

Romans

Romans Chapter Six

Romans 6: 1-2 February 28, 2010

This is lesson number **30** in our exposition of the Book of Romans.

The Theme of the Letter

“For I am not ashamed of **the gospel of Christ**, for it is the **power** of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the **righteousness of God** is **revealed** from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith.’ ” Romans 1:16-17

Title: “Shall We Continue in Sin?”

In our last lesson on this great letter of Paul to the church at Rome we examined the last two verses of Chapter Five and looked at the **reign of sin** and the **reign of grace**. “R-e-i-g-n” not “r-a-i-n.”

Dominion and rule over a person or an entity.

Romans 5:20-21

20 Moreover the law entered {along side of... sin} that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more {superabounded}, 21 so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The **reign of sin** and the **reign of grace**.

No matter how deep the stain of sin has gone in the soul of man, the blood of Jesus Christ goes “**Deeper Than The Stain Has Gone.**”

At this point in our exposition of Romans two things should be very clear:

- No one can be justified by any form of law-keeping, human response;
- God’s grace is at its best when sin is at its worst.

Sometimes, in an attempt to outline and organize and understand the Scriptures men make arbitrary divisions.

It is no different in the case of Romans. A typical outline would show:

Chapters 1-5	Justification and Assurance;
Chapters 6-8	Sanctification and Glorification;
Chapters 9-11	What about the Jews?
Chapters 12-16	Practical application of the Doctrines.

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There is some basis for such an outline, but that sort of separation of thought by following the chapter divisions may hinder you from grasping the continuity of thought that flows from verses 5:20-21 and this section that begins here at 6:1.

Cf. John 2:25 and 3:1.

Jesus knew what was in man; now there was a man... See what you might have missed of the context if you started reading at John 3:1.

The chapter and verse marks are very helpful. I honestly don't know how those who could read and had access to the Scriptures could find a particular passage unless they had memorized most of the text. The parchments were scrolls on papyrus or sheepskin. How many rolls of papyrus did it take for Isaiah? They surely didn't have Bibles and concordances on computers with a pointer {mouse} that allows you to navigate from one passage to another. On my personal computer I have no less than ten English Bible translations, not counting the Hebrew and Greek texts and I can flip between translations and look at dictionaries and lexicons and I barely know how to use all the resources at my disposal.

The chapter and verse markings are not inspired by the Holy Spirit.

CANON

Division of individual books of the canon into smaller sections is first indicated in the fourth century, in Codex Vaticanus, which uses paragraph divisions, somewhat comparable to the Hebrew Bible. Our familiar chapter and verse divisions were introduced into the Bible quite late in the history of the canon. Stephen Langton introduced the chapters into the Latin Bible prior to his death in 1228, and Stephanus added the verses in the New Testament in 1551 and his publication of a Greek and Latin edition of the New Testament. Verses are attested in the Hebrew Bible as far back as the Mishnah (Megillah 4:4). The first English Bible to include verse divisions was the Geneva Bible of 1560. Thus, our English translations reflect the divisions as well as the order of the Latin Vulgate.

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Of course you know that footnotes and marginal notes in study Bibles are not God's Word. There was a dear lady in our church in Tennessee that very often would quote from "her Bible," but she would be reading from a marginal note. I don't think she ever understood the difference between the translated text and the notes that were added to help her understand the text were according to some uninspired scholar.

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Now let's read 5:20-21 & 6:1-2 and see how they fit into Paul's line of thought.

20 Moreover the law entered {along side of... sin} that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more {superabounded}, 21 so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

The point is "What shall we say then?" What shall we say then?
About what? See what you miss if you start at 6:1?

Well, Chapter 5 is about assurance and the certainty of salvation:

Romans 5:1 Therefore, **having been justified** by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, **{compare this verse with}**

Romans 5:10 For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, **we shall be saved by {in} His life.**

Romans 8:30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and **whom He justified, these He also glorified.**

Then Paul gives us that wonderful explanation of how those who are justified are in union with Christ in 5:12-21. We were "in Adam," now those who justified are "in Christ."

