

EXPLANATION OF 45TH BIBLEBOOK

ROMANS 6:1-14 (April A.D. 67)

INTRODUCTION

Romans chapter 6 emphasises the moral state of a Christian in Christ. Romans 6:1-10 is doctrine about what a Christian ought to believe. Romans 6:11-16 is an exhortation about how a Christian ought to live. And Romans 6:17-23 is an encouragement for the progress already made. This is a good pattern how to build other people up.

Romans 1:16 says that the gospel is “the power of God for the salvation” of everyone who believes. Romans chapter 3 to 5 teaches “the power of God to save or to justify” the believer in Christ. Romans chapter 6 teaches “the power of God to sanctify or make holy” the believer in Christ”. While Romans 5 speaks of the Christian’s *legal state (or position)*, *that is, he has been justified once-for-all*, Romans 6 does not speak of the process of sanctification, but of the Christian’s *moral state (or condition)*, *that is, he has been made holy once-for-all*. Thus, the gospel is God’s power to justify (establish the Christian’s legal state or position)(chapter 1-5) and God’s power to sanctify (establish the Christian’s moral state and style)(chapter 6-7). *The Christian’s legal position is inseparable from his moral condition and consequent lifestyle*. Only such a position can lead to a continuing process of sanctification.

Possible titles for Romans chapter 6 are:

- The Christian’s position and process of growth (or his state and style of life).
- Christian salvation leads to genuine change of life.
- The legal state of justification is inseparable from the moral state of holiness.

OUTLINE

Theme. The Christian’s moral state (condition) in Jesus Christ.

The Christian once for all received a sanctified state (*set apart from sin and dedicated to righteousness*) and can make progress in sanctification (holy living).

- (I) 6:1-14. The new state and the new style of the Christian.
- a. The death and resurrection of Christ terminates a contradiction in human thinking and living (6:1-2).
 - b. Solidarity with the death of Christ gives the Christian a new legal state (position) (6:3-4a).
 - c. Solidarity with the resurrection of Christ gives the Christian a new moral state (condition) and life-style (6:4b-5).
 - d. Solidarity with Christ makes righteousness (justification) and holiness (sanctification) inseparable (6:6-7).
 - e. The conquering Christian continually bears his state and style in mind (6:8-11).
 - f. The conquering Christian is saved more and more (6:12-13).
 - g. The conquering Christian lives under grace and no longer under the law (6:14).

EXPLANATION

(I) 6:1-14. The new state and the new style of the Christian.

The context. Paul argues that it is impossible for a Christian to continue to live in sin.

- a. The death and resurrection of Christ terminates a contradiction in human thinking and living (6:1-2).

6:1. What shall we say (vifa), then? Shall we go on sinning (remain in sin)(vspa) in order that grace may increase (vsaa)?

6:2. May (this) not be (voad) (i.e. By no means)! We who *once for all* died (viaa) to sin; how can we live (vifa) in it any longer?

Some people think that you can be a Christian without having to live a holy life! They think that it is possible to have a state of righteous in Christ (justification, forgiveness of sins) without a state of holiness (sanctification, living a holy life). They think that the sins of a Christian can be forgiven and yet that the Christian may continue to live in sins! The apostle Paul teaches that this is impossible!

The Legalists. In Rome, the religious party of Legalists falsely taught that a person is justified by doing the works of the law. And the religious party of Antinomians falsely taught that the law was given with the purpose that a person should sin more.

The apostle Paul rejected both false teachings. Against the Legalists, Paul taught that a person is justified, not by doing the works of the law, but by the grace of God and through faith in Jesus Christ (chapter 5). And against the Antinomians he taught that a person ought to apply and live out the law.

The Antinomians. Romans 5 closed with the statement that “The law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more” (5:20). A particular group of people, called the Antinomians (which literally means ‘the people who are against the law’), developed a false doctrine out of this. They falsely taught, “God gave the law with the purpose that people should sin more.” And they falsely taught that: “The more people sinned, the more God would be glorified by showing his grace to people.”

Therefore, they concluded that people must be encouraged to sin more and more. They said, “Let us go on sinning, so that God’s grace may increase!” This teaching is obviously a false teaching, which distorts the biblical doctrine of grace.

What Paul meant to teach in Romans 5:20 was that the written Law of Moses makes a person aware of what ‘sin’ is and consequently more and more conscious of his own sin. But by meditating on the death and resurrection of Christ he also becomes more and more aware of God’s grace that dealt with his sins. As a matter of fact, he will see that grace is much more powerful than sin, because God not only forgives sins, but also creates a new (righteous and holy) life that brings eternal life (5:21)!

Antinomians stressed the work of God, but ignored the responsibility of man. The Antinomians stressed the completed work of Christ to the extent of rejecting the need of people to be regenerated, converted and sanctified. Although it is true that Christ *acquired* complete salvation for Christians, they falsely believed that Christians had to do nothing.

Antinomians stressed the grace of God to the extent that they rejected the law. They falsely believed that Christians are only ‘under grace’ and therefore they have nothing to do with the law. They falsely taught that the good works, which the law commands, were not required of Christians. They also falsely taught that the evil works of Christians, which the law forbids, would be graciously ignored. The Antinomians falsely believed that all evil deeds of Christians belonged to their *old nature*, which would not inherit salvation and therefore did not matter at all.

Refutation of this false doctrine. Paul abhors the argument that the forgiveness of sins gives a person a licence to go and sin even more! The apostle Paul also rejected this false teaching. Against the Antinomians, he taught that a person who is justified by grace through faith must still live his new life according to the moral law (the Ten Commandments) (chapter 6). He must still live the new and holy life. Paul taught that the law is not *the means* of gaining righteousness or salvation (as the Legalists believed), but the law is *the standard* according to which the righteous or saved people live their new and holy lives.

