

Rom. 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

Rom. 6:2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

These thoughts are a continuation of the context in the previous chapter. Paul is basically saying, “Based on what we now know, should we continue to practice sin in order to allow grace to be shown in abundance?”

Calvin made some statements that I like in answer to this question.

“God forbid that the grace of God would nourish our vices.”

“Medicine is not a feeder of the disease which it destroys.”

It’s warped logic to say that we need to sin in order to reveal the abundance of God’s grace. God’s grace is a “divine influence on the heart.” A divine influence on the heart leads one away from sin—not to sin more.

“God forbid” = a very emphatic NO.

As a new creation in Christ, the believer is dead to sin. He now has the Holy Spirit residing in him. That Holy Spirit does not encourage you to sin; He empowers you to overcome sin.

1Corinthians 6:19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you...

1Corinthians 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Rom. 6:3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

Rom. 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Paul is stating that baptism is a picture of our choosing to identify with Christ in His death and resurrection. Christ died as the sin-bearer and was raised from the dead by the Father to new life. When we are baptized, we are symbolically burying our sin nature and choosing to walk in newness of life in obedience to God. In Christ we become a new creation.

2Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Rom. 6:5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

Rom. 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Rom. 6:7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

“planted together” = buried as one—Greek: closely united to

“destroyed” = rendered useless, make of no effect, abolished

Our position and inheritance is in Christ. He exemplifies what is true for the believer. “Our old man” is a reference to the sinful man we were before salvation. Through faith in Jesus we, in essence, crucify / kill that *old man*.

Thought from Chuck Smith: “Crucifixion is a slow and torturous death; the flesh doesn’t die easily.

As a new creature with new life in Christ, represented by His resurrection, we are no longer servants to sin. Our new position in Christ empowers us through the Spirit to have the victory over sin in our lives. We have been freed from sin and its power over us.

John 8:34-36 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. ***If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.***

Galatians 5:24 And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

Galatians 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

“freed” = declared just or innocent, righteous (justified—just as if I had never sinned)

Rom. 6:8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

Rom. 6:9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

Again, Paul uses logic to make his argument. If you accept that you have died with Christ, it follows that we shall also live with Christ. Christ was raised from the dead never to die again; death has no power over Him. That brings up a new argument for the security of the believer as far as I am concerned. If we are in Christ and death no longer has power over Him, it no longer has power over me.

Rom. 6:10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

“died unto sin once” - I think this phrase is significant especially to the Jewish believer. The sacrificial system looking forward to Jesus required continual sacrifices to maintain right standing with God. Jesus’ sacrifice of Himself was sufficient for all peoples of all times and will never have to be repeated.

“he liveth unto God” – That seems a strange statement to make about Jesus. He always lived in obedience to and in fellowship with God the Father. The emphasis I think is on the fact that He chose to become my / our sin on the cross, and at that time He was forsaken by the Father; He lost fellowship with the Father for the first and only time ever in His existence.

Matthew 27:46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

As a man, Jesus had to deal with temptation just as we as believers do. The difference is that He always lived through the empowerment of the Spirit—just as we are supposed to do.

Hebrews 2:18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

Hebrews 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Rom. 6:11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

“reckon” = conclude, reason, think

We *reckon* ourselves dead to sin when we respond to sin as a dead man would. On the other hand, if we *reckon* ourselves “alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord,” we should live as Jesus would want us to live. In fact, because we are His temple, His dwelling place, we should live just as He would live—make the choices He would make, do the things He would do, say the things He would say, think the thoughts He would think, etc.

Paul expressed this thought to the Galatians as follows:

Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Rom. 6:12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

“mortal body” = the physical body subject to physical death

Paul continues to pound home his point. As believers who have been justified before God with new life in Christ, we are no longer slaves to sin; and we should not give in to the lusts of sin. The Greek for *lusts* is quite enlightening: “a longing (especially for what is forbidden).”

I was listening to John Piper recently, and he presents this verse as describing our bodies as a throne that sin desires to possess. It is our choice as to allowing sin to get victory in our life. He also makes the good point that our desires—i.e., food, drink, sex, etc.—aren't inherently bad. They become evil when we yield to their influence to produce unrighteousness in our life.

Rom. 6:13 Neither yield ye your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God.

We are to be yielded to God as instruments of righteousness. This is a choice on our part. Frankly, the choices we make indicate to whom we are submitting as Lord in our life. One of the definitions in Webster for *yield* stood out to me: "to make over to one who has a claim or right." Sin no longer *reigns* (cf verses 6 & 9) or has authority over us. Through the empowerment of the Spirit we can overcome sin. If we *yield* to sin we are granting it a position of authority it no longer possesses.

I thought it was interesting that the Greek for *instruments* indicates an offensive weapon—not a defensive weapon. An offensive weapon is used to attack and accomplish the objective of the one possessing it. We are to use our bodies offensively for the cause of righteousness, to accomplish the purposes of God.

Rom. 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

William MacDonald (Believer's Bible Commentary) made a statement that I like in reference to this thought: "The law tells you what to do, but doesn't give you the power to do it. God's grace enables you to live as an overcomer."

Another quote I have in some personal notes is attributed to *Denney* – "It is not restraint, but inspiration that liberates from sin; not Mt. Sinai, but Mt. Calvary which makes saints."

