

Romans 6:1–23 — Dead to Sin, Alive to God

Introduction: Grace Misunderstood

Have you ever noticed how easily good news can be misunderstood? Grace is the best news imaginable, yet it is also one of the most abused doctrines in the church. When people hear that God forgives freely, that salvation is a gift, and that grace abounds where sin abounds, the natural question arises: *If grace is that powerful, does it really matter how I live?*

Paul anticipates that question, and in Romans chapter 6 he answers it directly. Grace does not give us permission to sin—it gives us power to live differently. Grace does not excuse the old life—it ends it.

Romans 6:1–2 — Grace Is Not a License

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?”

Paul begins with a firm and decisive answer. The idea that grace encourages sin is completely backward. Grace does not minimize sin—it crucifies it. If a believer has truly come to Christ, something decisive has already happened: we died to sin.

That phrase does not mean we are incapable of sin, but that sin no longer defines us, rules us, or owns us. A dead man is no longer under the authority of his former master. The believer’s relationship to sin has fundamentally changed.

Application

Grace never leads us deeper into sin—it leads us out of it. If grace has not changed the direction of your life, it has not yet been understood.

Romans 6:3–4 — Buried and Raised with Christ

“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 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.”

Paul points to water baptism as a picture of a spiritual reality. Going under the water represents burial—the end of the old life. Coming out of the water represents resurrection—the beginning of a new one.

Christianity is not self-improvement; it is new life. The old life dominated by the flesh has been laid to rest. The resurrection life of Jesus now defines how we live.

Application

Ask yourself honestly: am I trying to improve the old life, or am I learning to walk in the new one? Resurrection life is not something we visit occasionally—it is how we are meant to walk daily.

Romans 6:5–7 — The Old Man Crucified

“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. For he who has died has been freed from sin.”

The “old man” refers to who we were in Adam—defined by sin, driven by self, and ruled by the flesh. That person was crucified with Christ. Sin has not been improved; it has been dethroned.

Yet there is still a struggle. The flesh resists surrender. Even though its authority is broken, it still tries to reclaim the throne.

Application

Victory is not pretending the struggle does not exist—it is refusing to let the flesh rule. Each day we affirm by faith what God declares as true: the old life no longer owns us.

Romans 6:8–11 — Reckoning the Truth

“Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

“Reckon” is a faith word. It means to count something as true because God says it is true. We do not reckon because sin is inactive—we reckon because Christ is victorious.

Application

When temptation rises, we do not argue with it—we identify it. *That belongs to the old life, and that life is dead.* Then we turn our hearts toward God, trusting the life of Christ within us.

Romans 6:12–14 — Grace Brings Freedom

“For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.”

This is one of the most powerful promises in Scripture. Grace does not remove responsibility—it removes domination. Sin no longer reigns. Grace places us under a new authority, where obedience flows from life, not fear.

Application

If sin is ruling, grace is not yet ruling. Grace teaches us to say no to sin and yes to God, not by pressure, but by power.

Romans 6:15–19 — Everyone Serves Someone

“Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey...?”

No one is autonomous. Every life is shaped by allegiance. We either yield to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness.

Application

Daily choices shape spiritual direction. What we yield to grows stronger. What we deny loses influence. God calls us to wholehearted devotion, not half-hearted compromise.

Romans 6:20–23 — Two Outcomes, One Choice

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Sin pays wages. God gives gifts. Sin leads to emptiness, shame, and death. God gives life—freely, fully, and eternally.

That life was purchased when Jesus shed His blood on the cross, bearing our sin. And the resurrection declares that He is God, Savior, and Lord. Eternal life is not earned—it is received through Him.

A Challenge for Believers

If you have been living as though sin still owns you, it is time to step back into the freedom Christ secured. Yield yourself again—fully, joyfully—to God. Let your life be an instrument of righteousness.

An Invitation for Non-Believers

If you have never surrendered your life to Jesus Christ, hear this clearly: eternal life is a gift, not a reward. Jesus died for your sins. He rose from the dead. He is alive, and He calls you to come.

Turn from sin. Trust in Christ. Receive the gift of life.

“If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for Your grace that not only forgives, but transforms. Teach us to walk in the new life You have given. Strengthen us by Your Spirit, and may our lives bring glory to Jesus Christ, who died for us and rose again. Amen.