Paul taught that the doctrine of the Antinomians is a contradiction. It is a contradiction to suppose that any person should come to Jesus Christ to be delivered from sin, in order that he may continue to live in sin. If a person’s sinful nature died in solidarity with Christ, how can he continue to live in sin? The unity between the Christian and Christ is of such a nature that continuing to live in sin is as big a contradiction as being a living-dead person (a living corpse)! Because the unity with Christ is the only source for a righteous and holy life, it cannot at the same time be the source of an unrighteous and unholy life! When a Christian has been forgiven and set free from the consequences and power of sin, it is impossible for him to continue to live in sin!

The apostle Paul’s argument against the Antinomian distortion of the doctrine of grace is that the acquisition of salvation by Jesus Christ does not exclude the application of salvation by Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ *merited* salvation by his sacrificial death on the cross. However, Jesus Christ also *applies* this salvation to people through the Holy Spirit by regeneration, by conversion and faith in the gospel, and by obedience to the moral law. *Paul argues that righteousness (justification) can never be separated from holiness (sanctification).* The *legal state* of righteousness (justification) and *the moral condition* of holiness (sanctification) belong inseparably together. The person, who shares in the benefits of Christ’s death, also shares in the benefits of Christ’s resurrection. *Jesus Christ imputes justification and imparts sanctification.* *Salvation may never and can never be separated from living the new and holy life!*

b. Solidarity with the death of Christ gives the Christian a new legal state (position) (6:3-4a).

6:3. Or don’t you know (to be ignorant)¹ (vipa) that as many² of us who were *once for all* baptised³ (viap) into⁴ Christ Jesus were *once for all* baptised (viap) into⁵ his death.

6:4a. We were therefore *once for all* buried (viap) with him through baptism⁶ into (the state of) death

The physical death of Jesus Christ *two thousand years ago* has great consequences for the believer in Jesus Christ *today!* Faith in the death of Jesus Christ gives the Christian a new state (position) in God’s presence! He is completely justified. God has declared him perfectly (100%) righteous (forgiven) and henceforth regards and treats him as perfectly righteous in his eyes!

The real Christian baptism is the baptism with the Spirit⁷! The baptism with the Spirit is another term for regeneration by the Spirit⁸. While baptism with the Spirit is the reality, baptism with water is a sign and a seal (cf. 4:11) which God gives to the Christian that he has been baptised with the Spirit. Thus, the baptism with water is the sign (symbol) and seal (sure guarantee) of the baptism with the Spirit⁹.

¹ G: agnoeó

² G: hosoi

³ G: baptizó

⁴ G: eis

⁵ G: eis

⁶ G: baptisma

⁷ Mark 1:8

⁸ Matthew 3:11-12; John 3:3-8; Acts 11:14-18; 15:7-9; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Ephesians 1:13; Titus 3:4-8

⁹ Acts 10:47-48

*But baptism with water is not the topic in Romans chapter 6, because a baptism with water by human hands never accomplishes regeneration! The topic in Romans chapter 6 is baptism with the Spirit. Only the baptism with the Spirit by Jesus Christ accomplishes regeneration*¹⁰.

Through the baptism with the Spirit the *physical* death and *physical* resurrection of Jesus Christ two thousand years ago also becomes the effective *spiritual* death and *spiritual* resurrection of the believer in Christ today. Through the baptism with the Spirit into Christ Jesus (6:3)¹¹ the Christian has been brought into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, especially with his death. The person who believes in Jesus Christ is (through the Holy Spirit) united to Christ's death and therefore has died to the legal consequences of sin (the condemnation and punishment of sin) (6:7). He has died to the moral consequences of sin (the power or enslavement of indwelling sin and the pollution or defilement of indwelling sin and sin of this evil world) (6:6).

And he has died to the demonic consequences of Satan (Satan has been bound by Christ at his first coming and no longer has any legal right, authority or power to continue to possess, harm or control a person)¹².

What is the meaning of Christian baptism? Whenever you read the word 'baptism' in the Bible, you ought to determine whether the Bible speaks of *the baptism with the Spirit* or *the baptism with water*¹³. The baptism with the Spirit is when the Holy Spirit is poured from above over or onto a person and he is consequently born-again¹⁴. The baptism with water is when another Christian pours water from above over or onto the new believer¹⁵ as a sign and seal from God that this person has been baptised with the Spirit¹⁶.

The following passages in the New Testament speak about the baptism with the Spirit: Matthew 3:11b; Mark 1:8b; 16:15-16; Luke 3:16b; John 1:33b; Acts 1:5; 11:16; Romans 6:1-8; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Galatians 3:26-29; Colossians 2:11-13 and Ephesians 4:5.

And the following passages in the New Testament speak about the baptism with water: Matthew 3:11a; 28:19; Mark 1:8a; Luke 3:16a; John 1:33a; 3:23; 4:1; Acts 2:37-41; Acts 22:16 and Acts 10:47-48.

In Romans 6 the apostle clearly speaks about the baptism with the Spirit and not about the baptism with water, because people can only be united to Christ and to all the phases of his work as Mediator by the baptism with the Spirit¹⁷ and not by the baptism with water¹⁸. The phases of his work as Mediator are his death, resurrection, ascension and enthronement and these are applied to the believer throughout history through the baptism with the Spirit (regeneration, rebirth). The baptism with the Spirit really brings about a union with Christ himself (6:3)¹⁹, a union with the Body of Christ (the Church)²⁰ and a participation in all the privileges in Christ: immediate justification (6:7), continual sanctification (6:4-6) and final glorification (8:29-30).

