

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

APRIL 17TH-18TH, 2021 // BOOK OF ROMANS

BAPTISM (ROMANS 6:1-7)

"DEATH TO SIN" (VV. 1-3)

"Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?" (v. 1)

- This is a rhetorical response to Paul's statement, "...but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more." (5:20b)
- Paul answers with his own question: "How can we who have died to sin still live in it?" (v. 2)

What does living in sin mean, and how have we died to it?

- Living in sin is our old desires, our old self without God. It is our deepest desire being the gratification of our own will, whatever that may be. It is being our own moral authority.
- We die to sin when we are baptized into Jesus' death, which is death to sin. (v. 3)

"NEWNESS OF LIFE" (V. 4)

We are buried with Him when we go down into the water, and we are raised into "newness of life" when we come out of the water. (v. 4)

- Baptism is not the mechanism of salvation. Rather, it is the mechanism of our identification with everything Jesus accomplished on the Cross.
- This is a picture of regeneration (born-again, born of the Spirit).

UNITED IN DEATH AND LIFE (VV. 5-7)

This is similar to the analogy of planting and harvest, where Christ is the first fruits. (1 Cor. 15:23)

- Since our old self/body of sin was crucified with Christ, we are no longer enslaved to sin. (v. 6)
- Though we have not yet physically died, we have died to sin. Since we have died to sin, then we have been set free from sin. (v. 7)

This is part of justification! When we are identified with Christ, our "body of sin" associated with the guilt of our sin died with Him.

- The guilt of our sin is replaced by the righteousness of Jesus.
- Sin now has no legal claim over you!
- Just as baptism is a response of gratitude and obedience, we "walk in newness of life" by making more righteous choices as a grateful response to the abundance of grace shown to us.

DEATH & LIFE (ROMANS 6:8-14)

No dominion (VV. 8-9, 14)

Paul summarizes his previous statements before building on them. (v. 8)

- In v. 9, He begins a comparison between Christ and believers: Since Christ has been raised, He will not die again. Death has no dominion over Him.
- This is picked back up in v. 14 where he says sin will have no dominion over us because we are not under law but under grace.

DEAD TO SIN, ALIVE (VV. 10-11)

Jesus died to sin, therefore we who believe in Him have died to sin. Jesus lives His life to God, so we are to consider ourselves alive to God in Christ Jesus. (cf. Gal. 2:20)

- However, because we have not yet received our incorruptible resurrection bodies, we are subject to the temptation to sin and the results of sinful choices.

"LET NOT" V. 12

We are not to "let" sin reign in death in our mortal bodies, but as 5:21 says, "grace shall reign through righteousness leading to eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

- "...therefore" – Since we are dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus, we suddenly have power to use against sin. This is an indication of the work of the Holy Spirit within us.

INSTRUMENTS V. 13

Paul then gives an analogy: "present your members...as instruments".

- We can either present our members to sin for unrighteousness, or to God for righteousness.
- "as those who have been brought from death to life" – This is us as followers of Jesus living the reality of our regeneration, in the midst of the choice.

SLAVES (ROMANS 6:15-20)

SIN, OR OBEDIENCE? V. 15-17

Since we have died to sin and our sins are forgiven, then is it ok to still sin? Absolutely not! (v. 15)

- To answer, Paul presents his second analogy for the choices we make: slavery.
- We present ourselves as slaves either to sin which leads to death, or to obedience to God which leads to righteousness. (v. 16)

The Greek word *doulos* most often gets translated as "bondservant" in the New Testament, but in this context *doulos* means absolute ownership by a master, and thus is translated as "slave".

- "the standard of teaching to which they were committed". (v.17) They became obedient to the teaching of Jesus and the apostles. ("traditions" – 1 Cor. 11:2; "pattern of sound words" – 2 Tim. 1:13)

LAWLESSNESS, OR SANCTIFICATION? V. 18-20

When we are slaves to sin, our desire is for sin. When we are slaves of righteousness (v. 18), our desire is to please God.

- Paul's application of this analogy: when you used to entertain "impurity and lawlessness", it led "to more lawlessness."