You must see that this is the only way to have assurance.
You must know by faith that you are "in Christ" apart from works.

By the one sin of the First Adam we were made {set in the rank and category of} sinners; but by the one act of the Last Adam who is Christ, we are {set in the rank and category of} made righteous. In neither case are we either personally guilty or personally righteous, but were made so because we were represented by either Adam or Christ.

And so we have the **reign of sin** over those who are "in Adam"
and the **reign of grace** over those who are "in Christ."

Paul is not finished with the **reign of grace** and he will deal with it again in Chapter 8 - which is also about assurance and the certainty of glorification. So what we have here in Chapter 6 and 7 is another "parenthesis."

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When the Apostle wrote 5:20-21

20 Moreover the law entered {along side of... sin} that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more {superabounded}, 21 so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

...the reign of grace superabounds over the reign of sin, and it occurs to Paul that he will be misunderstood. And so he gives an aside to be sure that what he has just written cannot be misunderstood.

There are two difficulties raised by 5:20-21.

- First, will not the fact that grace so overcomes sin and that the law is virtually set aside encourage us to sin?

He has already anticipated this difficulty In Romans 3:8,

And why not say, "**Let us do evil that good may come**"?--as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their condemnation is just.

- And second, why was the law given? If the law is entirely useless as far as being just before God, why was it given at all? How hard it must have been for a man, steeped in Judaism, to understand that law-keeping cannot have any part in justification. The same can be said for the self-righteous, merely moral, religious man today. It is offensive to him to be told that he has absolutely nothing to do with whom God chooses.

That is the offense of the Gospel!

And so, Chapters 6 and 7 will answer these two difficulties and are a kind of parenthesis between Chapters 5 and 8.

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For our understanding,

Read 5:20-21 and then read 8:1

Romans 5:20 Moreover the law entered {along side of... sin} that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more {superabounded}, 21 so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

{go to}

Romans 8:1

8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

In order to make it clear how the Christian will think, it was necessary to write what is contained in Chapters 6 and 7.

Some scholars make a neat division at Chapter 6 and say this is an entirely new section that deals only with sanctification. Then Chapter 7, they say, is the experience of a “defeated Christian.” Then Chapter 8 is the “victorious Christian” who comes out of Chapter 7.

But I am convinced that the way to understand what the apostle is saying is to think of Chapters 6 and 7 as being a parenthetical comment between Chapters 5 and 8.

Chapter 6 may be divided into two parts; a doctrinal statement in verses 1-14; and then verses 15-23, are a practical or experimental statement based on the doctrine.

Chapter 7 answers the question about why the law was given.

Chapter 7 tells us what the law does.

With that as a basis for understanding, that Chapters 6 and 7 serve as an explanation of how the reign of grace will necessarily affect a man, let's begin to look at:

Chapter 6, verses 1-2.

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Chapter 6 deals with what is known theologically as “antinomianism.”

The word means “against law” or “anti nomos” And what does that mean?

There are at least two ways that antinomianism is understood.

- The classic theological meaning of antinomianism is that the Old Testament law, specifically the moral law or the Ten Commandments, was set aside and replaced by a new law given by Jesus in His sermons and sayings.

It is my firm conviction that Jesus did not in any way “destroy the law,” but rather He fulfilled it and correctly interpreted it because the “men of old” and the scribes and Pharisees had so perverted its true interpretation. Jesus does not abrogate, amend, nor mitigate one jot or tittle of what Moses wrote in the moral code. Did not Jesus say,

45 Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you--Moses, in whom you trust. 46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. 47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?" John 5:45-47

But that is not the meaning of antinomianism that Paul is dealing with here in Chapter 6. Paul has already addressed that error in 3:31, “...do we make void the law?”

What he is dealing with here is the question that he has raised,

Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

- The second meaning of antinomianism says that because we are saved by grace and that because the reign of grace superabounds the reign of sin and that because “all of our righteousnesses are as filthy rags in His sight,” that it simply doesn’t matter how we live our lives. If you want to be a church type person and live a moral life, that’s okay, but if you want to “do you own thing,” after you have made a profession of faith, well everything will be just fine. The reign of grace has some qualifications:

“... grace might reign **through righteousness...**”

Whenever the Gospel of free grace is preached there is always the danger that it will be misunderstood.

