

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

APRIL 18TH, 2021 // BOOK OF ROMANS

AN OBJECTION (ROMANS 6:1-2)

In Rom. 5:20, Paul made the statement, "where sin increased, grace abounded all the more."

- He now wonders if someone might take this idea and suggest that he's saying that it doesn't matter if a Christian lives a life of sin (vs. 1).
- After all, God will always overcome great sin with greater grace - so why then should we even worry about living a holy life and not sinning?
- This mindset is alive and well in the church today.

One of the ways this mindset grows and spreads in the context of the church is a casual, dismissive attitude towards certain sins.

- If we're not careful we can create a church culture where sins like gossip, slander, anger, apathy/disobedience, drunkenness, gluttony, judgmentalism, premarital sex, and selfishness are all excused under the guise of "grace".
- Grace means so much more than this!

"BY NO MEANS!" (VS. 2A)

The Greek phrase, *me genoito* is sometimes translated - "God forbid!", "Never", "Absolutely not", "Not at all", "Certainly not".

- For Paul the idea that anyone would continue to sin so that grace may abound is ridiculous, absurd, and absolutely unthinkable.
- There's a reason for such a strong response to this exceptionally ludicrous idea.

"...HOW CAN WE WHO DIED TO SIN STILL LIVE IN IT?" (VS. 2V)

If we have been born again by believing upon Jesus for our salvation, our relationship with sin has permanently changed.

- We have died to sin, therefore we should not live in it any longer.
- There are no degrees of deadness - you're either dead or alive.

So if we're in Christ, we're "dead to sin" (we were dead in sin before Christ).

- Christianity is not just turning over a new leaf or getting a new list of ideals that you should aspire to live up to ("but if you don't, that's ok, grace!").
- The Gospel is the power of new life.
- We look for so little when it comes to salvation - it's not just a, "get-of-hell-free-card", it's an abundant life in Christ that frees us from bondage.

DEATH TO SIN (ROMANS 6:3-7)

A quick note on understanding this passage - in the early church, baptism was not an optional event in the Christian experience as it is for many in the modern church.

- In other words, the idea of an, "unbaptized Christian" would be like a, "childless parent" or a, "spouseless husband".
- Baptism usually occurred immediately when someone was converted (Acts 2:38, Acts 16, Acts 8) because of its physical representation of salvation.

BAPTISM IS A SYMBOL OF DEATH & RESURRECTION (VS. 3-4)

When a person is baptized (immersed) in water, it's a dramatization or an "acting out" of their identification with Jesus in His death.

- They're buried in a "tomb" of water as a way of symbolizing the spiritual reality that they're dead to sin and their old self was crucified with Christ (Gal. 2:20).
- It means that since Jesus died for me, I die with Him.

When a person comes up out of the water in baptism (vs. 4), that's a symbol of the resurrection.

- We have been raised from the dead spiritually because before Christ we were, "dead in our trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1).
- The same Spirit that raised Christ lives in us (Rom. 8:11) so that might walk in newness of life.
- You cannot die and rise again spiritually without it changing your life.

UNITED (VS. 5)

Since we joined Jesus in death by dying to self, we have been "united" to him in resurrection.

- This is a unity we have of the closest and most intimate kind where resurrection life from Christ Himself flows to us because we're joined to him.
- So it's not just that our sins are forgiven and done away with - it's that we're given a power from God to live a new life.

NO LONGER ENSLAVED (VS. 6)

The "old self" is the part of us that is patterned after Adam, that part of us that is rebellious, law-breaking, and self-seeking.

- That "old self" was "crucified with him" so that our sin nature (our "body of sin") would be brought to nothing.
- You can't be a slave to someone who is dead - we no longer are controlled by the "old self".

The old self has been done away with, but why do we feel the pull to sin inside of us?

- That pull comes from something called the "flesh" (we'll talk more about that in chapter 7).
- Remnants of our old desires, impulses, passions, mindsets, and imaginations may still be there, but they don't control us anymore.

- Now we have a power from God's spirit to put them to death (Gal. 5:24).

SET FREE FROM SIN (VS. 7)

Why are we free from sin? Because we've died and our slavery was broken by death!

