

ROMANS - #6

ANTIOCH BIBLE CLASS

LESSON TOPIC

DYING WITH CHRIST

SCRIPTURE TEXT: ROMANS 6:1-23

MEMORY VERSE: ROM. 6:5. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.

INTRODUCTION

The sixth chapter of Romans pronounces a strong emphasis on the truth about the righteousness of God being lived out in our “members”; (Members being such as our eyes, ears, mouth, heart, mind, hands, feet, etc.) He has just been dwelling on the marvel and the power of grace and its ability to cover our sins. Then he begins this chapter with a rhetorical question as to whether or not we should just keep on sinning since grace is sufficient to cover all our sins. His answer, of course, is that in no way should we do such. Then he proceeds with two major themes in the chapter.

Verses 3-6 compares the death, burial and resurrection of Christ to our own death (to sin), and burial (in water baptism) and to the new life we receive from the Holy Spirit to live. We have “died” to sin and therefore it should be obliterated from our bodies and all of its functions. Being dead we do not steal with our hands, lust with our eyes, gossip with our mouths or harbor evil of any kind in our hearts.

The rest of the chapter describes the condition of having crucified our old man and not being subject to the pursuit of sinful actions. The point of this is that grace has been given to us, individually, enabling us to get out of the sin business. There are no grounds by which you can justify a single sinful act while living under the influence of and by the grace of a Christian experience. They may be committed but they are not justifiable. When we as Christians fail the Lord and disobey his will in any manner, our recourse is repentance and begging for forgiveness, which he will grant. However, the idea that sin cannot or should not be identified and condemned is against everything that Christ purchased for us at calvary.

Therefore we are not to pursue, condone or practice sin in any of its subtle forms. We are to crucify our flesh with its affections and lusts because the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

DAILY SCRIPTURES AND COMMENTARY

MONDAY. ROM. 6:1-2. SIN IS FORBIDDEN!

SCRIPTURES.

V1. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2. God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

COMMENTARY

Shall we keep on living a sinful life so that grace can appear more gracious? Paul has declared the universality and all-inclusiveness of sin and its consequence. He has also declared that grace is greater than our sin; that is, God's enabling power is more than enough to enable us to overcome the lusts of the flesh and therefore we are inexcusable. That certainty and power of grace is unquestionable. The question that is raised is whether or not we can keep on sinning since grace is more powerful and is our free gift from God on an unmerited basis? The answer is, "GOD FORBID". After all what is this thing called salvation or deliverance if it is not a transformation of life from the old sinful ways to the new and righteous ways of God. What possible argument is there that can be sustained otherwise? Grace is not an excuse for sinning, grace is the enabler of righteous living. We discredit and bring reproach upon the grace of God by alluding in any way to the permissibility of freely continuing in sin just because grace is free and so sufficient. God provides grace sufficient that we may exercise faith in Christ and walk in the righteous pattern of Christ and not after the old man and his lusts.

TUESDAY. ROM. 6:3-7. "DEAD AND BURIED" PEOPLE DO NOT COMMIT SIN.

SCRIPTURES.

V3. Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 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. 5. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: 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. 7. For he that is dead is freed from sin.

COMMENTS.

These are some of the most powerful and practical scriptures there are relative to the subject of our salvation, its relationship with Christ and its impact upon our old sinful life. Altogether what they do is liken our salvation to the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. In that regard they are a perfect template of the process and effect of the saving grace of God upon our lives. These verses speak of our being "dead", "buried" and also "raised" up into a new life. These three components are each very specific actions of the plan of salvation in our lives. More than that, they emulate the precise components of Christ in his sacrifice and provision of our hope of salvation. To "die" with Christ connotes our repentance from our sins. By using the term "dead" as a representation for our repentance teaches the unequivocal cessation of a sinful life. By using the term "buried" as a representation for our water baptism, demonstrates the evidence of "death". You only bury dead

people, and likewise with water baptism, you only bury (baptize) those who have died to their former sinful life. The term “resurrection” used here represents the kind of life we are to live after we have “died and are buried”. It is a new life in Christ like his was after his resurrection from the grave. He was no longer subject to or in any way practicing the former lusts and sins of the “old man”. In other words, we have quit the sin business. To be sure, we can only live the “new life” by the power of Christ in us, otherwise we resort back to our old ways again. Paul’s argument in these verses is that we no longer serve sin. Instead of grace just covering over our sin it has given us a new life which is not to be subject to the sin influence.

WEDNESDAY. ROM. 6: 8-12. THE DOMINION OF SIN IN US HAS BEEN BROKEN.

SCRIPTURES.

V8. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: 9. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more: death hath no more dominion over him. 10. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. 11. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 12. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

COMMENTS.

Death has no more dominion over the one who has died. If that death be natural as a result of the sin and deterioration of the human body, then sin no longer reigns therein. If, on the other hand, it is spiritual by way of our surrender through faith in Christ and voluntarily dying unto our sinful past, then death has no more dominion over us. We now live a life based on faith in Christ and not on the human lusts and power of a carnal life.

