

*Sanctification: The Demonstration  
of God's Righteousness (Pt.1)*

Romans 6:1-23 (Preached 3/3/10) © 2010

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**INTRODUCTION**

1. I would to invite you to take God's Word and turn with me to Romans chapter 6.
2. Tonight we are beginning the next section in this letter that begins in chapter 6 and runs through the end of chapter 8.
3. Paul moves from demonstrating the doctrine of justification...to demonstrating the practical ramifications of salvation on those who have been justified [and] specifically discusses the doctrine of sanctification, which is God's producing actual righteousness in the believer (6:1-8:39).<sup>1</sup>
4. As he begins chapter 6, he addresses the objections raised from his teaching that a person is justified by faith in Jesus Christ alone.
5. Works play no part in our salvation.
6. It is all grace!
7. So as he ends chapter 5, he says in vv.20-21, "The Law came in so that the transgression would

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<sup>1</sup> John Jr MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Word Pub., 1997).

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increase; **but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,**<sup>21</sup> so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

8. That statement obviously stirred his objectors.
9. They had already “slanderosly reported and...some claim[ed] that [they said], ‘Let us do evil that good may come?’ (3:8).
10. Paul immediately dismissed their charges but now in chapter 6 he addresses them.
11. He gives two rhetorical questions.
12. The first is in verse 1, the second in verse 15.
13. Let’s look at the first question in verse 1.
14. He says, “What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?”
15. The objector’s argument is if sin brings about grace, why not continue in sin so that grace would increase.
16. Alan Johnson, in his commentary on Romans, says “a notable historical instance of the abuse of Paul’s teaching can be seen in the Russian monk Rasputin...Rasputin taught and exemplified the doctrine of salvation through repeated experiences of

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sin and repentance; he held that, as those who sin most require most forgiveness, a sinner who continues to sin with abandon enjoys each time he repents more of God's grace than any ordinary sinner."<sup>2</sup>

17. Paul says something different.
18. In fact, notice the key word in his question in verse 1.
19. It's the word "continue."

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<sup>2</sup> Alan F. Johnson, *Romans* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2000). 110.

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**I. Rhetorical Question #1 (vv.1-14)**

“What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?” (v.1)

The word “continue” (meno) means “to remain, abide.”

It is used in the New Testament of a person abiding in some one's home as a guest, or of a person abiding in a home.

It has in it the ideas of fellowship, of cordial relations, of dependence, of social intercourse.

The question now can be further interpreted to mean, “Shall we continue *habitually* to sustain the same relationship to the sinful nature that we sustained before we were saved, a relationship which was most cordial, a relationship in which we were fully yielded to and dependent upon that sinful nature, and all this *as a habit of life*?”<sup>3</sup>

What's the answer?

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<sup>3</sup> Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament : For the English Reader* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997).

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Verse 2 says, “me genoito” or in English, “*far be it! God forbid!*”<sup>4</sup> or “Perish the thought!”<sup>5</sup>

Paul uses this expression 14 times in his epistles (10 in Romans: 3:4, 6, 31; 6:2, 15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11) as the strongest Gr. idiom for repudiating a statement.

It contains a sense of outrage that anyone would ever think the statement was true.<sup>6</sup>

So now in verses 2-11 he gives 3 reasons why we are not to continue in sin.

We are not to “continue in sin” because...

A. We Died to Sin (vv.2, 7)

This is a one time event completed in the past.

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<sup>4</sup> Max Zerwick and Mary Grosvenor, *A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1974-). 471.

<sup>5</sup> R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (Columbus, Ohio: Lutheran Book Concern, 1936). 388.

<sup>6</sup> John Jr MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Word Pub., 1997).

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He repeats this in **Colossians 3:3 (NASB)** For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Paul is not saying that Christians never sin but that they are not able to live perpetually in those sins as they did before.

The apostle John takes up this very subject in 1 John 3:4-9.

