

**GOD DELIVERS BELIEVERS FROM THE POWER OF SIN**

**PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word.**

**Introduction:** The theme in Romans is the righteousness of God. The righteousness of God gives believers a holy life with Him, both now and in the future. When we received Christ as Savior, we were crucified with Him, buried with Him, and raised with Him. When we were crucified with Christ, we died to the pleasures of sin. Our old sin nature found pleasure in sin, but we buried our sinful pleasures in the grave. When we were raised with Christ, we became new persons in Christ; God gave us a holy way to live (2 Cor 5:17). How can we live a holy life? The power of God that raised Jesus from the dead when He carried all the sins of the world to the grave is the power that He uses to conquer every sin in our lives. We can live holy lives if we look to Him when we are tempted to sin (1 Cor 10:13). He has the power. Our new nature convicts and distresses us if we seek pleasure in sin, but it comforts and delights us when we find pleasure in living a holy life. Romans 6-7 will give us the basis for victory over sin, which is found only in Christ's resurrection.

**I. Sanctification is Required Because of Our Union with Christ — 6:1-14****A. The Principle of Sin is Questioned — 6:1**

6:1 — Paul begins this section (6:1-14) by asking the question, "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" He asks this question to clarify what he said about the power of God's grace: "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (5:20). He said this to show that God's grace can save the worst of sinners. Paul felt that way about himself (1 Tim 1:15). But he did not want believers to think that they could continue in their sins and expect God's grace to abound in forgiveness, thus bringing more glory to Himself. This kind of logic may not have been expressed, but it is practiced when Christians continue in sin and say, "God will forgive." Paul denounced this practice by saying, "God forbid."

**B. The Principle against Sin is Defended — 6:2-10****1. Sin contradicts the nature of salvation — 6:2**

6:2 — A practice of sin is not acceptable for believers. The phrase, "Dead to sin" should read, "died to sin." How shall we who died to sin live in sin? We died to our old sin nature when we were crucified with Christ. In a spiritual sense all believers are in Christ when He died, was buried and rose again. So, we died to our old nature. Now, it is absurd to think that we should go back to our old nature and let it dominate our lives. We have died to the realm of sin, but are alive to the realm of righteousness.

**2. Sin contradicts the meaning of baptism — 6:3-10**

6:3 — The practice of sinning contradicts one's baptism. Some take "baptism" in this passage to be Spirit baptism, while others take it to be water baptism. Spirit baptism happens at salvation when the Spirit immerses the believer spiritually into Christ to participate in His death, burial, and resurrection.

Those who take this verse to refer to water baptism understand Paul to use the believer's baptism after salvation as an illustration of verse two where he argues against the practice of sinning. In verse two he declared that we died to our sin nature when we were saved. In verse three he is asking the believer, "Are you ignorant about the meaning of your water baptism when you were baptized unto (*eis*) Jesus Christ?" *Eis* can be translated "unto" or "into." Those who translate it as "unto" believe Paul is talking about water baptism. Those who believe he is talking about Spirit baptism translate *eis* as "into." 1 Corinthians 10:2 is an example where *eis* is translated as "unto." The Israelites were baptized unto Moses. The KJV

translates eis as "into" in Romans 6:3, which tells us that the translators believed Paul was talking about Spirit baptism.

Water baptism is a symbol of Spirit baptism. We are Spirit baptized (immersed into Christ by the Spirit) unto Christ we are saved and then we should be baptized unto Christ in water to portray our death, burial, and resurrection with Christ. How does water baptism portray our union with Christ? We are immersed in the watery grave to symbolize our death and burial with Christ to show we are no longer under the rule of our sin nature. Then we are raised from the watery grave to show we are now under the rule of our new nature provided by God through Christ. Whether a person takes these verses to refer to Spirit baptism or to water baptism, Paul's argument against the practice of sinning is just as strong. We have died to our sin nature through Christ's death and should no longer keep on sinning. Furthermore, we are alive in Christ and have been given a divine nature from God (2 Pet 1:4) so we can live holy lives. If we keep on sinning, it would contradict the testimony that we gave by our water baptism.

