Romans 6:1-14 Answers
Dead to Sin, Alive to God

Overview: Romans has 16 chapters and 5 sections: Sin, Salvation, Sanctification, Sovereignty and Service.

Introduction: Today we begin the third section: Sanctification (Romans 6-8). The Bible calls us saints for a reason. In Christ we are saints, not sinners. In short, there are two types of people: the saints and the ain’ts.

What is antinomianism? Anti means against and nomos means law. The term evidently was coined by Martin Luther as a pejorative against those who distorted the doctrine of salvation by grace (Wikipedia on Antinomianism). Antinomianism is the false doctrine that under grace we can live without regard to righteousness. God’s grace is used as an excuse to sin all you want to. In Romans 6, Paul is dealing with what we would today call antinomianism.

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****Why not continue in sin that grace may abound (6:1-4)? We do not continue in sin because we died to sin and were raised to walk in newness of life. In Greek, “continue” (6:1) is in the present tense and indicates the practice of sin as a habit. It means to stay in sin, to remain in sin, to reside in sin (Rienecker, p. 361). Of course we all still sin. The issue here is a lifestyle of on-going sin.

Adrian Rogers: The lost man leaps into sin and loves it. The saved man lapses into sin and loathes it.

1. The word “then” in 6:1 connects us back to what Paul wrote previously (5:20-21). What aspect of Romans 5:20-21 does the word “then” refer back to (6:1)? Romans 6:1 serves to correct any possible misinterpretation of Paul’s statement that God’s grace increased to match increased sin (5:20-21).

ESV Romans 3:20 . . . through the law comes knowledge of sin.

Last session, in 5:20-21(read aloud), Paul made two shocking statements that require defense and clarification: 1) the Law was given in order to increase transgression and 2) God’s grace increased to match the increased trespass brought about by the giving of the law.

ESV Romans 5:20-21 . . . the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more . . .

Paul expected these two statements to be misunderstood and distorted, so he clarified and defended them in Romans 6-8. Paul did so with a series of anticipated questions of distortion (6:1, 6:15, 7:7, 7:13), each followed by a strong denial (mé ginoito). Thus, Romans 6 is a further explanation of how God’s grace works (Leiter, p. 147).
ESV 2 Peter 3:16 There are some things in them [Paul’s letters] that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.

Have you ever met anyone who boldly claimed he could live in sin because God’s grace would forgive it (6:1-2)? Explain. This, by way, seems to have been advocated by Russian monk Rasputin (who had great influence over Czar Nicholas II, Hendrickson, p. 194).

Review: What was Paul’s answer to the question of 6:1? His answer was “By no means”. The Greek here is mé ginoito. We who died to sin can no longer live in it. The key here is that we are not still living in sin. Of course there must be a sober recognition of our continuing potential to sin and our actual sin, but in Christ our lives are not to be characterized by sin (Cranfield, p. 299).

What died, sin or us (6:2)? Does it make any difference which one died? It is us who died, not sin. We are dead to sin, but sin is not dead in us. This makes a difference because as an operative principle, the temptation to sin will always be with us, yet its power over us is severed.

2. What does it mean to have died to sin (6:2)? Died is from apothnésko; apo means “away from” and thnésko means “to die.” With reference to sin (6:2) it means “to become wholly alienated from a thing and freed from all connection with it” (Thayer, #599). It means we are out of any relation with sin. A synonym might be “alienated.”

Death to sin is separation from sin’s power, not the extinction of sin. It is like unplugging a lamp from a wall socket, the light goes out because the power supply is cut off. We have been unplugged (separated) from sin’s power (but the electrical socket is still energized).

A Truth To Be Reckoned With: All those who have experienced God’s grace have died to sin. We are dead to sin’s beck and call. We don’t have to answer. Someone who is dead is unresponsive.

According to 6:3, what is true of all who have been baptized into Christ? All who have been baptized into Christ were baptized into his death.

Baptized is from baptizo and after 2,000 years remains an untranslated word in our Bibles. What is a synonym for baptized (6:3-4)? The Greek baptizo means to dip or to sink. Thus, “to immerse, submerge” (used in reference to sunken ships). It can mean “to wash by dipping or submerging, to bathe.” Metaphorically it means “to overwhelm.” In the New Testament it is a rite of immersion in water, performed as a sign of the removal of sin. When used with a preposition it is to mark the element into which the immersion is made (Thayer #907, 911). A synonym would be “immersed” or “enveloped.”
How many times is the word water found in this paragraph (6:1-4)? It is not in the passage at all. “Baptism” for us is an exclusively religious word. We always think of a religious rite involving water. Not so with in the Greek. It merely meant to dip or wash. It is helpful to note the element into which the immersion is said to occur.