Like Christ, we consider ourselves dead to the impulses of sin. Therein is the power of grace through faith. We could not stop sinning on our own strength and wisdom. That power comes from a risen Lord Jesus, transmitted to us through our faith and obedience to his word. Since grace has been extended unto us by our faith in Christ, we should not let sin reign in our mortal bodies anymore. This is the strongest possible directive that salvation from sin is not just some vicarious function but is a cessation of sin’s dominion in our “mortal body”.

THURSDAY. ROM. 6: 13-16. MEMBERS OF OUR BODY SHOULD NOT BE SERVANTS OF SIN.

SCRIPTURES.

V13. 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. 14. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. 15. What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. 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?

COMMENTS.

It is not the purpose of this lesson to discuss the various and numerous sins of humanity. A previous lesson entitled "A Catalog of Sins", addressed that subject to some degree. But this lesson does put emphasis on this thought by the injunction not to allow our "members" to be the servants of sin. By members we understand the various faculties and members of our body through which sin might be performed. These would include eyes, ears, tongue, heart, hands, feet, mind and so forth. Paul states that we should not yield our members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield ourselves unto God.

The practical application of this injunction against using our members for unrighteousness is that we should not steal, rob banks, commit adultery, gossip, hate, self righteousness, lie, covet and a host of evil propensities, all of which our hearts and minds are capable of conceiving and our "members" are capable of carrying out. We are (by faith in Christ) dead to ourselves and our old way of life. We do not desire to please our own lustful ways but instead we desire to please Christ and his blessed will in all that we are and do.

This raises again the old argument of "works", "legalism" and the like. This argument is raised by those who seek to apply a blanket of vicarious covering over human sins and call it "grace". But grace is not intended as a means to evade, avoid or cover our sins. It is intended as a free offer of God in Christ for us to believe in his atoning work (death, burial, resurrection) and thereby be delivered from our innate proclivity to perform sin. The bottom line is this: whatever is not of God is a sin and therefore we are, by his grace, delivered from its desire and practice. No man can deliver himself. But God, by his free gift of grace (mercy, forgiveness, love, etc) can deliver us from the lust and practice of sin, through faith in Christ. With God there is no tolerance for sin. However, with God there is plenteous mercy and love by which he will freely forgive us of our sin, if we repent of them. With God's provision of delivering us from our sins, we continue in them only if it is our desire to do so.

FRIDAY. ROM. 6:17-23. THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH.

SCRIPTURES.

V17. 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. 18. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. 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. 20. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. 21. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. 22. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. 23. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

COMMENTS.

Notice carefully the pattern of verses 17 and 18: You have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to you. Then, at that time and by that power, you were made free from sin and became the servants of righteousness. Thus becoming servants unto righteous living in Christ Jesus, holiness was the result. Holiness is not a claim, a denomination, a particular and peculiar culture or some self-imposed or religiously imposed practice of life. It is the by-product of our lives being transformed by grace through faith in Christ and obedience to “that form of doctrine which was delivered to you (by the preaching of the gospel)”.

Thus being delivered we are no longer the servants of sin to do those things which are not acceptable unto God. The end of those things is death. That is, he that continues doing sinful practices will reap death. As Christians we are delivered from sin. That, after all, is the whole purpose and scheme of salvation, to get us out of our sins.

So you have an item in your life that you love and don't want it referred to as sin, but don't know what to do with it? May I suggest that you simply search the scriptures and find ample, indisputable evidence that will either justify or condemn it? If you can't find scripture to support your life you are in trouble with God.

THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH! This is the summary of this chapter and of the Bible and of life itself. The full, complete and final pay day for sin is death.

SUMMARY

Two profound topics occupy this chapter, both of which are correlated with each other. One of these topics teaches us that the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, is the pattern and process of deliverance from sin. The other is that sin should not reign in our mortal bodies because we have been delivered from sin. These are the two themes of this chapter. The first six verses emphasize that the death, burial and resurrection of Christ is the mold for our own new life. They teach us about our repentance, our water baptism and our new life in and by the Holy Spirit. With a plan of salvation so distinctly patterned after the redemptive work of Christ, we are left with a frame work for salvation that should not be missed by the hungry seeker. It does not leave us to some simplistic mental profession but carefully guides us through the process of redemption, following the exact same pattern Jesus gave.

The rest of the chapter is given to thoughts about living our lives apart from sin. We are not to allow our members to be servants of sin, but instead, they are to be servants of (performers of) righteousness. Thus the entire chapter embraces and demands our obedience to the works of righteousness. By speaking of our “members” and thus bringing our entire bodies under the practice of righteous, holy living, we fulfill the plan of salvation by grace through faith.

The chapter concludes with the reminder that “the wages of sin is death and the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the power of grace as opposed to the power of sin.
2. How does the death, burial and resurrection of Christ portray our salvation?
3. What is meant by our members being servants of righteousness?
4. What is the relationship and work of grace and faith in our redemption?