Romans 6:1

October 17, 2010 · AM · https://letgodbetrue.com/sermons/2010/romans-6-1/

Simple Outline:

6:1-13 Identity with Jesus Christ, primarily by baptism, should bring death to sin and a life of holiness.

6:14-23 The gospel of grace has delivered us from sin's bondage to be servants of God and Jesus Christ

Introduction:

1. This chapter begins the second major section of the epistle with an emphasis on practical application.
2. We may easily see the following chapter divisions in the book of Romans … 1-5, 6-8, 9-11, 12-16.
    1. Paul proved man condemned under sin and taught God's gracious salvation in Jesus Christ (1-5).
    2. God's gracious salvation through Jesus Christ's death should cause us to live righteously (6-8).
    3. God is sovereign in giving eternal life and conversion, especially when it comes to Israel (9-11).
    4. Paul reserved the particular details of serving God acceptably until the end of the epistle (12-16).
3. The apostle so far has proven universal condemnation and free justification by God's grace in Christ.
4. The lesson of this chapter in Romans is practical righteousness, not eternal, legal, vital, or final.
    a. The previous chapters proved universal condemnation and legal justification by God's free grace.
    b. The theme is quickly stated as to whether saved persons should *continue to live in sin* (6:1-2).
    c. The issue here is *knowing* the intent of Christ's death and the effect of our conversion to it (6:3).
    d. The issue here is that baptized believers should have *new lives* and *no longer serve sin* (6:4-6).
    e. The issue here is *knowing* the death and resurrection of Christ and its application to us (6:9).
    f. The issue here is how we *reckon* our condition and response to salvation by Christ (6:11).
    g. The issue here is not letting sin *reign* any longer in our lives, not righteous perfection (6:12).
    h. The issue here is active *yielding* of bodies and their members to God for righteousness (6:13).
    i. The issue here is a choice of how we will live under grace – *continuing in sin or not* (6:15).
    j. The issue here is the choice of true conversion to *forsake sin and obey righteousness* (6:16-17),.
    k. The issue here is Paul's charge for these saints to *live for God as they once lived for sin* (6:19).
    l. The issue here is the different *fruit or end* from living a life in sin or one serving God (6:22).
5. The practical effect of justification by grace through faith should result in personal holiness unto God.
6. Let us reach beyond the devils and mere belief in doctrinal truth – let us strive to live like the saved.
7. It is our duty to fearfully work out the salvation that God has worked in us by grace (Phil 2:12-13).

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may *abound?*

What shall we say then?

A. Paul, as his manner in this book often was, opens the new section with a presumed question.
   1. He does this in several other places, for it is wisdom to head off queries (3:1; 4:1; 11:1).
   2. It is also an excellent form of instruction (inspired in this case) to teach interactively.
   3. This is a beautiful and powerful aspect of scripture – asking and answering for us.

B. The strictly doctrinal matter that has occupied the first five chapters could gender questions.
   1. So far Paul's argument has been of a legal nature of man's standing before the holy God.
   2. Justification is by the free grace of God in Jesus Christ (3:24), so what of our obedience?
   3. Righteousness is imputed by God without our works (4:6), so what of our obedience?
   4. Justification is by the obedience of One – Jesus Christ (5:12-19), so what of obedience?
   5. Grace has much more abounded over abounding sin (5:20-21), so what of our obedience?
   6. From what was declared in chapter five, it would be possible to be antinomian fatalists.

C. We must ask ourselves this question. *What shall we say then?* How does the truth affect us?
   1. What have we done with the knowledge of condemnation by sin and salvation by grace?
   2. What are you considering at this moment in regard to the truth of the gospel of Christ?
   3. Shall we joy in the fact we have the knowledge of the truth without the truth's virtue?
   4. Paul had already condemned the Jews for trusting in the law without keeping it (2:17-29).
   5. The spiritual and logical conclusion is that you owe Christ everything (II Cor 5:14-15).
   6. The spiritual and logical conclusion is that you owe God continual thanks (II Thess 2:13).
   7. May God save every reader from making light of grace by loving his life (Matt 22:5).

Shall we continue in sin,

A. Since God's grace in Jesus Christ for justification is so great, should we worry about sinning?
   1. Let every child of God hate the thought of *continuing* in anything but righteous living.
   2. The Christian religion is of mental toughness and self-denial (I Pet 1:13-21). Learn it!
   3. The only continuing for our lives is in the faith of the gospel (Col 1:23; Acts 14:22).

B. Paul posed an objection through a question about the application of his doctrine of grace.
   1. Two great extremes, or ditches, are at war theologically – legalism and antinomianism.
   2. Man by nature is a foolish creature that runs to extremes in thinking on most subjects.
   3. Legalism was the Jews' problem for exalting the ceremonial aspects of Moses' religion, all the while neglecting the moral law of God that condemned their lives (2:17-29).
   4. Antinomianism is the false charge against God's grace that the elect can live without law.
   5. We might consider these two extremes today – ritualism and fatalism or easy-believism.

6. Satan wins with another gospel of his own, if we leave the truth at all for either ditch.

C. Consider a legalistic response to preceding arguments for justification by grace through faith.
   1. If justification is not by the law, then why give the law or obedience any regard at all?
   2. If the law merely shows us the sinfulness of sin, then what is to guide our conduct?
   3. This evil and heretical way of thinking is condemned elsewhere (Rom 3:8; Jude 1:4).

That grace may abound.