Union with Jesus Christ himself cannot be separated from union with his accomplished work. Union with his death can also not be separated from union with his resurrection.

Baptism with the Spirit causes solidarity with the death of Christ. Romans 6:3-4 and Colossians 2:12 teach that Christians that were "baptised (with the Spirit) into Christ Jesus" were "baptised into his death". Their burial with Christ is proof of the reality of their death. While baptism with the Spirit (regeneration by the Holy Spirit) *causes* spiritual union with the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, baptism with water *signifies* that the baptism with the Spirit has taken place and that the believer has been spiritually united to Christ's death and resurrection.

The tenses of the verbs in Romans 6:3-4²¹ show that Christians have *once-for-all* died spiritually in their past history and were buried spiritually. They are as effectively shut out of the realm of sin, the sinful world and the kingdom of Satan as a dead person in a grave is shut out from human life. Thus, they are once-for-all forgiven and justified. The tense of Romans 6:5²² shows that this forgiveness or justification is a continuing present reality.

Baptism with the Spirit also causes solidarity with the resurrection of Christ. The argument of Romans 6:5 is that the Christian's intimate spiritual union (solidarity) with Christ's death and burial cannot be separated from his intimate spiritual union (solidarity) with Christ's resurrection. *Just as it is impossible to separate Christ's resurrection from his death, so it is impossible to separate the Christian's state of holiness (sanctification) from his state of righteousness*

¹⁰ Matthew 3:11-12; John 1:12-13; 3:3-8; 8:36

¹¹ Ephesians 1:13

¹² Matthew 12:28-30; Colossians 1:13; 1 John 4:4; 5:18; Revelation 12:10-12

¹³ Mark 1:8

¹⁴ Acts 11:14-18; 15:7-9; 1 Corinthians 12:13

¹⁵ Mark 1:5,8; Acts 22:16

¹⁶ Acts 10:47-48

¹⁷ John 3:3-8

¹⁸ Acts 19:1-7

¹⁹ Galatians 3:26; cf. Ephesians 1:13

²⁰ 1 Corinthians 12:12-13

²¹ G: aorist

²² G: perfect = perfectly completed present tense

(justification)! The whole discussion in Romans 6 revolves around the necessary connection between the Christian's legal state of righteousness (justification) and the Christian's moral condition of holiness (sanctification).

The Christian's resurrection with Christ in Romans 6:5 refers primarily to the Christian's resurrected (born-again) life *here and now on earth* and secondary to the Christian's resurrected physical body in the *future*. The death of Christ as a sacrifice of atonement for sins is necessary and certain for justification. Likewise, the resurrected life of Christ is necessary and certain for holiness. Christians *shall* more and more be conformed to Christ in a holy life here and now on earth (8:29). And finally Christians *shall* be completely conformed to Christ in a life of glorious immortality of soul and body hereafter²³!

What is the mode of Christian baptism with water? It is very important to note that Romans 6:3-5 does NOT speak about baptism with water, but about baptism with the Spirit! It is also very important to note that while *the meaning* of baptism with water is clearly taught in the Bible, *the method* of baptism with water is NOT taught, commanded or prescribed in the Bible! What does the Bible teach and relate about the baptism with water?

The meaning of baptism does not teach or prescribe the method of baptism. 'The baptism', with which Jesus and his disciples were baptised in Mark 10:38-39, refers to their hardships and sufferings. This 'baptism' does not refer to the baptism with the Spirit or the baptism with water. Nevertheless, even in this baptism Jesus and his disciples were not 'immersed' by someone into these hardships and sufferings, but were rather '*overwhelmed*' by these hardships and sufferings.

Being baptised with the Spirit means: 'to be made to drink the same Spirit' or 'to be imbued with' the same Spirit²⁴. But this does not mean that the method of baptism with water should be by *drinking* something.

Being baptised with the Spirit means 'to be clothed with Christ'²⁵. But this does not mean that the method of baptism with water should be by *putting on a baptismal robe*. It is not forbidden to put on a baptismal robe, but it is certainly not taught, commanded or prescribed!

Being baptised with the Spirit means 'being spiritually circumcised'²⁶. But this does not mean that the method of baptism with water should be by *physically circumcising* a person.

Being baptised with the Spirit means 'being united to Christ's death on the cross' or 'being crucified with Christ' (6:3). But this does not mean that the method of baptism with water should be by *crucifying* a person.

Being baptised with the Spirit means: 'growing (as a plant) together with what is like the death of Christ' (6:5). But this does not mean that the method of baptism with water should be by *literally expressing* the death of a plant.

Being baptised with the Spirit means 'dying and being buried with Christ and being resurrected with him' (6:4). But also in this case this does not mean that the method of baptism with water should be by *immersing* a person in water or by *burying him under* a pack of soil before bringing him up from under the water or from under the soil!

Baptising with water in the Bible is connected to the purification rites of the Old Testament. Luke 11:38 says: "But the Pharisee, noticing that Jesus did not first *wash* before the meal, was surprised." The Greek text literally says: "But the Pharisee, noticing that Jesus did not first *baptise*²⁷ before the meal, was surprised." Thus while Matthew 15:2 and Mark 7:2-3 use the word *to wash down*²⁸ the hands, Luke uses the word *to baptise* the hands. The *baptism* (washing) of hands was done by *pouring water from above on or over* the hands²⁹!

