

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

INTRODUCTION

A. Outline of Romans

1. Introduction (1:1-17)
2. The need for God's righteousness (1:18-3:20)
3. Justification: the position of righteousness from God (3:21-5:21)
4. Sanctification: from position to practice (6:1-8:39)
 - a. Live the way God sees you (6:1-14)

B. The result of justification

1. A Christian is judicially declared righteous by God.
2. A Christian is called to live what he believes in cooperation with the leading and convicting of the Holy Spirit. The process is called sanctification.
3. Paul moves from the believer's new position to his new practice in chapters 6 - 8.

ROMANS 6:1-14, LIVE THE WAY GOD SEES YOU

A. A Christian is to live out the new life in Christ (1-4)

1. Paul asks and answers a question concerning behavior under grace (1-2a), *What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means!*
 - a. The rhetorical question is raised by Paul based on his statement in Romans 5:20-21, *Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*
 - 1) The coming of the Law increased sin resulting in grace increasing more.
 - 2) If that is the case, shouldn't Christians sin intentionally so grace would increase?
 - a) The philosopher Voltaire declared, *God will forgive; that is his business.*
 - b) W. H. Auden, *I like committing crimes. God likes forgiving them. Really the world is admirably arranged.*
 - b. Paul's question probably was not a rebuttal of others' opinions but a clear introduction to his new emphasis on the responsibility of Christians to live what they believe.
 - 1) Yet, there could have been a strong resentment to Paul's undermining the Law as a deterrent to sin.
 - 2) Douglas Moo, *If the law does not have the authority to quell sin, how can grace do it? Will not the "reign of grace" simply encourage sinning without the law to curb it? . . . While, therefore, the objection was one that Paul must have heard from opponents of the gospel, he himself raises it here in order to show Christians that the gospel of grace, properly interpreted, leads not to licentiousness but to righteousness (now understood as godly living).*
 - c. Paul responded in the strongest terms to his question, no way!
 - 1) Note Paul's comment in Romans 3:8, *And why not do evil that good may come?—as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just.*
 - 2) William Barclay, *How despicable it would be for a son or a daughter to consider himself or herself free to sin, because he or she knew that a father or a mother would forgive.*
 - 3) John Witmer, *In no way is the abundance of God's grace designed to encourage sin.*
2. Paul gives the reason why he adamantly denies why Christians should not sin in order to gain more grace (2b-3), *How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?*
 - a. Paul asks how a person who died to sin can still live in sin.
 - 1) *Died to sin* carries the meaning of *died to the power of sin.*
 - 2) Douglas Moo, *It is better, then, to view the separation as a separation from the "rule" or "realm" of sin, sin being personified, as throughout this chapter, as a power that rules over the person outside Christ.*
 - 3) A Christian is no longer helplessly under the control of sin but is under the control of the resurrected Christ.
 - 4) Romans 6:11, *So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.*
 - 5) Romans 7:6, *But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.*

- b. Paul declares that this *death to sin* takes place at baptism.
 - 1) Baptism can mean spiritual baptism or water baptism. In the context, Paul is probably referring to water baptism but not because it is salvific but because as John Stott says, *The essential point Paul is making is that being a Christian involves a personal, vital identification with Jesus Christ, and that this union with him is dramatically set forth in our baptism.*
 - 2) Douglas Moo, *Baptism . . . functions as shorthand for the conversion experience as a whole...baptism is introduced not to explain how we were buried with Christ but to demonstrate that we were buried with Christ.*
 - 3) We are joined to Christ at conversion when we place faith in Christ alone.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 12:13, *For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.*
 - b. Galatians 3:27, *For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*
 - 4) The emphasis must be that *death to sin* demands an acknowledgment that a change of commitment takes place from sin to life in Christ.
- c. What Paul means by living in sin.
 - 1) Douglas Moo sets two possibilities, (1) *“We Christians should realize that we must not live in sin” (a “moral” appeal); or (2) “We Christians are no longer able to live in sin” (a “theological” assertion). In other words, is “living in sin” a possibility to be avoided, or an impossibility to be recognized?*
 - 2) I believe it is best to understand Paul’s meaning that *living in sin* is a possibility to be avoided.
 - 3) True we are no longer under the lordship of sin but we do have the choice to sin, note Romans 6:11-14, *So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as for righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.*
 - 4) Douglas Moo, *“Living in sin” is best taken as describing a “lifestyle” of sin—a habitual practice of sin, such that one’s life could be said to be characterized by that sin rather than by the righteousness God requires.*
3. Paul concludes his position that believers must walk a new life because of being tied to the death of Christ (4), ***We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.***
 - a. *therefore*
 - 1) Paul looks back to verse three and joins *baptized into his death* to *buried with him*.
 - 2) The importance of each phrase requires further study.
 - b. *baptized into his death*
 - 1) This is Paul’s position that a believer identifies with Jesus’ death as if it were his own.
 - 2) Jesus did not die for His sins but for the sins of others.
 - 3) His death is a declaration of release from one’s attachment to sin and union with Christ.
 - 4) C. E. B. Cranfield, *On God’s side, it is the sign and pledge that the benefits of Christ’s death for all men really do apply to this individual in particular, while, on man’s side, it is the outward ratification (we are thinking of course of adult baptism here) of the human decision of faith, of the response already begun to what God has done in Christ.*
 - 5) Douglas Moo expresses the concept of union between Christ and those who have come to Him by faith,, note Galatians 3:27, *For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*
 - c. *buried with Him*
 - 1) If we have died with Christ then we have been buried with Him.
 - 2) Douglas Moo, *...this burial not only marks the end of the old life but is also part of the transition to a new life, in which the believer is now called to walk.*