According to 6:3, into what two elements were we baptized? We were baptized into Christ and His death. Technically, there is nothing here about immersion into water. Paul is here writing about our spiritual baptism (immersion) in Christ when we were regenerated (born again).

Water Baptism: Water baptism does not put a person into Christ. The baptism of the Spirit does that. Water baptism is only symbolic. It is an outward sign of an inward act.

3. Based on 6:1-4, what does water baptism symbolize? Water baptism is symbolic of being spiritually baptized (immersed) into Christ. Water baptism is an outward physical sign of the inward reality of Spirit baptism. Being immersed symbolizes dying with Christ. In that sense you could consider the baptismal waters to represent a liquid grave.

Example: When a dead man’s relatives and friends leave his body in a grave and return home without him, the fact that he no longer shares their life is exposed with inescapable conclusiveness (Cranfield, p. 304). Similarly, we have departed from the world of sin; it goes home without us!

4. According to 6:4, why were we buried with Christ through baptism into death (what was the purpose)? It was so that just as Jesus was raised from the dead, so too we may walk in newness of life. Thus, in 6:2 we “died to sin” and in 6:4 we are resurrected to “live a new life.”

Teacher’s Note: “New” (6:4) is from kainotés (2538), “a new condition, a new state of being” (Thayer).

Coming back up out of the waters of baptism symbolizes our being resurrected with Christ to walk in newness of life. Walk is from peripateo; peri means around and pateo means to walk. Paul used the word frequently to denote a man’s conduct (Cranfield, p. 305).

5. What is the overall point of this paragraph (6:1-4)? In my opinion the main point is that we have died to sin and rather than living in sin any longer we now live in newness of life in Christ.

****Why must we consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God (6:5-11)? It is because we have been united with Jesus in both his death and in his resurrection life. Our old self was crucified with Jesus, setting us free from sin, and we have been made alive with Jesus in resurrection power.
6. Why did Paul write the word certainly in 6:5? It is a package deal. One is as sure as the other.

7. What phrase (found three times in 6:3-4) is used interchangeably with the phrase “united with” (twice in 6:5)? The phrase is “baptized into” (6:3). Thus we can learn that to be baptized into Christ is the same as being united with Christ.

8. According to 6:6-7, what does it mean to have been crucified with Christ? (Read aloud). It means our old self died to sin so that we are not longer enslaved to it. We have been set free. We do not have to give in to our sinful passions.

ESV Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

We sinned in Adam's sin (5:12-21) and we died in Christ's death (6:6-7) and in Christ the new you is here.

9. What is our old self (6:6)? This refers to our way of life before we began to walk in “newness of life” (6:4). It is what we were before we became Christians. The old self was in slavery to sin. It was associated with a body that was given over to sin. Note: The KJV has “old man”.

What is the body of sin (6:6)? A body of sin is a human body that is controlled and dominated by sin. Our physical bodies are not inherently sinful, but they are frequently instruments for expressing sin. Our old selves live a body of sin.

10. Practically speaking, what does it mean for the body of sin to be brought to nothing (6:6)? “Brought to nothing” is from katarego (2673); kata = “down”; argeo = “to be idle.” Thus it means “to render idle, unemployed, inactive, inoperative.” Thus, it means that the body may cease to be an instrument of sin (Thayer). A synonym might be “deactivated.” The NIV marginal translation has “rendered powerless”. Our bodies should no longer be bodies of sin.

Teacher’s Note: “Set free” (6:7) is from dikaioo, “to render or make or declare to be righteous or guiltless.” Figuratively it means “to be freed” (from sin’s domination) (Thayer #1344). A synonym might be “emancipated.” Sin’s power over us is broken.

Being dead to sin means being determined by God’s grace and power no longer to live in sin (Hendriksen, p. 199).

11. According to 6:8, what two things go together? (Read aloud). If we have 1) died with Christ we will also 2) live with him. You can’t have one without the other. As Paul wrote in 6:5, it is certainly going to be this way.

What truth about Christ did Paul express in 6:9? Others in the Bible who were resurrected died again. However, death no longer has mastery over Christ and He will never die again.
(Read 6:10 aloud). **In what sense did Jesus die to sin (6:10)?** See 2 Corinthians 5:21. Jesus died with reference to sin, as a payment for sin, to put away sin, because of our sin.

**ESV 2 Corinthians 5:21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

**According to 6:10, Jesus died once for all; all time or all people? Why?** From context, it means all time ("will never die again," 6:9). This does not do much to further the Roman Catholic notion of Christ being continually crucified via the mass (this is why Catholic crosses depict Jesus still on the cross and Protestant crosses are vacant).

