

Dead to Sin, Alive to God Romans 6:1-13

God's grace is without limit: where sin abounds, grace super-abounds! But if that's true, then why not let sin reign in our lives so that we can get more of God's grace? After all, sin's easy and pleasurable, at least for a while. So why not let sin reign? Because of Jesus... because the infinite, perfect, innocent Son of God died and rose again for this explicit purpose: to emancipate us once-and-for-all from slavery to sin. Because we've been united to His death and resurrection, we need never serve sin again. Let us know it, believe it, and live it!

"Same Kind of Different as Me" by Ron Hall & Denver Moore

- Story of unlikely friendship
- Ron, an upscale, wealthy art dealer
- Denver – the exact opposite... grew up a sharecropper in Louisiana

Since there ain't no sharecroppin now, I'm gon'tell you how it worked: The Man owned the land. Then he give you the cotton seeds, and the fertilizer, and the mule, and some clothes, and everthing else you need to get through the year. 'Cept he don't really give it to you; He let you buy it at the store on credit. But it was his store on his plantation that he owned

You plowed and planted and tended till pickin time. Then at the end of the year, when you bring in the cotton, you go to the Man and settle up. Supposably, you gon' split that cotton right down the middle, or maybe sixty-forty. But by the time the crop come in, you owe the Man so much on credit, your share of the crop gets eat up. And even if you don't think you owe that much, or even if the crop was 'specially good that year, the Man weighs the cotton and writes down the figgers, and he the only one that can read the scale or the books.

So you done worked all year and the Man ain't done nothing, but you still owe the Man. And wadn't nothin you could do but work his land for another year to pay off that debt. What it come down to was: The Man didn't just own the land. He owned you.

I worked them fields for nearly thirty years, like a slave, even though slavery had supposably ended when my grandma was just a girl. I had a shack I didn't own, two pairs a' overalls I got on credit, a hog, and outhouse. I worked them fields, plantin and plowin and pickin and givin all the cotton to the Man that owned the land, all without paycheck. I didn't even know what a paycheck was.

Legally: a free man – thanks to 13th Amendment

- But lived like a slave for 3 decades!
- One day, finally had enough, walked off land, hopped on train... because he could

Hard for us to imagine!

- Out of there in 10 minutes!... We'd never let ourselves live like slaves, right?
- Actually, many of us do live like slaves... slaves of sin
 - o life characterized by habitual sin, frustration, lack of joy
 - o see other believers experiencing joy, peace, contentment even in the midst of suffering
 - o What's the difference? How did they find such freedom over sin?
- Paul begins to tell us in this passage
- Wants to liberate us – help us recognize & enjoy our freedom

Start with REVIEW

- **Big idea** of Romans: **God is Righteous** in all He is and in all He does
 - o **RIGHTEOUS in judgment:**
 - He must condemn all mankind because all sin - wrath
 - o **RIGHTEOUS in justification:**
 - declares believers righteous through Christ
 - justification – change of STATUS
 - based on the faithfulness of Jesus
 - comes by faith alone
 - Gospel
 - BUT, God is NOT CONTENT to simply fix your status
 - o **RIGHTEOUS in sanctification:**
 - makes believers righteous through the Spirit
 - sanctification – change of CHARACTER and BEHAVIOR
 - justification: instantaneous / penalty of sin
 - sanctification: a process of growth / power of sin
 - Preview of sanctification in ch6-8...
 - Motivation for sanctification (6:1-23)
 - What won't produce sanctification: the Law (7:1-13)
 - Why sanctification is so hard: the flesh (7:14-25)
 - What will produce sanctification: the Spirit (8:1-17)
 - Our confidence in the midst of sanctification (8:18-39)

Ch 6 is about motivation for sanctification

Motivation starts with a question...read v1

- **Three things I want to ask about this question...**
- **(1) What does it mean?**
 - o "continue" = remain/persist/stay
 - o "in sin" – singular
 - not particular acts of sin (called "sins" plural)
 - sin (singular) = sin as personified master who rules over people
 - You see that in v12 [read]
 - if "sin" (singular) reigns, then result is "sins" (plural)
 - o SO: "Are we to remain under the mastery of sin so that it produces sins in our lives in order that God's grace might increase?"
- **(2) Why would someone ask it?**
 - o look back: read 5:20
 - summary of history of sin & grace in the world
 - God's grace literally "super-abounded" all sin.
 - o So, if more sin yields more grace, then why not commit more sin?
 - o Essence of the question: **"If more sin brings more grace, then why not let sin rule over my life so I get more grace?"**
- **(3) Who is asking it?**
 - o Paul doesn't tell us, but there's 2 possibilities:
 - o **(1) someone who wants to excuse sin**
 - Hears 5:20 & thinks, "...isn't that convenient, because I like sin!"
 - Sin comes naturally; fun (for a while at least)
 - So why not go wild with sin?!!!
 - W.H. Auden (one of the greatest poets of the 20th century)
 - o **(2) the person who wants to protect grace**
 - Hears 5:20 & thinks, "Paul, you can't say that!"
 - "What's to keep them from sinning?!"
 - "Your gospel promotes sin – abuses grace!"