The disciples of Jesus³⁰ and John the Baptist baptised people with water. There arose a dispute between the disciples of John and a Jew about the Jewish purification rites³¹. This ritual was called 'the proselyte baptism'. When a non-Jew desired to join Judaism, he took a bath (by pouring water over himself)³²; he was circumcised; and he promised to keep the law. The argument was probably that the disciples of John the Baptist accorded the baptism of their teacher, John the Baptist, greater purification significance than the proselyte baptism of the Jews and the baptism which the disciples of Jesus performed. They could not understand why more people went to Jesus to be baptised. The baptising with water³³ of John the Baptist and of Jesus was here connected to the Jewish purification ritual³⁴.

²³ 1 John 3:1-3; Philippians 3:21; 1 Corinthians 1:42-44

²⁴ 1 Corinthians 12:13

²⁵ Galatians 3:26-27

²⁶ Colossians 2:11-12

²⁷ G: baptizó

²⁸ G: niptomai

²⁹ 2 Kings 3:11

³⁰ John 3:1-6; 4:1-2

³¹ G: katharismos. John 3:25

³² G: baptisma. Hebrews 6:2

³³ G: baptizó. John 3:23,26

³⁴ John 3:25

Baptising with water in the New Testament is connected to the baptism with the Spirit. Christ's institution of baptising with water³⁵ is *the visible sign and seal of being baptised with the Spirit*³⁶.

And baptising with the Spirit in the Bible is depicted as follows: the Spirit was *poured out from above on or over* people³⁷; the Spirit from above *came on or literally fell upon* people³⁸; and the gift consisting of the Holy Spirit was *received from God (above)*³⁹. Because the baptising with water is the visible sign and seal of being baptised with the Spirit, the baptising with water is best illustrated by *pouring water from above on or over* the new believer. This was actually the method by which the apostle Paul was baptised in the New Testament⁴⁰!

Baptising with water in the Bible was not by immersion under water. John the Baptist came, baptising people *in* the desert region. There he baptised people *in* the Jordan river *with* water⁴¹. In both cases the word 'in' does not refer to 'immersion' in the sand of the desert or in the water of the Jordan. The Bible gives no detailed description of the method of baptism with water. People who were standing on the bank of the river probably stepped into the water. While they remained standing in the water, John baptised them with water by pouring water from above on or over them.

Also Jesus was baptised with water *in* the Jordan River. After his baptism he 'came up *out* of the water'⁴². This is an indication of the place where Jesus was baptised, not of the method by which he was baptised. He did not come up from below the surface of the water, but out of the river onto the bank. He was not baptised with water by immersion. He was also not immersed in the Spirit, but the Holy Spirit descended visibly as a dove *from above onto* him⁴³.

The evangelist Philip baptised the eunuch with water at a place where, according to the Greek original text, there was *some water*⁴⁴. Just as above, *both* the evangelist Philip and the eunuch stepped from the bank of the water *into* the water and then Philip baptised him *with* water. Also this baptism was not by immersion, because if it was by immersion, then it would mean that both Philip and the eunuch had descended (were immersed) below the surface of the water, that the baptism took place under the surface of the water and that they both afterwards ascended (emerged) from below the surface of the water! The words in the Bible cannot be understood in that way! *They did not go under the water, but stood in the water when Philip baptised the eunuch.* How he was baptised (by sprinkling or by pouring or with how much water) is not specified. After the baptism they *both* stepped *out* of the water onto the bank.

In just one day about three thousand new believers were baptised with water in Jerusalem⁴⁵! Of course this was possible. But was there enough water in Jerusalem to baptise all of them by immersion? Maybe this was possible at the pool of Bethesda or Siloam. Nevertheless, there is not a single indication in the Bible that the apostles deviated from the standard Old Testament practice of purification by *sprinkling or pouring water from above on or over* the people!

The baptism of the apostle Paul took place *in a house*. Paul was certainly not baptised by immersion under water somewhere in the house⁴⁶, because he *stood and called* on the name of Jesus Christ when he was baptised. Acts 22:16 says: "What are you waiting for⁴⁷ (vipa)? Stand up⁴⁸ (vraa), be baptised⁴⁹ (vmam) and wash away your sins⁵⁰ (vmam) by calling on his name⁵¹ (vram)." The water was sprinkled on or poured from above over Paul. His baptism signified that all his sins were *washed off or washed away*, that is, that he was completely justified in the eyes of God.

Baptism with water depicted on wall paintings in Rome (archaeological evidence). Paintings on walls in the catacombs of Rome (2nd century A.D.) show two men *standing with their feet in water while the one pours water from above on or over the other*. Thus, archaeological evidence shows that people were not baptised by immersion under water.

Conclusion. The method or manner of baptising a new believer by *immersion* into water cannot be derived from the Greek word 'baptizó' or from the contents of the Bible. Baptising with water by immersion is not taught, prescribed, commanded or even depicted (related) in the Bible. Nevertheless, because a particular method of baptism with water is

³⁵ Matthew 28:19

³⁶ Acts 10:44-47; 11:15-17

³⁷ Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17,33; 10:45

³⁸ Acts 8:16; 10:44; 11:15-16

³⁹ Acts 2:38-39; 5:32; 8:15-17; 11:17; 15:8; 19:2; Galatians 3:2

⁴⁰ Acts 22:16

⁴¹ Mark 1:4-5,8

⁴² Mark 1:9-10

⁴³ Mark 1:10

⁴⁴ Acts 8:38-39

⁴⁵ Acts 2:41

⁴⁶ Acts 9:10-11,17-18

⁴⁷ G: ti melleis

⁴⁸ G: anastas

⁴⁹ G: baptizó

⁵⁰ G: apolouó

⁵¹ G: epikaleó

not taught, prescribed, commanded or even forbidden in the Bible, baptising people by immersion under the water is quite legal.

c. **Solidarity with the resurrection of Christ gives the Christian a new moral state (condition) and life-style (6:4b-5).**

6:4b. in order that, just as Christ was *once for all* raised (viap) from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we *once for all* may live (walk)(vsaa) in newness of life.”