- d. *in order that*
- 1) Paul gives the result of this section, *newness of life*.
 - a) The purpose of being buried with Christ is that resurrection will bring newness of life. When a person identifies with Christ, he is not just resuscitated but raised to a new life with no ties to the former life of son.
 - b) Christians are part of Jesus' resurrection from conversion and are empowered to walk in *newness of life*.
 - c) Douglas Moo, *Our dying, being buried, and being resurrected with Christ are experiences that transfer us from the old age to the new. But the transition from old age to new, while applied to individuals at their conversion, has been accomplished through the redemptive work of Christ on Good Friday and Easter.*
- e. The role of water baptism
- 1) It is not salvific and is not mentioned by Paul after chapter 6 of Romans.
 - 2) Yet, it is emphasized in chapter 6, and well noted by Douglas Moo, *Just as faith is always assumed to lead to baptism, so baptism always assumes faith for its validity.*
- f. The key phrases discussed in verses 3-4 capture the truth of the Gospel.
- 1) 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, *For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,*
 - 2) Douglas Moo, *Christians, then, are both empowered and summoned to live a new kind of life by virtue of their participation in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.*
 - 3) James Stewart, *Only those who through Christ have entered into a vital relationship to God are really "alive." . . . But what Paul now saw with piercing clearness was that this life into possession of which souls entered by conversion was nothing else than the life of Christ Himself. He shared His very being with them.*

B. A Christian is dead to sin and alive to God (5-11)

1. Baptism depicts not only unity in Christ's death but unity in Christ's resurrection (5-7)

- a. Unity in death with Christ guarantees unity in resurrection (5), ***For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.***
- 1) *For* looks back and indicates confirmation of the previous verse.
 - 2) *if*
 - a) It indicates a first class conditional clause which if the first part is true, the second part is true.
 - b) The first part is true, so *if* may be translated since.
 - 3) Some believe Paul is speaking of future resurrection of one's body instead of resurrection to a new life.
 - a) Thomas Constable, *Our union with Christ in His death and resurrection is the basis for our future resurrection.*
 - b) Ephesians 2:6, *and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,*
 - 4) Others believe it is an emphasis on the moral life of a believer.
 - a) C. E. B. Cranfield, *The verse as a whole may then be given an interpretation which perfectly suits the context (see on vv. 4 and 6): 'For if (in baptism) we have become conformed to His death, we are certainly also to be conformed (in our moral life) to His resurrection.'*
 - b) 2 Corinthians 4:10, *always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.*
 - 5) *a death like his*
 - a) I believe this statement gives meaning to Paul's statement concerning resurrection.
 - b) It appears that Paul has both points in view.
 - 1] The view toward resurrection of the physical body emphasizes the hope and certainty of full conformity, glorification, 2 Corinthians 4:14, *knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence.*
 - 2] The emphasis on the present emphasizes the process of sanctification which is progressive conformity to the resurrection life of Christ, 2 Corinthians 4:10, *always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.*

