



from the desk of . . .  
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## **DAILY SURRENDER**

**Romans 6:12-23**

I want to begin this morning by giving you a little multiple-choice test concerning WWII. This is going to deal with D-Day & VE-Day. Now most of you know that I love American history, but for some reason I can never get those 2 straight.

So, I'm asking you to help me this morning ... okay?

Question #1 ... D-Day was the day when:

- (a) Draft notices were sent out ("D"-draft);
- (b) Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor;
- (c) Allies invaded France; or,
- (d) Hitler was assassinated. Which one?

"C" ... it's when the Allies invaded France. France was defeated by Germany in 1940 at the beginning of the War. And then on 6 June 1944 about 175,000 Allied troops stormed the beaches in Normandy, France. Around 7,000 of those soldiers lost their lives that day. But they established a beachhead from which General Eisenhower & his army could push their way toward Berlin. Historians refer to D-Day as the beginning of the end of Nazi, Germany.

Question #2 ... VE-Day was the day when:

- (a) Soldiers received vitamin E in their ration packets; (okay, you try to come up with a bunch of multiple choice answers)
- (b) Germany surrenders;
- (c) Victorious Eisenhower ("VE") was celebrated with a tickertape parade; or,
- (d) Bob Hope entertained the troops. Which one?

The correct answer is ... "B" ... Germany surrenders & there's Victory in Europe. This happened 11 months after D-Day; & as the Allies close in on Berlin, Adolph Hitler commits suicide in his bunker. A new President is elected in Germany, & he immediately surrenders.

Harry Truman, who has been President for a month, turns 61 on VE-Day. And there are parties & rejoicing on the streets of Chicago, Miami, Los Angeles, & NYC.

Why am I talking about D-Day & VE-Day?

Gordon Fee, who was one of my Seminary Professors, has said that the Christian life is like living between D-Day & VE-Day.

Our D-Day is the day we came to faith in Jesus, & He became our Savior & the Lord of our life. And when that happens, our archenemy, Satan, is defeated ... & sin loses its' stranglehold on us.

We're free for the 1<sup>st</sup> time to live a God-pleasing life.

However, the "war's" not over; the battles continue. Just like it took the Allies an additional 11 months of fighting to make their way to Berlin, where peace was finally established; so we, after our "D-Day", have to keep on fighting sin until the moment that Jesus calls us home (Genesis 4:7) ...

& we experience our own permanent & joyful "VE-Day".

Now the Good News is, because of our "D-Day", our victory is certain. We can defeat sin. We can defeat lust. We can defeat pride. We can defeat materialism & anger & selfishness. We can defeat envy,  
& any other sin that might have its' grip on us.

But, & you need to understand this, the key to our victory though is surrender. Not surrender to sin ... but surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in our life.

And that's what we're going to focus in on this morning.

I want to talk about experiencing victory over sin in our lives so we don't keep "falling" in the same areas. How do we beat this sin so that it doesn't keep dragging us down, & make us lose ground in our Christian walk? It's great knowing that God forgives us ...

but wouldn't it be even better to simply defeat sin?

If we keep breaking our arm again & again & again in the same place, it's nice to know that there's a Dr. who will reset it. But wouldn't it be better to stop breaking our arm in the 1<sup>st</sup> place? ...

So, I'm going to give you a 4-step strategy to gain victory over sin ... it's a victory that's achieved by "Daily Surrender" to Christ.

So, listen now to Good News from Paul to the Church in Rome, & to the Church also here in Rolling Meadows.

Within your hearing now comes the Word of the Lord ...

Sin must no longer rule in your mortal bodies, so that you obey the desires of your natural self. Nor must you surrender any part of yourselves to sin to be used for wicked purposes. Instead, give yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life, and surrender your whole being to him to be used for righteous purposes. Sin must not be your master; for you do not live under law but under God's grace.

What, then? Shall we sin, because we are not under law but under God's grace? By no means! Surely you know that when you surrender yourselves as slaves to obey someone, you are in fact the slaves of the master you obey - either of sin, which results in death, or of obedience, which results in being put right with God. But thanks be to God! For though at one time you were slaves to sin, you have obeyed with all your heart the truths found in the teaching you received. You were set free from sin and became the slaves of righteousness. ... At one time you surrendered yourselves entirely as slaves to impurity and wickedness for wicked purposes.

In the same way you must now surrender yourselves entirely as slaves of righteousness for holy purposes.