6:5. For if we have effectively become (vira) grown together (united)⁵² in the likeness of his death, we will *certainly* also become (vifd) (grown together in the likeness) of the resurrection.

The physical resurrection of Jesus Christ *two thousand years ago* also has great consequences for a believer *today!* Faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ gives the believer a new state (condition) of holiness and a new life-style called sanctification on earth. He is able to live the new and holy life.

Through solidarity with the resurrection of Jesus Christ the *physical* resurrection of Jesus Christ two thousand years ago also becomes the effective *spiritual* resurrection of Christians today⁵³. It finally results in the *physical* resurrection of Christians at Christ’s second coming⁵⁴.

Solidarity with the death of Jesus Christ is inseparable from the solidarity with the resurrection of Jesus Christ. A person who is united to Christ in his death is certainly also united to Christ in his resurrection! There is a *causal relationship* between death and resurrection. Just as the certain consequence of Christ’s death was his resurrection, likewise the certain consequence of the Christian’s dying to the power and pollution of sin (the evil world and Satan) is his living the new and holy life. The future tenses in verses 5 and 8 do not express the future, but certainty!

d. **Solidarity with Christ makes righteousness (justification) and holiness (sanctification) inseparable (6:6-7).**

6:6. For this we know (by study, observation, experience)⁵⁵ (vppa), that our old man (self) was *once for all* crucified together (with him)(viap) so that the body of sin might *once for all* be destroyed (wiped out, rendered inoperative, made inactive)(vsap), that we should no longer be slaves (vnpa) of sin.

6:7. because the one who *once for all* died (vpaa) is freed⁵⁶ (virp) from sin, (i.e. acquitted, freed and declared as standing in the right relationship with God).

In the new legal state (position), the old man is crucified, the body of sin is destroyed and the believer is declared free from sin.

The Christian is certain that he is made holy (morally set free from sin), that is, he has been regenerated by the Holy Spirit and set free from the enslavement to the power of his indwelling sinful nature. He has been set free from the power of the enslavement to every form of evil in this world (sinful habits and addictions). And he has been set free from power of the enslavement to demonic powers of Satan.

The old man (6:6) and the new man. Christians should distinguish between the terms: ‘the old man’, ‘the sinful nature’ and ‘the outward man’.

The old man has definitely died and the new man definitely exists. ‘The old man’ (the old self)⁵⁷ represents the *unregenerate nature* of people (6:6). It is the natural man who has voluntarily chosen to be a slave of his sinful nature (6:16) and thereafter is completely dominated by his sinful nature (8:6-8).

By his unity to Jesus Christ, ‘the old man’ (the unregenerate nature) has been crucified once for all⁵⁸. The unregenerate nature has been put off once-for-all⁵⁹!

The new man (the new self)⁶⁰ represents the *regenerated nature* of Christians. The regenerated nature has been put on *once-for-all*⁶¹! The new man is put on when the old man is put off⁶². They do not exist together at the same time⁶³.

However, *the new man still has a sinful nature.* Non-Christians and unbelievers are not free from the absolute dominating and enslaving power of the sinful nature (indwelling sin)⁶⁴ in their old man. Although Christians have once-

⁵² G: sumphutos

⁵³ John 5:24-25; 11:25

⁵⁴ John 5:28-29

⁵⁵ G: ginóskó

⁵⁶ G: dikaioó

⁵⁷ G: ho palaios anthrópos

⁵⁸ Galatians 2:20

⁵⁹ Ephesians 4:22; Colossians 2:11; 3:5

⁶⁰ G: ho kainos anthrópos

⁶¹ Ephesians 4:24; cf. 2:15

⁶² Colossians 3:9-10

⁶³ 2 Corinthians 5:17

⁶⁴ G: hé sarx

for-all been set free from the dominating and enslaving power of sin, 'their sinful nature' is still a present and forceful power in their new man (6:7, 7:18; 8:2).

The sinful nature is in continual conflict with the Holy Spirit dwelling in the new man (6:13,19)⁶⁵. Genuine Christians again and again choose to be controlled by the Holy Spirit and not by their sinful natures (8:9,13). The new man grows and is being transformed continuously (12:1-2). Again and again the new man resists conformity to the sinful world. Again and again he chooses to be transformed into the likeness of Christ. The standard and aim of this continual renewal is Christ and Christ likeness. The new man is being renewed continuously into the image of God⁶⁶.

The new man can be distinguished as the outward man and the inward man. The new man's outward appearance is called *the outward man* and the new man's inner being is called *the inward man*. "Though outwardly (the outward man) we are wasting away (we grow older and become weaker and maybe less beautiful, etc), yet inwardly (the inward man) we are being renewed day by day (we become more mature, wiser, more patient, more self-controlled, etc)"⁶⁷.

'The outward man'⁶⁸ is the jar of clay⁶⁹, the mortal body⁷⁰ and not the old unregenerate man. It is the whole human constitution with all its faculties and energies, mental and muscular, perceptive as well as practical, which is undergoing decay and is moving towards the grave. The present tense indicates that this decay is a steady and irreversible process. The outward man is the new man as he is outwardly manifested and is visible to his fellow-men.

