

SERMON STUDY GUIDE

RECKONED DEAD TO SIN — ALIVE IN CHRIST

Not a Spectator Sport: Conviction, Freedom, and Real Discipleship

Based on the message by Justin Younger

OVERVIEW

This message calls the church back to a biblically grounded view of sin, grace, and identity in Christ. Justin teaches that righteousness is received—not earned—and that every born-again believer is no longer defined as a “sinner,” but as a son or daughter who has died with Christ and been raised to walk in newness of life. From there, the sermon challenges the common habit of living spiritually “empty” from Monday to Saturday and then trying to get filled on Sunday.

Freedom from sin is not found in self-effort or spiritual performances, but in living fully in Jesus through real relationship—prayer, the Word, obedience, and daily surrender. Conviction is presented as a gift: an invitation from the Holy Spirit to go deeper, not condemnation to push you into shame. The call is clear: stop pretending, stop staying on the bench, and respond to the Lord with wholehearted obedience.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

READ → RESPOND → REFLECT

Each section begins with a focus statement drawn from the sermon. Open your Bible and read the passage aloud. This guide is not about quick answers—it is about training our response so we follow Jesus rather than ourselves.

If children are present, simplify questions and invite them to answer in their own words. Including children strengthens discipleship in community and helps them learn to go to Scripture first.

SECTION 1 — RIGHTEOUSNESS IS RECEIVED, NOT EARNED

“You cannot get more righteous than righteous.”

FOCUS

Righteousness is not a reward for good behavior. It is a gift received through Jesus Christ. Growth is real—but growth is sanctification, not earning righteousness.

READ

Romans 5: 18–21, 2 Corinthians 5: 21, Ephesians 2: 8–10

RESPOND

1. According to Romans 5: 18–21, what is the source of justification and righteousness?
2. How does 2 Corinthians 5: 21 describe your standing in Christ?
3. What is the difference between receiving righteousness and growing in sanctification?

REFLECT

- Where have I acted like God's acceptance depends on my performance?
- How would my week change if I started each day from "received righteousness" instead of "earned approval"?

SECTION 2 — A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP, NOT A SUNDAY DEPENDENCE

"If the only thing you're consuming is what you're given on a platform, you're staying spiritually immature."

FOCUS

Gathering matters, but discipleship requires daily relationship with Jesus. God speaks personally, not only through sermons.

READ

Matthew 4: 4, John 15: 4–5, Romans 8: 14

RESPOND

1. What does Jesus say in Matthew 4: 4 about what sustains a person?
2. According to John 15: 4–5, what happens when we try to live "apart from" Christ?
3. What does Romans 8: 14 say about being led by the Spirit—and how does that require daily fellowship?

REFLECT

- Where have I relied on Sunday to carry me through the week?
- What is one simple daily rhythm (Word, prayer, obedience) I can begin this week?

SECTION 3 — GRACE DOES NOT AUTHORIZE SIN

“Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not.”

FOCUS

Grace is not permission to live unchanged. Grace is power to live new. Paul confronts “sloppy grace” thinking and calls believers to a new identity and a new way of life.

READ

Romans 6: 1–4, Titus 2: 11–14

RESPOND

1. In Romans 6: 1–4, what argument does Paul make against continuing in sin?
2. What does it mean to be “baptized into His death” and to “walk in newness of life”?
3. According to Titus 2: 11–14, what does grace train us to do?

REFLECT

- Where have I excused sin by leaning on “God will forgive me anyway”?
- What does “newness of life” look like in one specific area right now?

SECTION 4 — IDENTITY SHIFT: NOT A SINNER, BUT A SON OR DAUGHTER

“When you’re a born again believer, you are not a sinner. You’re a son. You’re a daughter.”

FOCUS

The gospel doesn’t just forgive—it transforms identity. The old life is crucified with Christ, and believers are called to live from the new creation reality.

READ

2 Corinthians 5: 17, Romans 6: 5–7, Galatians 2: 20

RESPOND

1. What does 2 Corinthians 5: 17 say has happened to the “old”?
2. According to Romans 6: 5–7, what has been done to the “old man” and what is the result?
3. How does Galatians 2: 20 describe daily life for a believer?

REFLECT

- Where am I still speaking about myself with an “old identity” vocabulary?

- What would change if I faced temptation as someone who is already “dead to sin” and “alive to God”?

SECTION 5 — FILL THE VOID: FREEDOM REQUIRES REPLACEMENT

“If you don’t pursue God in place of what you left, you’ll revert back to what’s familiar.”

FOCUS

Repentance removes what is unclean, but discipleship must fill the place with Jesus. If a space stays empty, old patterns return. Freedom is sustained through devotion and relationship.

READ

Matthew 12: 43–45, Psalm 16: 11, John 15: 9–11

RESPOND

1. What warning does Jesus give in Matthew 12: 43–45 about an “empty house”?
2. What does Psalm 16: 11 reveal about what satisfies the human heart?
3. In John 15: 9–11, what is connected to abiding in Jesus?

REFLECT

- What has God helped me leave behind, but I haven’t replaced with intimacy with Him?
- What practical “replacement” step can I take this week (Scripture time, worship, accountability, serving, wise community)?

SECTION 6 — CONVICTION VS CONDEMNATION

“Conviction is an invitation from the Holy Spirit to draw deeper.”

FOCUS

The Holy Spirit brings conviction to lead you toward life and freedom. The enemy brings condemnation to lead you into shame, hiding, and defeat. Learning the difference is key to walking in ongoing transformation.

READ

John 16: 8–11, Romans 8: 1, 2 Corinthians 7: 9–10

RESPOND

1. According to John 16: 8–11, what does the Holy Spirit do—and why is that good?
2. What does Romans 8: 1 promise to those who are in Christ Jesus?
3. In 2 Corinthians 7: 9–10, what is the difference between godly sorrow and worldly sorrow?

REFLECT

- When I feel exposed, do I run to Jesus—or do I hide?
- What is one conviction I need to respond to quickly, before it turns into procrastination or shame?

SECTION 7 — NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT: DO WHATEVER IT TAKES

“Be willing to do whatever it takes to get free from sin.”

FOCUS

Jesus calls His followers to serious, decisive obedience. This isn’t about earning salvation—it’s about refusing to protect sin. Conviction is training. Obedience builds spiritual skill. It’s time to get off the bench.

READ

Matthew 5: 29–30, Romans 6: 11–14, James 1: 22–25

RESPOND

1. What is Jesus emphasizing in Matthew 5: 29–30 (and what is He not literally commanding)?
2. In Romans 6: 11–14, what does it mean to “reckon yourself dead to sin”?
3. According to James 1: 22–25, what happens when we hear but don’t do?

REFLECT

- What “radical obedience” step is the Lord putting His finger on right now?
- What accountability or boundary would help me practice obedience consistently?

PRACTICE FOR THE WEEK

1. Name the Conviction

Ask the Holy Spirit: “What are You inviting me to surrender?” Write it down.

2. Reject Condemnation

Speak Romans 8:1 out loud. Refuse shame and hiding.

3. Replace the Void

Identify a Scripture (the Seed) to plant in the place where sin was removed, and nurture it through daily “abiding” practices (Scripture reading & meditation, prayer, worship, fasting, community, accountability). Put it on your calendar.

4. Take One Obedient Step

Do the first step within 24 hours. Don’t delay. Obedience trains you.

CLOSING REFLECTION

Freedom is not found in trying harder—it is found in living fully in Jesus.

Conviction is not punishment—it is invitation.

We don’t grow by sitting in the stands.

We grow by saying “Yes, Lord,” and practicing obedience day by day.