

Romans 6

At the end of chapter five Paul states that the effect of God's law upon sinners is to antagonize them and stir them up to sin even more, but however great a sinner one becomes, the grace of God in the gospel is sufficient to save the vilest offender who truly believes.

This truth gave rise to a strong objection to the gospel, doesn't this free grace willingness to forgive sins, without any payment by good works on our part, encourage sinners to go on living a sinful life now that they have become Christians?

If as chapter five says; more sin – more grace, then let us sin all the more to give God the opportunity to display His abundant grace.

1 Paul states the objection in the form of a question. "Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase"? The objection is always brought up by those who hold that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is not enough, we must add some good works, our religious devotions and practices, and or our submission to the authority of a church or sect to which we must belong. They maintain that if salvation is given to sinners as a free gift entirely, they will abuse the grace of God by continuing in willful sin.

2 Paul's answer to the question is an emphatic No Way! What is suggested is a moral impossibility. We died to sin – our relation to sin has undergone a radical change. We are not what we were. A death has occurred! Our own! We simply cannot live in sin any longer.

3 Paul explains when and how we died to sin. Something we really need to know. All true believers have been baptized by the Holy Spirit into Christ and are henceforth spoken of as 'in Christ'.

This is illustrated by such terms as our being part of the spiritual body, the church of which Christ is the Head.

John 15, we are like branches grafted into The True Vine.

"Baptized into His death". We share in His death. His death deals with our sin.

4 That is why in the symbolic act of baptism in water we are buried, immersed, because we bury dead people!

We are also raised, because in Christ we have been raised from our death to sin, to live with Him a new life.

5 Emphasizes that our union with Christ in His death will lead to our spiritual resurrection to a new life with Him.

6-7 Answers the question, who actually died?

'Old self' The person I was previously; a sinner, guilty and condemned.

'The body of sin' inoperative! The body as the vehicle for sin, in a fallen state under sin's control.

Through our crucifixion with Christ, old self is dead, therefore the former alliance with sin no longer exists; we are free!

8 It also follows that New Self is alive.

9-11 Since our Lord's resurrection to immortality, that is, not subject to death, even so the New Self possesses eternal life. New Self cannot die spiritually therefore cannot revert to become again Old Self. Union with Christ is once for all, indestructible, non repeatable!

12-13 Sin is not dead and will throughout our lifetime strive to reassert authority over us and use us to express evil desires. We are to assert our freedom from sin and resist temptation. Rather than allow sin to use our bodies, we are to devote our faculties in the cause of righteousness.

14 Sin no longer has rights over us.

We are not under law; weak, powerless, condemned.

We are now under grace; right with God, the new self, free from sin's mastery.

15 Paul puts the objection to the gospel in another question. Are we now free to sin without guilt because we are not under law but under grace? No Way!

16-18 Indeed the evidence that I am a true Christian is seen in the Master I consistently choose to obey.

If I consistently choose to obey sin I am still a slave to sin, which leads to death and judgment.

If I choose to obey God this leads to righteousness and eternal life. You cannot serve two masters.

The evidence is further seen in our obedience to God's word.

19 There are two different paths. One in which we engage willingly in sin and degenerate more and more, or one in which we progress in righteousness and holiness.

20-21 We are now naturally ashamed of our former lives under sin, why would we want to indulge again?

22-23 Now we are free from sin's mastery, slaves to God, growing in holiness and reaping eternal life.

There are only two kinds of people.

Slaves to sin who receive the wages of sin, the Second Death.

Those who by faith have received God's free gift, eternal life in Christ.