When you were the slaves of sin, you were free from righteousness. What did you gain from doing the things that you are now ashamed of? The result of those things is death! But now you have been set free from sin and are the slaves of God. Your gain is a life fully dedicated to him, and the result is eternal life. For sin pays its wage - death; but God's free gift is eternal life in union with Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:12-23)

**May the Lord grant that we may engage in contemplating the mysteries of His Heavenly wisdom with really increasing devotion, to His glory and to our edification. Amen**

**Step #1 ... own your new identity in Christ.**

Paul writes, "You are to think of yourselves as dead, so far as sin is concerned, but living in fellowship with God through Christ Jesus." (Romans 6:11) Circle the word "think." Paul wants us to wrap our minds around this.

We're to think about the fact that we're **dead** to sin, & **alive** to God. And this happens "through Christ Jesus." When we come to faith, we become, spiritually speaking ... connected with Christ. So, what's true of Jesus becomes true of us ... because we're linked with Him.

So, Christ's death on the cross, with respect to sin, becomes our death to sin. Christ's resurrection from the dead to new life becomes our resurrection to new life.

What's true of Jesus becomes true of us.

The Apostle Paul put it this way ... (X)

"Anyone who is joined to Christ is a new being; the old is gone, the new has come." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

So, if we're "joined to Christ" we can say ... "I'm a new being. The old me is gone, the new me has come." This is our new identity. Paul wants us to "think" about that, to ponder it, to keep it at the forefront of our mind. But how does this help in our daily battle with sin?

Years ago, there was a baseball player named Bobby Richardson (X) who played for the N.Y. Yankees. Now Bobby was the Tim Lincecum of his generation ... he's a strong follower of Jesus, which would be why I'd like him today, but I liked him back then because he was their 2<sup>nd</sup> baseman ... & I played 2<sup>nd</sup> base.

And I remember clearly an interview that Ray Scott had with Bobby during the Yankees & Pirates World Series. Ray asked him ... "What's it like to be a Yankee?" And Bobby Richardson responded ... "Just putting on the Yankee pinstripes makes me a better player."

I've never forgotten that. "Just putting on the Yankee pinstripes makes me a better player."

What he was saying is ...

"I'm motivated to live up to my identity as a Yankee."

That's exactly what the Apostle Paul is telling us in our passage today. We ought to be motivated to live up to our identity as a follower of Jesus ...

dead to sin, alive to God. We need to remember that.

The next time you're "ready" to sin. The next time you're ready to lose your temper, or lust after that person or thing, or behave selfishly ... remember ...

you have died to sin, & are now alive to God.

Okay, how do we beat sin on a daily basis in our life?

Step #2 ... **offer** our body in service to Christ.

Paul wants us to stop sinning. He wants us to take this seriously. "Oh, you know, it's okay if I sin today ... I can always ask for forgiveness tomorrow." Paul says,

"That's ridiculous thinking! You've got to stop sinning."

Now I understand that's easier said than done. How do we stop a bad habit? ... It's said that the best way to stop a bad habit is by replacing it with a good habit. And I think that's exactly what Paul means when he says,

"Nor must you surrender any part of yourselves to sin to be used for wicked purposes." (That's the bad habit.)

"Instead, give yourselves to God ... & surrender your whole being to him to be used for righteous purposes."

(That's the good habit.)

Once again, this sounds great, but ... how do we do it?

Our good friend, Phil Miglioratti, led a seminar here 5 or 6 years ago. Do you remember the "body parts" prayer he taught us? ...

We need to pray 2 things for every body part. We pray a prayer of confession for how we use that part in sinful ways. And then, conversely, we pray a prayer of dedication to use that part for God.

So, if we begin with our eyes, we pray something like this ... "God, I offer you my eyes today. I confess that I've used my eyes this past week to sin. (And then we name it ... pornography, or judgmentally looking at people who are different, or coveting as we go through catalogs, etc.) I want to stop sinning with my eyes so I give them to you. Use my eyes to read your Word & draw insight from it. Use my eyes today to see opportunities to serve you. Use my eyes today to see this wonderful creation you've made, & to notice my blessings."

Do you see how this works? ...

Pick another body part ... our ears. "Lord, I have used my ears to listen to stuff I shouldn't have ... gossip, dirty jokes, etc. Forgive me. I want my ears to be used in service to you. Use my ears to hear the hurts going on in other people's lives. Use my ears to hear the sounds of nature when I walk out the door so that I don't ignore what you've made."