It is not merely that Christians *should not* continue to live in the realm and dimension of sin but that they *cannot*...a genuinely justified life both is and will *continue to be* a sanctified life.<sup>7</sup>

Second, we are not to continue in sin because...

B. We Have Been Baptized into Christ (vv.3-5)

This does not refer to water baptism.

Paul is actually using the word “baptized” in a metaphorical sense, as we might in saying someone was *immersed* in his work, or underwent his baptism of fire when experiencing some trouble.

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<sup>7</sup> John MacArthur, *Romans* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996). 317–318.

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All Christians have, by placing saving faith in Him, been ***spiritually immersed into the person Christ, that is, united and identified with Him*** (cf. 1 Cor. 6:17; 10:2; Gal. 3:27; 1 Pet. 3:21; 1 John 1:3; *see note on Acts 2:38*).<sup>8</sup>

Since we are united by faith with Him, as baptism symbolizes, His death and burial become ours.

Paul ends verse 4 by adding that we have also been united with Christ in His resurrection.

He says, “So that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

He continues in verse 5, “For if we have become united with *Him* in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be *in the likeness* of His resurrection.”

Because we have “died” and were “buried” and “raised” with Him, there is a new quality and character to our lives.

The third reason we are not to continue in sin is because...

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<sup>8</sup> John Jr MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Word Pub., 1997).

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C. The Old Self Has Been Crucified (vv.6-10)

Paul says in verse 6, “Knowing this, that our old self was crucified with *Him*, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin.”

Our “old self” is the believer’s unregenerate self.

It is the former human nature, the nature that we brought into this world where our humanity was dead in sin.

That person, the old person with a singular disposition toward sin whose heart was a heart of stone, is the one who was crucified with Christ.

Christ did not just die for our sins; he died for our sinfulness.

He did not just die for our sin legally, bearing our guilt; he died to kill our original sin, our moral inability.

Our dead, corrupt, fallen nature was crucified with Christ on the cross. My old man received the curse of God on Calvary.

At conversion we put off the old man and put on the new man, as if exchanging filthy rags for spotless clothing (Col. 3:9, 10).



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The crucifixion of the old man at Calvary means that the body of sin has been put out of commission.<sup>9</sup>

Nevertheless the old man keeps kicking and screaming.

In a very real sense, we are crucified with Christ, so the new life in Christ is just that—new.

“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Cor. 5:17).

When he says in verse 6 “in order that our body of sin might be done away with,” he is not referring to the physical body but indwelling sin.

Since “our old self was crucified with Him,” indwelling sin is now rendered “inoperative as a controlling power.”

In other words, the tyranny of sin over us has been broken “so that we would no longer be slaves of sin.”

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<sup>9</sup> William MacDonald and Arthur Farstad, *Believer's Bible Commentary : Old and New Testaments* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997).

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How is that possible? Verse 7 says, “For he who has died is freed from sin.”

If you have been “freed from sin,” then it is no longer your master—you are no longer under its control.

I like what R.C. Sproul says, “Corpses in the cemetery are not struggling with temptation. The battle is over. Saints in heaven are not exposed to sin. Once we die, the battle is over.”<sup>10</sup>

Paul continues to make this point in verses 8-10: “Now if we have *died* with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,<sup>9</sup> knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him.<sup>10</sup> For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

What should our response be then?

Verses 11-13 says, “Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.<sup>12</sup> Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts,<sup>13</sup> and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin *as* instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as

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<sup>10</sup> R.C. Sproul, Romans (Kindle Book). Location 3325-38.

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those alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God.

In other words, you must “consider.”

That is the Greek word *logizomai* which was often used metaphorically to refer to having an absolute, unreserved confidence in what one's mind knows to be true—the kind of heartfelt confidence that affects his actions and decisions.<sup>11</sup>

In other words, it refers to knowing and fully believing that you are “dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.”