A. Consider a fatalistic response to preceding arguments for justification by grace through faith.
   1. If justification is by grace through Jesus Christ's singular obedience, then why obey?
   2. If grace has much more abounded over sin, then why worry about whether we sin or not?
   3. We might as well go ahead and let sin have its way with us, since grace will conquer it.
   4. We might even be able to magnify grace better by giving it more sin to conquer in us.
   5. This evil and heretical way of thinking is condemned elsewhere (Rom 3:8; Jude 1:4).

B. Some who hold and teach the sovereignty of God are practical fatalists in light of godliness.
   1. Though antinomianism is usually a false accusation, there are some practical fatalists.
   2. Their preaching is as narrow about God's grace as Arminians and the Great Commission.

C. Are we at all guilty of this heresy? Rather than presumptive words, examine your lifestyle.
   1. Do we take comfort in the truth of God's sovereign grace … but live unto ourselves?
   2. Is there pride of having the truth of salvation by grace … but we live like Arminians?
   3. Do we unconsciously or subconsciously steal comfort from mere knowledge of grace?
   4. Do we conclude knowing "the truth" is evidence of eternal life, rather than holiness?
   5. Do we take false comfort in God's grace we can sin presumptuously and be forgiven?
   6. Do you presume your soul is safe in the great Day of Judgment from hearing grace?
   7. Do you presume your soul is safe in the great Day of Judgment from believing grace?

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

God forbid.

A. No way! The truth of Paul's gospel of sovereign grace does not allow for continuing in sin.
B. No way! True theology rightly understood and applied does not lead to licentiousness.
C. No way! The true grace of God teaches us a life of self-denial and godliness (Titus 2:11-15).
D. No way! It is false teachers that turn God's grace into lasciviousness that think so (Jude 1:4).
E. No way! It is false teachers that promise liberty under the guise of God's grace (II Pet 2:19).

How shall we,

A. There are restraining factors that cannot and do not allow a Christian to continue in his sins.

B. Paul wrote the beloved elect of God, true believers known for their faith, at Rome (1:6-8).
C. Believers with mutual faith in God have restraints on their lives against sinning (1:12,15-18).
D. The Lord sovereignly knows His elect, but let them depart from iniquity (II Timothy 2:19).
E. Paul forcefully introduced some argument that should be powerful indeed against sinning.

That are dead to sin.

A. In what sense are believers dead to sin? For sin is very much alive in our members (7:9,23).
B. In what sense are believers dead to sin? Is this the eternal, legal, or vital phases of salvation?
    1. The eternal phase of salvation, *election*, is God's plan to save from sin. We keep looking.
    2. The legal phase of salvation, *justification*, is Christ's payment for sin. We keep looking.
    3. The vital phase of salvation, *regeneration*, is the Spirit's power over sin. We look more.
    4. The final phase of salvation, *glorification*, is yet future freedom from the presence of sin.
C. There is a practical phase of salvation, *conversion*, in which believers have died against sin.
    1. Yet, believers are not dead to sin in any absolute way, even when greatly converted, for sin is still alive in their members and keeps them from living unto God perfectly.
    2. Paul was crucified with Christ against the world, and the world against him (Gal 6:14).
D. The context of this phrase teaches us a *figurative way* that we are dead to sin – by baptism!
    1. Though we are dead to sin legally through Jesus Christ's death, that is not the context.
    2. The context of this passage is reckoning ourselves to be dead to sin in Christ (verse 11).
    3. The context teaches figurative identification with Jesus Christ by symbolism of baptism.
    4. Yet it is Jesus Christ death for the legal payment for our sins that is the basis of baptism.

Live any longer therein.

A. The appeal to our death to sin is so powerful that Paul presumes we cannot continue in sin.
B. Though we once lived in sin, there is now an obligation that does not allow continuing in sin.
C. The time past of our lives should be sufficient for the amount of sin for each (I Peter 4:1-3).
D. An event in the life of each believer has obligated them to live unto Jesus Christ without sin.
E. This event, Baptist and Bible baptism, declares one dead to sin and committed against sin

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

Know ye not.

A. The knowledge Paul presumed of his audience answers the rhetorical question from verse 2, and he will explain the knowledge of baptism that he intends in the verses that follow here.
B. The knowledge Paul presumed of his audience is the glorious symbolism of water baptism.
    1. Do you understand water baptism's symbolism? It is something you should know well.

2. It is a shame that so many Baptists take the doctrine for granted and do not fully grasp it.
3. Do not think it a waste of time to repetitively review the nature and meaning of baptism.
4. Baptist baptism, the kind Jesus received and ordained, is an ancient landmark of our faith

That so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ.

A. All the faithful elect at Rome had been baptized, but he appeals to them as baptized believers.
B. The words used, the context of the words, and all of Scripture demands immersion in water!
   1. We are *buried* with him by immersion in a watery grave, like He was immersed in earth.
   2. We are buried *with him* by means of identification in a watery grave just like His burial.
   3. We are buried with him *into death* by means of this watery picture of burial under water.
   4. We are *planted* by baptism, which requires a seed being immersed under ground.
   5. We are planted in this *likeness* of His death, not legally, vitally, or literally in His death.
C. Baptism creates an obligation to Jesus Christ by the believer declaring the holy symbolism.
   1. Baptism clearly identifies one with Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38; 19:5 Gal 3:27; I Peter 3:21).
   2. Baptism clearly identifies one with His death (Colossians 2:12; Rom 6:4-5; I Cor 15:29).
D. Presbyterians, and other daughters of Rome, will argue and fuss to get water out of this verse.
   1. They cannot allow water baptism in this passage – the demand for immersion is obvious.
   2. Therefore, they make this some vital baptism into Jesus Christ by the Spirit (I Cor 12:13).
   3. But that text is the Spirit's baptism of an individual into a local church (I Cor 12:12-27).
   4. There is no more basis for their infant sprinkling heresy than there is for the immaculate conception of Mary, the assumption of Mary, purgatory, cardinals, or salt in the baby's mouth … along with 100 other insane inventions they have added to their baptism!
   5. The only way a Bible reader or scribe could come up with infant sprinkling is out of superstitious fear to defend the tradition of Roman Catholic theology from St. Augustine.
   6. At least Sabbatarians have the Old Testament! Rome and her daughters have nothing!