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Paul had to deal with it.

Jude had to deal with it.

Jude 4 For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, **who turn the grace of our God into lewdness** and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

“If you claim to love Christ and yet are living an unholy life, there is only one thing to say about you. You are a barefaced liar!”

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

But don't get the idea that antinomianism is a relic of the past. There are millions of Baptists who live the life of antinomianism. They made a “decision” some time ago and for a time church had some place in their busy schedule. But after a time they grow weary of religion and the cares of the world choke out the seed of the Word that had quickly sprang up. Now they rarely meet with the church. Easter and Christmas and weddings and funerals about sum up their attendance to anything that might pass for religion. Whenever a doubt enters their mind that all may not be well with their soul, they are reminded that, after all, “once saved, always saved.”

You know that slogan is true only if “saved” is correctly defined. And Paul is about to explain here in Chapter 6 just how those who are indeed saved think and how they do not think.

Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones says that a good test of whether a man is preaching the Gospel is whether or not he is accused of preaching antinomianism. That's what they said Paul was preaching. If you preach that man can do nothing in order to be saved, the thing they will accuse you of saying is that then nothing you do really matters.

A man who preaches works or “deeds of the law” as a way of being justified will never be accused of preaching antinomianism. The man who preaches “do this or that” and then God will save you, or, “don't do this or don't do that” or God will take away your “salvation,” will never be charged with preaching antinomianism. That is because he is not preaching grace but some form of salvation by law-keeping, deeds of the law, or human response.

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His hearers will never raise this question, **Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?** because the man is not preaching grace. Saved through the church? Saved by baptism? Anything that you make necessary, “in order to be “ saved, is not grace. But someone will say, Isn’t faith necessary?

Yes, but saving faith is a gift from God, that you can in no way be the cause of receiving.

Romans 4: 5 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who **justifies the ungodly**, his faith is accounted for righteousness,

Ephesians 2: 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

The charge of preaching antinomianism is exactly what the Roman Church said about Martin Luther. They said that he preached what he did so he could justify his marriage. The same charge of antinomianism was brought against George Whitefield.

If a man preaches that salvation is entirely of grace and that works have no part in his being saved {justified} he will be accused of preaching that it doesn’t matter then how you live. There are ungodly men who think that you can be a Christian and habitually lie, that you can be a Christian and commit adultery, that you can be a Christian and be addicted to pornography, that you can be a Christian and live a homosexual lifestyle, that you can be a Christian and do drugs and get drunk, and ignore the church.

And they are wrong!

That’s the question that Paul has asked and answered here in 6:1-2:

- 1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?
- 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

The answer is very strong! Certainly not!

Certainly not! NKJV

By no means! NIV; ESV

May it never be! NASU

Of course not! NLT

God forbid. KJV {The Greek word for God is not in the text.}

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Paul is saying that if you are under the reign of grace, you would never even raise the question, Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?. If a man raises this question it will prove that he has not understood justification, nor union with Christ; and that he has completely missed grace.

5: 21 so that **as** sin reigned in death, **even so** grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Just **as** sin reigned, **even so** now grace reigns.

And “even so grace might reign through **righteousness...**”

A man who has been delivered from the reign of sin will not think to ask, “Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?”

A man who is justified and “in Christ” cannot think nor act that way.

How shall we who **died** to sin live any longer in it?

Paul believes this point is important because in one way or another he will go back to this thought in verses 6, 7, 8, 10, and 11.

The verb tense for “died” is aorist, which indicates something that has happened once in the past.

The same verb tense is used in verses 6, 7, 8, 10, and 11.

It is not, “dying” to sin, as in a process, but “died” as in a “done deal.” It is done, the great transaction is done. My guilt imputed to me from Adam has been charged to Christ; the righteousness of Christ is freely given to me.

