

Romans Chapter 6

Verses 1-14

The passion that Paul preached the gospel with led to him being accused of antinomianism. The word antinomianism comes from two Greek words, *anti*, meaning "against"; and *nomos*, meaning "law." So then, antinomianism means "against the law." Theologically, antinomianism is the belief that there are no moral laws God expects Christians to obey. Antinomianism takes a biblical teaching to an unbiblical conclusion. The biblical teaching is that Christians are not required to observe the Old Testament Law as a means of salvation. When Jesus died on the cross, He fulfilled the Old Testament Law, (Romans 10:4; Galatians 3:23-25; Ephesians 2:15). The unbiblical conclusion is that there is no moral law God expects Christians to obey. Antinomianism is contrary to everything the Bible teaches. God expects us to live a life of morality, integrity, and love. Yes, Jesus freed us from the burdens the commands of the Old Testament Law placed upon us, but that is not a license to sin. It is, in fact, a covenant of grace. We should strive to overcome sin and cultivate righteousness, and to do that we must depend on the Holy Spirit to help us. Here Paul's view that the increase of sin is met by an increase in grace leads to a question that Paul addresses straight away, and that question is, "*are we to continue in sin so that grace may abound (increase)?*" He immediately answers his own question with a resounding, No! Paul goes on to say that to continue in sin would be a contradiction to a Christians new identity in Jesus. As Christians we are defined by our union with Jesus in His death and resurrection. In light of this new identity Christians should refuse to let sin have authority over their lives which should now be focussed on God. In God we have the assurance that sin is no longer our master because we are no longer under the law but under grace.

Paul's point is that believer's are now united in all reality with Jesus in both His death and His resurrection and are, therefore, free from the sin that once held us captive. The replacing of sin as the master of our lives over God is impossible for the true believer.

In Vs.4, Paul cites baptism as the seal of our being ingrafted into Jesus and of our regeneration, our forgiveness and our adoption into God's family. Baptism was instituted by Jesus (Matt. 28:19-20) and is the sacramental sign (the outward visible sign of inward grace), of the New Covenant which is to be administered in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Using this sign, God seals His pledge to His elect that they are included in the covenant of grace. What is the covenant of Grace? It is 'Where the Eternal Covenant was made between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the Covenant of Grace is made between God and Man. This Covenant of Grace is where God promises eternal salvation to Man based upon the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. This is called a Covenant of Grace because it is initiated by God, due to no part and worthiness of man, and is unmerited favour received from God. In this covenant, Jesus would become man (John 1:1,18; Heb. 2:9), be the mediator of a better covenant (Heb. 8:6), and being under the Law (Gal. 4:4) fulfils the Law perfectly (1 Pet. 2:22). Therefore, the righteousness accomplished by Christ is given to the believer so that he has the righteousness that is not his own, but that of Christ (Phil. 3:9). The believer's responsibility is to have faith in the work of Christ (Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:8-9), a righteousness derived in the New Testament times by faith, just as it was in the Old Testament times (Rom. 4:1-11). The manifestation of the Covenant of Grace was progressively disclosed. It began in the Garden of Eden after Adam and Eve sinned and God promised a redeemer (Gen. 3:15), to Abraham the promise to bless the nations (Gen. 12:2-3), the covenant of the Ten Commandments given to the Israelites at Mount Sinai (Exodus 34:28), and believers in the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-37) which is fulfilled in Christ (1 Cor. 11:25).'

**Taken from the web site: CARM (Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry)*

In Vs. 6, the phrase "*our old self*", uses the Greek word 'palaiós' which doesn't refer to something old in years but something that is old and worn out. Our old self died with Christ and everything we were in Adam was nailed to the cross. Likewise the phrase "*body of sin*" refers to the sinfulness we were in which is brought to death on the cross.

Now, although we are redeemed by Christ and have a new nature that new redeemed nature is still encased in unredeemed flesh. Obviously when we become Christians our physical body doesn't die but our union with Jesus kills the role of the body as a means or vehicle of sin. Our bodies are now dedicated to Jesus to bear fruit in our service to Him. Our bodily passion for sin is now replaced with a bodily passion for righteousness and holiness through the Holy Spirit who lives within us. We are now a people who are not sinless, but a people who should sin less.

Paul goes on to expand this principle of our faith by explaining that our future resurrection is implied in our present participation in the risen life of Jesus. Jesus now "*lives to God*" Vs.10, and we too should consider ourselves dead to sin and alive in God.

In Vs.13, the word "*Instruments*", implies military use and signifies that we are to be devoted as priests, offering our bodies in allegiance to God. This is done in full awareness as a deliberate expression of our new identity with Jesus. In that identity we now live a life consecrated to God and therefore sin no longer has any claim over our lives.

Verses 15-23

Paul states in this passage that we are no longer under the law but under grace, but does that give us the right to do as we please? The answer is categorically no, we are under grace which means that God has reign over our lives which means that, as Christians, we have the freedom to obey God and give our lives in service to Him, we do not have the right to do whatever seems right to us. Our freedom is within the confines of God's will and as His children we should want to do what pleases God, and what pleases God is obedience and service to Him. This is our freewill as Christians, we choose to do the things that please the Father. His grace has given us freedom to be the children of God that we should be, it does not give us the right to do wrong, or anything that pleases us but doesn't please God.

In Vs.17, Paul highlights the believer's commitment to their new life and the new lifestyle that grace produces and that lifestyle is modelled for us in the gospel by Jesus and His life here on earth.

In Vs.19, Paul explores the contrast between the nature of sin and it's effect, to the new life of the believer. When we were unregenerate we lived in sin, and in sin a persons life only grows worse and that "*lawlessness leads to more lawlessness,*" however, the believer's life is lived in righteousness that "*leads to sanctification.*"

In his closing statement of this passage, Paul contrasts the wages of sin and death with the gift of God and eternal life. In effect sin pays the sinner the wages he earns, which is death. But God pays the sinner a wage he could never earn. To the person who repents and gives his life to God, God grants the free gift of His grace and bestows on us eternal life through the redeeming works of Jesus. This is the beauty of salvation, we have eternal life and liberty through the grace of God. Sin has it's own reward but God has given us this new life in which we should work to bring Him honour and glory. The cross cancels out sin and forgiveness cancels out eternal damnation. As God's people we should be looking to glorify our risen saviour by honouring God with a life of dedication and service to Him. A life that is pleased to do the will of our Father and our Lord, a life that is continually being sanctified by the Holy Spirit in our obedience to the will of God, and a life that is seeking less of our own desires but more of the desires of our king, our saviour and our God.