- Our old enslaved self died on the cross with Jesus, now a new person, a "free man" lives by the power of God's spirit!
- Sin wants to be our master, and it often finds a foothold in our flesh that seeks to control us.
- But we've been set free - we don't have to live this way - we have a power that's so often untapped.

RAISED WITH CHRIST (ROMANS 6:8-14)

"NOW IF WE HAVE DIED WITH CHRIST, WE BELIEVE THAT WE WILL ALSO LIVE WITH HIM" (VS. 8)

Living with Christ means that our lives are radically altered and daily transformed by His spirit.

- This is the doctrine of "sanctification" - the process by which we are made holy, set apart from the world, and grow to look more like Jesus as we surrender to the Holy Spirit's work in our lives.
- This is a lifelong journey!

Because we're in Christ, death has no dominion over us (vs. 9) and the life that we live now is no longer for ourselves and for sin, but for God (vs. 10).

- So all of this describes our spiritual standing if we're in Christ - this is what we are positionally before God.
- But how does this actually become a reality in the life of the believer?

"CONSIDER YOURSELVES DEAD TO SIN..." (VS. 11)

The word *logizomai* is translated as, "consider yourself" (reckon).

- It's an accounting term that means you count one thing as if it were another (Wild Card in Uno).
- When God sees our faith in Jesus as our sin substitute, he *logizomai's* our faith as righteousness (Rom. 4:5).
- Well now it's our turn to do some reckoning...

When we consider ourselves "dead to sin", it simply means to believe what God says in His Word is really true in our life.

- Even if we don't feel dead to sin, when we still choose to believe what God has declared to be, God infuses power within us to walk in it.
- We walk in it when we feed our spirit instead of our flesh, we stay away from temptations, and when we confess and repent sin quickly so that it doesn't gain any control over us.

RESTORING GOD AS THE CENTER (VS. 12-13)

Living in Christ and being dead to sin works in lives through considering ourselves dead (vs. 11) and then restoring God as the center of our lives.

- We don't live to serve ourselves and sin anymore.
- Don't let "sin reign" means to cut ties with sin in our lives - we take drastic measures to stay away from temptation, we get accountability, and we confess and repent quickly when we fail.

Instead of presenting our bodies to our old master (sin) so that we can serve it, we present our bodies to our new master (God) so we can serve Him!

- If the Christian life is simply sin avoidance and not Gospel obedience, this is UNBELIEVABLY difficult (if not impossible).
- We get busy serving God and not self.

NOT LAW, BUT GRACE! (VS. 14)

For those under the law, sin is the master because the law points the finger at our failures but gives us no power to resist sin.

- But the reason why sin has no dominion over us is because we're under grace!
- We have God's forgiveness, His unmerited favor, AND the power of the living God through the Spirit to live a new life!

OBEDIENCE FROM THE HEART (ROMANS 6:15-23)

The fact that we're saved by grace doesn't give us an excuse to sin, but it does give us a reason to obey.

- Because of grace, we're free to be "slaves of obedience" and that leads to righteousness (vs. 16)
- When we're freed from sin and death, we're given the ability to become, "obedient from the heart" (vs. 17).

So much better than rules you can't and don't want to follow is a new heart that responds to God out of loving obedience.

- This is the promise of freedom that the Gospel gives us.
- We are legally free, but sometimes we still choose to live like a prisoner.
- The message to us is to simply be what you are! Be obedient from the heart towards your Father, not a slave to sin!

FRUIT (VS. 21-23)

- Walking in freedom over sin means being honest with ourselves about the fruit of sin (vs. 21)
- What does a "sin binge" promise? But are the results of "sin binge"?
- The "end of those things is death" - in a moment of temptation, we're not thinking about that.
- But the truth of what sin is truly going to cost us if we serve it is often horrifying.

Serving God is worth it (vs. 22b) and serving sin is not worth it (vs. 23a)!

- "The wages of sin is death" - when you work for your master that is sin, you are paid back with death.
- But when we serve God we get no pay- only the free gift of the best benefits package imaginable (vs. 23).