and enablement to serve God in this totally new way is the Holy Spirit Himself (Romans 7:6): 'But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.'

- Remind students: Like the Israelites on the far side of the Red Sea, there will be moments when it looks like the new life is harder than expected. "I didn't know it would cost me my job / my friends / my comfort."
- The promise remains: Sin will not rule over you. Grace will.

7

Have you experienced a moment in your Christian life when the new life felt harder than anticipated? How does the promise of Romans 6:14 — that sin will NOT have dominion over you because you are under grace — change how you face those moments?

CONCLUSION & CLOSING CHALLENGE (2 minutes)

Close with the challenge from Romans 6:13:

The Challenge: Have you presented yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members as instruments of righteousness? (Rom. 6:13)

Three diagnostic questions:

- Have you come to the point where you have looked at your body — your entire life — and decided that from this moment on it will never be used for the things you used to live for?
- Have you rendered a decisive verdict that you will ground your life in the truth that you are dead to sin and alive to God?
- Are you willing to take the practical steps in Romans 6:12–13 — stopping what sin has been doing in you, and formally presenting yourself to God?

If you do so, God's promise is clear: Sin will not reign over you! (6:14)

Preview for next lesson:

"Wonderful news, Paul! But what do I do about the entrenched sins that have a strong hold on my life for years — the ones I can't seem to overcome no matter how hard I try?" — That is exactly what Romans 6:15–23 will address next week.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS SUMMARY

- 1 Why might someone who genuinely hears the gospel be tempted to ask Paul's question in verse 1? What does this reveal about the value — and the potential danger — of the doctrine of grace?
- 2 How does understanding your union with Christ as permanent and organic (like a branch grafted into a vine) change how you think about sin's hold on your life?
- 3 Since sin has been stripped of its authority and its power nullified, why do so many believers continue to live as if they are still prisoners? What is the gap between truth known and truth applied?
- 4 The American colonists would never go back to paying taxes to Parliament. What would it look like for a believer to act as if the old regime of sin still had authority over them? Give some practical examples.
- 5 What is the difference between knowing a spiritual truth and 'rendering a verdict' on it? Can you identify an area in your own life where you know the truth but haven't yet entrusted your life to it?
- 6 Paul uses the word 'present' or 'offer' — a formal, deliberate act. What would it look like to formally and intentionally present your body to God as an instrument of righteousness? Is this a one-time act or an ongoing posture?
- 7 Have you experienced a moment when the new life felt harder than anticipated? How does the promise of Romans 6:14 change how you face those moments?

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

PERSONAL REFLECTION

- ◆ **Render the Verdict:** Ask yourself: Have I truly considered (reckoned, rendered a decisive verdict) myself dead to sin and alive to God — or am I merely acknowledging this intellectually? What difference would it make to my daily life?
- ◆ **Identify the Unchanged Areas:** Make a list of specific areas (conflict, money, lust, relationships) where sin is still reigning. These are the places where you have not yet fully stopped presenting your members to sin.
- ◆ **Present Your Body to God:** Set aside time this week for a formal, intentional act of presenting yourself to God as an instrument of righteousness — in prayer, journaling, or in community.

THIS WEEK

- ▶ **Memorize Romans 6:11:** "So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus."

- ▶ **Identify One Area:** Choose one specific area where sin has been reigning in your mortal body. Apply Paul's command: stop presenting that area to sin; instead, present it to God.

- ▶ **Pray for Grace:** Romans 6:14 is a promise and a resource. Pray explicitly that the grace of God — the power and enablement of the Holy Spirit — will have dominion over this specific area instead of sin.

LOOKING AHEAD

- **Prepare for Next Week:** Romans 6:15–23 will tackle the harder question: What do we do about sins so deeply entrenched that we can't seem to overcome them? Come prepared with honest self-examination.

TEACHER PREPARATION NOTES

KEY THEOLOGICAL POINTS TO EMPHASIZE

- The baptism in v. 3 is the Spirit's baptism (1 Cor. 12:13), not water baptism. This is the permanent, positional placement of the believer into the body of Christ at conversion.
- "United with" (σύνφυτοι) is an organic, agricultural image — grafted, not merely associated. This is an inseparable union.
- The command in 6:11 (λογίζομαι) is the same word used in accounting — to reckon, to calculate as a settled fact. Paul is commanding them to treat this spiritual reality as the definitive truth about themselves.
- Romans 6:14 frames grace not merely as forgiveness but as power. The same Spirit who raised Christ from the dead is at work enabling believers to break the reign of sin.

COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS TO ADDRESS

- "I still sin after conversion — does that mean I haven't really died to sin?" Answer: The old self died, but the body (our mortal frame) still has patterns and passions that must be actively not yielded to. The death was decisive; the battle is ongoing. That is precisely why Paul commands us to act in 6:12–13.
- "This sounds like we have to earn our freedom." Answer: No — the freedom is a gift already given. Paul is commanding us to LIVE IN the freedom we already have, not to earn it.
- "Isn't this just a one-time decision?" Answer: The presentation of 6:13 has the flavor of a decisive, formal act (perhaps like Romans 12:1–2) but the daily renewal is assumed throughout. Paul will address the ongoing nature in ch. 7–8.

PASTORAL SENSITIVITY

- Some group members may feel deep shame about persistent sin patterns. Emphasize that the command to 'not let sin reign' is grounded in the promise that 'sin will not have dominion' — this is an achievable command, not a guilt trip.
- The ISIS illustration is powerful but may need pastoral care. Ensure individuals understand it is used to illuminate Paul's argument, not to minimize the real danger faced by believers in hostile environments.
- Be attentive to students who intellectually assent to these truths but are clearly not experiencing the freedom Paul describes — gently press toward the question of whether the verdict has been genuinely rendered.

MEMORY VERSE

"So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus."

Romans 6:11 (ESV)