

Romans 6

“Dying and Rising with Christ”

This chapter addresses the power of sin in your life. Those of us old enough can remember the comedian Flip Wilson from the '70's, who's character Geraldine would proclaim, “The devil made me do it! The devil made me buy this dress!” And yet, Paul will exhort the church in Rome to consider themselves dead to sin and alive to God through Christ. How much sway does sin have in our lives?

Although “the devil made me buy this dress” is not found in this chapter, Romans 6 does include many other phrases which will sound familiar to us.

Paul's argument in chapter 6 springs from the great saying found at the end of chapter 5: “...but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more...”

Read Romans 6: 1-4

1. If God's grace is so wonderful, should we keep on sinning so we can keep on being forgiven? Paul's answer: By no means!
2. In v. 2 Paul states that we have died to sin. And yet, we still struggle with sin. So, in what sense is sin “dead” in us, and in what sense is it “still alive”?
3. Those of us who have been baptized “have been baptized into his death.” Thus, Christ's death remains at the focal point of our faith, our new life.
4. Symbolism of baptism as a burial - Baptists, and other who practice baptism by immersion (dunking) are particular fond of this analogy. Baptism was known in the 1st Century as an adult rite. Infant baptism developed with the rise of the Christian family, and as a substitute for circumcision.
5. “Walk in newness of life” - another image of our lives after baptism (equally applicable to infant baptism or immersion)

Read Romans 6: 5-11

1. Both Christ's death, and his resurrection, are to play a role in our lives, as well. We are united with Christ in each of these events. Thus, we share in both his death and his resurrection.
2. Our old self was crucified with him
3. So that we might no longer be enslaved to sin
4. If we have died with Christ, we will also live with him
5. As death no longer has dominion over Christ, we must consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God.
What does it mean to you to be “dead to sin”?

Three Great Permanent Truths:

- 1) Knowing that God wants to forgive us is not an excuse to keep on sinning.
- 2) Becoming a Christian is a commitment to a different way of life (dying to an old life)
- 3) This ethical change is not possible without a union with Christ - we now experience a real identification with Christ - we are now “in Christ.”

And now comes the practical demand -

Christianity is not just an emotional experience - it is meant to become a way of life. Emotions must be translated into actions (an inner change which results in outward changes)

Read Romans 6: 12-14

1. In this world, there is an eternal battle between sin and God - choose your side. Don't give in to sin and let it have the upper hand.

2. The response to sin - present yourself to God.
3. We are tempted to give up, or give in, saying, "Sin is too powerful for me. I am bound to fail." We are now under grace, not law, so instead of seeing God as a stern judge, we see God as the lover of our souls. God is on our side. God wants us to win the battle.

"We do not fear what God will do to us, but are inspired by what God has done for us."

Read Romans 6: 15-19

1. You are a slave of whoever you obey
2. We have been set free from sin - we've become "slaves of righteousness"
3. Speaking in human terms - Paul apologizes for even comparing the Christian life to any kind of slavery.
4. Just as a slave was always his master's possession, so Paul wants Christ's followers to know that they are always Christ's possession.

Read Romans 6: 20-23

1. The end result of sin is death.
2. Now, by being enslaved to God, we get sanctification and eternal life.
3. For the wages of sin is death... this word for wages is what one has earned (a soldier's pay). It is what is due you, for your work. The word for free gift is the word donation. It is totally unearned, but given to you (like a bonus). It was given out of kindness and grace.

Thus, Paul is saying,

"If we got the pay we had earned, it would be death; but, out of his grace, God has given us life."