**The Death of the Reign of Death!**

**A picture containing text

Description automatically generatedRomans 6:1-23**

**(Lesson #10)**

***Last week, in chapter 5, we saw the effect of Adam’s disobedience and the result of Christ’s obedience:***

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| --- | --- |
| **One Man (Adam)** | **One Man (Christ)** |
| Vs 15 – One man’s offense and many died | Vs 15 – One man’s free gift and many are made righteous |
| Vs 16 – One man’s sin brought condemnation | Vs 16 - After many offenses, one man’s free gift brings justification |
| Vs 17 - One man’s trespass brought the reign of death | Vs 17 – One man brings the reign of life |
| Vs 18 - One man’s trespass brought condemnation | Vs 18 – One man’s act of righteousness brings justification |
| Vs 19 – One man’s disobedience the many are made sinners | Vs 19 – One man’s obedience the many are made righteous |
| Vs 20 – Due to one man, sin abounds | Vs 20 – Due to one man, grace much more abounds |
| Vs 21 – Due to one man, sin reigns unto death | Vs 21 – Due to one man, grace reigns to eternal life |

***6:1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 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.***

**Vs 6:1-2 -** As Paul has done throughout this letter, he is **asking rhetorical questions** that are no doubt forming in the minds of some, if not many, within his audience.

**To frame this up…** If the Mosaic law cannot form the basis for breaking the power of sin in a believer’s life, (for the law came in to **“increase the trespass”**), then it seems the believer has **no basis for ethical behavior**.

*“Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,” (Ro 5:20 ESV)*

Now, based on everything that Paul said about justification this seems like a reasonable conclusion.

To show us how far removed this line of thinking is for Paul, I want to remind you of what he said earlier in Romans:

*“7 But if through my lie God’s truth abounds to his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? 8 And why not do evil that good may come? —  as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just.” (Ro 3:7-8 ESV)*

First his response: ***By no means, certainly not!* This is the classic Pauline rejection of something that is completely false!**

But his response to his rhetorical question, **opens up a whole new line of thought**, that up until this moment has not been exposed.

**Vs 2b - *How can we who died to sin still live in it*?** Paul has been discussing how **Jesus was delivered for our offenses** (4:25), how **Jesus died for the ungodly** (Rom 5:6), and how **God showed his love for us, when Jesus died for us** (Rom 5:8).

But here, in pure Pauline fashion. **How can we who have died to sin, still live in it?**

Let’s grasp Paul’s conclusion and then work backwards to understand what he means and when it happened.

**His point is easy enough.** Believers are **“dead to sin.”** This verb is aorist tense, indicative mood. **It is simply a statement of fact.**

But what does Paul mean and when did this occur?

Here is Paul’s point. When you and I placed faith in Jesus, in a sense we died in and with him, we were placed in the grave with him.

Having died to sin and its authority over us we are now free to walk in a new way, empowered by the Spirit.

**Frank Thielman:** *“Believes are no longer living in the sphere of sin, that is, in its power because Christ, through his atoning death, had delivered them from sin’s overwhelming power (Eph 2:1-6; Col 3:3).”*

**Douglas Moo:** *“Paul uses the language of realm transfer to show how inconceivable is the suggestion that a believer should remain in sin in order to accentuate grace.”*

Paul is **not saying** that after we are justified, after we are saved, now we never sin. He is saying that the power of sin, and its dominion in our lives has been broken!

**Vs 3 -** **The rhetorical question…** ***“Do you not know”*** is making the point that you should know. All of who have been baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into his death.

The Greek word translated baptized in both places is: βαπτίζω (baptize). It literally means to dip, dunk, submerge, or to wash.

**Scholars disagree if Paul is alluding to water baptism or fully and only referring to water baptism.**

**For sure, he is at least alluding to water baptism.**

**Something to consider:**

Baptism is used in a number of different ways in the New Testament. I do not want to develop those here only to provide you some examples if you are interested in running this (Mat 3:11 - baptized with the Holy Spirit; Mat 20:22-23 – to James and John being baptized like Jesus was baptized; I Cor 1:13 – a questions about being placed in union (baptized) with Paul; I Cor 10:2 – to be placed in union (baptized) with Moses.