'The inward man'⁷¹ is the Christian heart in which God's light shines, giving him real and experiential knowledge of God's glory through Christ⁷². The inward man is the Christian heart in which the Holy Spirit dwells as the guarantee of the future fulfilment of everything God promised⁷³. It is in the Christian heart that the Holy Spirit has implanted the principle of new life. It is there that the Holy Spirit exerts a controlling influence. It is there that the Holy Spirit imparts power to grow in all the Christian virtues⁷⁴. The inward man is the new man as he is inwardly hidden from the gaze of the people of the world and inaccessible to their analysis. After regeneration, the Christian is still an indivisible personality, seen from without (by others) or seen from within (by God and by himself). Paul is speaking of the great Christian reality, that the visible advance in outward decay is accompanied by the experience of inward renewal, day after day!

The body of sin, the body of humiliation and the body of death.

The body of sin. 'The body of sin' (6:6) is *the physical body of the unregenerate unbeliever* or non-Christian, which is indwelt, conditioned, controlled and dominated by his sinful or depraved nature and which voluntarily, yet irresistibly, serves impurity and ever increasing wickedness as a slave. It is the physical body of the non-Christian or unbeliever apart from God's regenerating grace. By his unity to Jesus Christ, 'the body of sin' has been destroyed. When a non-Christian or an unbeliever becomes a believer in Christ, he is set free from this body of sin (6:6,18,22).

The body of humiliation and the body of death. Nevertheless, the physical body of a Christian still remains 'a body of death' (7:24), 'a body of humiliation'⁷⁵.

By his unity to Jesus Christ, the power of the sinful nature (the indwelling sin) in the non-Christian or unbeliever has been broken once for all and the believer is no longer a slave of his sinful nature.

Although he is not yet perfect and can still fall into particular sins⁷⁶, he no longer dwells in those sins⁷⁷! Being bound to Jesus Christ, he can and wants to and certainly will fight against sin and conquer the expressions of his sinful nature! He can and wants to and will live the righteous and holy life!

Through the baptism with the Spirit (6:2) the believer is completely bound to Jesus Christ and to his accomplished work of salvation on the cross. His sinful nature is nailed to the cross and a definite end is made to his previous sinful existence. He no longer serves sin, but serves Jesus Christ.

The Christian is certain that he is justified (legally set free from sin), that is, he is declared righteous and regarded and treated as righteous. He is certain that he is declared to stand in the right relationship to God and thus freed from sin.

⁶⁵ Galatians 5:16-23

⁶⁶ Colossians 3:10

⁶⁷ 2 Corinthians 4:16

⁶⁸ G: ho exó anthrópos. 2 Corinthians 4:16a

⁶⁹ 2 Corinthians 4:7

⁷⁰ 2 Corinthians 4:10-11

⁷¹ G: ho esó anthrópos. 2 Corinthians 4:16b

⁷² 2 Corinthians 4:6

⁷³ 2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:5

⁷⁴ Ephesians 3:16-17

⁷⁵ Philippians 3:21

⁷⁶ cf. 1 John 1:8 to 2:2

⁷⁷ cf. 1 John 3:6,8-9

Paul teaches that anyone who died in solidarity with Christ is justified and remains justified forever (perfect tense) in the sense that he *is legally set free from sins, the sinful world and Satan*⁷⁸.

The holy and righteous God demands that all people must live complete holy and righteous lives and that all sins must be completely punished. No human being qualifies (3:23). But God is not only perfect in holiness and righteousness. He is also perfect in love and mercy. He desires that as many as possible people are saved without violating his holiness and righteousness! So God does the only thing that is possible: without laying aside his divine nature, he took on the human nature in Jesus Christ, identified himself with the plight of people on earth⁷⁹, lived a perfect holy and righteous life on earth and finally died on the cross as the punishment for sins. It is the human nature of Jesus Christ that dies (that he lays down) and that is immortally resurrected (that he takes up again)⁸⁰.

In this way Jesus Christ fulfilled God's righteous requirement for all who believe in him. *What God demanded from the person who believes in Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ fulfilled in his place!* Therefore God acquitted the Christian from God's judgement (condemnation and punishment). God declared the Christian completely justified (forgiven) and henceforth regards and treats him as perfectly justified. When God looks at a Christian he only sees the righteousness of Jesus Christ! Justification is the new state of Christians.

The true identity of a Christian is that he is 'in Christ'⁸¹. That is why Jesus Christ urges his disciples: "If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

Conclusion. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ renders *the legal state of justification* (6:7) and *the moral state (condition) of holiness* (6:6) of the believer in Jesus Christ certain! A Christian shares in Christ's death in order that he may share in Christ's life. The Christian cannot enjoy the benefits of Christ's death unless he is a partaker of the power of Christ's resurrected life. God must first justify a person before he can make him holy. *In the Bible, righteousness (justification) and holiness (sanctification) are inseparable!*

- Without justification no one can become holy.
- Without holiness justification becomes questionable.

The goal of Christianity is not only the forgiveness of sin, but the destruction of sin and the production of new life. A genuine believer in Jesus Christ cannot remain living in sin, in the evil world and under the power of Satan. He has effectively been rescued from the dominion of darkness and he has been brought into the Kingdom (the kingship or sovereign reign) of Jesus Christ⁸². He will produce the fruit of righteousness and holiness.

e. The conquering Christian continually bears his state and style in mind (6:8-11).

