

BIBLE STUDY SHIRLEY
June 2020
ROMANS CHAPTERS 6-8

Study 1 Chapter 6

- *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ² Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised 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 united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, ⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. ⁷ For he who has died has been freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹ knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. ¹⁰ For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹ Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³ And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. ¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.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? ¹⁷ But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. ¹⁸ And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. ¹⁹ I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness. ²⁰ For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. ²¹ What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. ²² But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit [\[9\]](#)to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"

Although we are confining this present study to just three chapters a little about the book of Romans might be interesting to those whom the book may not be too familiar. It has been called "the Constitution of Christianity" the "Christian Manifesto" In it are all the foundation truths of Scripture on which we must stand. It has been responsible for more change in the church than any other book.

John Calvin (a French lawyer and theologian of the 16th century) said ***"When anyone gains knowledge of this Epistle he has an entrance opened to him to all the most hidden treasures of Scripture."***

F.F.Bruce (British biblical scholar of 20th century) said ***"Time and again in the course of human history Romans has liberated the minds of men, brought them back to an understanding of the essential gospel of Christ, and started spiritual revolutions."***

Here are some examples of notable figures whose lives have been changed by the book

- 1. AUGUSTINE** In the year 386, a professor in the city of Milan, sat weeping in the garden of a friend contemplating the wickedness of his life. He was a brilliant but an immoral man. He heard a child singing in Latin “tolle lege tolle lege” meaning “pick up and read, pick up and read”. He thought at first that the song was related to a children’s, game but realising that the song might be a command from God to open and read the scriptures, he picked up his bible and read the first passage he saw. It was Romans 13:13-14 ***“Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil its lusts”*** He felt his heart was flooded with light and turned away from his life of sin to Christ. Later reflecting on his life Augustine wrote his famous prayer ***“You have made us for yourself Lord and our hearts are restless until they rest in you”***.
- 2. MARTIN LUTHER** 1000 years later a Roman Catholic monk of the order of Augustine named Martin Luther a professor at the University of Wittenberg in Germany was teaching his students from the book of Romans. As he studied the text he was struck by Romans 1 v 17 ***“For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”*** Justification by faith. Luther came to Christ and the Holy Spirit used this man to bring this glorious truth to the world. This is what Luther said of the Book ***“this is the chief part of the New Testament and the very purest gospel which indeed deserves that a Christian not only know it word for word by heart but deal with it daily as with daily bread to the soul for it never can be read too much or too***

well and the more it is handled the more delightful it becomes and the better it tastes”

3. **JOHN WESLEY.** A few hundred years later an ordained minister in the Church of England named John Wesley was preparing to go to America as a missionary. He was a preacher but confused, and was seeking a genuine conversion experience. On a Wednesday evening he attended a Bible study in London and heard some of Luther’s comments on Romans being read. He was converted. He “felt his heart strangely warmed” and with his brother was used by God to bring great revival to the world. Some historians assert that their conversions prevented the French Revolution from spilling over to England.
4. **WHAT OF US.** Are we praying for revival/spiritual awakening to come to the church? God has used this book over and over again and changed lives.

The essence of the book in a nutshell

In brief what is the essence of the book? It’s been described as the trial of human history. Mankind sits in the dock; Gods charge against us is this, you have all sinned and come short of my glory the wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life. The lawyer for the prosecution is arguing that you can pay off our debts by good works. He represents the law that is Law of Moses. The defendant’s lawyer, the apostle Paul, is arguing that only Christ can pay the debt we owe. Only by faith in His death and resurrection can we be saved and cause God the judge to pronounce us not guilty.

The Bible is quite clear salvation is by grace alone through faith alone and **“Without faith it is impossible to please God”**. No amount of effort on our part will succeed in pleasing God.