I believe that is what Paul is getting at: ***Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized*** (united) ***into Christ Jesus were baptized*** (united) ***into his death?***

**Then I would add, of which water baptism is a perfect picture of the spiritual reality that took place!**

Equally, for believers during the New Testament era, they were normally baptized by water once they professed their faith. We see this throughout the New Testament (Acts 2:38, 8:12, 8:36, 9:18, 10:47, etc.)

What you should be grappling with in your mind is Paul sees a metaphorical reality, when you placed faith in Jesus, you were (united) into Him (by faith) and thus (united) into his death!

**This uniting has moved you out of the realm of death, where you previously resided and has placed you under the sphere of Christ’s power, or as we saw moments ago… THE REIGN OF GRACE!**

**This is the deathblow to your former way of existence. You are no longer a slave to sin!**

**Now, this spiritual reality, was typified in your water baptism. It is a beautiful picture of a spiritual reality that took placed when you placed faith in Jesus Christ!**

**Vs 4** - **Since sharing in someone’s death means sharing in their burial**, Paul is able to shift the metaphor slightly and prepare the way for another amazing point!

Notice the picture. We died with Christ… We have been ***buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that,***

**Here is the goal:** ***just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.***

We might see that the power of sin has been broken in our lives, and now **empowered by the Holy Spirit of God**, we are brought into **new spiritual life** “**as pictured**” by coming out of the water.

The term newness is the Greek word **καινότης** (kainotes). It connotes a **startling freshness**, a **new quality that makes it different**. This word is only used by Paul and only here in Romans.

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” (2Co 5:17 ESV)*

**This is the root of the word we are looking at - καινός** (kainos). **New in kind or new in form!**

**Chuck Missler:** *“The resurrection of Jesus was not resuscitation; it was a new form of life in the same way the spiritual lives of believers in Jesus have a new, fresh quality. A believer’s identification with Jesus Christ is in His resur­rection: besides being the start of new spiritual life now, it is also the guarantee of physical resurrection.”*

Believers in Christ, those who have been justified by faith, have a newness of life. It does not mean they never sin. It does mean the dominion of sin in their life has been broken by Christ!

**Think of the old life (under the reign of sin and death) and the new life under the reign of grace!**

**Do you remember when we discussed the “minimum effective dosage” of the gospel?** We discussed the three things we are calling men and women to believe. You see those same three things here:

1. Jesus is Lord (in this case the Messiah)
2. He died for our sins
3. He rose from the grave for our justification

Here we see that even baptism points to the M.E.D. of the gospel!

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***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. 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. 7 For one who has died has been set free from sin. 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9 We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. 10 For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. 11 So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.***

**Vs 5 -** Paul’s takes his **metaphor one step further.**

**Follow his line of thinking.** For if (this is a conditional clause), if, **we have been united with him in a death like his**... **“we shall certainly be” united with him in a resurrection “like his”.**

**This is a masterpiece in the Greek: “If”**, there is the condition, if **“we have been”** this is perfect tense (an action completed in the past, once and for all, and never needing to be repeated) indicative mood (statement of fact). If “we have been” (united in his death by faith), then we shall certainly, in the future, as a matter of fact, ***be united with him in a resurrection like his.* If “we have been”** then one day, it is an absolute for certain **“we shall be”** future tense indicative, **united in a resurrection like his!**

**The reality that our ultimate resurrection is for certain should give us great confidence and courage to live our lives for God today!**

*“16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.” (1Th 4:16-17 ESV)*

*“51 Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. 53 For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. 54 When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."” (1Co 15:51-54 ESV)*

**APPLICATION:** Jesus’s actual historical death and resurrection were real, unique, special, and both are historically epoch changing events. The realities of those events have a profound effect on those who have been justified by faith.

**APPLICATION:** **More direct!** If that is true, and it is. How then should we live our lives today?

**Vs 6 -** Here we see that our “old man” was crucified with Christ! Sin’s grip on you and I has been broken.

**The “old man” to which believers belong has been co-crucified with Jesus.**

The idea, we should pull in now, is that we, have been co-crucified with Christ.