- in anger, shouts this question at Paul as an objection
 - The question is an excuse for the 1st person, an objection for the 2nd
 - Either way, same basic question...(re-read)
- So how does Paul answer...

Answer – read v2

- “May it never be!” An emphatic “No”!
- Followed by an appeal: “how can we who died to sin still live in it?”
 - Not stating an impossibility: “we can’t live in it”
 - Making a moral appeal: “we shouldn’t live in it”
 - What does he mean: “died to sin”? Find out in rest of the passage
- Paul is clear: we should never use God’s grace as an excuse for sin.
- **But why?** Explains why in v3-10...

Explanation why (3-10) – read v3-5

- **Notice what Paul doesn’t say:**
 - Abuse grace, lose grace
 - Abuse grace, prove you never had grace
 - Paul doesn’t backtrack from the radical free-ness of the gospel
 - Doesn’t bring our salvation into doubt
- **So, why shouldn’t we let sin rule over us?... because of Jesus**
 - because Jesus died and rose again to free us once and for all from the mastery of sin.
 - This is the Big Idea of passage:
 - Why not let sin rule?
 - Because Jesus (Son, eternal, perfect, innocent) died for this explicit purpose: to set us free from our slavery to sin.
- **Let’s look at that answer in detail...**
 - v3: “Or do you not know” – focused on a truth we need to know
 - ...a truth about our **baptism** “into Christ Jesus”

Pause: this raises a red flag for our theology

- clearly water baptism (had to clarify if something different)
- but presented as basis for everything else in passage
- **SO:** Is faith not enough? Is water baptism an additional, necessary step?
- **In Paul’s day, no one was asking that question.**
 - Never crossed their mind to ask
 - **Because: faith & baptism were not thought of as separate steps**
 - baptism *always immediately* followed belief
 - Acts 8:35-38
 - Acts 10:43-47
 - notice: proof that salvation comes before baptism
 - Baptism done moments after belief.
 - **Result: no such thing as a believer who was not baptized**
 - at least not for longer than a few minutes!
 - Everyone got baptized – just what you did right after believing
 - No controversy over it. No theological debates.
 - **Think of baptism in the early church like wedding rings today.**
 - If you ask me – “are you married?” Point to ring
 - Ring doesn’t make you married
 - just like baptism doesn’t make you saved
 - **But in our minds, symbol so connected to reality that I can refer to reality by pointing to the symbol**

- That's how baptism worked in Paul's day – symbol can stand in for reality
- Reality behind baptism described in v3-5.

Brings us back to Paul's answer.

Q: Why shouldn't we let sin rule over us?

A: Because of what Jesus has done for us which is symbolized in baptism.

Namely, baptism symbolizes our union with Jesus, first, in...

1) DEATH – read v3: “baptized into His death” = union with Christ in death

- v4a – buried “with Him” – in the eyes of God: as if we died with Jesus on the cross and then were laid next to Him in the tomb.
- Gal 2:20
- emphasis on **finality** – in the past, I died – who I was is dead
- not hypothetical, metaphorical, figurative: **decisive** legal language
- **So what? What's the significance?**
 - o **Answered in v6-7... [read v6-7]**
 - **“old self / old man”** = who we were “in Adam”
 - not part of me - all of me before justification
 - that “Blake Jennings” is dead and gone
 - **purpose: “so that” our “body of sin” might be literally “rendered powerless”**
 - “body of sin” = my whole body before conversion was a helpless tool of sin
 - no longer
 - **final purpose: “so that” we would no longer be sin's slaves**
 - ultimate purpose of our union with Christ in death
 - Paul explains in v7...
 - **legal basis for our freedom / principle: a slave who dies is no longer a slave to his former master**
 - slave's death brings end to master's ownership
 - sin's authority over me was canceled by my death
 - Meaning of **“Died to sin” (v2)** – sin no longer has legal authority over us
 - We've been emancipated! Never have to obey it again!

2) RESURRECTION – v4b-5: union with Christ in resurrection

- has major implications both now and in the future...
- **Now: “new life” (read v4)**
 - o before justification: “dead in trespasses and sins” (Eph 2:1)
 - o after justification: new life – we can walk like Jesus in righteousness
 - o the same infinite power of God that raised Jesus is available to us!
- **Future: “resurrection” (read v5)**
 - o a glorified, perfected body free from presence of sin.
 - o that promise frees us from fear... **read v8-10**
 - Death no longer “master” over Jesus
 - We're united to Jesus
 - SO, death no longer “master” over us!
 - Holds no power over us – death has been neutered!
 - Nothing to fear – just a doorway to eternal life
 - Result: 1 Cor 15:55

Summarize:

Q: since God's grace always trumps sin, should we let sin rule in our lives so that we can experience more of God's grace?