What does it mean to be "under the law?" It means that you are living under a curse.

Nehemiah 10:29 They clave to their brethren, their nobles, and entered into a **curse**, and into an oath, to walk in God's law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the LORD our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes;

Daniel 9:11 Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore **the curse** is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him.

Galatians 3:10 & 13 For **as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse**: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them....Christ hath redeemed us from **the curse of**

the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree...

That curse is spelled out specifically for the people of Israel in Leviticus 26 and in Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy 11:26-28 Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God....

The commandments of God = the law.

What does it mean to be “under grace?” It means to be under divine influence, to have the empowerment and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Webster defines the grace of God as:

(Theol.) The divine favor toward man; the mercy of God, as distinguished from His justice; also, any benefits His mercy imparts; divine love or pardon; a state of acceptance with God; enjoyment of the divine favor.

Paul adds to the answer in his letter to the Corinthians.

*2Corinthians 9:8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, **always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work....***

And to the Ephesians:

*Ephesians 1:6-7 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us **accepted in the beloved.** In whom we have **redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins,** according to the riches of his grace...*

*Ephesians 2:7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace **in his kindness toward us** through Christ Jesus.*

And to the Thessalonians:

*2Thessalonians 2:16 Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us **everlasting consolation and good hope** through grace....*

Spurgeon gives food for thought on this section: “God has so changed your nature by His grace that when you sin, you shall be like a fish on dry land; you shall be out of your element and long to get into a right state again.”

Rom. 6:15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

Paul doesn't let up; he continues to hammer home his point. Being under grace does not give us a license to sin! The grace of God doesn't lead us to sin; it leads us to live godly lives.

Titus 2:11-12 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world...

Rom. 6:16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

I am reminded of the old saying, "Actions speak louder than words." Your actions reveal whom you consider to be your master. If you yield to sin, your master is sin; if you yield to obedience in righteousness, your master is God. Choosing sin as your master results in death; choosing God as your master results in eternal life.

James 1:15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

1John 2:17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

Rom. 6:17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

Rom. 6:18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

Paul gives thanks to God that the church at Rome had chosen to reject sin as their master and to become servants of righteousness. When this body of believers was taught the truth of the gospel, they responded from the heart, and their actions, their way of life proved it. This is really the truth that is at the heart of the epistle of James.

*James 2:17-22 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that **faith without works is dead**? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and **by works was faith made perfect**?*

A true servant of God will become a servant of righteousness. John Piper stated it this way: "Justification by faith does not produce Christians who are cavalier about sin. It makes us dead set against sin in our own lives."

Rom. 6:19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

“after the manner of men” – in a way that is easy to understand
Paul is using the language of slave and master to explain the truth; truth that is illustrated by things that are a normal part of our life is sometimes easier to understand.

“infirmity” = weakness, frailty, **feebleness of mind or body**

Having served sin for so long, it takes time to develop spiritual maturity and understanding. Regarding the mind, Paul doesn’t want to speak assuming understanding they did not possess. He wants to present the truth clearly. Regarding the body, Paul knows that a past lifestyle that has catered to the flesh causes great struggle in the life of the believer. He addresses that very struggle in the next chapter.

“as.....even so” = a comparison of time past to the present

“uncleanness” = impurity (physically or morally)

“iniquity” = lawlessness, transgression of law, wickedness

Paul is stating that in the past, before accepting Jesus as Savior, these people had used their bodies in acts of impurity and wickedness that just led them into greater sin; they had yielded to sin as the master in their life. Paul is encouraging them to now make their bodies “servants to righteousness unto holiness.” He will expand on this thought in chapter 12.

Rom. 6:20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

This verse and verse 18 are like opposite sides of the same coin.

Freedom from sin = servant of righteousness

Servant of sin = free from righteousness

Rom. 6:21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

Rom. 6:22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

Sinners aren’t concerned with doing what is right; they are basically concerned with gratifying the flesh. Shame is the result of realizing how we have acted as servants of sin. The believer has come to the point of realizing that the penalty of sin is death, and he wants no part of it. He has chosen to become a servant of God and be set free from sin. His life now reflects actions that cause him no shame. He is producing “fruit unto holiness” and can look forward to “everlasting life.”

What is “fruit unto holiness?”

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance....

Ephesians 5:9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

Hebrews 13:15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

This is the process of sanctification—becoming more like Jesus, more holy. This is a work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.

Rom. 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

When we speak of sin resulting in death, it is more than just the death of the physical body; it includes the separation of your being from the presence of God forever.

Eternal life is not just living forever; it's living forever in the presence of God and experiencing all that is holy and righteous that is associated with His presence.

There are only two options—death and life.

Death is what you earn by yielding to sin as your master.

Eternal life can only be attained by accepting God's gift that was made possible through Jesus Christ our Lord; you can't earn it.

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Thought from Chuck Smith: "Death, sin and the flesh are always related. Spirit, righteousness and life are always related. This is God's ordained order."

Again, I thought John Piper expressed it well. (My paraphrasing)

Sin and God = slavemasters

Sin pays wages that are deserved—earned.

God gives a gift that is undeserved—grace/mercy.

Wages deplete life (your time, effort, etc.) and have no eternal benefit. God's gift will allow us to experience the fullness of His love and blessing for time without end.