

GOD FORBID!

Romans 6:1-2

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid.

REVIEW

- I. “God forbid”** – Literally: “Let this not be.” “By no means.” “That be far from us.” This is an expression of strong denial; indeed, of shock and revulsion.
- II. “Continue”** – GK *epimeno*: persevere, persist, hold on, not stop, remain in a state, abide indefinitely, like a bus passenger who just never gets off.

A. Examples in the Bible

1. Continue to ask questions – “So when they **continued** asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.” (John 8:7)
2. Continue knocking on the door – “But Peter **continued** knocking: and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished.” (Acts 12:16)
3. Continue in Christian doctrine – “Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; **continue** in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.” (I Tim. 4:16)

B. Our text today: “Shall we continue in sin?”

1. The thought is portrayed as utterly revolting
 - a. Like continuing to drink vomit after learning it's vomit.
 - b. Like keeping the PTO shaft running after a person is caught in it.
2. The theology of why not to continue comes next, but before that, we have “God forbid,” which itself screams beware! Cease and desist! Not one more second! Hair pull! Eyes bug! Face flush! Noooooooooooooo!
 - a. Isis beheads our brother, and we have no problem enjoying tea and goat with them at the bistro!
 - b. God would sacrifice His own Son to deliver us from the power of darkness, and we ask if we should keep *dwelling* in *darkness*?!!
3. Compare Scripture with Scripture! Someone may think “Shall we continue in sin?” is a cute comeback to the Rom. 5:20 statement that where sin abounded grace did much more abound. But a true doctrine fits with all the rest of Scripture. So we are told in II Pet. 1:20-21:
 - a. “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”
4. And the Scriptures are *replete* with admonitions to cease sinning.
 - a. “Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” (II Tim. 2:19)
 - b. “Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.” (Prov. 3:9)
 - c. Eph. 5:1-12

III. So, truly, the theme in our text today is REPENT! What is repentance? How well do you know it? How thoroughly have you done it?

A. Definition

1. GK *metanoe'o*: *meta* → “after” + *noe'o* → “to perceive.” So, to perceive after, in contrast to *pronoē'o*, “to perceive beforehand.” The idea is profitable *moral reflection*. This Greek word used in the Bible and translated “repentance” signifies that, after hearing the truth of God, the sinner is led to understand that the way in which he has walked is wrong. In fact, he may see that it is the way of misery, death, and hell and a cause of grief for God and other people.
2. So the accuracy of our English word, “repentance,” which comes from the Latin, *re* [intensifier] + *poenitere* [from which we get our word, “pain”] → “to regret.” Hence, to regret with great pain.
3. A person who repents, then, is one who bemoans, deplores, regrets, rues, bewails, laments over, grieves over, and sorrows for his error!
4. And, of course, the soul anguish in true biblical repentance must not be myopic and indulgent so as to begin and end with self. We are more than cows stung by an electric fence that stay in borders solely to avoid pain, with no compunction for damage done to the owner's cornfield when out of the borders. No, there must be what the Bible calls, “godly sorrow.” (II Cor. 7:10)
5. Additionally, biblical repentance will be revealed to be authentic by a change of devotion from the things of the world to the things of God, and that change will be seen by a change in behavior.
6. Indeed, Bible dictionaries tell us the word translated “repentance” is also used to communicate “after madness,” a phrase intimating that the whole life of a sinner is nothing other than a continued course of insanity and folly in constant opposition to the dictates of true wisdom. It means to wage war with one's own best interests in time and eternity; to provoke and insult the living God; and, by habitual sin, to prepare oneself only for a state of misery.
7. This definition accords with Proverbs 8:36, “But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.”
 - a. Illustration: radical college football players who in a presumption of invincibility did harmful acts which surely caused personal destruction in time.
8. But, again, in repentance a sinner's mind, purposes, and inclinations are changed; in consequence, conduct radically changes. There lies the contrast between Greek and Jewish ideas of wisdom.

B. What is to occur inside

1. Sin is seen as an offense against God – Psalm 51:4, Jer. 44:4
2. Each sin is understood to have caused Christ's death – Zech. 12:10
3. The sinner experiences godly sorrow – II Cor. 7:10
4. The sinner confesses and forsakes his sin – Prov. 28:13

C. What is to occur outside – Luke 3:10-14. Acts of repentance are generally:

1. Obvious – nothing subtle or hidden here
2. Do-able – no great talent or resources required
3. Measurable – you'll know if it was done or not

D. Impediments

1. Ignorance of God's teaching – “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.” (Hos. 4:6)
2. Blindness to personal application – See II Sam. 12:1-13. (King David discovers he is the offender.)
3. Sloth
 - a. “The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing.” (Prov. 13:4)
 - b. “He that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.” (Prov. 18:9)
4. Willfulness – “We will not have this man to reign over us.” (Luke 19:14)

E. Responsibility

1. God commands repentance – Acts 17:30
2. His goodness is to lead to it
 - a. “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?” (Rom. 2:4)
3. God gives it
 - a. “In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.” (II Tim. 2:25-26)

IV. Conclusion

Continuing in sin is an utter abomination to God, an offense against the clear logic of Scriptures, a display of shameless insensitivity toward others, and a choice that is desperately unwise and self-destructive.

DISCUSSION

1. Discuss what we can learn about repentance from the following Bible illustrations, and make personal applications.
 - a. The two sons – Mat 21:28-31
 - b. The prodigal son – Luke 15:17-19
 - c. Paul – Gal. 1:23
 - d. Israelites – Judges 10:15-16
 - e. David – II Sam. 12:13

f. Manasseh – II Chron. 33:12-13

g. Job – Job 42:6

h. Nineveh – Jonah 3:5-8, Matt. 12:41

i. Peter – Matt. 26:75

j. Zacchaeus – Luke 19:8

k. Thief on the cross – Luke 23:40-41

l. Corinthians – II Cor. 7:9-10

m. Saul – I Sam. 15:24-30

n. Ahab – I Ki. 21:27-29

o. Judas – Matt. 27:3-5

p. Jezebel – Rev. 2:21-22

q. Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum – Matt. 11:20-24