Go to our feet. "I confess, Jesus, that my feet have taken me places I shouldn't have gone." (And we name those places.) Then we pray, "Lord, I want my feet to take me into opportunities to tell others about you. I want my feet to take me to Bible Study;  
& to bring me to worship you next Sunday."

So, begin with the body parts prayer ... & then do what you pray. Whatever you've told God you wanted to do with your various body parts ... go & do it. Stop sitting around. Because ... what's the old saying?  
"Idle hands are ... *(the Devil's workshop).*"

If we don't give our body parts something to do in service to God ... I guarantee sin will put our body parts to work. Because idle hands & idle eyes & idle feet ...  
will become, the Devil's workshop.

Let me give you a Scriptural illustration of this ...  
the story of David & Bathsheba.

David looks out one afternoon from his balcony & sees his neighbor's beautiful wife taking a bath. That leads him to lust, which leads to an affair,  
which leads to disaster in David's life.

Now, if you remember the story, what was David doing when he 1<sup>st</sup> spotted Bathsheba? ... Nothing. Scripture underscores that fact. He's sitting at home, while his army is out fighting battles.

David's the General ... he should be out there leading his soldiers by example;

but instead he's become a "couch potato" at home.

And so, after his afternoon nap, as he's idly roaming around the roof, because he has nothing else to do, David spots Bathsheba. (2 Samuel 11:1-2,4)

Idle eyes, in this case, become the Devil's workshop.

We will get in trouble when we have nothing to do but roam the mall. We will get in trouble when we have nothing to do but surf the internet. We will get in trouble when we have nothing to do but open the door to the frig ... & stand there & stare into it.

Have you ever done that? ...

Put your body parts to work for Christ. Use your spare moments to write someone an encouraging card or e-mail. Call someone who's lonely. Visit a shut-in. Get involved with "Blessings In A Back Pack" or "Kid's Hope". Attend one of our Bible studies. Read a Christian book.

Offer your body in service to Christ.

Step #3 ... do you want to beat sin? Then **obey** God's Word with a slave's devotion. As I read this passage pay attention for repeating words. I've told you before, one of the keys to interpreting the Scriptures is when we see a word, or phrase, or idea repeating itself over & over again in a passage ...

we know that God is trying to get our attention.

"What, then? Shall we sin, because we are not under law but under God's grace? By no means! Surely you know that when you surrender yourselves as slaves to obey someone, you are in fact the slaves of the master you obey - either of sin, which results in death, or of obedience, which results in being put right with God. But thanks be to God! For though at one time you were slaves to sin, you have obeyed with all your heart the truths found in the teaching you received. You were set free from sin & became the slaves of righteousness."

What's the key word? ... (*slaves*) ... 4 times it's used. Paul writes that before we began a relationship with Christ we were slaves to sin. Sin has a way of making us do its' bidding. Sin orders us around. But once we come to faith, & begin to follow Jesus, something happens.

We go from slavery to absolute freedom, freedom to do what we please, right? ... Is that what he says? ... No, we go from being a slave to being a ... slave. We go from being a **slave** to sin to being a **slave** to Christ.

The alternative to being sin's slave is to become Christ's slave. Or as Paul puts it, "a slave of obedience," or "a slave of righteousness." We exchange an abusive master, sin, for a loving master, Jesus. We stop devoting ourselves to something that's out to destroy us ... & we start committing ourselves to Someone who is out to transform us.

Anything less than wholehearted slave-like devotion to Jesus Christ will result in slipping back into sin.

If you want Jesus to be your Savior & nothing more, simply a sin-forgiver ... but then you want to do what you jolly well please ... you're going to fall back into sin. You have to determine that Christ is going to become the Lord of your life, the Master of your life, & that you are going to become a "slave" to Him.

It's critical that we surrender our lives to Jesus Christ as Lord. This is just too important, so, I need to spend another moment talking about it.

If we're surrendering ourselves to Christ, & He's going to direct our lives ... how's He going to do it? Is He going to speak to us audibly? ... Probably not.

God directs us through the Scriptures.

Listen again to what Paul writes, "Thanks be to God! For though at one time you were slaves to sin, you have obeyed with all your heart the truths found in the teaching you received." He is talking about God's Word ... & obedience to it. God has given us His instructions.

Officially, the Christmas season ended yesterday. During Christmas, many of us gave gifts ... many of us received gifts. Imagine giving a gift to someone, & their putting it under the tree & never opening it.

What does that say about that person? ...

