

“What Will We Let Happen?”

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.
Romans 6:12

REVIEW

I. “**Let not**” – Observe: Continuing in sin is wrong, stoppable, and a choice.

A. Wrong

1. God says don't let sin reign. He doesn't want it. It is bad. We have seen continuing in sin:
 - a. Is illogical, inconsistent, and counter-productive
 - b. Shows ignorance and ingratitude
 - c. Takes the greatest victory and turns it to defeat
 - d. Darkens our testimony, diminishes our usefulness, and disregards our calling
 - e. Offends heaven

B. Stoppable

1. Shall we continue in sin? God forbid!! Slavery is eminently end-able. Continuing is like:
 - a. Leaving on the lights when you could flip the switch
 - b. Letting the bathtub overflow when you could turn off the water
 - c. Letting the bugs in when you could close the door

C. A Choice

1. The word is “let” not. Meaning: “Do not *allow* this.” “Do not *permit* this.”
2. Compare other times this word appears in Romans. Always there is an appeal to the will.
 - “**Let** every soul be subject unto the higher powers.” (Rom. 13:1)
 - “The night is far spent, the day is at hand: **let** us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and **let** us put on the armour of light.” (Rom. 13:12)
 - “**Let** us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.” (Rom. 13:13)
 - “**Let** every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.” (Rom. 14:5)
 - “**Let** not then your good be evil spoken of.” (Rom. 14:16)
 - “**Let** us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.” (Rom. 14:19)
 - “**Let** every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.” (Rom. 15:2)

We have a choice not to continue in sin as we have a choice not to continue in rebellion, darkness, rioting, drunkenness, immorality, strife, envy, bad reputation, ineffectiveness, or harm.

II. “(Let not) Sin”

Do we have a clear idea what this word in this verse means to *us*? We all sin, of course. “For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.” (Ecc. 7:20) But we do not always go so far as to make specific personal application of a text like this, though we should.

A. For folks who have accumulated some years and life experience, the sin may be:

1. Secret shameful thoughts
 - a. Recollecting, reimagining, reworking, reusing life experiences one would recoil from actually doing now, but might slavishly “enjoy” in thought as a way of enduring life.
 - b. Indulging fantasies, abuses of the imagination, where one finds himself/herself the hero, the star, the beautiful one, the victor, the one who is loved....
2. Secret shameful deeds
 - a. Capitulating to what has become one's refuge, whether it be linked to the lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh, or the pride of life.
3. Yes, many believers struggle with secret sins of thought and deed. So the Bible says, “Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after.” (I Tim. 5:24)

B. For every believer

The scope of our charge not to let sin reign in our mortal bodies is broad and applies to all men, women, boys, and girls who have claimed Christ as Savior. The sin that reigns over us could be:

1. Sin of Omission – “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” (James 4:17) We may know it would be right to help around the house, think of others, be faithful to church, read the Bible, but yet habitually choose not to do these things.
2. Faithlessness – “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” (Rom. 14:23) What is worrying, moping, defeatism, complaining, or fearfulness, but an offense of this very verse as we let sin reign?
3. Foolishness – “The thought of foolishness is sin.” (Prov. 24:9) We live in an escapist, God-denying, present-oriented, pleasure-seeking, self-indulgent age that wants not to face the consequences of life choices. Are we allowing this sinful view to reign in our lives?
4. Pride – “An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked, is sin.” (Prov. 21:4) Some “Christians” have no idea how to deny themselves, no idea how to lay down their lives in service to God and others. Rather, they live as though everything revolves around them. They are the center. They are letting sin reign in their mortal bodies.

III. “(Let not sin therefore) Reign”

- A. The Greek word is *basileuo* – “to be king.” A form of it is used in Matt. 2:22, for instance, to speak of the dynasty of Herod and in I Cor. 4:8 to describe people who “reigned as kings.” Here, the verb is present active imperative, meaning “let not sin continue to reign.”

B. The message is that once sin had the authority of a king over us. But no more.

1. Sin has no more authority over us than does a former U.S. President. The time of such power does not continue.
2. Sin may still say, “think this,” “desire that,” “do these things,” or “say those things,” but we must comprehend that our relationship to this abusive head has changed. We can say, “NO!”

IV. “(Let not sin therefore reign) In Your”

A. A successful church starts with successful individuals.

B. What about the sin of Mr. Jones or Mrs. Smith?

1. There is a place to discern and rebuke, but there is a time when the Lord says, “What is that to thee? Follow *thou* me.”

C. I cannot stress enough the importance of us individually finding the victory promised here.

1. *We* MUST! “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” (Phil. 2:12)

V. “(Let not sin therefore reign in your) Mortal Body”

A. Note the “time zone.”

1. On a trip we passed from Central Standard Time, through Mountain Standard Time, to Pacific Standard Time. Our duration in Mountain Standard Time was brief and now it is over. So is life brief in this mortal body. The opportunities of life will soon be over.

B. Now is the time to show the victory that Christ won over the reign of sin.

1. “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” (II Cor. 6:2)

VI. “(Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body,) That Ye Should Obey It In The Lusts Thereof.”

A. Surely, in other words, you can pick a better master than the one the world has.

1. Our body is a corrupt and dying bag of sin whose every desire conflicts with the will of God.

B. “Lusts” – *epithumi'a* – an eagerness to possess and enjoy, a strong longing, especially for that which is forbidden.

1. Aha! Now we are really getting at the heart of it all. Compare Gal. 5:16, 24. See:
 - a. Where the failure is – a rebel heart that delights in the naughty, the forbidden.
 - b. Where success is found – total surrender to Christ and the ways of victory.

C. Survey all the choices you made to obey the call to sin. What profit was there?

1. See Rom. 6:21.

Let's summarize. We have learned that we must see sin to be wrong, stoppable, and a choice. We must see our personal sin in that light. And we must see that our relationship to sin has changed. It can not tell us what to do. We can stand and say no. We can resist the devil, and he will flee from us. We must apply this truth personally. We owe it to God and the church and the lost. We only have a brief bit of time when we can do this. Then our opportunity is over. Any other choice is a choice for a lesser and unprofitable and offensive thing. Victory over sin is attainable. Victory over sin is God's will.

The bottom line requirement is zeal. We must want this victory enough that we will ride it out and will not let it go until God has blessed us. We must stay with it. Work it. We must not leave the riddle of triumph unsolved. We must seek with all our hearts what must be found until we find it.

DISCUSSION

1. At the beginning of this message, continuing in sin is said to be wrong. Five reasons are listed in letters a through e. Please explain those reasons. (For example, how is continuing in sin illogical?)
2. Here's the real question. If continuing under the reign of sin is ill-advised and unnecessary, why would a Christian do it? Explain.
3. List all the benefits of living a life of victory over besetting sins.
4. What insights to disallowing sin from reigning over a believer do you find in Galatians 5:16, 24?