Were baptized into his death?

A. Our baptism of identification with Jesus Christ's is clearly related by immersion to His death.
B. For 2000 years, the true disciples of Jesus Christ have identified themselves with His death by being buried under water by immersion as a declaration of unity in His death.
C. Bible baptism, or immersion, declares one dead to sinful living in unity with Jesus Christ.
D. Though our burial by baptism also involves a symbolic resurrection to walk in a new life.

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.

Therefore.

A. The conclusion being drawn here is by the nature of Bible baptism to that declared in verse 3.

B. In case the Roman believers had forgotten the symbolism of baptism, Paul elaborated on it.

We are buried with him by baptism into death.

A. Bible baptism, or immersion, shows a very clear picture of death and burial. Believe it!

B. Our identification by baptism with Jesus Christ's death should involve our own death to sin.

That like as Christ was raised up from the dead.

A. Burial by baptism, or immersion, into death should also involve a resurrection to a new life.

B. Jesus was raised from His legal death to sin to a life to God's glory in heaven above.

By the glory of the Father.

A. God raised Jesus from the dead, and it was by His power to do so (I Cor 6:14; II Cor 13:4).

B. The Spirit raised Jesus from the dead according to this epistle (Rom 1:4), which is His glory.

C. God's power in such things is called His glorious power (Jn 11:40; Col 1:11; Matt 28:1-3;).

Even so we also should walk in newness of life.

A. If Jesus rose from the dead to a new life in the presence of God, we should do the same.

B. We also should rise gloriously from our lifestyle of sin to one rather of glorious holiness.

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

For if we have been planted together.

A. Paul did not assume unbaptized church members, but rather the implication or *what if* of their baptisms, of which all had partaken. Compare this use of *if* in Philippians 2:1 and I Pet 1:17.

B. Baptism is described as a *planting*, which can only be satisfied with baptism by immersion.

C. Planting, which is putting seeds in the ground, cannot be accomplished by laying a seed on pavement and sprinkling an insignificant amount of water over only a small part of it.

D. The planting, or immersion, of baptism is again like his death, requiring a burial under water.

In the likeness of his death.

A. Baptism is here described as a likeness to death, which is only satisfied with immersion.

B. If we have been properly planted like our Lord's death, there should be a resurrection as well.

We shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.

A. If we have been properly planted like Jesus, there should be a resurrection to holiness also.

B. Though we know baptism pictures bodily resurrection (I Cor 15:29), that is not the apostle's goal or intent here, where he is still dealing with the issue of sinning after conversion.

C. The issue here to grasp the future tense construction is the practical knowledge and implications of baptism, which Paul continues to address, as the next verse indicates.

D. If we properly understand and practice baptism, then our future conduct will be accordingly

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.

Knowing this.

A. Paul stressed knowledge in this section of scripture, otherwise baptism becomes a dead ritual.
   1. The action requiring and resulting in a resurrected life is baptism, from the last verse.
   2. This is where we add details to required faith and good conscience (Ac 8:37; I Pet 3:21).

B. The value of baptism in practice and profession is to know the symbolic relationship to sin.
   1. It is the answer of a good conscience (I Pet 3:21), for it understands sins were paid for.
   2. It requires a new life, for it is based on repentance for the former lifestyle (Ac 2:28; etc.).
   3. Water baptism is a figurative likeness and identification with a legal reality by Jesus.

C. It is important to know what we believe and practice, in this case the doctrine of baptism.
   1. So many keep the ordinances out of tradition rather than conviction. We must learn them.
   2. Paul made his first large argument for holiness from the correct knowledge of baptism.

D. For the theologically minded, this verse and several following are the practical phase of salvation rather than the eternal, legal, vital, or final, with an emphasis on the figurative and symbolic intent of baptism for our attitude and mindset of death to sin and life to holiness.

That our old man is crucified with him.

A. What is our *old man?* It is the sinful nature we and all our ancestors have had from birth.
   1. It is your sinful desire to do anything that God does not strictly restrain you from doing.
   2. It is your natural craving and desire and weakness for sins of all kinds known to man.
   3. It is old, for it came first, before the new man that is implanted by grace in regeneration.
   4. It is the corruption in motives, thoughts, lusts, speech, and actions that are against God.

B. But the nature and symbolism of water baptism declares that it was killed at Christ's cross.
   1. There is legal reality that our old man was nailed to the cross with Jesus Christ, so that not only our specific sins were paid for but our very sin nature was condemned also.
   2. Our vital salvation – regeneration – is not the focal point, though paid for by redemption.
   3. From this legal reality of positional righteousness, we obey through practical obedience.

C. We are to daily crucify ourselves to sin, as we declare by burial and resurrection in water, or immersion (Rom 8:13; 13:14 Luke 9:23; II Cor 5:14-17; Gal 2:20; 5:24; 6:14; Col 3:5).

