

## Romans

Romans Chapter Six

Romans 6:15-16

April 25, 2010

This is lesson number 38 in our exposition of the Book of Romans.

**The Theme of the Letter**

**Romans 1:16-17**

“For I am not ashamed of **the gospel of Christ**, for it is the **power** of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the **righteousness of God** is **revealed** from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘The just shall live by faith.’ ” Romans 1:16-17

**Title: “Whose Slave Are You?”**

15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!

16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?

In Romans 6:3 Paul implied that there was something that believers, those baptized into Christ, i.e. those regenerated by the Holy Spirit, should know; then verse 6, “knowing this...”

Now at verse 16 we have another “Do you not know...”

It often occurs to me how important is sound doctrine; if believers are expected to know certain things, how will they know if they are not taught?

Here at verse 15 of chapter Six, the apostle begins to deal even more specifically with the process of living under grace.

**This is our personal sanctification.** Because we are not justified, or made right with God, on the basis of our obedience to the moral law does not mean that the moral law has no authority over us.

Sanctification **necessarily** follows justification.

When a person does not understand {know} this, they miss the essence of the gospel. They end up either as moralists, trying to justify themselves by their “deeds of the law,” or they “turn the grace of God into licentiousness,” as Jude says about the antinomians who had crept in unawares into the church in the first century.

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Now I want to put to you the question asked by Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones at this point in his commentary on Romans 6.

Have we grasped the significance of justification by faith? Do we know that personal sanctification is not an isolated optional endeavor for some of the more “committed Christians?”

Do we really understand {know} what it means to be “in Christ?”

Do we really understand {know} what it means to have been delivered from the reign of sin to the reign of grace?

Do we really understand {know} what it means to have died to sin?

Dr. Lloyd-Jones says the way to know if you have grasped this great truth is to ask yourself, “Has the effect of this teaching been to cause you to hate sin more than you ever have before?”

Here is a quote on the cover of Evangelistic Sermons, c 1930 by Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones:

“The purpose of true gospel preaching is not to entertain, but to lead people to salvation, and to teach them how to find God.”

What I am saying is that all true Christians, those who have entered the kingdom through the narrow gate and are on the narrow way, will strive against sin.

God gives you the grace, but you must do the striving yourself.

Our text: **Rom 6:15-16**

15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!

16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?

It may seem that the apostle has already dealt with this thought in verses 1 & 2, and so he has. But obviously the Holy Spirit had more to say through Paul about law and grace.

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In verses 1 & 2, Paul is responding to the false proposition that because the reign of grace superabounds the reign of sin that we may continue in sin. Then in verse 15, he is answering a similar notion that because we are not under law, but under grace, that we may continue in sin.

And of course, that is as an absurd an idea as the first proposition.

“If a man voluntarily sins, on the pretext that he is not under the law, but under grace, it is a proof that the grace of God is not in him... The freedom from the moral law which the believer enjoys, is a freedom from an obligation to fulfill it in his own person for his justification - a freedom from its condemnation on account of imperfection of obedience. But this is quite consistent with the eternal obligation of the moral law as a rule of life to the Christian. Nothing can be more self-evidently certain than that, if the moral law is not a rule of life to believers, they are at liberty to disregard its precepts. But the very thought of this is abominable.” {Haldane}

“All the children of men are either the servants of God, or the servants of sin; these are two families. Now, if we would know to which of these two families we belong, we must inquire to which of these masters we yield obedience.”  
{Matthew Henry}

John 8:34

Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin...."

In verse 15, **“What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace.”**

When trust in the law or in any law system, human response, as a means of justification, is taken away, does that mean that the authority of law ceases to exist? And his answer is the same, “Certainly not!”

And then Paul explains the condition or status of someone under law and someone under grace.

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The nature and the power of sin is that the first time you commit a particular sin your conscience pricks you and you have this sense that what you did is wrong. Take the example of telling a deliberate lie. At first it really troubles you that you would tell a lie or shade the truth to your advantage and mislead someone. But soon another occasion arises and you make the choice to tell another lie. It bothers you, but not as much as the first time. If you continue to lie without genuine repentance and confession of this sin, you are becoming enslaved to telling lies and soon your conscience will stop bothering you. You are a slave to sin.

A modern proverb:

If you tell the truth you do not have to remember what you said.

The New Age philosophy that is brainwashing our youth {and older people too if they get their philosophy from Ophra, the high priestess of New Age Thinking} by teaching that there are no absolutes and that you are the master of your fate is a lie itself.

The greatest social offense today is to stand up and say that anything is just wrong. How dare you judge another person's actions, no matter what they are.

Example of the McDonald's project: Text not included.

Well, no one is free in the absolute sense. Your master is either Sin or God. Those who object to what Paul is teaching here fall into two groups.

The **first group** would be the legalists, the Judaizers, the moralists, anyone under a "law system." "If you deny good works or obedience as a basis for merit before God," they say, "How will you know what **to do** in order to be saved?"

