

ROMANS 5-8

ROMANS 6-7 | WEEK 2: DEC 13, 2015

ROMANS 6:1-7:6 (DEAD TO SIN ALIVE WITH GOD)

In 5:12-21 Paul does not explicitly spell out how believers have moved from the reign of sin to the reign of grace. That he must now do. But he must also dig himself out of a bit of a hole. If more sin resulted in more grace (5:20b), perhaps more sin is in order—as some seem to have thought Paul believed (3:8). Chapter 6 exposes the fallacy of this argument while describing how believers participate in the death of the Messiah that has inaugurated the reign of grace. Through that death they escape from the reign of sin and death (6:1-23) and even the Law (7:1-6).

QUESTIONS

This section divides neatly into two parts signaled by two similar rhetorical questions (6:1, 15), each followed by “By no means!” and “Do you not know...?”

- 1) *‘Should we remain in sin that grace may abound?’* (6:1, as the logical consequence of 5:20).
- 2) *‘May we sin because we are not under law but under grace?’* (6:15, as the sequel to the conclusion of 6:1-14 in 6:14).

ROMANS 6:1-14 Dying and rising with Christ

Shall we go on sinning that grace may increase? (6:1)

No: we have died to sin (6:2)

If baptized with into Christ, then buried with him into death to be raised with him (6:3–4)

If we share in his death we will share in his resurrection (6:5)

Our old self was crucified with him; thus we are no longer slaves to sin (6:6–7)

Death no longer has mastery over him (6:8–10)

Count yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus (6:11)

Do not let sin reign, but live as resurrected people (6:12–13)

Sin is no longer your master; you are under grace (6:14)

ROMANS 6:15-23 Slaves to righteousness

Shall we sin because we are under grace? No! (6:15)

Slavery to sin leads to death; slavery to obedience leads to righteousness (6:16–17)

You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness (6:18)

You used to offer your members to sin, which ends in death; now offer your members to righteousness, which ends in eternal life (6:19–23)

ROMANS 7:1-6 Freedom from Law

The law has authority over a person as long as that person lives (7:1)

Example: a woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives (7:2)

You died to the law through the body of Christ and now belong to him (7:4)

In the realm of the flesh, the law worked in us to bear fruit for death (7:5)

But dying to the law, we are released to serve in the Spirit, not the written code (7:6)

ROMANS 7:7-8:39 (IN THE SPIRIT, NOT IN THE FLESH)

Paul's third antithesis about the life of justification is the contrast between life in the flesh and life in the Spirit. 7:7-25 should be read with 8:1-39, not as descriptions of the 'defeated' and then the 'victorious' justified life, but as contrasting depictions of life before and after justification (inside and outside of Christ), like 5:12-21 and 6:1-23.

ROMANS 7:7-13 Is the law sinful?

The law is not sinful, but sin uses it to produce sin (7:7–8)

The law brought death because of sin (7:9–12)

The law names sin for what it is, so that sin becomes utterly sinful (7:13)

ROMANS 7:14-25 I am unspiritual

I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin (7:14)

I don't do what I want to do (7:15)

Good does not dwell in my sinful nature, so I cannot do good (7:15–20)

I delight in God's law, but I am a prisoner of sin (7:21–23)

Delivered by Christ (7:25)

Paul is using the "I" to speak representatively as a believer about the experience of those (Jews or all people) who were or are outside the Messiah. It is his perspective on unredeemed humanity seen through the prism of his redemption in Christ. More specifically, we may say that Paul's "I" is Adam, in the sense of 'everyone' living (cf. 5:12-14). Paul even alludes to Genesis 2-3 to tell the story of sin's entry into the human race (past tense, 7:7-13) and the ongoing consequences of its reign (present tense, 7:14-25). This condition of being 'in Adam' and enslaved to sin is also described as being "of the flesh" or 'in my/the flesh' (7:14, 18; 8:8-9). It finds its antithesis in being "in Christ" and therefore "in the Spirit" (8:1, 9-11).