That the body of sin might be destroyed.

A. There is the legal reality that the body of our sins was nailed to the cross with Jesus Christ.
B. The whole package of sin, both nature and actual sins, was condemned and washed away.
C. But there is more than legal reality of positional righteousness – there is practical obedience.
D. And though we cannot and will not live perfectly without sin, Jesus died for them as well!

That henceforth we should not serve sin.

A. Legal payment on the cross is only the motivator in this context – Paul sought obedience.
B. The resurrection of baptism, immersion requires rising, pictures a new life of righteousness.
C. The resurrection of baptism, only immersion has it, identifies a life free from sins' bondage.
D. The key, implied strongly (3-5), is how we reckon ourselves in light of Christ's work (11).
E. The specific key, stated next, is that we are dead to sin and should be no longer able to do so

7. For he that is dead is freed from sin.

For he that is dead.

A. A dead man cannot sin. This is a basic assumption that the simplest can grasp (I Peter 4:1-5).
B. The key, implied strongly (3-6), is how we reckon ourselves in light of Christ's work (11).
C. The bondage of sin cannot go beyond death, which we symbolize in baptism, immersion.
D. If you have been baptized, you have answered God with a good conscience that you will no longer sin, for He sent Jesus Christ to die for your sins and save you to live unto God.

Is freed from sin.

A. A dead man cannot sin. This is a basic assumption that the simplest can grasp (I Peter 4:1-5).
B. The bondage of sin cannot go beyond death, which we symbolize in baptism by immersion.

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

Now if we be dead with Christ.

A. We are dead with Christ by electing grace that chose us in Christ before the world began.
B. But the issue in the context is our reckoning ourselves to be dead with Christ to sin (11).
C. There is no reason to leave the obligation of water baptism, introduced already (6:3).
D. This is only the first half of the baptism equation – death; there is also a resurrection.

We believe that we shall also live with him.

A. If in baptism we identify ourselves with Christ's death, we lay claim to His resurrection also.
B. We follow His example of death in immersion; we also follow His example of resurrection.
C. The resurrection to live with Christ is not in heaven, but rather here and now on earth (6:11), for it is based on the knowledge of immersion and its symbolism for a new life in Christ.
D. Furthermore, if we have identified with His death by baptism, we also hope for resurrection.

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

Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more.

A. There is much we are to know about our practical relationship to Jesus and sin … by baptism.
B. Jesus Christ's single death for sin resulted in His resurrection; there can be no further death.
C. Jesus declared to John that though He had been dead, He was alive forevermore (Rev 1:18).

Death hath no more dominion over him.

A. Death has no more dominion over Jesus Christ, for He rose from the dead after His death.
B. If we identified ourselves with Jesus Christ by baptism, then we also reject death's dominion.

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

For in that he died, he died unto sin once.

A. Death is an event that only happens once, and Jesus died only once to put away sin for us.
B. Jesus only died once to put away sin, so there is no hindrance for living unto God forever.
C. Jesus never had to die again for sin and never will die again for sin, for it is fully paid for.
D. The implication that is coming is that we only need one death event in our lives – baptism.
E. We should be living the rest of our lives without reverting back to dead sins (I Peter 4:1-5).

But in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

A. After Jesus died for sin and rose from the dead, what does He do? He lives forever to God.
B. What should we do after baptism and because of baptism's symbolism? Live unto God!
C. The next verse is key in that it describes the nature of this section – reckoning a personal application from identifying with Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection by baptism..

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive

unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin.

A. What does it mean to *reckon?* To account, count, consider a thing to be such and such.
B. So we are to account, count, and consider ourselves to be dead for all purposes related to sin.
C. Every day of your life should involve a conscious decision that you are dead to sinful living.
D. This verse guides us contextually, for it declares we are *reckoning*, or counting, a matter.
E. The emphasis in this passage is not the legal reality, but our application of the legal reality.
F. God in Jesus Christ has made us dead to sin in several respects, but this is our reckoning.
G. While Jesus died to sin and now lives forever to God, we reckon that we should also do so.
H. Are you dead to sin and sinners? To sinful fantasies, speech, music, rebellion, moodiness, unthankfulness, bitterness, pornography, selfishness, fear, laziness, revenge, etc.?

But alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A. This is a matter we are to reckon in the figure of baptism, based on the legal reality of Christ.
B. We are to account, count, and consider ourselves to be alive for one purpose – God's glory.
C. The basis for this new life with new goals and motives is our purchased redemption by Jesus.
D. Are you alive to holiness and saints? To praise, thanksgiving, Bible reading, looking for His coming, service to others, charity, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, etc.?

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

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body.

A. What is the *therefore* here for? Salvation in Christ and baptism's symbolism obligates us, for our reckoning from His work and our profession in baptism declare us dead to sin.
B. Since Jesus died for our sins, and since we declared unity in His death by baptism, it is our solemn duty and blessed privilege to oppose and resist sin's claim in our mortal bodies.
C. As long as we are in these mortal bodies, sin will try to reign or rule over us; we must resist.
D. We do all we can prudently to avoid situations bringing temptation (Ro 13:14; II Tim 2:22).
E. The devil seeks to devour you, but make him flee by obeying God and resisting (James 4:7).

That ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

A. How do you know if sin is reigning in your mortal body? If you fall to any of its sinful lusts.
B. You can keep sin in subjection by doing all you can in Christ's power to avoid and resist sin.

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.***

Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin.