6:8. And if we *once for all* died (viaa) with Christ, we believe (vipa) that we will *certainly* also live with (vifa) him.

6:9. For we know (by relationship, reflection, intuition)⁸³ (vpra) that Christ, having *once for all* been resurrected (vpap) from the dead, no longer dies (vipa)(i.e. he cannot die again); death no longer exercises lordship over (vipa) him.

6:10. For (the death) he died (viaa), he died (viaa) to sin once for all⁸⁴; but (the life) he lives (vipa), he lives (vipa) to God.

6:11. So then also you must *always* consider (regard)(vmpn) yourselves dead to sin, but living (alive)(vppa) to God in Christ Jesus.

The Christian is no more a slave to his sinful nature. Paul teaches that a Christian *will* live the new life in solidarity with Jesus Christ. God will certainly continue and complete (make perfect) the good work which he began in the Christian⁸⁵.

Christ was raised to life once in history. He *cannot* die again! Death no longer rules over him as his lord and master. Likewise, the Christian was resurrected with Christ to life once (when he was baptised with the Spirit). He cannot return to his old, sinful life. Although *the Christian can fall into a particular sin at times*⁸⁶, *he cannot continue to live in sins*⁸⁷. Spiritual and eternal death has no longer mastery over him. He *can* live the new life in solidarity (in union) with Jesus Christ. What was previously impossible in his life of sin is now possible through his union with Christ.

This abiding state of holiness is not destroyed by committing a sin in the future⁸⁸. Just as Christ's death and resurrection was once-for-all for him, likewise the state of righteousness (justification) and the condition of holiness (sanctification) is once-for-all for the person who believes in Jesus Christ!

⁷⁸ cf. Acts 13:39

⁷⁹ cf. Philippians 2:5-8

⁸⁰ John 10:17-18

⁸¹ Colossians 1:27; 2:6-7,11-12,20; 3:1-4,17,23

⁸² Colossians 1:13

⁸³ G: oida

⁸⁴ G: eph-hapax

⁸⁵ Philippians 1:6

⁸⁶ 1 John 1:8 – 2:2

⁸⁷ 1 John 3:6,8-9

⁸⁸ 1 John 1:9

Christ died once for all. He died to make an end to sin: to make an end to the condemnation and punishment, the corruption and defilement and the domination and enslavement of sin. Christ was resurrected once for all. In his resurrected human nature he now lives a life devoted to God. His death and resurrection in his human nature was a one-off and decisive event in history. This event will never be repeated!

The Christian must also count his death to sin, his separation from sin, its guilt, shame, pollution, power and punishment as a one-off and decisive event in his personal salvation history. The Christian is not commanded to die again and again to sin, but to regard himself as once-for-all-time dead to sin and alive to God. By faith his conviction is that he *can, wants to and will* regard himself as dead to sin and alive to God. He is now able, dedicated and certain to live a life devoted to God.

The Christian's separation from the power of indwelling sin, the evil world and demonic powers is final and his ability to live the new and holy life is certain.

This once-for-all decisive event in history of 'having died with Christ' shows that his 'being dead to the power of sin' is an abiding state and condition. Likewise, this once-for-all decisive event in history of 'having been resurrected with Christ' shows that his 'being alive to God' is also a permanent state and condition⁸⁹.

Jesus Christ has once-for-all-time dealt with all his sins in the past and present and future. Jesus Christ has also once-for-all-time dealt with the influence of the evil world on the Christian⁹⁰. He has once-for-all-time dealt with the grip of demonic powers on the Christian⁹¹. Nothing and no one can separate the believer in Jesus Christ from God's love for him (8:39)!

Thus, while Christ died to sin (to make an end to sin), Christians must count themselves dead to sin even though they have not died physically as Christ did. This once-for-all definitive break with sin is the identity of the Christian! For a Christian, deliverance from sin (redemption) is not merely a deliverance from the penalty of sin (he is forgiven, he is justified, made righteous), but a deliverance from the power of sin (he is no longer a slave to any sin, he is set free) and a deliverance from the pollution of sin (he is cleansed, purified, sanctified, made holy)⁹²! The Christian is no more a slave to sin!

The Christian is no more a slave to this evil world. Likewise the Christian is no more a slave to this evil world⁹³, to the things that cause people to sin and to the people who cause them to sin⁹⁴.

Things that cause people to sin are for example: bad TV, videos and films; evil books and magazines; pornography and violence on the Internet; gaming, gambling, betting, lottery; alcohol, over-eating and drugs; evil disco's, house and beach parties; materialism, greed for money, power and fame; all kinds of practices coming from one's old non-Christian religion and culture, etc. (1:28-32).

People who cause them to sin are for example: a non-Christian boyfriend or girlfriend; bad friends; the mafia; teachers in secular and religious education who teach lies and make anti-Christian propaganda; politicians who worship power; entertainment stars who worship fame; businessmen who worship money and corruption, people who worship all kinds of sexual immorality, occultism, witchcraft, idolatry, and the members of one's old non-Christian religion, etc.

The Christian is no more a slave to any demonic powers. And the Christian is no more a slave to any demonic power⁹⁵.

Note that the Christian is not commanded to *become dead* to sin or to *become alive* to God, because it is presupposed that the regenerated Christian *is already dead* to sin and *is already alive* to God! Note also that it is not by believing or counting these things to be facts that they *become facts*, because it is proclaimed that they *are already facts*! It is already a fact that the regenerated Christian is spiritually united to Christ's death and resurrection. Therefore it is already a fact that he has been justified and that he has been made holy, that is, that he has died to the power of sin (the evil world and Satan) and is able to live the new and holy life to God. What Paul commands the Christian to do is *to believe that these are already facts*, to appreciate these facts and to live according to these facts!