- 6) Warren Wiersbe, *Too many Christians are “betweeners”*: they live between Egypt and Canaan, saved but never satisfied; or they live between Good Friday and Easter, believing in the Cross but not entering into the power and glory of the Resurrection. Romans 6:5 indicates that our union with Christ assures our future resurrection should we die. But Romans 6:4 teaches that we share His resurrection power today.
- b. A Christian’s sin nature was crucified with Christ in order to make that old nature powerless (6), ***We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.***
- 1) It appears that Paul is emphasizing in verses 6-7 the meaning of the believer’s death with Christ in verses 4a and 5a.
 - 2) The *old self* is the controlling force before justification.
 - a) The word in Greek for *old self* is *man*.
 - b) C. E. B. Cranfield, *It is the whole man, not merely a part of him, that comes under God’s condemnation, and that died in God’s sight in Christ’s death.*
 - c) John Stott, . . . *what was crucified with Christ was not a part of me called my old nature, but the whole of me as I was before I was converted.*
 - d) Colossians 3:9, *Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices*
 - e) 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.*
 - 3) That *old self* has no control unless the new person in Christ makes wrong choices.
 - a) Douglas Moo, . . . *the “old man” is what we were “in Adam”—the “man” of the old age, who lives under the tyranny of sin and death. . . What we were ‘in Adam’ is no more; but, until heaven, the temptation to live in Adam always remains.*
 - b) Ephesians 4:22, *to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.*
 - 4) My *old self* before justification can’t control me but I still have a sinful human nature.
 - a) Thomas Constable, *The New Testament presents the Christian not as a person with two natures warring within him or her. It presents the Christian as a person with one sinful nature (the flesh) that is in conflict with the indwelling Holy Spirit (cf. Gal. 5:16–23). It also speaks of the Christian as struggling with the decision to live as the new man that he or she now is. Our alternative is to live as the old man who we were but are no longer (cf. Rom. 7:13–24).*
 - b) C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Christian has still to fulfil on the moral level, by daily dying to sin, the death which in God’s merciful decision and in the sacrament of baptism he has already died.*
- c. Slavery to sin has been broken for those who died with Christ (7), ***For one who has died has been set free from sin.***
- 1) *one who has died* is literally translated, *has been justified or declared righteous.*
 - 2) John Witmer, *Sin no longer has the legal right to force its mastery and control on a believer, for he has died with Christ.*
 - 3) John Stott, *The only way to be justified from sin is that the wages of sin be paid, either by the sinner or by the God-appointed substitute... Our death and resurrection with Christ render it inconceivable that we should go back. It is in this sense that our sinful self has been deprived of power and we have been set free.*
2. Baptism confirms that having died with Christ results in life in Christ (8-11)
- a. Death with Christ assures life with Christ (8), ***Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.***
- 1) Again, Paul introduces a section with a first class conditional clause, a condition considered true.
 - 2) *if* may be translated *since*.
 - 3) The condition states that since Christians have died with Christ, they will also live with Him.

- 4) Paul inserts *we believe* as a strengthening of the clause. Our life with Christ is core truth of the Gospel.
 - 5) *we will also live with Him.*
 - a) The force is present but the thought of eternal life should be considered as noted in verse 5.
 - b) Douglas Moo, *...this future life of resurrection casts its shadow into the believer's present experience, and it is clear from the sequel that Paul wants us to see the present implications of this promise of future resurrection life.*
- b. Paul gives facts concerning Jesus' death and resurrection (9-10), ***We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.***
- 1) He was raised from the dead and will never die again.
 - a) Acts 13:34, *And as for the fact that he raised him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, he has spoken in this way, 'I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David.'*
 - b) Revelation 1:18, *and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.*
 - c) Jesus is the *first fruits* of those who rise 1 Corinthians 15:23, *But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.*
 - 2) He will never die again because He is not under the control of death.
 - a) Romans 5:14, *Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.*
 - b) Romans 5:17, *For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.*
 - 3) His death resulted in death to sin for all time.
 - a) 1 Peter 3:18, *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit,*
 - b) Hebrews 7:27, *He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.*
 - 4) He lives to God
 - a) Note Galatians 2:20b, *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.*
 - b) A Christian lives to God even as does Christ due to His death, burial and resurrection which Paul emphasizes in verse 11.
- c. Christians are to consider themselves like Jesus, dead to sin and alive to God in Christ (11), ***So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.***
- 1) Christians are to *consider* or *keep on checking the evidence* concerning death to sin and alive to God.
 - 2) Colossians 2:12-13, *having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses,*
 - 3) Thomas Constable, *The verb is a present imperative in the Greek text indicating that we should definitely and constantly view ourselves this way.*
 - 4) John Stott, *Once we grasp this, that our old life has ended, with the score settled, the debt paid and the law satisfied, we shall want to have nothing more to do with it.*
 - 5) Our position in Christ is not based on faith but fact. Faith is the means of access to the facts of our redemption which will last forever.

