

## So, What Do You Say?

*Romans 6:1*

### REVIEW

Here's the risk of telling the truth.

Present a jewel, and there will always be someone pinning it on a swine's snout. See:

“Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.” (Matt. 7:6)

“Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?” (Prov. 17:16)

“A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself.” (Prov. 18:2)

We have here:

1. At the least, **colossal ignorance** expressed in honest inquiry.
2. Or, worse, the sort of **slothful self-deception** described in James 1:22 – “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves,” and “The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.” (Prov. 26:16)
3. Or, worst, **out-and-out devilish impudence**, that shameless, saucy, in-your-face effrontery of a scorner who eats, wipes his mouth, and finds a way to reject everything you say.

You see, Paul has just listed in Romans 5 the tsunami of blessings won by Christ for us:

- :1 – justification
- :1 – peace with God
- :2 – access into grace
- :2 – hope of the glory of God
- :3 – souls sustained in tribulation
- :5 – love of God shed into our hearts
- :5 – Holy Spirit given to us
- :9 – eternal security
- :11 – joy

Paul then explains in the second half of chapter 5 the mechanism by which all these blessings have been availed to us: GRACE. That wondrous unmerited kindness of our God! The Lord of heaven and earth overwhelming sinful man with favor and goodwill! GRACE: the explanation of all the benefits men receive from God! GRACE: God's Riches at Christ's Expense!

“Ho-hum,” yawns the scoffer, who immediately hunts for the flaw in this idea so that his own way of thinking stays in tact.

This response driven at the least by **colossal ignorance**, or, more likely, by **slothful self-deception**, or, worst, by **out-and-out devilish impudence** calls to mind the Scripture charge not to mistreat grace:

“We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.”  
(II Cor. 6:21)

“Look diligently,” the writer of Hebrews urges, “lest any man fail of the grace of God.” (Heb. 12:15)

The key to understanding our text is found in the 5 words: **“What shall we say then?”**

1. If the reader is sincerely interested but just not catching the sequence of thought here, the meaning of this question may be: “Given that I have laid out for you the way to offense, failure, and damnation or, on the other hand, the way to full forgiveness of all sins in your life, restoration to God, purpose, glory, love, power, security, and an ocean of other incomprehensible, immeasurable, and inexhaustible blessings . . . what . . . do . . . you . . . think . . . you . . . should . . . do?”
2. If, as is more likely the case, the reader is slothful, self-deceived, or impudently *lippy*, with little-to-no interest in enlightenment but rather wants to debunk Paul's doctrine with some cute come back, the intent of Paul's question may be, “OK, let's take your sage rebuttal and examine its logic in light of Scripture.”

You see, this isn't the first time this question appears. In fact, I count at least 8 times just in Romans:

“But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, **what shall we say?** Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man.)” (Rom. 3:5)

**“What shall we say then** that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? (Rom. 4:1)

**“What shall we say then?** Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” (Rom. 7:7)

**“What shall we then say** to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?” (Rom. 8:31)

**“What shall we say then?** Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.” (Rom. 9:14)

“Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? **Shall the thing formed say** to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?” (Rom. 9:20)

**“What shall we say then?** That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.” (Rom. 9:30)

And here:

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

Paul delivers a stinging rebuke communicating: “Oh, brilliant. That's a *great* way to respond to grace.” To assert that one should continue in sin is a sarcastic reaction of unbelief to Rom. 5:20. Paul already referenced this line of thought in Rom. 3:8.

“Really?” a soul may want to say to unbelieving humanity, including torpid Christians who can take the message of last week and come back this next time unmoved and unchanged.

“Really? That's the best you can do? The glories of heaven are laid out for man . . . and he shrugs his shoulders!

Let's remind ourselves of some marvelous truths about grace:

1. We are to *live* to the praise of the *glory* of His *grace*!

“**To the praise of the glory of his grace**, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.” (Eph. 1:6)

2. God's grace is **rich**.

“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the **riches** of his grace.” (Eph. 1:7)

3. It is **great**.

“And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and **great grace** was upon them all.” (Acts 4:33)

4. It is **exceeding abundant**.

“And the grace of our Lord was **exceeding abundant** with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.”  
(I Tim. 1:14)

5. It is **manifold**.

“As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the **manifold** grace of God.” (I Pet. 4:10)

6. It is **sufficient**.

“And he said unto me, My grace is **sufficient** for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” (II Cor. 12:9)

7. It is, indeed, the **gospel**.

“But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the **gospel of the grace of God**.” (Acts 20:24)

And in light of such truth, *this* is the best you can do, oh lazy and distracted and bitter and unbelieving man? *This* is the best you can do: throw out some two-bit nonsense like, “Let us do evil that good may come.” This is your take. This is your grand conclusion. This is the best response your soul can muster to the revelation of some of the greatest truth ever revealed by heaven to earth!

That would be an unconscionable failure to respond well to a huge opportunity. Indeed, there is our summary theme for today: How we sinful souls can drop the ball when given so great possibilities!

Think, for example, of the multitudinous blown opportunities in Bible history:

1. Philosophers on Mar Hills hear of the resurrection and mock!

2. Man is given a talent and buries it in the ground!

3. Moses could have the testimony of God-empowered speech but turns it down!

