

BOB HALLMAN - THE EPIC LIFE

Dead or Alive?

Romans 6:1-14

2000

Introduction

One of the dangers of preaching salvation by grace in Christ alone is that there will always be a few who will pervert that grace of God to suit their wishes – usually manifested in two distinct and equally erroneous responses:

1. Some will think that grace gives them a license to sin

Jude 1:4 “For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.”

The Corinthian church was a good example of this kind of abuse.

2. Some will think that the potential abuse of grace must be curbed through laws and regulations

- a. They attempt to keep the Old Testament law (moral and ceremonial)

- b. They establish various man-made laws to curb the sinful nature

They insist that conformity to countless man-made regulations and ceremony is necessary for true godliness and is essential to counter man’s propensity to abuse God’s grace.

Although the intentions are good and even noble – to protect and bolster the pure gospel – the theology is unbiblical and the experience is miserable!

Illustration: Alcohol and our previous church “policy”

Paul anticipates the objections that his critics might have regarding salvation by faith in the free gift of God’s grace.

I The Two Responses to Grace

A. Go on sinning? **NO!**

Continue = Epimeno = “To remain or abide in”

It carries with it the idea of habitual persistence.

Paul is not talking about a believer occasionally falling into sin, but a believer who willfully sins as an established pattern of life.

Can a person who persists in a lifestyle of disobedience to God be considered a truly born again child of God?”

Paul emphatically states, “**No!**” = May it never be! Of course not! God forbid!

1 Jn 3:9 “No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God.”

1. We **died** to sin

Paul is not speaking of a daily dying, but is referring to a singular event that has taken place in the past.

Contrary to what some people believe, we aren't dealing with:

- a. A black dog/white dog scenario in our hearts
- b. Believers no longer have a fallen nature, but a new nature in Christ

Col 3:3 “For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.”

1 Peter 2:24 “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.”

Some have thought of the Christian life as merely a reformation of the old. This is not true. We are not part righteous and part sinful. The unbeliever is absolutely incapable of becoming righteous and pleasing to God.

The believer on the other hand has been made pleasing to God through Jesus Christ and his new nature is entirely godly and righteous. Yet he is not perfected or glorified, but he is already spiritually alive and holiness is at work in him. The new man will continue to grow in that holiness, no matter how slowly or falteringly, because, by its very nature, life grows.

2. We aren't to live in it any **longer**

It clear from Genesis to Revelation, that the life that has truly been transformed by the grace and power of God, is a life that is marked by a growing obedience to God reflected in a holy life. The person who persistently disregards Christ's Lordship and His standards of righteousness by disobedience to His clear commands, evidences that he has not yet come to know Jesus as Savior.

It is impossible to be alive in Christ and also still be alive to sin. It is not that the believer is totally without sin, but that from the moment of rebirth he is totally separated from the controlling power of sin.

Col 3:5, 9-10 “Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.”

[And] “Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.”

B. Stop sinning? **YES!**

1. The rational for the change is found in baptism

Don't you know = Agnoeo = "To be uninformed or ignorant."

Baptized = Baptizo = "To immerse or to submerge"

One of the strongest arguments for full immersion baptism

The importance of baptism is affirmed throughout Paul's' writings and is a clear command of the Lord for anyone who claims to be a believer (1 Cor 1:13-17; Eph 4:5). But Paul was not advocating salvation by water baptism; that would have contradicted everything he had just said about salvation by grace and not works in Romans 3-5. He is simply using the physical analogy of water baptism to teach the spiritual reality of the believer's union with Christ. Water baptism is the outward identification of an inward reality – faith in Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection.

a. We were **buried** with Christ into death

Having come under our new Champion, Jesus Christ, we are now identified as having actually died with Christ in His death.

Col 2:12 "having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead."

b. We were raised with Christ from the dead

Just as we had solidarity with Adam's sin, we now have solidarity with Christ's death and resurrection. So just as we died with Him, we also have been raised up with Him.

Eph 2:6 "And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus."

Col 3:1 "Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God."

c. We are to **live** a new life in Christ

Newness = Kainotes = Refers to newness of quality and character.

Just as sin characterized our old life, so righteousness now characterizes our new life. The Bible is filled with descriptions of the believer's new spiritual life.

We are said to receive:

1. A new heart – Ez 36:26
2. A new spirit – Ez 18:31
3. A new song – Ps 40:3
4. A new name – Rev 2:17
5. A new beginning – 2 Cor 5:17
6. A new nature – Gal 6:15
7. A new identity – Eph 4:24

2 Cor 5:17 "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"

II The Significance of Baptism

To support his position that we died to sin and are now alive in Christ, Paul employs the powerful metaphor of baptism which is an outward symbol of an inward reality.

A. If we have been **united** with Christ in His death

United = Sumphutos = “Planted together, or braches being grafted and bound together”

When Jesus died on the cross 2,000 years ago, something incredible happened: My old sin nature was crucified with Him, having been supernaturally united with Him on the cross!

1. We will be united with Christ in His **resurrection**

2 Tim 2:11 “Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with him, we will also live with him.”

Rom 8:11 “And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.”

a. Our old self was **crucified** with Christ

We know = Ginosko = “To know with absolute certainty”

Old self = Palaios = Not chronologically old. But “useless or worn out”

Our new life as Christians is not the result of a makeover or a renovation, but a new, divinely bestowed life that is Christ’s very own.

