

"For sin shall not have dominion over you: For ye are not under the law, but under grace" ROM 6:14

Beloved, if we did not know God's Word is absolutely true, I believe we would think this verse a mockery!

It is amazing to me how long people can continue living with hidden sin in their hearts. By putting on a good front, they can get away with it for a long time. They can hide their sin from their husband, wife, children, friends and pastor. But the Bible warns:

"Be sure your sin will find you out" NUM 32:23

I think of one brother who worked closely with me for over eight years. He was a kind, considerate, loving man and husband. He had a servant's heart and would do anything to help anyone in need. He was an integral part of our ministry team - and I still love him in the Lord.

But in all the time I knew him, I never knew what was hidden in his heart! His wife didn't know, nor did his children, because he kept up such a beautiful facade.

Finally, my wife, Gwen, and I sensed something was wrong. His moods and attitudes began to change. We prayed about it, and the Lord told me to dismiss him. I said, "Please, Lord - I've got to know why. Show me what's in his heart!"

Not long after that, a friend found this brother drunk. His wife and children had seen him in this state - and they were hysterical, unable to believe it! The man had been a secret alcoholic for years - and God exposed him!

Sin Shall not Have Dominion over You!

When I brought him into my office to terminate his employment, I asked, "How long has this been going on?"

He said, "Brother Dave, I was an alcoholic before I came to Christ. And I've been drinking ever since I've been with you. Every time we checked in a hotel, I'd order something in my room." He said that wasn't his only problem. Whenever he traveled alone, he checked into hotels that showed R-rated movies. (A hidden sin doesn't remain alone. Anyone with an unconquered sin will see a whole chainreaction of sins arise!)

This man's wife was devastated. His children lost respect for him. And now he had lost his job. I said to him, "How could you sin this way, under the ministry? For eight years you've watched as multitudes of alcoholics were saved. You've walked and prayed with me, you've seen so much of God's Spirit at work. But you've kept this thing hidden!"

He shook his head and answered, "I have never conquered this. It's been with me ever since I was saved."

He was repentant and sorry - but still bound!

The Shocking Disclosures Come in Nearly Every Day!

Evangelists, ministers and laymen are being caught in shameful acts - and when they are exposed, they

tell of sin problems they've had for years!

A housewife in Brooklyn saw her husband off to his Wall Street job every day. He carried a locked briefcase, holding it close as he left. She never knew anything - until he was picked up by the police for selling crack cocaine!

A man approached me after one of our church services and confessed, "I've been coming to Times Square Church for over a year, and nobody would ever guess I'm not a righteous man. I sit here and worship, and people think I'm living a pure live.

"But I'm about to lose it all! God has convicted me, and I can't keep my secret sin hidden anymore - I'm addicted to crack! It's destroying me, and I need help! I was delivered years ago - but now I'm in its grip again. Brother Dave, why did I go back? I can't shake this thing - it has possessed my heart!"

I wonder how many who are reading this message right now have been hiding a secret, life-controlling sin. God knows and sees every act - every lust, every indulgence, every hidden, secret sin!

I believe every faithful shepherd of the Lord Jesus has wrestled with seeing children of God remain bound by a besetting sin. But God gives us this wonderful promises:

"If the son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" JN 8:36

"Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed" ROM 6:6

"For he that is dead is freed from sin" ROM 6:7

"But being made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" ROM 6:18

I read all these precious, glorious promises about freedom from the power of sin - and then I look at all the slavery to sin that is in God's House!

Multitudes of Christians - Pentecostals, Catholics, Baptists, Methodists, Charismatics - are still under sin's dominion. They are constantly fighting a losing battle against a sin that overpowers them!

They sing, shout and praise the Lord - but something keeps cropping up and never gets dealt with. They may go a month or two, a year, two years - but then it comes back suddenly and down they go! They say, "I'm hopeless, I can't help it. It comes upon me and I'm overpowered!"

My soul cries out, "Oh God, where is your victory? Why are so many of Your people still enslaved by the enemy, still falling back into old sins and lusts?"