How would you feel if you gave me a Christmas gift,  
& I haven't yet opened it ...

& at this point have no intention of opening it? ...

God has given us a gift (Romans 6:23) ... have you've  
received it? ... Have you "opened" it? ... Do you cherish it?  
... Are you obeying it? ...

As we begin 2018, I'm challenging you to spend a few  
minutes in God's Word each day. What good excuse will  
you be able to give God for not doing that? ...

He has given this to us. Open it. Read it.

Every one of us is a slave to something ... it's either  
sin or Christ. To win the battle against sin we must read  
& obey God's Word.

Step #4 ... here's how the battle with sin is won ...  
**opt** for Christ's holy character in you.

Now as I read this final paragraph, I want to alert  
you for something that theologians call the "Doctrine Of  
The 2 Ways." The "Doctrine Of The 2 Ways" is a  
pattern that pops up repeatedly in Scripture, especially  
in The Proverbs. For example ...

"A gentle answer quiets anger,  
but a harsh one stirs it up." (The Proverbs 15:1)

Scripture teaches that there are 2 ways of doing  
things: if we follow this road, we'll end up here ...  
& if we follow that road, we'll end up there.

An example of this is the 1<sup>st</sup> Psalm. If we follow the example of the ungodly we ...

"are like straw that the wind blows away."

But if we listen to the advice of God's Word we ...

"are like trees that grow beside a stream,  
that bear fruit at the right time,  
& whose leaves do not dry up.

We succeed in everything we do." (The Psalms 1:3-4)

So, we can make godly choices or ungodly choices.

Jesus uses "The Doctrine Of The 2 Ways" in His Sermon On The Mount. He says that we can take one of 2 gates. Now one gate opens to a very wide road, with lots of people traveling on it. But that road leads to Hell. Or we can take the narrow gate which opens to a narrow road ... but this road will take us to life/Heaven. (Matthew 7:13-14) Which road are you going to take? ...

A little later Jesus asks ... "Do you want to be a healthy tree producing good fruit, or do you want to be a poor tree producing bad fruit." (Matthew 7:17-18)

Finally, Jesus asks ... "What kind of builder are you going to be? Are you going to build your life upon the rock foundation of obedience to God's Word, or are you going to build it on sand?" This is so important, because when the storms of life come, & they will, only the people with rock-solid foundations are going to stand.

So, which builder are you? (Matthew 7:24-27)

Now I'm going to read you Paul's closing paragraph & see if you can spot his use of "The Doctrine Of The 2 Ways."

"At one time you surrendered yourselves entirely as slaves to impurity & wickedness for wicked purposes.

(That's one way.) In the same way you must now surrender yourselves entirely as slaves of righteousness for holy purposes. (That's the other way.)

"When you were the slaves of sin, you were free from righteousness. What did you gain from doing the things that you are now ashamed of? (That's where that road takes you.) The result of those things is death! But now you have been set free from sin & are the slaves of God. Your gain is a life fully dedicated to him, & the result is eternal life. (That's the other road.) For sin pays its wage - death; but God's free gift is eternal life in union with Christ Jesus our Lord."

Do you see "the doctrine of the 2 ways"?

There's a right way ... & a wrong way.

Each day we're going to face a fork in the road. In fact, we're going to face it numerous times throughout the course of a day.

Paul says, if we choose sin, it will lead to ever increasing wickedness ... & that will have us doing things that we're ashamed of ... & that will lead to spiritual death ... which leads to eternal death.

Is that the road you want to take?

Or we can take the road that leads to obedience to Christ. We can become a slave to righteousness. We make choices that please God, which leads to holiness, & seeing more & more & more of Christ's character in our life ... which leads to spiritual life ... which leads to eternal life. Is that the road you want to take? ...

(X) Every day we face these forks. We have decisions to make. And we need to make those decisions not on how the road begins ... but where the road ends.

Where do you want to end up?

We have an enemy out there who is trying to tempt us away from our walk with Jesus. (1 Peter 5:8) So, how do we defeat Satan in our life?

- Own your new identity in Christ ... keep reminding yourself that the old is gone & the new has come
- Offer your body parts in service for Christ ... find things to do that will serve Jesus
- Obey Christ's Word with a slave's devotion
- Opt for Christ's holy character ... when you're facing a fork in the road, take the one path that will produce Christ's character

Do that in 2018 ... & "your gain will be a life fully dedicated to him, & the result will be eternal life."

**MARANA THA**