A. What is *yielding?* To give in, give up, hand over, surrender, resign, acquiesce, submit, obey.
B. What are your *members?* Primarily the parts of your body e.g. hands, feet, tongue, eyes, etc.
C. How are they *instruments of unrighteousness?* When they are used to sin against God above.
D. This is an ugly fact – your body, soul, and spirit only sin as you give in to sin's temptations.
E. Do not let body or spirit join in the world's sinful activities e.g. fornication (I Cor 6:15-20).
F. In context of this ugly fact, God's word exhorts resistance and promises blessings (Jas 1:12).
G. Paul also taught that we are to give no place to the devil, with wrath in context (Eph 4:27).

But yield yourselves unto God.

A. Our Lord Jesus ascended into heaven after His resurrection and lives unto God there (6:10).
B. What is *yielding?* To give in, give up, hand over, surrender, resign, acquiesce, submit, obey.
C. God our Father will empower and enable us to live victoriously, if we yield ourselves to Him.

As those that are alive from the dead.

A. While regeneration makes us truly alive from death in trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1-3), the context here leads us to the figurative and practical reckoning of being alive in Christ (11).
    1. Consider even the Ephesians, who were to rise from the dead to obey Christ (Eph 5:14).
    2. It is our baptism that declares our death to sin and resurrection to a new life in Christ.
B. The figurative lesson is powerful, for it is based on the legal reality, and it answers our duty.

And your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

A. The time past of our lives should suffice for the amount of sin we practiced in our members.
B. Now, as baptized or resurrected believers, we yield our bodily members in obedience to God.
C. Rather than perpetuate universalism of sin, we strive to promote the righteousness of God.

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

For sin shall not have dominion over you.

A. This is likely the most difficult verse in chapter six creating a wide divergence of opinion, and it is this clause in the verse that raises questions as to what sense dominion is to be taken.
    1. A legal, vital, or final sense could lead to fatalistic antinomianism (compare I John 3:9).
    2. An evidential sense could lead to discouragement or even despair for struggling saints.

3. A conditional sense could lead to wresting scripture or hopeless striving for perfection.

B. **Dominion**. The power or right of governing and controlling; sovereign authority; lordship, sovereignty; rule, sway; control, influence.
   1. Sin's dominion over men is its governing, controlling, or ruling influence over them.
   2. How does sin govern, control, rule, or influence men and then have that power removed?

C. In what sense does sin *not have dominion* or will yet *in the future not have dominion* over us?
   1. We understand the eternal phase, or election, to have saved us from *the plan of sin*.
   2. We understand the legal phase, or justification, to have saved us from *the penalty of sin*.
   3. We understand the vital phase, or regeneration, to have saved us from *the power of sin*.
   4. We understand the practical phase, or conversion, to save us from *the practice of sin*.
   5. We understand the final phase, or glorification, to save us from *the presence of sin*.

D. In what sense does sin *not have dominion* or will yet *in the future not have dominion* over us?
   1. Is this merely a description of our positional relationship to Christ with our sins paid for?
   2. Does the future tense refer to final deliverance from all kinds of sin at the resurrection?
   3. Is it an offer or promise of freedom from sin, if we live in a certain way of obedience?
   4. Is it a description of the regenerate child of God, who can no longer live in sin anymore?
   5. Is it a proof or reference text supporting Calvinism's idea of perseverance of the saints?
   6. Does Christian experience confirm or disprove interpretations by our daily fight with sin?
   7. In what sense did sin have dominion under Moses' law that it does not have under grace?

E. The coordinating conjunction *for* connects this verse to what has gone before about baptism, which is still the point of reference by Paul's words of our being alive from the dead (6:13).

F. When the whole context is included, it is clearly seen that knowledge or a mindset is in view.
   1. First and foremost, observe that this first clause is dependent on and explained by the clause that follows distinguishing law and grace as two *economies* for worshippers.
   2. The *dominion* considered here must be one that the law economy had but grace did not.
   3. The knowledge of God's grace in Jesus Christ that a Christian has under the New Testament has a profound effect as to how he views sin, condemnation, and salvation.
   4. Legal, vital, or final freedom from sin's dominion is not here, for Paul in the immediate context allowed for the choice to sin, which precludes any absolute dominion (6:15).
   5. *Experience* teaches the same as Paul, we are not yet free from actual dominion (chap. 7).
   6. A dominion or *reign* in context is one that can be resisted by the faithful Christian (6:12).
   7. The coordinating conjunction *for* refers to the believer's choice to live righteously (6:13).
   8. Including more context, the gospel of grace of the N.T. teaches us things that we should all *know* as fundamental axioms or aspects of our redemption (6:3,6,9,16).
   9. The things Paul presented here are things we can *reckon* or consider to ourselves (6:11).
   10. The thing Paul has in mind is the *doctrine* (of grace) that the Romans had obeyed (6:17).

11. A reference text requiring a similar sense of *knowledge of grace* is also abused (Gal 5:4).
12. The *future tense* here should not cause any more trouble than that usage in 6:5 and 6:8.
13. The legal, vital, or final are not totally ignored – they provide the basis for the practical.