Having been justified, we died to sin. Having been justified, you ceased to be in Adam and were judicially placed in Christ.

Do you have that firm assurance?

In the next section we will look at how those who “died to sin” are “in Christ.” How does the reign of grace affect a man?

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We have about twenty minutes so we will begin the next section but will not complete it.

Baptized into Christ

Romans 6: 3

Or do you not know that as many of us as were **baptized into Christ Jesus** were baptized into His death?

“Or do you not know....?”

If you are a believer in Jesus Christ there are some things that you are expected to know. This is one of them. If you are living the life of an antinomian {explain}, you do not know this truth and you are probably deceived as to whether or not you are saved. Salvation is not obtained by something that you decided to allow God to do for you. Salvation is entirely the work of the sovereign God and you will know when God has brought you from darkness to light - from death to life - having been born again.

What would you say is the most important truth that the Apostle has presented in Chapter 5?

Based on the number of times that I have emphasized the Doctrine of Representation, I would expect a careful listener to give that as the answer.

In this series of lessons, not counting this reference, I have referred to the Doctrine of Representation over 40 times {computers make it easy to go back and find a word or phrase}.

The Doctrine of Representation teaches that there are only two men in the history of the world that God considers. Adam and Christ. Everyone is represented either by Adam or by Christ. The reason why the Doctrine of Representation so very important is because it establishes union!

Union with Adam; or **union with Christ**.

Just as union with Adam results in **condemnation**;
even so union with Christ results in **justification**.

If a man is in union with Christ he is therefore justified {declared not guilty}, and there are certain things that may be known and certain things that must be true.

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That is why Paul anticipated, asked, and answered the question in 6:1.

If grace superabounds sin; and if the reign of grace so overcomes the reign of sin, why not continue in sin? And the answer is final! “Certainly not!

Why is his answer so emphatic?

How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

If you have been justified, sanctification necessarily follows justification.

Have you been justified? Then you have died to sin.

If you have not died to sin, then you have not been justified.

What does it mean to have “died to sin?”

It does not mean that we no longer sin.

Paul will deal with that in chapter 7.

It does mean that sin is no longer your master.

Sin does not reign over you.

You now have the ability to resist temptation and it grieves you when you yield to sin. You have died to sin.

“Or do you not know...?” Know what? That you died to sin.

And when did this transaction of grace occur?

3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were **baptized** into Christ Jesus were **baptized** into His death?

Now I can't think of a more appropriate example in Scripture to illustrate this warning than what Peter gives to believers in 2 Peter 3: 14-18:

14 Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; 15 and account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation--as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, 16 as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are **some things hard to understand**, which untaught and unstable people **twist** to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures. 17 You therefore, beloved, since you **know this beforehand, beware** lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; 18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

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What is “hard to understand” in verse 3? Doesn’t it simply say that if you are baptized, you are “in Christ?” Well, yes it does. But are you sure you know what it means to be baptized into Christ?

Not many things in Scripture have been “twisted” to lead to destruction more than water baptism.

Now I would not embarrass you by asking you to raise your hand if you think Paul refers to water baptism here in this verse. But be honest with yourself. What comes to your mind when you read or hear the word “baptized?” Baptism in water!

Do you ever think of any other kind of baptism?

In order to understand what this text is teaching we need to briefly discuss baptism. So, let’s talk about baptism and how the word is used in the Bible.

There are five kinds of “baptism” named in the New Testament, and yet 99.9 percent of today’s church people will think only of water baptism.

What else, then, besides Water is called a baptism?

Repentance; Moses; Suffering; Fire and the Holy Spirit.

What I want you to see about these baptisms is that they all have one thing in common. They all involve being **overwhelmed**. {repeat} If you can remember this concept it will help you to understand all types of baptism.

1) **Water baptism:**

In Scriptural water baptism, the subject is **overwhelmed** with water. He is put under the water, as if to be buried, he is dead, dead to sin, buried, and he is raised to life.

Water baptism symbolizes union with Jesus Christ who died, was buried, and rose again from the grave.