A: May it never be!

- Don't you realize that Jesus, God's perfect, eternal Son died and rose again for the explicit purpose of gaining your freedom from the mastery of sin?!
- You have been united to Him in death and resurrection so that you never have to obey sin again.
- So how can you even think of going back under sin's rule?

That answer leads us to the application...

3 step application –

- **Knowing this truth...**
- **1) read v11 – Consider it to be true...**
 - o reckon/regard... **believe** it to be true
 - o Believe that sin has no authority over you anymore
 - o Believe that no sin is necessary or unavoidable again
 - True even of sins that seem to own you:
 - addictive sins: substance, porn, eating disorders
 - sins tied to personality: anger, pride, worry
 - Step #1: believe that they don't have to give in!
 - Don't make excuses anymore
 - worry: "that's just who I am" – not anymore
 - angry: "I had an abusive dad"
 - lust: "I'm surrounded by sexuality"
 - You can have victory at any moment over any sin!
 - there is always hope!
 - o **Memorize and meditate on 6:4-7**
 - memorizing scripture reinforces our beliefs
 - rehearse it in your mind when temptation comes
- **2) read v12 – Reject – Don't let sin reign**
 - o The only authority sin has over your life is the authority you give it
 - Denver Moore – only authority Man had was the authority Denver gave him
 - All he had to do was leave the Man's land!
 - o Do the same! Don't give sin authority over your life – walk away.
 - First step about belief; second step about commitment
 - Decisive – you're tired of the authority sin has exercised in your life – you're ready to walk away
 - Pray that to the Lord

Now practically speaking, how do we walk away from sin?

We'll get to that next week as we focus on the 3rd and final step...

- **3) read v13 – Present**
 - *negative – don't give into sin*
 - *positive – seek to serve the Lord*

Questions for Romans Sermon #13 – 6:1-13

Note: these questions have been written for small groups studying Romans together. You can also adapt these questions for your family or for personal study.

1. BIG IDEA: Read Rom 6:1-13. What is the big idea of this passage? How does it relate to the previous chapter?

2. To understand Paul's question in 6:1, answer the following and then summarize the question in your own words:
 - a. What does Paul mean in Romans by the word "sin" in the singular (see 5:12; 6:12; 7:8, 14)?

 - b. What preceding statements or concepts would motivate such a question (in other words, why would someone ask this question at this point in Romans)?

 - c. Who would ask such a question (there's more than one possibility – see 3:8 for a similar question)?

3. Paul declares as a fact that we have "died to sin" (v2, 7, 9, 11).
 - a. What does this statement mean?

 - b. If we have "died to sin," then why do we still struggle with it? (Hint: think about why Paul didn't say the opposite: "sin has died to us")

4. Paul answers the question about "remaining in sin," and explains the concept of "death to sin" by pointing to our "baptism into Christ" (the symbol, and more importantly, the significance of that symbol: union with Jesus, both in death and resurrection). What are the results, both theological and practical, for us of being united to Jesus' death and resurrection?

5. APPLICATION: Practically speaking, how exactly do we apply the instructions and commands of 6:3, 11-12?
- a. “know”

 - b. “consider yourselves dead to sin” (think about the difference b/w “knowing” [v3,6,9] and “considering”).

 - c. “do not let sin reign”

End by memorizing 6:4-7

Additional Interpretive Questions from Romans 6:1-13

6. What questions came to your mind during this sermon? Write them down and bring them up with your group.
7. What is the relationship between sin (singular) and the unbeliever (5:12,19; Eph 2:1-3)? How does that relationship change at conversion?
8. Why does Paul connect our water baptism to our union with Jesus? Is he saying that baptism is a required step in salvation? Prove your answer from scripture.
9. Summarize in your own words Paul's answer to the question (not just his short answer in v2, but his answer and explanation in vv3-10).
10. If you knew a believer who was happily living under the mastery of sin (letting sin have it's way in his life), how might you use 6:2-11 to help him turn away from sin?

Additional Application Questions from Romans 6:1-13

11. How would you describe your personal battle with sin at this time in your life? Are you regularly winning or does sin seem to often have the upper-hand? Or have you simply surrendered to sin in one or more areas of your life? In what situations or circumstances does sin seem to have the most sway over you?
12. Have you been experienced water baptism as a believer? If not, what has held you back?

Review Questions

13. The big idea of Romans is the righteousness of God. What does the word "righteous" mean?
14. What does it mean that God has "justified" us through faith in Christ (3:24)?
15. Chapters 6-8 shift from a focus on justification to a focus on sanctification. What does the word "sanctification" mean? How does it differ from justification?