Speaking of pointless and futile effort to please God I'm reminded of an illustration I have used. Harry Houdini, the famous escape artist issued a challenge. He could be locked in any jail cell in the country he claimed, and set himself free quickly and easily. Houdini entered a jail in his street clothes; the heavy metal doors clanged shut behind him. He took from his belt a concealed piece of metal, strong and flexible. He set to work immediately, but something seemed to be unusual about this lock. For thirty minutes he worked and got nowhere. An hour passed, and still he had not opened the door. By now he was bathed in sweat and panting in exasperation but he still could not pick the lock. Finally, after labouring for two hours he collapsed in frustration and failure against the door he could not unlock. But when he fell against the door, it swung open! It had never been locked at all. But in his mind it was locked and that was all it took to keep him from opening the door and walking out of the jail cell. He had laboured under a misapprehension that his efforts would bring about his release from jail. Only God can bring us freedom from sin and death when our efforts have ceased and we have reposed our entire confidence in His work at Calvary. Jesus says in Revelation 1:18 ***"I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore Amen. And I have the keys of death and Hades"***

Chapter 5 in brief

To set the context for chapter 6 we shall have to look, albeit briefly, at part of chapter 5, where we read about sin entering into the world through Adam, resulting in death. Conversely Just as sin and death entered through one man, through one man's righteousness (Jesus) the free gift came to all men. Then we get that glorious verse (20) which reads ***"Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound but where sin abounded grace abounded much more"*** The law shut us up and we are without excuse, its function to declare us guilty before God, without hope, except in the Lord Jesus Christ and

His grace. Our works can't save us and we cannot keep God's law without the life of Christ.

Now into chapter 6

Now right away Paul is ready to anticipate his critics and asks this question “***What shall we say then? Shall we continue*** (meaning as an habitual way of life) ***in sin that grace may abound?***” If more sin means more grace let's go on sinning. Paul knew that at the opposite extreme some would misinterpret his assertion that “***Where sin abounded grace abounded much more***” to mean that sin glorifies God by causing his grace to increase. If that were true, they argued, men ought to sin, indeed they were obliged to sin in order for God to expand his grace. That was exactly the teaching of a man called Rasputin, the religious advisor to the Royal family in Russia in the late 19th and early 20th century. He taught what was called the Antinimian view of salvation. That is the more you sin the more God gives you grace. The more you sin with abandon the more opportunity you give to God to glorify Himself. People have believed these things and have introduced error into the church. They use the freedom of the gospel as justification for sin. Jude puts it this way in his little book. “***For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons, who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness, and deny our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ***”

To His question “***what shall we say shall we continue in sin that grace may abound***” Paul provides the answer, and almost in horror he exclaims “***Certainly not how shall we who died to sin live any longer in it***”. Now we have dealt with this in previous studies, but allow a little explanation. The person who is alive in Christ has died to sin, and so they can't live in sin from which they were delivered by death. Any person who has died to one kind of life cannot still live in it. Paul here is talking about a past event, a past death. Stand over a coffin and

look inside. The person has died to this world; it's impossible for him to live any longer in it. Death is permanent, Life and death can't exist together. Physical life can't coexist with physical death and spiritual life can't coexist with spiritual death. A person may not call himself or herself a Christian if he or she lives wilfully and habitually in sin. 1 John 3 v 9 ***"No one who is born of God practices sin because His seed abides in him and he cannot sin*** (that is keep on habitually sinning as a normal way of life) ***because he is born of God"***

Verses 3-10

When we were born we were born with a sin nature, the devil was our father. We were the illegitimate sons and daughters of Satan. When we came to Christ we were born again and we received His nature, God became our Father.

Paul says ***"Do you not know"*** Listen he says there are some facts you must know if you want to live victorious for Christ ***"Do you not know that as many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into His Death"*** Paul is not talking about water baptism. Look at 1 Corinthians 12 v 13 ***"For by one Spirit we were all baptised into one body whether Jews or Greeks whether slaves or free and have all been made to drink into one Spirit"*** That's not water baptism. The Holy Spirit takes us and plunges us by spirit baptism into the body of Christ. He immerses us in Christ, until we become one with him, a part of Him.

