

Bible Study of Romans (16)

Romans 6:1-14

Introduction:

Chapter six introduces a new fruit related to justification. In chapter five Paul wrote about peace; in chapter six about holiness. In chapter five the focus was on the *legal status* of the believer in Christ. In chapter six the focus is on the *spiritual-moral condition and life* of the believer in Christ Jesus. So, the main points of this chapter are holiness, living a new life, dying and being dead to sin and living to God.

Though each chapter focuses on a different subject, they are nonetheless intimately related. Justification (the legal aspect of the believer) and sanctification (the spiritual-moral aspect of the believer) are as two sides of one coin. The 'coin' is God's salvation. The God who declares the sinner just at the same time pours the sanctifying Spirit into the justified sinner's heart, producing the fruit of holiness.

In every age there have been those who have denounced the doctrine of justification by faith on the ground that it logically leads to sin. For, they say, if our good works don't save us, then why worry about sin? Why try to do good? Why strive to live a righteous life?

Romans 6 answers these various objections showing that a truly justified sinner will have no such attitude. The Gospel method of salvation by grace leads to true obedience. It inevitably results in good works more than any other method of salvation. But the justified sinner's obedience results from love and not fear. His good works are performed out of gratitude for God's free gift of salvation, not in the hope that his works will save him.

The chapter is divided into two parts: in vs. 1-14 Paul establishes the fact that it is impossible for a saved man to continue *to live in sin* (which is altogether different than *falling into sin*); in vs. 15-23 he concludes this subject with a personal question about 'Who is your Master whom you serve?'

Below some extra study notes on these Scriptures

Vs. 1 What shall we say then? In other words, what conclusion shall we draw from the above teaching about God justifying the ungodly believers in Jesus rather than the pious (Romans 4:5)? **Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?** Since the increase of sin resulted in an overflow of grace, would it not be a good thing to sin purposely? Wouldn't this magnify God's grace even more for it would give God's grace even more opportunity to shine in my justification?

This question was already raised in Ch. 3:8 but here Paul answered it with more detail.

1. Is this merely a hypothetical question or are there actually people embracing this? Are there other passages in Scripture where this error is spoken about? Does the abundance and freeness of grace ever encourage sin?

Vs. 2 God forbid. Paul's strongest expression of utter rejection of such a wicked thought. **How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?** Something has happened which caused believers to become 'dead to sin' and therefore they no longer can live in sin.

2. What is meant or not meant with 'dead to sin'? Notice that this same phrase, with the same Greek words, is used in vs. 7 and vs. 11 with regard to the believers. But in vs. 10 the same words are used when Paul wrote about Christ Who 'died unto sin once'.

vs. 3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?

Since the Roman believers entered the church as adults, Paul rightly assumes that they were baptized as adults. Their personal baptism symbolized their union with or identification with Christ's death.

To be 'baptized into' always means 'to baptized in reference to.' Compare 1 Cor. 1:13 and 1 Cor. 10:2. In these examples baptism symbolizes one's union with the person. So, when believers are said 'to be baptized into His death' it means that their baptism symbolized their union with Him in His death and therefore also will be partakers of the benefits of this death. To continue in sin is therefore impossible for any who are truly united to Christ.

Vs. 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: which implies that these believers were immersed into the waters of baptism after they came to faith, symbolizing their identification with Christ when He entered into death and burial. **that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.** When the believer came out of the water, this symbolized his identity with Christ's resurrection from the dead to a life of glory.

3. The doctrine of the *believer's union with Christ* is one of the richest veins of gold in the Gospel. Explore how this truth is symbolized in vs. 3-4 and in the others part of this chapter.

4. How does vs. 3-4 answer the question of vs. 1?

5. In what ways is the life of a believer different than before his or her union with Christ?

6. Would a healthy emphasis on the benefit of *union with Christ* discourage or encourage holy living?

Vs. 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death and so intimately united to Him, **we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:** in other words, the power of the resurrection will so certainly affect us that we shall walk in newness of the life of sanctification. This verse expands the thought of the previous verses. Our union with Christ brings not only justification, the benefit of sharing in his death — it also brings the benefit of eternal life, of sharing in his resurrection. This affects the way we live. We are to live in a way that reflects our future life with Christ.

Vs. 6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Because of Christ's death on the cross, Christ's people are justified (freed from the condemnation of sin) and shall be glorified (completely freed from the presence and influence of sin) in the life to come. Our old self was united with Adam, a body under the curse of sin and in the power of sin. Yet being united to Christ, this identification with Adam ceased and as we are no longer his and therefore, we are no more to serve sin.

7. How is this fact of the old man being crucified *experienced*? Does that mean the old man gets gradually weaker, bleeding to death as it were, the longer we are in Christ?

8. How does this verse answer the question of vs. 1?

Paul introduced here two new metaphors to describe the condition of the sinner before and after coming to Christ: slavery and freedom. Sin does not only bring guilt or curse upon us. Sin also is a power that holds us. Sin is a power that works against us, a power that enslaves us, a power we must be

freed from. Only Christ's power can break the blinding and binding power of sin and when that happens, we don't live any longer as we did before.

Vs. 7 For he that is dead is freed from sin. Notice that Paul wrote **is freed** and not **will be** freed.

9. How are the believers freed from sin in this life?

Vs. 8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: through the power of His grace experienced through the union of faith

10. How are we dead with Christ?

Vs. 9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

11. Paul wrote that death hath no more dominion over Jesus. In what way did death have dominion (!) over Jesus Christ? When or how do we need to see this?

Vs. 10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth after He rose from the dead, **he liveth unto God** having returned upon His ascension to the life which He had before He left the riches and glories of heaven to suffer on earth for the sins of His people.

12. Jesus died unto sin once. What are we to make of this? What comfort is contained in this redemptive fact of Jesus?

Vs. 11 At this point, doctrine makes way for exhortation. **Likewise reckon also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

13. How does we 'reckon' ourselves dead unto sin? Sin is always alive, always pushing itself upon from within and without. How can we be dead unto sin's appeals and power for undoubtedly this is the desire of every born-again soul?

Only by realizing that he is dead to the condemning power of sin and alive to God "in Christ" can a sinner truly love or trust God. Only as the believer sees what Christ has done for him can he find the motive to do what God requires of him. Once he sees God's love him "in Christ" he no longer wants to "live in sin." (Quoted from Steel and Thomas on Romans)

If a man does not thus identify himself with Christ's purpose to destroy sin, and if, instead of grief and hatred of sin, he cherishes the notion that he may continue in sin that grace may abound, the conclusion is inevitably that this man knows nothing of Christ and has not been justified. To speak plainly, it is spiritually impossible to trust Christ's redeeming blood and to want to continue in sin. Sanctification is not merely the purpose of justification as if the purpose might fail; but rather sanctification is the inevitable result. (Quoted from Clark on Romans)