- Since you have grace through faith, instead practice righteousness which leads to sanctification. (v. 19)
- Paul ends his argument by confirming that when we were "slaves of sin", we had no regard for righteousness. (v. 20)
- Only a slave of sin would want to continue in sin, and the excuse that we are "not under law" or "grace may abound" is false.

FRUIT, WAGES, & GIFTS (ROMANS 6:21-23)

FRUIT VV. 21-22

He asks what the fruit was of those things of which we are now ashamed. (Rom. 1:21-32, Gal. 5:19-21)

- He then tells them that the "end of those things is death." (v. 21)
- This is reminiscent of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Bad (Gen. 2:17)

For the third time Paul tells them that they have been set free from sin and are now slaves of God.

- The fruit we get from being completely owned and mastered by God leads to sanctification, and its end is eternal life. (v. 22)
- This is reminiscent of the Tree of Life.

What is this fruit? Regeneration, justification, and adoption are the fruit we get from the Tree of Life that is Jesus' redemptive work on the Cross.

- Sanctification begins at regeneration and is an ongoing and ever-increasing work of the Holy Spirit, in which we cooperate, to be more and more free from sin and like Christ.

The process of sanctification is not completed for us until we die physically, and even then it is only completed for us spiritually. (Phil. 3:10-11)

- Sanctification involves our whole being, and it isn't completed for our bodies until we are resurrected at Jesus' return. Thus, the end of sanctification is eternal life both spiritually and physically.

WAGES & GIFTS V. 23

"The wages of sin is death"

- There is no gift from sin. There is an initial bait and then endless work.
- There are a couple of different ways this can be viewed: The first is - wages come from work. We can stay under the law and try to earn our salvation, but the end is death. Why?

"...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God..." (Rom. 3:23)

- "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death." (Prov. 14:12, 16:25)
- This would have been the temptation of the Jewish believers, to trust in their works: circumcision, keeping the law, etc.

The second way to look at it would be to chase the initial feeling of sin in order to cover-up the regret of the after-effects or the evidence of a previous sin.

- Addiction is a great example of slavery to sin. Once you take that first hit, first one-night-stand, first etc., you start a slide that leads you further into that sin until you end up a wretched mess or dead

"The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

- Where sin is a bloodthirsty tyrant, God is a benevolent King.
- God gives the gift of life freely, while sin makes you work for a fleeting feeling or to avoid consequences.

TREES & CHOICES

When Paul mentions fruit in this last section, he is recalling the imagery of the two trees in the Garden: the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Bad.

- In Genesis 2:9 we see that both trees are in the middle of the Garden.

Then later in vv. 16-17, we see God tell Adam to eat of any tree except the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Bad.

- So, we see this situation where every time Adam and Eve went to eat from the Tree of Life they would have to pass by or be close to the Tree of Knowledge.

This represents a choice for them, and us.

- The Tree of Life has God's life-giving fruit: Jesus as the true vine (John 15:15), Fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).
- It represents His wisdom, given in love and without restraint. (Prov. 3:18; James 1:5)

The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Bad is good-looking fruit, the seemingly easy way, the short-cut.

- It is the choice of attaining secret knowledge and "wisdom" aside from God.
- It is the choice of our own gain, our own will, at the expense of others.

And, in a sense, at the expense of our own life: the life God intends for us, God's gift.

- Or in the case of a very bad choice, our physical life.
- It's also the choice of relying on your works for salvation, instead of giving your allegiance to Christ and trusting in His work on the Cross.

Death Or Eternal Life? DEATH OR ETERNAL LIFE?

Have you received salvation?

- When you receive salvation:
- The Holy Spirit awakens faith in you.
- You eat the fruit of Jesus' life-giving work on the Cross: redemption, justification, and adoption as sons and daughters.

Now, sanctification is at work within you.

- What kind of tree are we eating from? Are we slaves of sin or God? Is sin using our members or is God?
- Even though we who have faith have eternal life, we can still choose to poison our spiritual bodies.

As we go through this process with the Holy Spirit, we need to partake of His fruit. If we partake of His fruit, others experience that fruit through us.

- We need to examine ourselves. (2 Cor. 13:5) What is our deepest desire?
- Walk by the Spirit, and not gratify the desires of the flesh. (Gal. 5:16-17)