The answer is simple. The apostle Paul said,

"Let God be true, but every man a liar... that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings" ROM 3:4

It is not the Lord's fault we are enslaved - because his promises are true. When a believer says he loves God but can't get victory over sin, he's got to be lying - because God cannot lie! His word says, **"Sin shall not have dominion over you!"**

There is a heartrending cry from many: "Who shall deliver me from this bondage?" I told God I could not deliver a message about victory over sin unless I heard it from the Holy Spirit. I had to have an encouraging word from the very heart of Jesus - and I believe he has given me one for you. In fact, God has made me a promise with this message: He said many are going to be set free - for the first

time since they started serving Christ! You may not be fighting a battle with a ruling sin - but perhaps you know someone who is ensnared by Satan. If so, you can share this message with them. The first thing God would have you know is this:

No Matter How You Have Sinned and Failed the Lord - No Matter How Low You Have Sunk - You Must Be Convinced God Still Loves You!

The Lord told me, "My children have to understand that no matter what they are bound by, no matter what their problem is - **they must know I love them!**"

You can't even begin to get deliverance from the powers of hell until you are convinced Jesus still loves you and is not mad at you.

I see Jesus standing by Peter, even though the disciple denied Him. Peter deserted and cursed his Savior. Yet when he lay on the ground grieving, wondering how he could have hurt his **Lord** so, Jesus did not send wrath upon him. Instead, Jesus was praying for him - that his faith would not fail!

God loved David in spite of his adultery. The Lord grieved as David plotted the murder of Uriah, Bathsheba's husband. And God judged his sin - indeed, David paid a high price for it. But God answered David's prayer of repentance: He did take not his Holy Spirit from him!

Beloved, you may despair and sorrow, wondering how you could sin so suddenly and grievously toward your Lord. But you have to know He still loves you and is pleading your cause! He is on your side, praying that your faith will not fail in the battle. And he will not take his Holy Spirit from you - if you will humble yourself and cry out to Him from your heart.

The moment you fall back into an old lust or sin, the devil comes to you with this lie: "That was your last chance! You've sinned once too often - God has run out of patience with you. Your sin is worse than others', because you claim to be a child of God. You knew better!"

Satan knows if he can make you believe your condition is hopeless, then he has won the victory:

"And they said, there is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart" JER 18:12

The people of Israel were convinced they were so evil, hardened and destined to fall that they were hopeless - that they might as well do as they pleased.

But dear saint, God will not let you go! Right now the Holy Spirit is sending missionaries into Russia and other formerly Communist countries, seeking out the godless, wooing them and bringing them into His kingdom. Would God chase after atheists with his love - and forsake you, His child? Never!

How were you delivered from sin's power when you first came to Christ? Was it because you were a great prayer warrior? No - it was all because of the mercy and love of Christ! He delivered you from Satan's snare simply because He loved you! The Bible says:

"We love him, because he first loved us" 1. JN 4:19

As I labored over this message, I wanted to say next: "When you fall, get up quickly and run to Jesus. Confess it all to Him, and trust Him for strength!"

But the Holy Spirit showed me that before you run back to Jesus, there is something you must do. This is the reason so few win the victory over sin: They run back to Jesus without facing their sin!

A rich young ruler came to Jesus - and Jesus told him the price he had to pay:

"Sell everything you own, give the money to the poor, and pick up your cross and follow Me."

Scripture says Jesus greatly loved this young man:

"Then Jesus beholding him loved him" MK 10:21

But when the young ruler heard the price, he *"went away grieved."* Jesus can love you with everything in His eternal being - and yet you can turn and walk away from Him. You see, your sin goes deeper than drugs, alcohol, sex, or gambling. It

has its roots in such things as bitterness, envy, wrath - things that lay hold of your heart and character.

It is still there in you - and it has never been dealt with. That is why it surfaces week after week, month after month, year after year! It destroys your testimony and brings guilt and condemnation and fear upon you, as it should.

But you never get victory!

Yet I've found there is a pathway to hope that the Lord provides. It is this:

At the Lowest Point of Your Failure, You Have to Honestly Ask Yourself Three Questions

When you are in the very midst of your sin - still "in the lap of Delilah" you need to stop and ask yourself the following:

1. **"How did I get here - so low?"**
2. **"What has happened to me - why am I doing this?"**
3. **"What power has such a hold on me to make me do this?"**

I've found that if you don't do this at your very lowest point, you'll never do it when you are walking in the light!

You see, right after you've "done it, "Satan gives you a false sense of peace - a hellish rest! He gives you a little time to enjoy your sin, and all seems well.

