

## Romans Six<sup>1, 2, 3</sup>

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Remember clearly how chapter five of Romans ended? Paul said that since the Law entered the world that sin was categorized in a large extent to us, but that grace abounded even more. Now Paul was an excellent student of human sin and he was able to easily anticipate the questions that people would raise to his arguments. His methodology was to anticipate the question and then answer the question before the listener/reader had a chance to breath! So here he gives his answer to the anticipated question.

**Rom 6:1 “What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase?”**

**Rom 6:2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?”**

A deservingly harsh reply! Indeed, may it never be. If we really understand the grossness of our sin, the holiness of God, and the unmatched sacrifice of Jesus Christ, then we certainly want to please our Heavenly Father and He has clearly told us how to please Him. Sins that we still commit should be as a dagger in our own heart as we do not want to displease Him. The Holy Spirit also seeks our heart and tells us what part of our daily life needs cleansing. God the Father then disciplines us when we sin, as we discussed some in chapter five. If we indeed are children of God then we have really died to sin and the rest of our life here is spent trying to work out that death to sin and replace it with life in Christ. If we want to purposely sin, then we had better search our own heart to make sure that we have indeed really accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord. We are now a new creature and we are now created for good works:

*Eph 2:10 “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”*

Note that the works for which we have been now created were prepared before we were born again and they were created for the purpose of our walking in those works. One of the strongest forces affecting the church today is antinomianism, which is the teaching that the law does not apply to us once we are born again. The opposite false teaching is legalism, which is the teaching that we still have to do good works to be “totally” saved. Legalism was present in Paul’s time as Christians were trying to teach converts that they still had to be circumcised to be “really” saved. Antinomianism was also present in Paul’s time and that is what he is teaching against in these sentences. Paul then goes on to elaborate on his statement that we should never live in sin again.

**Rom 6:3 “Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?”**

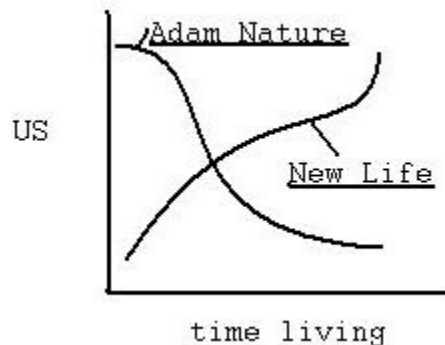
**Rom 6:4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.**

**Rom 6:5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection,  
Rom 6:6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin;  
Rom 6:7 for he who has died is freed from sin.”**

The miracle that happened to all of us children of God is truly remarkable and far beyond our current level of understanding. We were spiritually dead (Eph 2:1) and an enemy of God. Jesus then lived a perfect life for us and physically died on the cross taking the wrath of God upon Himself rather than letting us receive what we deserve. But when God breathed spiritual life into us, our Adam nature died because all of our sins were imputed to Jesus at that moment on the cross. But just as the physical death of Adam was a death that took some years to be effective, the death of our Adam nature also will take the rest of our time here on earth to be totally effective. Adam spiritually died immediately and we were born spiritually immediately:

*Eph 2:5 “even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),  
Eph 2:6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus,”*

Since we are now dead in our Adam nature, we are freed from sin. However, this freedom takes time to work itself out in our everyday life. We now have a double action occurring within ourselves as we continue to physically live here:



This diagram is supposed to show that our Adam nature is decaying and our new life is taking over our existence. The end result would be total sanctification, but we know that such will not occur during our life here, but after our death we will be glorified when there is no trace of our Adam nature left. The more we really know that we are indeed really dead to sin and alive to God, the faster the Adam nature decays and the more rapidly the new life takes over.

Every second of every day we make decisions as to whether or not we will sin. Once we know that we really can refuse to sin, the desire to not sin grows stronger and our total

dependence upon God to help us not sin amplifies our new-life nature. We will study this more in chapter 7 of Romans.

**Rom 6:8 “Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,**

**Rom 6:9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him.”**

What wonderful assurance of our salvation! Knowing that we have indeed died with Christ means that we know that our Adam nature is indeed pronounced dead and as we live out our lives here we see this worked out as the Holy Spirit helps us understand that we really do not have to sin anymore. Now as we know the above more and more clearly, we also know more clearly that some day we will surely live with Jesus in Heaven! Just as Christ was raised from the dead and will never die again so we, who died on the Cross also, will never die again. Death is also no longer a master over us! Now this might seem confusing. Certainly we will one day physiologically cease to function, but the moment that happens we will be spiritually fully alive with Christ. So death to the Christian now is just a transfer from the totally physically alive and partially spiritually alive (here), to the totally physically dead (Adam nature totally dead) to the totally spiritually alive with Christ.