G. Sin does not have controlling power over those in the New Testament as those under the Old.
   1. Paul here did not deal with legal, vital, or final freedom from sin, for the context in both directions describes our choice and duty to not yield *practically* to sin (6:12-13,16-19).
   2. Our *reckoning knowledge* (6:11-13) and *doctrinal belief* (6:17-18) of the loss of sin's reigning power and our resulting ability and duty to yield ourselves to God is the context.
   3. The obedience that Christians commit to in baptism (6:1-11) and that Paul exhorted them to after baptism (6:12-13) is based on the liberation of knowing the gospel of grace.
   4. When the gospel of grace is compared to the Law of Moses, there is great liberty seen, as the comments on the remainder of this verse will show.
   5. The problem with dominion here is no worse than dealing with freedom from sin (18), which is not a legal, vital, or final matter, but rather a practical one of choice under grace!

H. What is the bottom line? You can keep 6:12-13 in light of the greater privileges of the N.T.!
   1. This is a practical decision of discipleship based on the greater benefits of the economy of grace, for the abuse of these same privileges is stated in the immediate context (6:15).
   2. Sin can have practical dominion over you, even under the N.T., if you allow it (I Cor 3:3; II Tim 2:18; Heb 3:12-13; 5:12-14; II Pet 1:9; etc., etc.).

For ye are not under the law.

A. Paul cannot leave the Jewish legalist problem for very long. He raised it again right here.
   1. The greatest threat to the gospel in the apostolic age was the Jews' abuse of Moses' Law.
   2. The issue here is not justification by the law but rather the guide for practical living.

B. New Testament baptized Christians are not under the Law as the rule of faith and practice.

C. There are much greater motives and hope for breaking sin's dominion under grace than law.

D. As Paul showed in detail in chapter seven, the good and holy Law exposed his sinfulness.

E. The law was a hard schoolmaster, a dominating governor and tutor, to drive us to faith in Jesus Christ and the glorious liberty and hope of the gospel of grace (Gal 3:22 – 4:7).

F. When Paul compared the two economies, the differences were very great (II Cor 3:6-18).

G. When he reviewed the differences with the Hebrews, they were great (Heb 9:11-14; 10:1-4).

But under grace.

A. Without leaving what we have learned, grace here is also understood of the gospel of grace.

B. As in the oft-abused case of Galatians 5:4, Paul refers to the knowledge or system of grace.

C. Consider the liberty, promises, hope, and future certainty of grace compared to the Law.

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

What then?

A. As Paul's manner of writing, he states and then answers an objection that could easily rise.

B. An objection by Jews still in love with Moses could easily suggest that anarchy would result.

Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace?

A. The objection Paul chose to address here indicates that the dominion and sin in context are those of practical obedience rather than any absolute view of legal, vital, or final freedom.

B. Should the greater liberties, promises, hope, and future certainty of grace lead to license?

God forbid.

A. This is Paul's typical and dogmatic response to foolish reasoning – God will not consider it.

B. Though there is a short, simple, and final negation here, he dealt further with it in chapter 7.

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?

Know ye not.

A. Here again we encounter Paul's argument that he sought an attitude, knowledge, or mindset.

B. The issues presented in this sixth chapter deal with how we understand and view salvation.

C. Having dealt with death to sin and life to God (6:3-13), he then took up servitude or slavery.

D. Based on Paul's words in the next verse (6:17), he dealt here mostly with their previous lives.

That to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey.

A. Any dominion, or controlling and ruling influence, in your life is by your decision to yield.

B. No one can be your master to whom you do not give the controlling influence in your life.

C. Most men do not like being anyone's slave, but you daily choose sin or obedience as master.

D. Paul was greatest of slaves to God, yet the freest man on earth. What will you choose today?

Whether of sin unto death.

A. If you choose to yield to sin, then you become sin's slave, and the sure result is death.

B. The practice of sin is the evidence of legal, vital, and final death in hell, or the lake of fire.

C. The practice of sin is the means for practical death to fellowship (I Tim 5:6; Jas 5:19-20).

D. The practice of sin is the means for physical death by chastening judgment (I Cor 11:30).

E. Based on Paul's words in the next verse (6:17), he dealt here mostly with their previous lives, and the end

of that lifestyle is death in all its forms, as the final verse of the chapter declares.

Or of obedience unto righteousness.

A. If you choose to yield to obedience (6:13), then you become a slave of righteousness.
B. If you are a slave of righteousness and holiness, the end of such is everlasting life (6:22).

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.

But God be thanked.

A. Based on Paul's words in the previous verse (6:16), he dealt mostly with their previous lives.
B. If you have within you the will or ability to serve God, He worked it in you (Phil 2:12-13).
C. We are bound to give thanks to God always for His incredible choice of us (II Thes 2:13).
D. If Arminianism is true, God should be thanking us for choosing to obey Him and fill heaven.

That ye were the servants of sin

A. Prior to regeneration and conversion, God's children look no different than others (Ep 2:1-3).
B. When we live as we choose … unrighteousness unto sin (6:13) … we are slaves to sin.

But ye have obeyed from the heart.

A. Conversion is a change of life by a choice of a changed heart, and it brings freedom from sin.
B. Bless God for a changed heart to choose the things of Christ's gospel and continue to choose.
C. God opened Lydia's heart to attend to Paul's preaching (Acts 16:14), and He has for you.

That form of doctrine which was delivered to you.

A. **Doctrine.** 2. That which is taught. **a**. In the most general sense: Instruction, teaching; a body of instruction or teaching. **b**. *esp*. That which is taught or laid down as true concerning a particular subject or department of knowledge, as religion, politics, science, etc.; a belief, theoretical opinion; a dogma, tenet. [OED.]
B. God changes our hearts by Spirit regeneration, and we respond by obedience for conversion.
C. The arrival of the gospel to the ears of man brings evidence of life or death (II Cor 2:14-17).

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

Being then made free from sin.