"We know that you must **do** something, so tell us what **to do**."

Salvation, to their thinking, cannot be by grace through faith alone, apart from their contribution in some manner.

So the first group looks to a law system.

The **other group** are the antinomians. These people think that because they have an intellectual knowledge of certain facts: They believe in God, they believe in the Virgin Birth, they even believe that Jesus is the only Savior. But James tells us that the devils believe that.

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What they do belies what they say. They think that because they are “saved,” that the moral law has no authority over the way they live.

These two groups are exactly the opposite in the way they view the moral law.

The **first group**, the moralists, build a law system and insist that salvation is obtained **and** kept by doing certain things.

Remember that a law system is anything that you can control.

You can control which set of “touch not, taste not, handle not” rules to which you subscribe. You can control your water baptism. You can control which local church you belong to. Yes, even your “decision” can be a law system if you believe that you had the power to control that decision, that that decision originated in your “free will.” That God could not save you until you gave Him “permission.”

The **other group** views the moral law and wrongly concludes that while there is a way to be saved “under law,” that they are “under grace,” and therefore the moral law has no authority over them.

Neither the legalist nor the antinomian trusts in Jesus and His righteousness alone. The moralist adds his human response to what Jesus has done; the antinomian says, “We will not have this man to rule over us.”

The one group claims to have control in their being made right with God through obedience and the other group despises personal obedience to the moral law.

And so, even today, when the true gospel is preached, these two groups are still around in the visible church and think: “Shall we continue in sin?”

When you preach freedom from sin and the law and justification by faith alone, it will always sound to the unbeliever that you are saying that the moral law has no authority over the Christian. The first group is offended that they are denied control over their salvation and the other group is indifferent to the moral law.

From time to time I feel it necessary to explain why we do not give a typical Southern Baptist “invitation” at the close of our preaching. Some have even objected by saying that unless you give such an invitation, you do not give anyone a “chance” to be saved. That thought alone gives away the view that a person is in control of their being saved.

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What we do is put a statement in the bulletin and often say from the pulpit that anyone wishing to speak with an elder about their salvation or membership matters may do so. The reason not to give an “invitation” is that far too many people on the church rolls believe that they are saved because, after all, they made a “decision,” and they are living in one of these two groups.

Answer this question: Exactly what are you inviting the person to do?

The “invitation” system is a fairly modern practice. By “modern,” I mean in the last 160 years and in the last 85 years in most Baptist churches.

Study the history of the protestant evangelical church from the Reformation, the growth of true religion in Europe, through the founding of churches in America, and especially in the periods of revival in America, and you will **not find** what is practiced in most baptists churches today.

Study the preaching of George Whitefield and John Wesley, Asahel Nettleton and Charles Spurgeon and you will not find an “invitation” for people to make a “decision” and to come forward during the service. They did offer people an opportunity to speak with an elder of the church.

So where did this now common practice of an “invitaion” originate?

During the 1830s and 1840s, when Asahel Nettleton was having a harvest of souls through preaching of the gospel, along came CHARLES GRANDISON FINNEY.

Finney taught that a person had within themselves the ability to decide to be saved and only needed to be persuaded. That if you set the proper mood and made an emotional appeal, that a person could and would let God save them.

That method appeals to the flesh and it seems to get results, so Jim, what is the problem? The problem is that this allows a person to have confidence in their “decision,” something that they can control.

### **What to do?**

Preach that God is Creator and that all ideas of evolution are atheistic.

Preach that God is sovereign, that our God is in the heavens and He has done whatsoever He has pleased.

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Preach that every man woman and child were represented in Adam in his rebellion and because of the one sin of the one man, we are all condemned.

Preach the wrath of God against all ungodliness and unrighteousness.

Preach that by the law no flesh shall be justified but that by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Preach that God justifies the ungodly.

Preach justification by faith alone and not by deeds of the law.

Preach that you must be born again or you will not see the kingdom of God.

Preach that sin is covered only by the precious blood of Jesus.

Preach that Jesus and Him alone - not New Age Buddhism, not Judaism, not Islam – not Mary – preach that only Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and that no comes to the Father except by Jesus.

Preach that personal holiness is a necessary consequence of being justified.

When the Holy Spirit uses that message and a person is convicted of sin, and righteousness, and judgement, and in sovereign mercy the Holy Spirit shows them what Jesus has done for sinners: When such a person confesses faith in Jesus they will not be able to trust in their “decision.”

They will have died to sin; they are not under law, but under grace, and they will live as though they are under grace.

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### 1 John 3:1-9

3:1 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope in Him **purifies himself**, just as He is pure.

4 Whoever **commits sin** also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. 5 And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. 6 Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. 7 Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. 8 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 9 Whoever has been **born of God does not sin**, for His seed remains in him; **and he cannot sin**, because he has been born of God.