**In what way does Jesus live “to God” (6:10)?** Jesus' whole life was (and is) one of obedience to the Father's will.

12. **To what does “so you also” (6:11) refer?** See back to 6:9-10. In the same way that Jesus died to sin and is alive to God, so also we are to do the same. Death no longer has mastery over Jesus and sin no longer has mastery over us. This is the application of the passage.

13. **What does it mean to “consider” ourselves dead to sin and alive to God (6:11)?** Consider is from *logizomai* and means “to reckon, calculate, meditate” (Thayer, #3049). This is the same Greek word used in Romans 4 about righteousness being counted to Abraham. It means we are to think about this truth and to count on it being true.

**Word Study:** “Dead” (6:11) is from *nekros* (as in necrotic), “destitute of life, inanimate; destitute of force or power, inactive, inoperative.”

Seeing ourselves as Scripture declares us to be and taking that revelation seriously is the first and decisively important step on the way of obedience (Carnfield, p. 315). We must constantly bear in mind that we are no longer what we used to be (Hendriksen, p. 201). This really is a case of belief determines behavior.

We are dead to sin in Christ's death; we are alive to God in Christ's resurrection.

**ESV Colossians 3:1** If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

****What tension is surfaced in 6:12-14?**** The tension is between yielding to sin's passions versus living in righteousness.
14. What imagery does the word reign bring to your mind (6:12)? It is from basileuo and means “to exercise kingly power” (Thayer #936). It is related to the Greek word for a king. We must not let sin reign like a king over us. We have an obligation to stop allowing sin to reign unopposed and to revolt in the name of our rightful ruler King Jesus (Cranfield, p. 297).

What does mortal (6:12) mean? A French word for death is mort. Mortal translates thnétos, “subject to death” (Thayer #2349). The opposite of a mortal body is a glorified body, which will be sinless.

15. Based on 6:12, would it mean to let sin reign in your mortal body? It would mean you obey its passions and use your body to commit sin.

Based on 6:12, how does King Sin direct us? How does it tell us what to do? It directs us through our passions (the NIV has “evil desires”).

What are passions (6:12)? The Greek word is epithumia and means any type of desire, craving or longing (good or bad). When this refers to a desire for what is forbidden it becomes “lusts” (Thayer #1939). It is also translated in the NAS as “coveting, desire, impulses.”

That our bodies will still experience inappropriate passions shows that the temptation to sin will still be present in a Christian's life. However, we are now dead to that sin. We are no longer slaves to it. Some people erroneously think that the more spiritual one is, the less he will feel temptation. However, lust and temptation will never go away. If anything, the more spiritual one is, the more he is aware of potential sin in his life.

What do's and don'ts are we given in 6:13? Do not present your bodily members to sin but instead do present your members to God for righteousness.

16. Combining 6:11-13, what overall process is involved in resisting temptation?
   1. Consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God, 6:11.
   2. Do not obey sin's lusts (6:12) and do not present your body to be an instrument of unrighteousness, 6:13a.
   3. Remembering that you have been brought from death to life, present your body to God as an instrument of righteousness, 6:13b.

According to 6:14, why doesn’t sin have any dominion over us? It has no dominion because we are not under law, but under grace.

17. Why is sin able to be our master under law but not under grace (6:14)? See 3:19-20, 5:20. The law reveals God's commands, but it does not give us the ability to obey it. No one in his own strength is able to keep all the law (3:19-20). The law only gives us the knowledge of sin (3:20) and increases transgression (5:20). However, God's grace empowers us to die to sin and to put away our old life of domination by sin.
Run and do, the law commands
But gives me neither feet nor hands.
Better news the Gospel brings,
It bids me fly and gives me wings.

Review: This is clearly a case of where your belief (6:1-11) determines your behavior (6:12-14).

18. What is the main application of this paragraph (6:12-14)? This is a chapter about soaring over sin. Among other things, it states that in Christ we have died to sin (6:2, 11), have been set free from sin (6:7, 22) and sin no longer has dominion over us (6:14) with the result that we can bring forth fruit unto sanctification (6:21-22).

So What?

Just as death no longer has mastery over Jesus, what is no longer to have mastery over us? Sin’s dominion has been broken.

19. Christ’s death was with reference to sin and Christ’s resurrection was with reference to God. What does Christ’s death and resurrection parallel for those who have been baptized into Christ? It parallels our own death to sin and life to God.

20. Why do we sometimes succumb to the weakness of making excuses and sinning? We forget to reckon on/count on the truth that we died to sin. As Christians, we sin because we choose to sin. We cannot say “the devil made me do it.” In Christ, sin’s dominion over us has been broken.

**** = ask this question before reading the text aloud. Doing so will cause focus.

• These lessons are designed for a 45 minute session and are based on the text of the ESV.

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