

# DEVOTIONAL

WHEN IN ROME VI // NO DOMINION  
MARCH 27, 2022

GRACE  
FELLOWSHIP

**Discussion Starter:** Why do you think the Bible speaks so strongly against sin?

**Key Text:** “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. <sup>13</sup>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. <sup>14</sup>For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.” (Romans 6:12-14)

Hiroo Onodo was a soldier in the Japanese army in World War 2. For twenty-nine years after the war ended and the peace treaty had been signed, Onodo remained hidden in the jungle of a remote island in the Philippines, refusing to believe that his country had surrendered to the allies. In 1974, Onodo’s commanding officer traveled to the island to find Onodo and convince him to come out of isolation. The officer found Onodo living a paltry existence because he would not believe that the war was over.

Hiroo Onodo reminds us of some Christians who are unaware that they are liberated from sin’s control through Christ’s work on the cross. With Christ’s victorious shout, “It is finished!” liberation has come to us!

In last week’s lesson (“You Are Dead to Me” - Romans 6:5-11), Paul told us to consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God through Christ. In today’s lesson, Paul warns us not to let sin take control in our bodies—we are not to let sin force us to obey it.

- 1. Even though Christ has set us free from sin’s authority over us and sin can no longer make us obey it, we still struggle with the desire to sin (v.12).**

Yes, we are dead to sin (Romans 6:1), the “*body of sin*” has been done away with (Romans 6:6), and we have been set free from sin by dying with Christ when we placed our faith in Him (Romans 6:7). We are no longer slaves to sin—we are not forced to go back under sin’s tyrannical rule over us. But we still want to sin, at times, even knowing how destructive it is. We still sometimes desire to sin, to volunteer to “*obey its passions*” (v.12). So, Paul tells us to stand strong in the battle against our old desires. Stay militant against sin, and don’t let it tell you what to do. Don’t give control over to those sinful urges.

**Discuss:** How would you advise a new Christian to stay militant against sin?

- 2. We have control over our bodies, and we are to present our bodies to God to be used for righteousness, not to sin to be used in unrighteousness (v.13).**

Yielding our bodies to be used for righteousness requires a proactive, intentional effort on our part. We do this purposefully because we have been brought “*from death to life*” (v.13). This is who we are now in Christ.

**Discuss:** What does a life look like that has been presented to God to be used for righteousness?

### 3. We are no longer under the penalty of the Law; rather, we now live under the law of grace in the love of God (v.14).

Since Paul emphasizes the Law quite often throughout the Book of Romans, let's do a quick survey of the purpose of the Law. The Law was given to the nation of Israel (Exodus 19; Leviticus 26:46; Romans 9:4), and it consisted of three parts: 1) The Ten Commandments, 2) The ordinances, and 3) The worship system, which included the priesthood, the tabernacle, the offerings, and the festivals (Exodus 20-40; Leviticus 1-7; 23). The Mosaic Law was intended to accomplish these purposes:

- Reveal the holy character of God to the nation of Israel (Leviticus 19:2; 20:7-8).
- Set apart the nation of Israel as distinct from all the other nations (Exodus 19:5).
- Provide forgiveness through the sacrifice/offerings (Leviticus 1-7) for the people who had faith in the Lord in the nation of Israel.
- Provide a way of worship for the community of faith through the yearly feasts (Leviticus 23).
- Provide God's direction for the physical and spiritual health of the nation (Exodus 21-23; Deuteronomy 6:4-19; Psalm 119:97-104).
- Reveal the sinfulness of man and lead us to God for mercy and grace. Galatians 3:19 says, "*Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions...*" The Law was good and holy (Romans 7:12), but it could not provide salvation for Israel. Romans 3:20 says, "*For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.*" The Law reminds humanity that no one can keep it perfectly—everyone falls short of God's standard of holiness. That realization causes us to rely on God's mercy and grace. When Christ came, He fulfilled the Law and paid our penalty for breaking the Law by dying for us (Galatians 3:24; Romans 10:4). By faith in Him, the believer has the very righteousness of Christ imputed to him.

The Mosaic Law compels each of us to ask this essential question: Am I trusting myself to keep all of the Law all of the time (which experience proves we cannot do!), or am I trusting in Jesus as my Savior, realizing that He fulfilled all the Law for me, paying my penalty for breaking them?

**Discuss:** How would you explain the purpose of the Mosaic Law in your own words to a person who is not a Christian but is open to truth?

**Discuss:** Why is living under grace better than living under the law (v.14)?

#### For Further Study:

*The End of the Law: Mosaic Covenant in Pauline Theology* by Jason Meyer

"What Should Christians Learn from the Mosaic Law?" article at [www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org)

"Why Did God Give the Old Testament Law?" article at [www.crosswalk.com](http://www.crosswalk.com)