It's not a mind game—it is knowing and believing!

It is knowing and doing!

So he says in verse 11 to “consider” and in verse 13 to “present.”

You are to know and believe, and then present.

Until a believer accepts the truth that Christ has broken the power of sin over his life, he cannot live

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<sup>11</sup> John Jr MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Word Pub., 1997).

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victoriously, because in his innermost being he does not think it is possible.<sup>12</sup>

When you know and fully believe then you will “present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God” (v.13).

If we are not to “let sin reign in [our] mortal bod[ies]”, it is because it “shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but grace” (v.15).

The law cannot save you nor as a believer now can it condemn you.

Remember, the law brings about “the knowledge of sin” (3:20), and “brings about wrath” (4:15).

Sin’s dominion is gone. It is history. We cannot be brought back again into absolute bondage to sin as we once were.

But remember, not being “under law” and under “grace” does not give us a license to sin.

We are not antinomian.

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<sup>12</sup> John MacArthur, *Romans* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996). 335.

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Antinomian comes from anti, against or opposed, and nomos, law.

It means being opposed to the law of God or against the law of God.

We are not opposed or against the law of God.

It is only through the indwelling Holy Spirit that we can fulfill the law.

Do you remember when Jesus said in Matthew 22:37-39 to “And He said to him, " 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE Lord YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' <sup>38</sup> "This is the great and foremost commandment. <sup>39</sup> "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'

He also said in verse 40, “On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”

Loving God and man is our moral duty!

And when we love we fulfill the law.

Paul said in **Romans 13:8 (NASB)** Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled *the* law.

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**Romans 13:10 (NASB)** Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of *the* law.

So when Paul says in Romans 6:14 we are “not under law,” he is saying we are no longer under the curse of the law for our sin.

To be under law is to be unredeemed.

Jesus Christ took our sin on Himself and satisfied the just demands of the law.

We now stand in grace (5:2) and are given the power to overcome sin in our mortal bodies.

We come now to the second....

**II. Rhetorical Question #2 (vv.15-23)**

This section continues Paul's discussion of sanctification by reminding his readers of their past slavery to sin and their new slavery to righteousness.

He wants them to live in submission to their new master, Jesus Christ, and not to be entangled again with the sins that characterized their old life, sins which no longer have any claim over them.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> John Jr MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Word Pub., 1997).

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So he gives another rhetorical question in verse 15:  
“What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law  
but under grace?”

Again he refutes the license to sin and gives the same  
answer as verse 1, “May it never be!”

And then gives two reasons why.

He reasons in the first by showing that they were...

A. Slaves of Sin (vv.16-20)

It is a simple fact of life that when we submit  
ourselves to someone as our master we become that  
person's slave.

Likewise, if we sell out to sin, we become slaves of  
sin, and eternal death lies waiting at the end of that  
road.

If, on the other hand, we choose to obey God, the  
result is a holy life.<sup>14</sup>

When he says, “Do you not know that when you  
present yourselves to someone *as* slaves for

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<sup>14</sup> William MacDonald and Arthur Farstad, *Believer's Bible  
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obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? <sup>17</sup> 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, <sup>18</sup> and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. <sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. <sup>21</sup> Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death.

In verse 22 he says they are now...

**B. Slaves of Righteousness (v.22)**

“But now having been set free from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.”

**C. Warning (v.23)**

Paul concludes in verse 23 with a warning to his objectors.



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If one continues in sin the results are death because  
“the wages of sin is death.”

On the other hand those who have been declared  
righteous through faith in Jesus Christ are given “the  
free gift of God [which] is eternal life in Christ Jesus  
our Lord.”

**CONCLUSION**

1. If we have been justified by God through faith in Jesus Christ, then there will be evidence of holy living.
2. Standing in grace never gives us the license to sin or the freedom to live any way we choose.
3. Our lives are now marked by obedience to Jesus Christ and the Word of God.
4. Let's pray.