

# ROMANS INTO THE TEXT 6:1-23

## Dead to Sin, Alive in Christ

1 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2 By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? 3 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. 6 For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— 7 because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9 For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. 10 The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

11 In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. 13 Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. 14 For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

## Slaves to Righteousness

15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means! 16 Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? 17 But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. 18 You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

19 I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness. 20 When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. 21 What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! 22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:1-23

Apostle Paul has been hammering home the importance of being right with God by faith plus nothing. We cannot work our way to heaven. We all sin and fall short of the glory of God. We need help from the One who can and will make us right in His Son. All the work necessary to make us right with God has been accomplished for us, so no matter who you are the only way to please God is to accept His gift of grace by faith. Since this is the case, the natural progression of human thought is this: if it does not matter how I behave to make me right with God, then I might as well live however I want so His grace will all the more richly flow and save us from all the more evil.

Two words are key here: **identity** and **slavery**.

**Identity** - We have a new allegiance since our Lord has laid down His life to make us right with God we fully identify with Him in His death and resurrection and purpose to die to the ways of the world and **live a new life in Him**.

**Slavery** - We make practical choices every day to obey our Master and not our own wicked desires. We are not our own, we have been bought with the high price of His own blood, so we choose to die to evil and live to righteousness in Him. Positionally, we are already clean with God, but practically we still make tough choices to follow Him.

Often well meaning believers confuse justification (we are already clean with God, once and forever, by faith in Jesus) with sanctification (the process of choices we make by His grace to grow in the likeness of His Son). Paul is not saying we are practically dead to sin (see Romans 7!), but we have identified with our Master and our new position, identity and relationship by faith in His grace makes sin no longer a viable master. Jesus Christ is now our new Master and evil is no longer our friend, but our constant nemesis. So what do we do now with sin? We count ourselves dead to sin and offer ourselves to God as His slaves, over and over and over again.

1. OK. You have one particular sin in your life that troubles you more than any other. List the natural/godless ways to deal with (or not deal with) the problem.

2. How can you, practically speaking, really count yourself dead to sin and alive to God?

3. In light of this passage, how can and should we encourage one another to "become slaves to God"?