A. Compare this use of freedom from sin with deliverance from dominion earlier (6:14).
B. God's change of our hearts in regeneration is the vital freedom from sin's power (6:17).

C. But there is more here than just regeneration, for we grasp that grace and choose to be free.
D. Freed from its vital power, we believe the doctrine that there is hope and victory in Christ.
E. Freed from the condemning guilt and dominion of the law, we embrace the freedom of grace.

Ye became the servants of righteousness.

A. This is true Christianity! It is not sprinkling an infant with water or a decision at an altar.
B. It is the life-changing decision by grace to reject the claims of sin to choose servitude to God.
C. Are you a slave to God today? Do you choose daily to resist sin and serve righteousness?
D. This is what the true gospel of grace teaches … living soberly and righteously (Tit 2:11-14).
E. Paul will explain that he is speaking metaphorically, but do you fulfill the metaphor, friend?

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.

I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh.

A. Rather than limiting himself to religious or spiritual terms, Paul used human analogies.
B. The reason for this choice was not to be entertaining, but rather to stoop to their ignorance.
C. Paul here excuses his use of a carnal and often unhappy relationship to make the point of discipleship as clear as possible, rather than using strictly abstract or spiritual arguments.
D. Here is some scriptural justification for illustrations for application, but you will notice that this is not a story about a fishing trip in which he dropped an expensive watch in a deep lake.

For as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness.

A. Before conversion (prior regeneration is necessary, but not part of this argument), men offer themselves willing to the lusts of their flesh and mind and the devil himself (Eph 2:1-3).
B. Sinful men surrender their bodily members to do whatever their lusts or peers desire.
C. What will baptismal regenerationists do? Same as in I Peter 3:21? Is this dirt of the body?

And to iniquity unto iniquity.

A. Wicked men – we before our conversions (or when in the flesh) – add and multiply sins.
B. Would to God that the gospel had the effect of us adding and multiplying holiness to God.

Even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

A. In the same way that we lived for ourselves and our sinful lusts, we should now do to God.
B. This is what every soul winner ought to tell every person “coming forward” to be saved.

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

For when ye were the servants of sin.

A. The time is before their regeneration and conversion, which are not distinguished here due to Paul's emphasis on their conversion by obedience to apostolic doctrine (6:17).

B. Before regeneration and conversion, the Gentiles were atrocious sinners (Eph 4:17-19).

Ye were free from righteousness.

A. Keeping the surrounding context as our guide, the *freedom from righteousness* is its lack of binding obligation on us due to the ignorance of our unregenerate and/or unconverted state.

B. The last thing unregenerate sinners think of doing is the righteousness of God (Eph 4:17-19).

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

What fruit had ye then in those things.

A. In this verse and the next, Paul compared in two stages both serving sin and serving God.
   1. The two stages are the effect of your chosen servitude on life now and its eternal reward.
   2. This is quite logical reasoning … what are the benefits of sinning now? … and later?

B. What was the fruit – consequence, effect, or result – of a lifestyle of sin before conversion?

C. The pleasures of sin are only for a season (Heb 11:25), and they leave even pagans discontent and disillusioned by life, which is indicated by attempts to escape through drink, drugs, etc.

D. If you can imagine death in three parts, and most men cannot properly consider even one, was the temporary, guilt-ridden pleasure of sin for a season sufficient compensation?

E. Sin is always hateful in the end (Ps 36:2), and most sins sooner (now) than later (judgment)!
   1. It is hardest for children and youth to see danger, because they lack the experience of life.
   2. It is hardest for women to see disaster, for they are more easily deceived (I Tim 2:14).

F. Of course, sin brings more pain and trouble than just the three horrible deaths in the Bible.
   1. Lot thought a little extra wine (drunkenness) was not bad … until 3-4 months later!
   2. Judah thought he could get rid of Tamar with a future promise … until 3-4 months later!
   3. Samson thought fun and love with Delilah was worth it … until he woke up from a nap!
   4. Amnon thought his sister Tamar would make him very happy … until 2 minutes later!
   5. David thought being easy on Adonijah might win him … until he was on his deathbed!
   6. Peter thought it okay to boast to Jesus of loyalty … until Jesus looked at him that night!
   7. Peter thought it okay to deny Jesus when afraid … until Jesus questioned him thrice later!

Whereof ye are now ashamed?

A. True conversion brings shame and disgust for past sins, and without it there is no evidence.
    1. Elihu's confession acknowledged the profitless vanity of a sinful lifestyle (Job 33:27-28).
    2. Peter wrote that our past time in sin should suffice us for such things (I Peter 4:1-5).
    3. Paul recounted his horrible acts before conversion (I Tim 1:13; I Cor 15:9; Gal 1:13).
    4. If you try to justify, excuse, or cover your previous sins, you are likely not even saved.
B. The main intent of these words is to describe the value of sin from gospel-enlightened eyes

For the end of those things is death.

A. What is the great temporal consequence of serving sin instead of God? Physical death!
B. What is the great eternal consequence of serving sin instead of God? Eternal damnation!
C. The character traits of those in hell ought to cause each man to hate each sin (Rev 21:8).
D. The passages listing sins that exclude one from heaven should be considered personally.
    1. Paul had already given a lengthy list in this epistle dealing with God's wrath (1:28-32).
    2. Other sins are joined by the use of *such* (I Cor 5:11; 6:9-11; Gal 5:19-21; Eph 5:3-5).

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

But now being made free from sin.