Paul uses three words we must remember and use to keep from sinning: KNOW, RECKON, and YIELD. We are to know three facts. The first fact we need to "know" is found in verse 6:3. In 6:3-5, Paul wanted us to KNOW when we were baptized by water unto Christ, we were baptized unto His death on the cross. Water baptism is done in the likeness of Christ's actual death and burial, which He did with our sins. Water baptism is a witness to others on how we believe Jesus Christ paid for our sins. Then when we are raised out of the water in the likeness of His resurrection, it is a witness that we believe Christ raised us from the dead to walk in newness of life, no longer slaves to our sin nature. The other two facts we need to know will be discussed in verses 6 and 9.

6:4 — Our baptism unto (or into) Christ's death and burial has a twofold significance. First, our identification and union with Christ is complete; we died once with Christ to our old life and it was buried with Him. Second, it prepares our mind to depend on our union with Christ for victory over our sin nature by the power of His resurrection.

The purpose of our union in (or, symbol of) Christ's resurrection was that we are resurrected to walk in newness of life. This is a necessary and important aspect of Christianity. The "newness of life" has to do with the holy life we should live because of our inward regeneration (2 Cor 5:17). If there is no change in our walk, we should examine our salvation to be sure it is real. The Father was active in Christ's resurrection where His power and glory were majestically demonstrated in this amazing miracle.

6:5 — Paul confirms and explains the reasons why the believer cannot practice sinning but must walk in newness of life. First, our Spirit baptism has judicially united us in Christ's death and resurrection which are the two facts water baptism has pictured. "Planted together" actually means "grown together" or "woven together." It has reference to the closeness of our relationship to Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection. "Likeness" seems to refer to the likeness of Spirit baptism in water baptism which symbolizes our death and resurrection. Now we must walk in newness of life with Christ.

6:6-8 — The second fact we must KNOW to walk in newness of life is that the "old man," our unregenerate nature, was crucified with Christ when we were saved (cp. Eph 4:22, 24; Col 3:8-9). Our old nature was crucified so that the body of sin might be destroyed, not in the sense of being eradicated, but its power is legally taken away. The body of sin is our sin nature. It appeals to the natural desires of our bodies to commit sin. The body of sin will be rendered powerless by drawing close to Jesus, depending fully on our death to sin with Jesus Christ and our resurrection to holiness by Him. So, the crucifixion of our unregenerate self makes our salvation secure (Jn 5:24; 10:27-29). We have become a new creation in Christ (2 Cor 5:17). But the sin nature still can cause us trouble. It can deceive us and draw us into sin

through its appeal to the desires of our bodies. We must be alert and abstain from every form of evil (1 Thess 5:22), so the members of our body serve God and not the sin nature.

6:9-10 — Third, Paul uses a stronger word for "know." Here we are to **KNOW** for certain that Christ was raised from the dead, never to die again. Now that He lives, He lives unto God. This is a lesson for us to apply and remember. We only die with Christ one time in order to be saved. Then we must live by the power of His resurrection to serve God with a sanctified life in full obedience to Him (Rom 12:1-2). We must know these three facts about our Savior which is the basis for victory over our sin nature. When we are tempted to sin, we need to remember 1 Corinthians 10:13. "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it" (NKJV) .

### C. Principle of Sin is Applied — 6:11-14

6:11 — The discussion above was related to our union with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. Now Paul applies that truth to believers. We are to **RECKON** (count or consider) ourselves to have died to sin. It is true that we are positionally dead to sin, but now we must count it to be so in our daily lives. We must not please our sin nature. Instead we are to live holy lives unto God so that we please Him in all that we do. We are to make no provision for sin in our lives. If we do sin, we must confess it immediately and forsake it (Prov 28:13).

**NOTE:** When "sin" is mentioned in Romans, especially in chapters 5-7, it usually is referring to the sin nature that has been made powerless by our crucifixion with Christ. We should reckon that we died to the sin nature when we were crucified with Christ and not yield our bodies to sin.

