

THE BOOK OF ROMANS



7. Free to Live Righteously

Introduction

In the first five chapters of the book of Romans the Apostle Paul has explained God's plan of salvation. He began by showing that all men and women are sinners, both Jews and Gentiles, and that we can only be made righteous by faith in Jesus Christ. At the end of chapter 5 he writes, "But where sin increased, grace increased all the more." However Paul knew that this could be misunderstood and so in chapter 6 he answers two questions that were in people's minds. Let's look at these questions and answers.

Scripture Reading: Romans 6:1-23

- ⊗ What are the two questions that Paul raises in chapter 6? See verses 1 and 15. In what ways do people think like this today? Discuss.

(The first question: "Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?"

The second question: "Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace?"

Sometimes people think that because they are now under God's grace their sin is covered, and so they treat sin lightly. Paul says they have failed to understand the true meaning of grace.)

The answer to both questions is, "no"! Although we have been saved by grace, it does not mean we should go on sinning or treat sin lightly. Paul gives two reasons to show why we should not go on sinning, using illustrations.

- ⊗ The first illustration is taken from water baptism in verses 1 - 10. Why should we no longer live in sin according to verse 2?

(The reason is simple – we have died to it.)

- ⊗ What is the meaning of baptism and how does this help us understand that we are set free from sin to live righteous lives?

- ⊗ The second illustration Paul gives is taken from the picture of a slave and his master in verses 15 – 23. What is the relationship between a master and his slave? What rights does a slave have? Why does Paul use this illustration do you think?

(The master 'owns' the slave and he can use him at any time of the day or night. The slave has no rights of his own. Paul uses this illustration to show that now we totally belong to God, and we should never yield ourselves to sin because it is no longer our master.)

- ⊗ What is the condition of a person who is a slave to sin compared to the one who is a 'slave' of righteousness? Romans 6:19-22

(The person who is a slave to sin will be increasingly drawn to wickedness, which brings shame and death. However if we are slaves to righteousness it leads to holiness and eternal life.)

- ☉ In chapter 6 there are 3 truths that can help us live righteous lives. What are the truths in verses 11 and 12? What do these verses mean?
- ☉ Sometimes we try to justify our sinful behaviour by saying, “Well I am like that. I can’t change.” Why is this attitude wrong and how do these verses help us?

(We need to understand why we are forgiven! It is so we can live a righteous life. Then we need to know that sin no longer has power over us – we can change with the help of the Holy Spirit. We need to want to change, and not to just accept or tolerate that sinful behaviour anymore.)

- ☉ The third truth is in verse 13. What must we do according to verse 13? What does this mean?
- ☉ Which part of your body causes you to sin the most? Your mind, your mouth?? How can you offer that part of your body to God?

Conclusion

We have been saved by God’s grace. This is a wonderful truth, but as Paul shows, it can be misunderstood. It was then, and it is today. Now we are saved by grace, we are set free from the bondage of sin to live righteous lives. There is a little song that says, “I’m free, I’m free, I’m free to be the servant of the Lord.” This is the truth we learn in Romans 6.