*“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.” (Ga 2:20 ESV)*

**In order that, the body of sin might be “brought to nothing”**

You died with Jesus, in order that, the reign of death in your life might end! **Jesus died, so that the Reign of Death might Die in your life!**

**Therefore, you should not (the verb tense is subjunctive, it is the mood of possibility) serve sin and death.**

Paul had reminded us of the solidarity in Adam and its disastrous consequences. **Here we see the solidarity in Christ and its amazing impact on our life!**

Paul is moving from discussing justification to a discussion about the impact it **“should”** have on your life and this opens the door for the expanding discussion on **sanctification**.

**Theology Break:** Sanctification - Theologians generally recognize two broad categories of sanctification, positional and practical. Most of the time when we use the term we are thinking about practical, progressive, or experiential.

**Positional –** We are sanctified positionally in Christ the very moment we are justified by faith. We do not generally think of the word this way, but it is presented in a number of places in the Bible (Joh 17:16-17; I Cor 1:30; Heb 10:10).

**Practical, Progressive, or Experiential –** This is an ongoing process and generally how we use the word.Here we are referring to growing in the Lord (Col 1:9-10; Rom 12:1-2) growing in grace (II Pet 3:18), or spiritual maturity (Phil 3:12-14). We are referring to the choice to follow God and God’s ways day-by-day. We are talking about submitting to God’s word and being changed over time by it. We are talking about a work that involves each of us, the word of God, and the Spirit of God who is in us.

**A good verse to help us:**

*“For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality;” (1Th 4:3 ESV)*

**Vs 7** - The principle that physical death puts a person beyond the reach of sin’s dominance.

Paul brings this point forwardto show, to demonstrate, to prove, that our **union in the Messiah, breaks sins power over us.** We are no longer slaves.

This discussion could lead to an incorrect conclusion (namely sinless perfection in this life). Do not worry, Paul will tackle this incorrect conclusion in the next chapter.

But hear me. You and I have been snatched from the domain of sin and death!

The word translated “set free” is the word, **δικαιόω** *(dikaioo).* It means **justified**, **declared righteous**, Can we insert the idea?

**Vs 8 -** Notice, Paul continues to drive home the point that **“we died with Christ”** the very moment we placed faith in Him!

Since we (notice the pronoun) have died in Christ, we believe **present tense** (believe and keep believing) that we will one day live with him.

Since, we died with him, Paul would tell us it is only **reasonable to believe that we will live with Him!**

**Vs 9 -** He then shares a **theological point** that we all likely understand. The sinless Son of God died, in **the place of and for sinners**. God raised Him from the dead, and **he will never die again.**

Death only had dominion over him because he was serving as our substitute. He was sinless, and death actually had absolutely no claim on him.

**Vs 10 -** The death of Christ is the **dramatic**, **unlikely**, **amazing**, **climatic** and an **unrepeatable event** that **atoned for the sins of others**.

Jesus, died to and for sins **once** and **he is alive forever more**. The life he lives, he lives for the glory of God.

Unlike you and I, Jesus knew no sin (II Cor 5:21) and therefor he had no need to die in the same sense you and I do.

**Vs 11 -** We are to consider ourselves dead. The Greek word is **λογίζομαι** (logizomai).It is that **accounting term**. God accounted to us righteousness, having placed faith in Jesus Christ, and we should, let’s use Paul’s more emphatic term, we must **“reckon”** or **account ourselves** dead to sin, dead to the power of sin, dead to the domain of sin.

By the way, in the Greek it is in the present tense, which brings with it the idea of a **continual action.**

**APPLICATION:** What is the practice you should follow to help us daily walk with God? **Here is Paul’s answer, for the moment: You should start each day “accounting” that you are dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ.** You and I should continue, day in and day out, to reckon, to account ourselves dead to sin.

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***12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. 13 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 instruments for righteousness. 14 For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.***

**Vs 12 –** Do not let sin reign in our mortal bodies. You see Paul’s point; we should not let sin reign in our bodies that we obey the passions and lusts. WE ARE DEAD to sin!

The present tense command: ***Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, h*arkens back to the reign of sin and death that came because of Adam.**

Adam’s trespass brought the reign of sin and death. Jesus by his righteous deed has introduced the reign of grace and life! Do not submit yourself back under the bondage of sin, to obey its passions.

