

BIBLE STUDY NOTES

ROMANS 6:1-14

Introduction. Romans 6:1,2.

Verse 1.— The objection was raised that justification by grace through faith results in careless living. Under the Law actions were guarded to escape the punishment for disobedience. It was argued that under Grace the penalty is removed, and thus, careful living is no longer necessary. The more we sin, the more grace God will extend to free us from the penalty. Paul answers this objection by setting forth the doctrine of sanctification.

The distinction must be made between our standing and our actual state. When we are justified God declares us righteous in a legal sense. The condemnation of the Law is removed (the curse, Galatians 3:13), and Christ's perfect righteousness is imputed to us (Romans 4:11, 22-24.) Thus, as far as our standing, we are perfectly righteous before God, totally and forever freed from the penalty and guilt of sin.

Concerning our actual state, we are still in conflict with sin and will be as long as we are in these bodies of flesh. After Paul explained how God declares the sinner righteous by the operation of His grace, he goes on in this chapter to show how through God's grace we are made righteous in the practical real-life sense.

Verse 2.— "Let it not be so! We such as died to sin, how shall we still be living in it?" (more literal translation) Here Paul states the sum and substance of his answer to the objection. Those who have received Christ have died to sin. "The moment a man is dead he ceases to respond to stimuli. Coax him, command him, threaten him - no response, no reaction. The sphere in which he once moved is his sphere no longer. So plain in the physical realm, is it less plain in the spiritual where the genuine realities exist? Once sin was the sphere in which we moved and responded to all this power of sin. Then came grace - oh, what blessed grace so vastly greater than the sin! - and possessed our soul which then and there died to the sin and, being thus dead, ceased to live in it, ceased responding to it, the sin reached out to this dead one in vain." (Lenski)

I. "Know." Romans 6:3-9.

A. Identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection (verses 3-5).

Our intimate union with Christ is symbolized by our baptism. Here we must distinguish between the sign and the thing signified. Baptism is an outward sign of an inward reality, the reality being the application of Christ's atoning work to our hearts by the Holy Spirit. (regeneration, Titus 3:5) Thus, the sign and the thing signified are connected, but should be distinguished one from the other.

"Let us not separate what the Lord has joined together. We ought, in baptism, to recognize a spiritual laver; we ought in it to embrace a witness to the remission of sins and a pledge of our renewal: and yet so to leave both to Christ and the Holy Spirit the honor that is theirs, as that no part of the salvation be transferred to the sign." (Calvin)

The point is not the ceremony of baptism and how it should be performed, but what it signifies. The identification is twofold: negatively, death and burial; positively, resurrection.

Negatively - Death and burial.— (The word for buried "does not signify any particular form of disposal of the body, but designates the fact that the body has been disposed of as by a funeral." (Buswell) Thus burial means simply the confirmation of death.)