- C. A Christian is commanded to be controlled by grace not law (12-14)
1. Do not allow sin to control your body for the sake of unrighteousness (12-13a), ***Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness,***
 - a. Paul strongly expressed the important principle that Christians are dead to sin and alive to God in 6:5-11.
 - b. *Therefore* in verse 12 gives a conclusion that Christians are not to let sin take control again.
 - 1) *reign*
 - a) The word in Greek is the same word for *king*.
 - b) Paul warns that sin is not to be king of a Christian's life since we have died to sin's rule.
 - c) John Witmer, *When sin reigns in people's lives and bodies, they obey its evil desires.*
 - d) Thomas Constable, *Since believers know that we are no longer subject to sin's domination, and since we believe that is true, we should not let sin reign in our bodies (selves) any longer. Sin is no longer our master so we should stop carrying out its orders.*
 - 2) *mortal body*
 - a) Sin is manifested through physical actions.
 - b) Romans 7:5, *For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death.*
 - c) John Witmer, *The Greek here stresses that the body is mortal or dying. Perhaps this suggests the foolishness of giving in to the desires of a body that is transitory and decaying. To give in to a dying master is strange indeed.*
 - c. Paul commands Christians to reject sin which is an instrument of unrighteousness.
 - 1) Psalm 119:133, *Keep steady my steps according to your promise, and let no iniquity get dominion over me.*
 - 2) Charles Swindoll, *Is the Holy Spirit being allowed to transform your life? There are only two possible answers: yes or no. If your answer is no, there are two possible reasons. Either you do not have the Spirit within you (i.e., you're not a Christian), or He is there but you prefer to live life on your own.*
 - 3) Douglas Moo, *In union with Christ we have been made dead to sin and alive to God; it remains for us to appropriate (v. 11) and apply (vv. 12-13) what God has done for us.*
 2. Present yourself to God as instruments of righteousness (13b), ***but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.***
 - a. In 13a, Paul gave a negative command and now he gives a positive command, *present yourselves to God.*
 - b. Paul reminds Christians that their new condition is not death but life.
 - 1) John 5:24, *Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.*
 - 2) Grant Osborne, *We have been "brought from death to life," which means we have transferred from the realm of sin into the realm of righteousness. Our realm henceforth is the kingdom of light, and we serve the good rather than the wicked.*
 - c. Paul reminds Christians that their new condition is the pursuit of righteousness not unrighteousness.
 - 1) Romans 12:1, *I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.*
 - 2) Paul uses the word *righteousness* here for the first time since Romans 5:21. In that verse he was speaking positional righteousness (justification), here he is speaking of practical righteousness (sanctification).
 - 3) Grant Osborne, *Too many people in our churches give the Lord lip service while largely living for themselves and their earthly pleasures. They are serving the wrong master and inadvertently using their resources or "instruments" for the wrong things. That is a great and tragic mistake. A key part of the ministry of every church should be not just winning the lost but waking up the sleeping saints who are wasting their lives on the wrong things.*
 3. Remember that you are not under law but under grace (14), ***For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.***
 - a. Paul concludes that sin will not have dominion over a Christian because we are not under law but grace.
 1. The purpose of the law was not to justify but to condemn, Romans 3:20, *For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.*
 2. We can't be condemned by the Law because we live under grace.
 3. 1 Corinthians 15:56, *The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.*

- b. *No dominion* does not mean no sin.
 - 1. A Christian is still responsible for making right choices.
 - 2. Sanctification is not a process whereby sin is excluded but where righteousness is pursued.
 - 3. Douglas Moo, *...we can live a holy life only as we appropriate the benefits of our union with Christ.*
 - 4. Jeremiah Burroughs (17th C. Puritan), *...from him [Christ] as from a fountain, sanctification flows into the souls of the Saints: their sanctification comes not so much from their struggling, and endeavors, and vows, and resolutions, as it comes flowing to them from their union with him.*

CONCLUSION

- A. Our life with Christ is core truth of the Gospel.
- B. Our position in Christ is not based on faith but fact. Faith is the means of access to the facts of our redemption which will last forever.
- C. Sanctification is not a process whereby sin is excluded but where righteousness is pursued.