**We see the first of two metaphors:**

Do not let sin, reign from the throne in your heart and life. Paul once again personifies sin, and places it on this horrific throne.

**Vs 13 -** Here, Paul implores a second metaphor. This one from the world of soldiering and combat! Do not **present your members to sin as instruments** (**or weapons)** of unrighteousness.

You see what he is saying, do not present yourself, your members, as weapons at the disposal of a very powerful king. **Do you allow your body to be used by the powerful reign of sin!**

*“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 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Ro 12:1-2 ESV)*

**Imputed righteousness** should lead to a life that no longer wants to serve sin, but instead presents itself to God as an **instrument of righteousness!**

**Vs 14 -** Think about the metaphor that Paul is using, since Adam’s fall this **horrible, wicked king** has ruled over the lives of all of Adam’s descendants. Because God has broken the power of sin in your life, it no longer has that dominion over you.

**You are no longer a servant in the kingdom of death.** You are now a servant in the reign of righteous and you are no longer under the law, **but you are under grace.**

**God’s riches at Christ’s expense!**

You are I have been **shifted** from the realm of sin and death and translated into to the realm of grace. **This happened the moment we placed faith in Jesus Christ!**

Now the provocative statement that we are not under the law but under grace could lead some, to an erroneous conclusion that we can sin like the devil, since the law is out of the picture.

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***15 What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! 16 Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? 17 But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, 18 and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. 19 I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.***

**Vs 15 -** He asks the same question, a false inference that he lead with in 6:1:

***“What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?” (Ro 6:1 ESV)***

Here the same question, but from a different vantage. OK, since we are not under the law, but under grace, does that mean we can go on sinning? **BY NO MEANS, CERTAINLY NOT!**

**Vs 16 -** Here Paul explains a simple truth about all mankind!

First, Do you not know? Surely you understand that **you fall under the power of the master** of whom you choose to obey, in fact, **you are a slave to the one you obey.**

Then he provides only two choices. The same two we have been working with and through:

1. The reign of sin which leads to violence and death.
2. Or obedience (notice Paul now starts to expand the point) he has been, up until now speaking about the reign of grace, now he is talking about obedience that leads to justice, fairness, and uprightness.

**Vs 17 -** **Thank the Lord! All thanks to God!** You were at one time under the reign of sin, and a slave to sin.

**BUT NOW.** You have become obedient from the heart to the standard that Paul is teaching and which they have already submitted to which is:

You were ushered out of the kingdom of death and into the kingdom of light, righteousness, grace!

This reminded me of:

*“****26*** *And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.* ***27*** *And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.” (Eze 36:26-27 ESV)*

**Vs 18 -** At one time a helpless slave… But now, you have been SET FREE! Having been set free from the reign of sin, **you are now willing and joyful subjects of the reign of grace, the reign of righteousness!**

**Vs 19 -** Here Paul goes back to the imagery he started earlier and now further expounds. You once presented your members as slaves to impurity and lawlessness, which leads to more lawlessness.

You once spent your energy in sexual immorality, socially destructive behaviors, and suppressing the knowledge of God, all leading to more and more lawlessness

**Vs 19b -** Devote yourself, with all your abilities to the service of “righteousness” rather than the service of “impurity.” **This is what should happen because we have been justified by faith!**

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***20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. 21 But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. 22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

**Vs 20 -** This is the logical other side of the coin. When you were in bondage to sin, you had nothing to do with and no concern with righteousness!

**Vs 21 -** Being in bondage to sin led to vicious and shameful behavior.

**Vs 22 - BUT NOW,** we have been set free from the kingdom of sin and death. **Set free to serve a new master.** Set free to stop doing shameful things and start doing things that glorify the One who saved us.

The Psalmist said it this way:

*“For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.” (Ps 84:10 ESV)*

Now Paul is saying because this is true, since this is true, you SHOULD grow in sanctification. We will talk more about this in the coming weeks. You should bear fruit and the result of the fruit production is sanctification!

**Vs 23 -** Then Paul reminds us. **If we have sinned, and indeed we all have, what we deserve, the wages we have earned, is death (eternal death).**

BUT, I love that conjunction here. **But God has a free gift**, and it is eternal life, in the Messiah Jesus, who is our Lord. **This gift can only be received by faith!**

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