A. We are *free from sin* in the same sense as in verses 14 and 18, by regeneration and conversion, though not distinguished in Paul's argument, with the emphasis on conversion.
B. The gospel makes us free from sin in the sense of declaring its penalty satisfied, describing the new power within, and detailing the life that God expects His adopted children to live.
C. The hopeless lifestyle of slaves to sin is broken by conversion to the gospel of grace (with prior regeneration the doctrinal truth taught elsewhere but ignored here for Paul's argument).
D. The knowledge of what Jesus Christ had done for Paul constrained him (II Cor 5:14-15)!

And become servants to God.

A. True conversion … the Bible kind … is to serve the living and true God (I Thess 1:9-10).
B. The grace of God that brings salvation – the gospel of grace – teaches us how to serve the living and true God, and any other message is not the true grace of God (Titus 2:11-15).
C. Yet, men argue and fight about the lordship controversy, where service is not included!
D. If each person "inviting Jesus into their hearts" was told that without service to God as they had previously served sin there was no sign of eternal life, it would shrink stats about 99%.

Ye have your fruit unto holiness.

A. There is a benefit and blessing to serving God right now … and it is the fruit of a holy life.
B. Our God is holy, and we must live holy lives to be acceptable to Him at all (I Peter 1:13-17).
C. Let it be grasped … that even if the Bible were not true, it presents a lifestyle and wisdom that is far superior to any other holy book or philosophy for life. There is nothing even close.
    1. The rules for marriage, child training, employment, finances, risk, etc. are wonderful!
    2. The definition of love in one place, I Corinthians 13:4-7, is beyond man's knowledge.
    3. The gospel of a Creator giving His Son in order to adopt His enemies and then asking only the easiest, most practical and benevolent response by them is incredible.
D. A holy life has glorious reward from God here and now by His Holy Spirit in us and with us.
    1. A child of God is capable of being filled with all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:14-19).
    2. An obedient child living a holy life has about seven glorious promises (II Cor 6:14 – 7:1).
    3. A spotless life and guilt-free conscience are just two more temporal benefits of holiness.
E. Let us not cheat the gospel of grace, for it promises a 10,000% return here (Mark 10:29-30)!

And the end everlasting life.

A. What is the enormous eternal consequence of serving God? Everlasting life! Incredible!
B. Can you see the win-win proposition of the gospel of grace? Holiness now – eternal life later!

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

For the wages of sin is death.

A. For a detailed sermon (10/23/2005).
B. The analogy or metaphor of servitude includes the concept and practice of earning wages.
C. Everyone of us have earned wages, by Adam's sin and our own repeat sins, which is death.
D. From the beginning, sin had the clear consequence of death, even in Eden (Genesis 2:17).
    1. As we have learned already, especially in 5:12, there are three variations of death for sin.
    2. Adam died spiritually that day, physically 930 years later, and there is the second death.
E. Death is king of terrors, and sane men are terrified by it, but for spiritual saints (Job 18:14).
F. God restated this basic principle to Israel about each man's individual burden (Ezek 18:1-4).
G. The end of all men is to learn about a death that never ends – the lake of fire (Rev 20:11-15).
H. Of course, while men are breathing, they enjoy sin and ignore the possible consequences.
    1. They flatter themselves all is well and sin is harmless (Ps 36:1-2; 50:21-22; Eph 4:17-19).
    2. The murderer thinks he can get rid of any enemy or any life, since we are mere animals.
    3. The adultery had such a loving time … a few minutes … not seeing death and hell!
    4. The covetous and greedy man makes great plans … but his soul is required (Lu 12:20).

5. The angry and bitter woman thinks she is justified … until she has eternity to reflect on it.
6. The disobedient son thinks he knows best and has reasons … until he meets a real Father!
7. Moses was careful to warn two tribes of Israel that sin will find you out (Num 32:23).

But the gift of God is eternal life.

A. The disjunctive conjunction *but* sets the second half of this verse in opposition to the first.
   1. O glorious *but!* Bless God for inspired disjunctives (Ro 5:20; 6:17; Gal 1:15; Ep 2:4,13)!
   2. You are about to read the glorious, total, and final remedy for all the wages of your sins.
   3. Reader, if you will humbly bow before the just wages you deserve, this *but* will be sweet.

B. If God were fair, perfectly fair, every last one of us would be in the lake of fire; but thanks be to God, He is rather gracious and merciful to the elect instead and rejects fairness for love!

C. This is no *gift* you must accept (Arminians), for dead men cannot so accept the gift of life!
   1. You were dead in trespasses and sins, and you had to be quickened by Almighty power!
   2. Offering a cure for the disease that killed a dead man is vanity! You must resurrect him!
   3. The only offer involved in eternal life is Jesus offering Himself to God (Heb 9:11-15).
   4. The only acceptance in eternal life is God accepting the work of Jesus and you in Him!
   5. If God offered eternal life, no one would take it, as Paul previously taught (Rom 3:9-18).
   6. If God offered eternal life, no one could take it, as Paul will shortly teach (Rom 8:7-8).

D. The *gift* of eternal life from God has three aspects that should be remembered gloriously.
   1. God gave His elect to Jesus Christ in an eternal covenant before the world began.
   2. God gave His Son Jesus Christ to die in their place for their sins about 2000 years ago.
   3. God gave legal justification and vital regeneration; He will soon give final glorification.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A. Chapter five taught us clearly that it is by the obedience of One we are justified (5:12-19).

B. Our salvation and all the promises of God are wrapped up in the Lord Jesus (5:20-21; 8:1).