This will not be an exhaustive lecture on the **subject** and **mode** of water baptism.

By **subject** I mean whom do you baptize?; believers only, or unbelieving infants? Only those who profess faith in Jesus Christ, or tiny little sinners?

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By **mode** I mean how much water is required to scripturally baptize someone? Enough to drown in, or just enough to clean your fingers?

The reason that I won't make this an exhaustive lecture on water baptism is because that is not what this text is about. There are more than sufficient texts in the Bible to establish believers' baptism by immersion, this is just not the place to do it. Expository preaching simply explains the meaning of the Scripture.

We do, however, need to explain what water baptism really is.

Acts 8:34-39 So the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?" 35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. 36 Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" 37 Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." 38 So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. 39 Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.

"See, here is water... The eunuch was travelling in the desert and he had enough water in skins on that chariot to use if sprinkling amounted to baptism.

"If you believe with all your heart, you may."

The eunuch was a believer.

John 3:23 Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was **much water there**. And they came and were baptized.

Once I heard a well-known Presbyterian minister, whom I greatly respect, teaching from this passage, say, "We who sprinkle need to be honest, it does not take "much water" to do that."

In just these two passages we clearly have the **subject** as a believer and the **mode** as immersion.

But the main issue with water baptism is what does it do?

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There are those who teach that water baptism literally and physically has an effect on the one being baptized. Others, of whom I am one, teach that baptism is only symbolic, that it is a picture of something that has already happened to the one being baptized in water.

So here is a point of fundamental doctrine. Does water baptism have a literal effect or is it symbolic?

As Yogi Berra is reported to have said, “When you come to a fork in the road, take it.” What you believe about water baptism will affect your understanding of many other doctrinal issues.

In order to illustrate how different sects view water baptism it is necessary to know what they teach. This is not meant to be mean, you can verify what I say by simply asking them or reading their published material. Therefore, I am not building a “straw man” that I can then destroy.

The **Roman Catholic Church** teaches that water baptism removes the guilt of original sin. That is called “baptismal regeneration.” They teach that the water of baptism actually removes the guilt of Adam’s sin. Then, by their teaching, you must continue in the sacraments of the Roman Catholic church in order to pass through “purgatory” and eventually arrive in heaven.

The **Church of Christ** {the denomination} teaches that you must be baptized “in order to be saved.” They argue that water baptism is part of your faith and is therefore not a work. They also deny that the Holy Spirit is active in regeneration. They teach that the Holy Spirit gave us the Bible and we each have the ability to believe it apart from the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. They do not believe in man’s total depravity, or that a man is dead in his spirit.

However, they are not consistent in that they teach that a person who has been baptized can lose their salvation; but if they are re-saved they do not have to be re-baptized.

As an example of how this trust in the efficacy of water baptism affects your mind, there was a woman with whom I worked in Nashville, whose son at age 16 ran away from home and got into serious trouble. She was a faithful member of the Church of Christ and she said to me, “I don’t know why he did this, he has been baptized.”

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Does the water literally remove the guilt of sin? Does water baptism save us? Peter answered both those questions for us. 1 Peter 3:20-21

... in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. 21 There is also an antitype which now saves us--baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,....

We must not ignore our **Presbyterian** friends. They teach that when believing parents take their infant, unbelieving child and he is sprinkled, that child is then in a "covenant" relationship with God. As the child grows up he is received into the church and allowed to take the Lord's Supper. It is my fear that many adult souls of that faith are presuming on God and have no conviction that they have been born again by the Spirit of God.

Our Presbyterian friends go astray when they try to make baptism the New Testament antitype of Old Testament Circumcision. I will not go into all the arguments in this study, but regeneration is the New Testament antitype of circumcision. Cf. Romans 3:28-29

28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; 29 but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.

Didn't Paul know that baptism replaced circumcision? But here the type is physical circumcision and the antitype is Holy Spirit regeneration.

Colossians 2:11-12

11 In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

Regeneration is the circumcision of the heart and this is the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

We must conclude our study today and if the Lord wills we will resume next Sunday on "Baptized into Christ."