But the "afterglow" of sin is temporary - **and it is blinding!** Satan does not want you to stop and think of God, eternity or consequences when you're in the middle of your sin. So he blinds you to all guilt, fear and condemnation.

Yet if you are a believer and still enslaved by an overpowering sin, you will never get free until you ask yourself these questions and face the truth. And the truth is that a supernatural power has moved in - and has taken control over you!

I hear Christians say, "I'm still battling an alcohol problem." "I'm fighting a battle with drugs." "My problem is lust." **No** - your enemy is bigger than drugs, sex or alcohol. It is the devil himself! Peter says,

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion,

walketh about, seeking whom he may devour"

1 PET 5:8

You are not battling a problem - but a person!

You ask, can a Christian be demon-controlled? That depends on what kind of Christian you're talking about. If you mean an overcoming, righteous believer who is vigilant and has a close walk with Jesus - no, absolutely not. He is safe and secure and can never be invaded by demon powers. But if you talk about a slothful soul who is drifting, not walking in truth, not praying or reading the Bible or seeking God - yes! His heart is wide open to demon powers!

If you continually go into the devil's territory, you open your heart to Satan and give him place. For example, Samson took off for Gaza knowing full well that town was full of prostitutes and brothels. He may have convinced himself, "I'll just stroll along - I won't do anything. I'm just curious."

Yet the moment Samson walked through the gate of Gaza, the devil moved in!

Satan could claim, "As long as you were on God's side of the wall of fire, I couldn't touch you, Samson. But when you walked into my territory, you were telling me you wanted what I have to offer. You wouldn't have come here unless you were itching for what I've got. Now you're in my territory - and you are helpless. I've got you!"

Is this what has happened to you? Every time you pick up pornography or watch a dirty movie, you walk back into the devil's domain - and you open the door of your heart! It is an open invitation for the devil to move in!

Jesus spoke very clearly about how a person who has been delivered from Satan's power is overcome once again. It is because the heart is never put in right order:

"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the

last state of that man is worse than the first"

MATT 12:43-45

Beloved, Jesus is talking about a heart that has been cleansed! When the evil spirit came back, he saw the heart had been swept clean - but there had been no change. It wasn't filled with the gospel or with prayer; it was just as he had left it. So he brought in seven other spirits worse than himself - and the state of the man's soul was seven times worse!

When Jesus told this, he was talking to those who hated Him - **and He was telling them why they were doing it!** Many of these very people had repented at John's preaching. But Satan had come back with seven times the force!

How else could such religious people break their own law, killing an innocent Man whose only desire was to save, comfort and deliver them? It was because Satan had overcome them! They acted wholly under the influence of the devil. Satan had gained access - and he directed every action.

"For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them" 2.PET 2:19-21

These are strong words! Peter isn't talking about drug addicts, prostitutes or street sinners. He's talking about Christians who became corrupted by a false gospel of freedom - and were overcome by the devil:

They had "escaped the pollutions of the world"

2.PET 2:20

They could say, "I've been set free - and I claim Jesus' victory!" They had started out truly following Christ.

They had a full "knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"

2.PET 2:20

The Greek word for "knowledge" here suggests "full, complete." They knew Jesus intimately!

They had "known the way of righteousness"
2.PET 2:21

They had walked with the Lord for some time - they weren't babes in Christ.

They had heard the "holy commandment delivered unto them"
2.PET 2:21

They had sat under the pure Word of God - solid gospel preaching and teaching. They knew His promises and His judgments.

They "feasted with (the saints)"
2.PET 2:13

meaning they had communion. They had been at the meetings and worshipped with the body. And they had sat at the Lord's table for the fellowship supper of the church.

These were not newcomers who were unskilled in the Word of God. These were seasoned Christians. And yet Peter says they were overcome by Satan - meaning, "devastated, ruined, brought low into the pit, entangled in deep sin" - utterly cast down!

Do you have a besetting sin you've prayed about - but no power to overcome it? If so, then what is the logical conclusion, according to the Scriptures? It is that you have opened your heart and given access to the enemy!

Whether through spiritual laziness, neglect, holding onto a hurt, whatever it may be - you gave the enemy access, and you have not dealt with it. As long as the enemy sits on the throne and calls the shots, and you say, "I can't help myself, I just keep doing it" - then you are admitting you've lost control.