This crucifixion that Paul speaks of is not a present experience but a past event [aorist tense]. Paul is essentially saying, “As a believer in Christ, you are not the same person you were before salvation. You have a new life, a new heart, a new spiritual strength and a new hope that were not a part of your previous life.

Gal 2:20 “I have been crucified [perfect tense] with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

1. To do away with the **body** of sin

Do away with = Katargeo = It doesn’t mean annihilated. Rather, it means “useless, inoperative or paralyzed”

If the body of sin has been done away with, then “why does it still give me so much trouble?”

The tyranny and penalty of sin both in and over the Christ's life have been broken, but sin's potential for expression in our lives has not yet been fully removed. Our human weaknesses and instincts make us capable of succumbing to Satan's temptations when we live apart from God's Word and the power of the Holy Spirit. We are new, redeemed, holy creations temporarily trapped in unredeemed flesh.

Illustration:

Chuck Swindoll's army sergeant
Dysfunctional abusive father

The child leaves home and is no longer under the authority or supervision of his father, yet even as an adult he responds to his father in such a way as to indicate that the father still has power over his son.

2. To do away with the **slavery** to sin

Freed = Dikaioo = "To render just or innocent"

Paul does not teach that a Christian is no longer capable of sinning, but that he is no longer under compulsion to sin. For a genuine believer, slavery to sin no longer exists.

Rom 6:18 "You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness."

B. If we have been united with Christ in His death

1. We will also **live** with Christ

This applies not only to the future life we will share with Christ in His coming kingdom, but also in this life as well.

a. Who was raised from the dead

Knowing = Eido = "To perceive or understand"

Acts 2:24a "But God raised him from the dead ..."

b. Who cannot die again

Acts 2:24b "... freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him."

c. Who is no longer mastered by death

Mastery = Kurieuo = "To rule over or to have dominion over"

Rev 1:18 "I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades."

2. We are no long under the **mastery** of death

a. The death He died He died to sin once for all

He died to the penalty of sin by taking upon Himself the sins of the whole world.
He met sin's legal demand of all mankind who would put their faith in Him.
He died to the power of sin, forever breaking its power over those who belong to God through their faith in His Son
He achieved a victory that will never need repeating!

Heb 7:27 "Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself."

b. The life He lives He lives to God

III The Fruit Of Baptism

A. A new way of **thinking**

1. Count yourselves dead to sin

Count = Logizomai = "To take an inventory or impute to one's account"

Paul uses this word 19 times in this letter.

In this context, it means to "fully affirm the truth, or having an unreserved inner confidence in the reality of what the mind acknowledges.

This is not a psychological mind game that Paul is advocating. It is an acceptance of the realities proclaimed in the word of God and in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Until a believer accepts the truth that Christ has broken the power of sin over his life, he cannot live victoriously because in his innermost being he does not think it is possible.

2. Count yourselves alive to God in Christ Jesus

1 Cor 10:13 "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it."

B. A new way of **living**

1. Don't let sin reign in your bodies

Reign = Basileuo = "To rule"

The moment you were saved, you became a citizen of God's kingdom of righteousness, and simultaneously, aliens and strangers to Satan's realm of sin and death.

In the present life, sin will always be a powerful force for the Christian to reckon with. But it is no longer master, no longer lord, and it can and must be resisted.

Rom 7:18 "I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my [flesh] sinful nature.

For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.

Col 3:1 "Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God."

2. Don't obey its evil desires

Obey = Hupakouo = "To subordinate one's self to, or to heed"

Gal 5:24 "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires."

3. Don't offer the parts of your body to sin

a. As instruments of unrighteousness

Instruments = Hoplon = "A tool or weapon"

It is interesting to note that we can use our bodies for either constructive or destructive purposes.

Don't keep making the parts of your body (your tongue, hands, feet) available as tools of unrighteousness.

1. Mind – Ungodly thinking
2. Eyes – What you expose your heart to - Pornography
3. Tongue – gossip, slander and blaspheming
4. Hands – Hurtful actions
5. Feet – Inappropriate places you frequent

4. Offer the parts of your body to God

a. As those who have been brought from death to life

5. Offer the parts of your body

a. As instruments of righteousness

1 Peter 2:24 "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness."

We are to present our bodies (your tongue, hands, feet) as instruments of righteousness.

1. Mind – Phil 4:8 "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable- - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy-- think about such things."
2. Eyes – Job 31:1 "I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl."
3. Tongue – Eph 4:29 "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."
4. Hands – Col 3:23 "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men."
5. Feet – I Jn 1:7 "... walk in the light, as he is in the light ..."

Rom 12:1 "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-- this is your spiritual act of worship."

C. A new way of **yielding**

1. Sin will not be your master

The law demanded obedience, but grace supplies the will and the power to obey.

a. You are not under **law**

Rom 7:4-6 “So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God. For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death. But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.”

Gal 3:25 “Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law.”

Gal 5:18 “But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.”

b. You are under **grace**

Rom 3:24 “and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.”

Conclusion

So there are three appropriate responses to the information we’ve discovered in Rom 6:1-14:

1. Know that we have solidarity with Christ

In his death and resurrection and righteousness

The power of sin has been broken

2. Count yourself dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus

Reckon it to be true.

3. Offer your bodies as instruments of righteousness.