6:12 — The first result is that sin is no longer the master over our bodies. Paul here assumes that sin is not reigning in the lives of these believers in Rome, but he exhorts them, "Let not sin reign." Paraphrasing, he is saying, "Sin is no longer our master. We died to sin; the old sin nature has been crucified with Christ. Therefore, we must not allow it to reign in our daily lives." The lusts of our bodies may plead with us to sin, but we must not submit to our lusts. Our bodies are still the same fleshly bodies with sinful lusts as we await glorification, but Paul explicitly warns us not to yield to the lusts of the old man. We must yield to the desires of the new man (Eph 4:22-24).

6:13 — Neither should we yield the individual members of our bodies as instruments (weapons) to work unrighteousness. Since we died to sin, we should **YIELD** our members as instruments (weapons) to God to do works of righteousness. These members are to serve God as weapons in His battle against sinful activities in the world. "Yield" is an aorist tense indicating not so much the "once for all" aspect, but more the constative idea; we always must yield the members of our bodies as weapons for God to use.

6:14 — Believers are to live under grace, not under the Law, so we can have victory over sin. The Law has no power to deliver us from our sin nature. We must live under the grace of God to be delivered from our sin nature. The grace of God comes to us through faith in the death and resurrection of His beloved Son. It provides us salvation from sin and sanctification over sin. Holiness is attained by faith in Christ's power, like salvation. Nothing spiritual is attained by keeping the Law, so boasting is excluded (Eph 2:8).

The Law is not the answer to our sin problem, instead our sin nature uses the Law to put us in bondage (7:24). The Law commands and demands, approves and disapproves, condemns and exposes, but it cannot free us from sin. God's Law is holy and good, because it reveals our sins and shows us the path of life (Ps 16:11; Prov 4:18). However, the Law is weak through the flesh, not being able to control the lusts of our bodies. Only Christ can control the members of our bodies because He stripped our sin nature

of its power when we were crucified with Him (cf. 6:6). So, when Jesus Christ was raised from the dead by the power of His Father through the Spirit, that power can defeat every attempt of the sin nature to deceive us with false promises that draw us into sin. The Law is like a thermometer: it reveals sin, but has no power to control it. Christ is like a thermostat: He has the power to control sin. We must live by the grace of God in Jesus Christ to be saved and be sanctified from sin (live holy lives).

## **II. Sanctification is Realized Through Our Dedication to Christ — 6:15-23**

### **A. The Principle of Sanctification is Questioned Again — 6:15**

6:15 — "Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace?" — Paul asked this question to clarify what he wrote in 6:14 that we are no longer under Law but under grace. The question is similar to that of 6:1, but there are two differences. First, in 6:1, believers felt they could sin so the grace of God would super-abound in their forgiveness. In 6:15, believers felt they could sin because they were free from the law. Second, in 6:1, the verb is in the present tense, which indicates continual sin. In 6:15, the verb is in the aorist tense, which could indicate separate sins, thus an occasional sin. Should Christians tolerate many or few sins in their lives? The answer is the same for both questions: God forbid! Christians must not be tolerant of any sin in their lives, whether they be great in number or few. They must seek to be holy as God is holy (1 Pet 1:15-16)

### **B. The Principle of Sanctification is Defended — 6:16-23**

6:16 — Paul refutes the logic of those that rationalize their sinful actions: he tells them that they are slaves to the one they obey. The specific application of this principle is limited to two choices in the spiritual realm. We are either a slave of sin which results in eternal death, or else we are a slave of obedience which results in righteousness and eternal life. No other alternatives are possible (cp. Jn 8:34; Lk 16:13).

6:17-18 — Paul cites the believers in Rome as an example of his teaching. Paul gives thanks to God that these believers had chosen to serve God. They formerly were the slaves of sin, but when they received Christ, they became slaves of righteousness. They were set free from sin (1 Thess 1:9-10).