It is also very important to understand that verse 8 does not just apply to the time after our physical death. If we have really died to self with Christ then we live with Him NOW also. Such is more of an understanding that we really do not have to ever sin again.

**Rom 6:10 “For the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.**

**Rom 6:11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.”**

Paul then completes this analogy between the death and life of Jesus to the death and life of the Child of God. Of course verse 10 does not mean that Jesus ever lived in sin, but that His death meant an end to sin forever and that His life now, since His work here was finished, He now lives to God. Jesus sits at the right hand of God the Father and we also are seated in Heaven. So verse 11 tells us to consider ourselves also dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. The word “consider” means to let that thought control our life. Again we will talk about this concept more in chapter seven. But now Paul uses a “therefore” to apply all of the above.

**Rom 6:12 “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts,**

**Rom 6:13 and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.**

**Rom 6:14 For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace.”**

As I said earlier, every second of every day we choose whether to choose God’s way or man’s way (also our Adam nature). So based upon all that Paul told us before, we must choose to NOT let sin rule our lives. We now have the ability to choose not to sin. We still have strong lusts and what they are depends to a large part on how we lived before we were born again. The person who was addicted to alcohol still has to fight that battle to return to that choice and similarly for any other addictions. The person who was strongly engaged in worldly ambition will still have to fight against that drive. Now our ambition is to please the Lord. If we still lived under law, we would have no power to resist choosing against the law, but now we are under grace. The law still applies for us to use as a measure of how to live our lives, but obeying the Law does not earn us any favors toward God since Jesus paid for our sins and God applied grace to us. Praise God for giving us opportunities to see the outworking of grace in our lives as we turn away from a temptation and turn toward God.

**Rom 6:15 “What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!**

**Rom 6:16 Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?**

**Rom 6:17 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed,**

**Rom 6:18 and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.”**

Again Paul sees an opening for someone to object to us having to not sin anymore and so he anticipates the question and drives home the answer. If a person claiming to be a Christian would still rather sin than obey God, then there is something terribly wrong with that person. Praise God that I am no longer under the law, meaning that I would have to totally obey the law to be pleasing to God. But I now am under grace meaning that I have received the grace of God so that I am now sinless and full of Christ’s righteousness in the eyes of God. Since I have, by the grace of God, presented myself to God as His child, I now am now a willing slave of righteousness. It breaks my heart when I sin because I really do want to obey God in every way of my life. However, I do still succumb to some of my remaining Adam nature. But when I realize what I have done, that I have sinned against my loving Father, I am brought back to my knees in humble submission to His authority.

**Rom 6:19 “I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.”**

Notice very carefully that he does not say “resulting in justification”, but he says “resulting in sanctification”. The more we submit ourselves to righteousness rather than

lawlessness, the stronger our new life becomes and the more our Adam nature dies (remember the diagram above).

**Rom 6:20 “For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.”**

This verse contains a very important concept. When he says that we were “free in regard to righteousness” it means that we had no tendency at all to live a righteous life. When Adam was first created he had total freedom meaning that he was free to sin or to choose to obey God. When he sinned he lost the liberty to choose righteousness and we were born in the image of Adam so before we were born again we also had no tendency to desire to live a righteous life in the eyes of God (remember our study of chapter 3).

**Rom 6:21 “Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death.**

**Rom 6:22 But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.**

**Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”**

While reading these verses, remember the following:

*Eph 2:1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,*

*Eph 2:2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.*

*Eph 2:3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.*

Before we were born again, we served our Adam nature and the lusts of our flesh. But what were we earning while we were “enjoying ourselves”? We were just building up our reward of death. We were fully under the wrath of God (John 3:36). But now that we are slaves to God we obtain our benefit from God and that benefit is growing sanctification while we are here and then glorification and eternal life after we physically die. While slaves to sin, we were earning (wages) our eternal death, but after receiving the free gift of God, we have the free gift from God of eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### References

1. All Bible quotations are from the New American Standard Bible, Moody Press, 1975.
2. James Montgomery Boice, “Romans, Volume II, The Reign of Grace, Romans 5-8, Baker Book House, 1992.
3. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, “The New Man, Exposition of Chapter 6”, Zondervan Publishing House, 1971.