I have spent some time on the subject of baptism and would remind you that it is a recurring theme in the Bible. There are some hidden baptisms in the Old Testament pointing to this baptism which Paul here talks about. For examples of those hidden baptisms (a study in itself) we have, the flood, the crossing of the Red Sea, Naamans baptism, the Jewish baptism of Proselytes, and references to baptism in Isaiah and Ezekiel.

By baptism we become one with Christ, taken into God Himself. John says this in his Epistle ***“and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His son Jesus Christ”*** Paul says this in 1 Corinthians 6 v 17 ***“But he who is joined to The Lord is one spirit with him”*** Again Paul says in Galatians 3 vs. 27 ***“For as many of you as were baptised into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek there is neither slave nor free there is neither male nor female for you are all one In Christ Jesus”*** In John 15 Jesus says ***“I am the vine and you are the branches”***

Water baptism is the symbol of this wonderful truth. We are identified with Jesus in His death burial and resurrection. We are part of Him and His body, and because He died we died too, and because He lives we live too.

Verses 11-23

“Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”¹ We must believe this to be so because we cannot rise above our faith. If we are going to think of ourselves as sinners, sinning daily in thought word and deed, then we probably will. If we are not thinking rightly we are probably not acting rightly

“Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts” Paul sees sin (not sins which are the result of sin) as a tyrant whom we should thrust from our lives so righteousness might rule. Surely he is teaching that sin is a choice, not something caused by something dwelling in the depths of us. We have a new heart if we are born again. It's our responsibility to turn sin away whenever it seeks to regain the throne of our lives. In other words sin can be obeyed or disobeyed we have a choice, disobey sin and obey righteousness.

”And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. This is an act of the will under our control, not a mysterious force behind our will causing us to sin.

Presenting our bodies is a choice we have to make. Here we must go to Chapter 12 where Paul says ***this I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*** ² ***And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God***” This is described as “reasonable” service or worship, by no means impossible, on the contrary God has given us new hearts. Last study we considered this verse and asked the question what is the will of God. We identified this by looking at 1 Thessalonians 4:3 ***For this is the will of God, your sanctification***” If there is sin in our life we cannot say we are in the will of God. Better confess it, deal with it, and get back into His will and fellowship.

For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. We are not under the curse of the law which is condemnation and death but that doesn't mean that we as Christians are free from the obligation to obey the moral law of God. Christians are under grace, that is, they are motivated to keep the law's moral precepts by the love that God extends to us. Those under grace are free to obey; those under the law are slaves to sin.

Do then we grow in grace and how does that look. Peter says this 2 Peter 3:18 ***”but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*** Growing in grace surely implies maturing in the Lord as we better understand His character and ways and expectations for us. Holiness is walking in the light we understand with a right

intention of heart. As we gain more light, through our study of His Word and communion with Him, we gain a deeper walk in the Spirit. As our knowledge of God increases, we will always be growing in grace.

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? Now, either sin is our master or righteousness is our master, one or the other. We cannot serve both. Jesus made this clear

¹⁷ Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears

bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree

bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut

down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Therefore by their fruits you will know them. (Matthew 7:17-20).

¹⁷ But God be thanked that though you were (note past tense) slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart (note the heart) that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. We need to obey

from the heart, that is, with the right motive. Our motive for obedience to God is our love for God. The love of God enables us to perform all that He requires. This love empowered Jesus to become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Christ's time in the Garden of Gethsemane was overwhelming, but His delight in doing His Father's will encouraged Him to say, "***Not My will, but Thine be done***". Love, not fear is our motive.

. ¹⁸ And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of

righteousness. Wonderful words of Jesus in John 8:34-36 "***Most***

assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of

sin. ³⁵ And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son

abides forever. ³⁶ Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

¹⁹ I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness. It's as if Paul is berating them because they cannot see the obvious, which is they don't have to sin anymore. They have been set free. This is just milk, basic stuff for them, they are saints not sinners.

He continues in the next few verses to hammer home the points he has been making.

There we will leave it and move on to Chapter 7 next time