"Form" — The Greek word is *tupos*, which can be translated "example," or "pattern," or a "mold" into which molten metal is poured to take the shape or pattern of the mold. The "form of doctrine" that Paul had in mind could easily be water baptism, which he used as a mold for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Gospel would be Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, which is portrayed in baptism (6:4-5). This doctrine of Jesus Christ is essential for the salvation of unbelievers and the sanctification of believers. This was the main emphasis in Paul's letter up to this chapter.

It also is worth noting that translators are divided on how to translate the last words of this phrase: "which was delivered to you" or "to which you were delivered." The translation, "to which you were delivered," fits water baptism very well. We are delivered to baptism after we are saved as a testimony of our faith in Jesus Christ and our union with Him in His death, burial and resurrection.

6:19 — As these believers once were slaves to uncleanness and iniquity, so now they should be slaves of Christ to sanctification and holiness.

6:20-21 — These two verses look back at their slavery to sin, stressing the necessity of presenting their bodies as slaves to Christ. An unsaved person has no concern or desire for righteousness but has a desire to serve sin. However, the undesirable result of serving sin is twofold. First, the fruit of sin is shameful, and second, the end of sin is eternal death.

6:22 — Those who have received Christ as Savior are free from the power of the old sin nature. It no longer has the right to bring sin into our lives. Instead we should be willing slaves of God. We should bring to Him the fruit of holiness (sanctification). The end of this kind of life is eternal life.

6:23 — This concludes all that has been said. The old nature, which is the result of Satan's temptation, pays his servants a wage that quickly depreciates in value and ends in eternal death. His servants are cast into Hell until they are sentenced to the Lake of Fire to be tormented forever. The new nature, which is the gift of God, gives rich rewards that grow in value and continues in eternal life. His servants are allowed into Christ's Kingdom for 1000 years and then brought into the glorious New Jerusalem to be blessed forever.

**Summary of Romans 6.** Paul tells Christians they must seek to live without sin. This is sanctification which follows salvation. Sanctification means to be set apart from sin and to live in holiness. Some believers may have suggested that since sin caused God's grace to abound, maybe they could continue to practice sin in order for God's grace to super-abound (5:20; 6:1). Paul soundly refuted such logic and showed the absurdity of such reasoning. At salvation we died to sin so it would be inappropriate for us to continue to live in sin (6:2). We should KNOW that our baptism showed that we died to sin and were alive to righteousness with Christ (6:3). Separation from sin (sanctification) makes it possible for us to walk "in newness of life" (6:4). We should KNOW that our old unregenerate man was crucified with Christ and our sin nature was rendered powerless when we died with Christ (6:6). Finally, we must certainly KNOW that we were raised with Christ to a new life in His resurrection (6:9). Hence, we are to RECKON (count on, consider) ourselves to be dead to the sin nature and alive to God (6:11). This is to be done whenever we are tempted to sin. To make this effective so we do not sin, we must YIELD the members of our bodies as instruments (or, weapons) for righteousness to God (6:13-14) in His war against sin. When we yield to God, He will give us victory over our sins.

When Paul said that believers are not under Law, but under grace, some took this to mean that they did not have to follow the Law in all its moral precepts, but they could sin whenever it was convenient and God's grace would remove their guilt (6:14-15). Paul proved that any sin was forbidden because we had forsaken sin as our master when we chose Christ to be our Master. He died to save us from our sins so we could walk in righteousness. If we allow sin in our lives with no concern about it, we show that sin is still our master (6:16). Nevertheless, Paul was certain that the believers in Rome were the servants of righteousness and would live holy lives (6:17-19). Furthermore, they would not produce the fruit of shame unto death, but the fruit of holiness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ (6:20-23). Could Paul say that we are servants of righteousness striving to obey all of God's commands? Think about this. If we are slaves to sin, it shows one of two things. One, we did not know how to overcome sin because we were not trained adequately after we were saved. Two, we did not receive Christ into our life, so we never became a child of God to have the power of Christ to help us.

True believers must remember that they died with Christ to sin and trusted in Him for the power to overcome their sins. If they sin, and we all do, they must repent and confess their sin immediately to maintain their power over sin. Christians do not need to be slaves of sin, if they follow this counsel.