You have to see you are under somebody else's power!

You Can't Be Christ's By Profession - and Yet the Devil's By Practise!

You may profess to live for Christ. But what is your practice? Are you practicing love for Jesus - or sin?

One evangelist was exposed recently for cavorting with prostitutes - and he confessed he had been doing it for years! Another minister was caught in adultery - and he admitted to being driven by lust for more than twenty-five years.

I tell you that no matter how forcefully these men may have preached, they were under the dominion of Satan! Their problem wasn't a weakness or a character flaw. Rather, it was the devil moving in, possessing them and directing their lives.

Are you addicted, bound, unable to stop your sinning? When will you face the truth? When will you say, "This continual going back to a gross sin is inspired by Satan - I am under satanic dominion!" You will never break free until you recognize what has happened to you: You are possessed! The devil lives in you, and he is driving you, pushing you - and he won't rest until he destroys you!

You Need a Full and Complete Deliverance! You Need Satan Driven Out - to Stay Out!

If you are not willing to admit you have been overpowered by the devil, you will keep looking for advice rather than deliverance. But you don't need anymore advice - you need to be set free from Satan's power. He must be cast out!

You can be delivered today - right now! You don't have to live under the devil's power anymore. But first you have to understand: There is no freedom from sin until you learn to hate it!

The only strength that sin has over you is the love of it. But if you've had enough of the guilt, fear and condemnation and can say, "Devil, I recognize you!"

Are you willing to take a stand in the name of Jesus - to acknowledge, "I've been overpowered?" It's going to take a lot of honesty on your part. You've got to say in your heart, "Yes, that's me! I've had this thing in me long enough, and it's got to go. I've got to be set free!"

Right now you need to put all of hell on notice that your Savior Jesus Christ died and shed His blood - and therefore the devil has no more power or victory over you: "For sin shall not have dominion over you!"

Here is what you must do:

1. **Realize that God loves you - and that He sent His Son Jesus Christ to set you free from every bondage.** It

doesn't matter if you entered into that bondage before you came to Christ or since. He has come to set you free!

You can't sit there on your own and battle the devil; you've already seen he's too powerful for you. But the devil's battle is not with you - it is with Jesus! You only have to stand confidently and say, "Because of the cross!"

2. **Lay down all fear.** You may fear what Satan will do to you - but he has no authority to do anything. The devil has perverted what deliverance is - because in truth it is simply the authority of Jesus Christ and Him alone!
3. **Stand on what the Word of God says to you:**

"For this purpose the son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."

1 JN 3:8

Jesus didn't intend for you to be destroyed. He wants to rescue you - to redeem you and set you free!

"Though death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

HEB 2:14

All your deliverance came through the death of Jesus Christ at the Cross!

"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it."

COL 2:14

Jesus made an open display of His triumph over Satan - through His victory at Calvary!

4. **Lay down your sin completely - and trust Jesus to help you put it to death.**

Utter this prayer to Him:

"Lord Jesus, I want to be delivered from my sin. I let the devil in by my will - and now by my will I renounce my sin. I call it sin, and I trust you completely to help me resist it. Now I ask you to wash me and cleanse me. I trust in your word that I

am forgiven, washed and set free by your blood.

"At your name every knee must bow - things on heaven, on earth and under the earth. So by Your name, I stand against all demonic strongholds in my life. And on the authority of Your Cross, I pray to be delivered from the demonic spirits that control me.

"Devil, you have to face Jesus - not me, but Jesus! I command this stronghold over me to be broken, by the blood of Jesus and the victory of the Cross. I declare an open show and

triumph over you - in Jesus' name!"

Now, read this promise to you from the Lord:

"Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he has known my name" PSA 91:14

Set your love on Jesus right now. It is by His name and His Cross that you are delivered. Not by your crying out, not by someone praying over you - but by His name and His Cross!

Oh God, I pray for the precious one reading this message right now. Pour out Your mercy on

this child of Yours who has been held in bondage for so long. Cast down the stronghold, break it and destroy it in this beloved child's life. And in Jesus' name, set this one free ! I declare that every evil spirit and demonic bondage must flee now, in the name of Jesus. Release Your child!

Now give the Lord thanks - and bless His name for your full and complete deliverance today. He loves you - and He has paid the full price to set you free !

David Wilkerson 5-4-1992

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