Dead to sin, alive to God

Romans 6 v 1-14 – Leader's version

For an hour study, just do the starred * questions

Check in – ask everyone, including leaders, how they are and how they're feeling about studying the Bible today.

It might help to say 'rebellion against God' to clarify the word 'sin' every time you come across 'sin'. This may make the concept of sin more personal and relevant.

What does the passage say and mean?

90 minutes

*1. Should being a Christian have an effect on your behaviour? Why?

Don't try to reach a conclusion, just have a discussion.

*2. **STICKERS** Since Jesus has died for your sin, can you can carry on sinning? Why?

Don't answer the question, just read out the stickers. Then explain that today we're going to find out what the Bible has to say about this.

Read Romans 6 v 1-14 to the group.

*3. Re-read Romans 6 v 1-2. What is Paul's response to Q2, and what is his reason?

No! Because we have died to sin. (Don't try to unpack this yet)

You may need to explain that when Paul says 'live in sin' he's not talking about unmarried people living together!

4. Read Romans 6 v 2-4. What does the Bible say happens to us when we become a Christian?

(Explain that in the New Testament, baptism happened at the point of becoming a follower of Jesus, so Paul uses the word 'baptism' here to mean 'conversion').

We were buried with Christ into death and we were raised from the dead with him, v4. This is big stuff to get

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your head around!

Remember the concept of 'federal head' from the last study v for example, legal counsel speaking for us in court. What they say on our behalf is as our own words, they are our representative. Or a Prime Minister saying we are at war with another country – everyone in the country is at war, not just the Prime Minister. So, in union with Christ, what happened to him happened to us - when Christ died, we died, when he rose, we rose.

*5. Since, in v2, 'We died to sin' and v4, 'we too may live a new life', what has happened to the power that sin had in our lives before we trusted Christ?

The power of sin has been put to death in us, because Christ has the victory over it – we are dead to sin. We have a new life in Christ, which is not under the power of sin. However, we are still human and we are still sinful, as evidenced by our day to day lives. We could say ***sin remains in us, but doesn't reign in us****.*

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Think back to how things were before you trusted in Jesus' death on your behalf. Can you see any ways in which your attitude to sin has changed since then? Are you living the new life that the Bible talks about?

If not, gently challenge them – why are they still living as if Jesus hadn't died? Have they really understood what happened at the cross?

NB everything doesn't change at once – we all have sinful behaviours / attitudes that we continue to struggle with. The question is asking whether people are engaging in the process, not whether they've got it all sorted!!

*6. Read Romans 6 v 5. What else does being united to Christ in his death bring us? Why is this good news?

We are also united with him in his resurrection. We are raised to new life with him – this means we can have a fresh start! There may be stuff from the old life that we still have to deal with, like a prison sentence or ongoing consequences for our victims, or addictions / sinful behaviour patterns, but, with Jesus, we have a clean slate before God, which will keep being cleaned, as he continues to forgive us for ongoing sin.

7. Read Romans 6 v 6-7. What is the 'old self'? What is the 'new self'?

The old self is who we were before we trusted Christ. The new self is who we are in Christ – forgiven, redeemed, saved, righteous, adopted, a new creation etc.

8. Read Ephesians 4 v 22-24. How is the 'new self' different?

Compare on the flip-chart what the Bible says and unpack what these things might mean in day to day life v

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Old self	***New self***
Corrupted by its own deceitful desires = sinning without any struggle to stop, living with no reference to God	*Made new in the attitude of your minds. Created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness = engaged in a battle against sin. We won't be sinless this side of heaven, but if we are struggling against sin, we are becoming 'holy and righteous'.*
Think about examples – our attitudes to other people and our behaviour / lifestyle.	*Think about how this would / does change our attitudes to other people and our behaviour / lifestyle.*

*9. In what way does Paul describe the 'old self' at the end of Romans 6 v 6, and what do you think he means by this?

A 'slave to sin'. He means that sin was our master, it had control over us and we couldn't fight back (only Jesus could fight back, on our behalf). This doesn't mean everyone's moral handbrake was off – unbelieving 'good people' are also slaves to sin, who need to trust Jesus' death on their behalf.

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A Christian called Tim Keller says that sin 'is still able to lead me to disobey God, but now, sinful behaviour goes against my deepest self-understanding.'

As a Christian, do you recognise this change in <u>your</u> deepest self-understanding too? How does it affect your life?

*10. What do you think it means to count yourself dead to sin? (v11)

We are dead to the power of sin, although not to its presence. We no longer have to obey sin – we can choose not to. In Christ we can say 'I am dead to that!'

Questions 12-14 are **SELF-DIRECTED QUESTIONS**. You need to write them on flip-chart sheets for the group to work on in pairs.

11. **SDL** <u>Read Romans 7 v 21-25a</u>. What problem did Paul have? What was the solution?

He delighted in God's law but was in a battle with sin. He knew that Jesus had rescued him.

12. **SDL** <u>Read Romans 6 v 12</u>. What happens when we let sin reign in us?

We obey its desires.

*13. **SDL** <u>Read Romans 6 v 12-14</u>. What choice do we have, concerning sin?

*We can choose whether to let sin reign in us or not. As above, when we are saved by Jesus, **sin remains***

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***but it does not reign**. But, if we give it permission, sin will pull us down (this doesn't mean we are no longer saved). If we recognise sin is there, but don't submit to it, we can overcome it, in Christ.*
Before we were a Christian, we were in rebellion against God. Now, we are in rebellion against sin.

***?** As Christians we're in a battle against sin and we're on the winner's side. How does knowing this help you?

14. Where do we get the strength to resist the power of sin?
Discuss, but don't try to make a conclusion
Now look up Luke 22 v 40-46. (Explain that this is the night before Jesus died and he is being tempted not to go to the cross). What does Jesus do when he's tempted? (v40-42)
Prays
What does Jesus tell the disciples to do and why? (v45-46)
Pray, so that you will not fall into temptation.
It should be clear by now that we don't have this strength or power within us! Sin can only be defeated by Christ. Jesus defeated sin at the cross so it has no power over us, but it does still have influence.

15. What do you think it means to 'offer yourselves' and 'offer the parts of your body to God as instruments of righteousness?' (Romans 6 v 13).
A complete surrender of every part of yourself to God. It means to use your body – physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually – for God's glory, not for your own. Think about practical examples.

16. Read Romans 6 v 13 again. How would you answer Q1 now?

***?** Are there sins in your life that you have grown tolerant of? What needs to happen? *Remember 'I am dead to that!'*

Check out – ask everyone, including leaders, how they found the study and if they are safe to go back to the cell.

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8. Read Ephesians 4 v 22-24. Why is the 'new self' different and how is it different?

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What does Jesus tell the disciples to do and why? (v45-46)

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