Therefore, when someone has become a believer in Jesus Christ, he cannot continue to live in sin anymore, he does not want to live in sin anymore and he will not live in sin anymore! And therefore also, *if a person continuous to live in sin, he cannot be a Christian! When someone has become a Christian, he can, wants to and shall live the new life!*

f. The conquering Christian is saved more and more (6:12-13).

6:12. Therefore you must not let sin reign (vmpa) in your mortal body, in order to obey (vnpa) its evil desires.

⁸⁹ cf. Colossians 3:1-4

⁹⁰ Galatians 6:14

⁹¹ Matthew 12:28-30; Luke 10:18-20; John 12:31-32; Colossians 1:13; 2:15; Hebrews 2:14-15; 1 John 4:4; Revelation 12:10-11; 20:1-3

⁹² 1 Corinthians 1:30

⁹³ cf. 1 John 2:15-17

⁹⁴ cf. Matthew 13:41

⁹⁵ Matthew 12:28-30; Colossians 1:13; 2:15; 1 John 4:4; Revelation 12:10-11

6:13. And you must not *continue to put the members of your body at the disposal*⁹⁶ (vmpa) as weapons (instruments) of wickedness to sin, but you must *once for all put yourselves at the disposal* (vmaa) of God, as those *continually living* (vppa) (after being brought out of the dead) (i.e. as those who have been brought from death to life)⁹⁷; and your members as weapons (instruments) of righteousness to God.

The beginning and completion of salvation. Salvation begins with regeneration, conversion and faith that results in justification (receiving Christ's righteousness). Although the Christian is no longer a slave of the power of sin and no longer remains lying in sin, the power of sin is still an opponent in his life. The Christian still lives in a mortal body and the power of sin will remain an opponent throughout his life on earth (cf. 7:14-26)⁹⁸.

Salvation has a *beginning point in justification*, but continues as an *unbroken line in sanctification*. Although a Christian sometimes allows sin to get the upper hand in his life, he continues to fight against sin (cf. 8:13; 1 John 1:9. 2:1-2).

The Christian does not put the members of his body (his mind, eyes, ears, tongue, hands, feet, etc) as instruments (literally: weapons) of unrighteousness at the disposal of sin. Instead, the Christian puts himself at God's disposal (6:13). He yields himself as a slave to obey God (6:16).

Salvation is finally completed in glorification. At the second coming of Christ the final act of salvation will be when Jesus Christ throws Satan and all his helpers in hell⁹⁹, resurrects the bodies of all believers¹⁰⁰ and transforms this present earth by fire (8:19-23)¹⁰¹.

The state (condition) of holiness and continual sanctification. The exhortation not to let sin reign as a king in the members of the body or to offer the members of the body to sin as instruments of wickedness is an exhortation to live in accordance with the nature and intention of the gospel. The life of the Christian is no longer conditioned or controlled by sin, that is, by the power of sin to condemn, to pollute or to enslave him. He is no longer conditioned or controlled by either his old sinful nature or by the sinful deeds he does in his physical body. This *state* of being dead to the power of sin and being able to live the new life in obedience to Christ is called *holiness*.

Christians have the personal responsibility not to live in accordance to their sinful nature, but in accordance to their regenerate nature¹⁰². While in Romans 6:1-11, Paul argued that God has already taken *the absolute power of their sinful nature* away, in Romans 6:12-23 he exhorts Christians no longer to obey *the evil desires of their sinful nature*, which is still present in Christians (6:12). Christians should rather put the members of their physical bodies (as instruments of righteousness) at the disposal of God (6:13). Although the sinful nature is still present, its absolute power has been broken! *Christians have already been justified (legally set free) from sin (6:7), that is, also the power of their sinful nature has already been legally condemned to be destroyed and God is now executing that judgement through the Christian living the new and holy life in the power of the Holy Spirit (8:13)*. The Christian has therefore graciously been given the ability to resist the sinful nature and to devote himself to the new and holy life.

g. [The conquering Christian lives under grace and no longer under law \(6:14\).](#)

6:14. For sin shall *certainly not be lord over* (vifa) (you), because you *continually are* (vipa) *not under law, but under grace*.

The right understanding of the law. There are two misunderstandings concerning the law and one right understanding of the law:

(1) First misunderstanding: the written Law of Moses is the means of justification. The first misunderstanding concerning the law teaches that everyone must keep the law (the moral, ceremonial and civil laws of the Old Testament). This was the teaching of the Legalists: the Jewish religious leaders and teachers. Being 'under law' for them meant that they had to keep the law in order to be justified or saved¹⁰³. So the Jews became very legalistic.

For example: the Jewish religious leaders and teachers required their followers to obey the following religious duties (external laws):

- To make a particular confession about their god: that their god is a mathematical unity¹⁰⁴. However, Deuteronomy 6:4 does not make a statement about the *divine nature* of God, but that there is absolutely no other god besides the God who revealed himself in the Bible: "The LORD is God; the LORD alone"¹⁰⁵.

⁹⁶ G: parhistémi

⁹⁷ cf. John 5:24

⁹⁸ Galatians 5:16-18

⁹⁹ Revelation 19:19-21; 20:10

¹⁰⁰ 1 Corinthians 15:25-26; Philippians 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 20:10-15

¹⁰¹ 2 Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 20:11; 21:1

¹⁰² Galatians 5:16-18

¹⁰³ cf. Acts 15:1

¹⁰⁴ James 2:19

¹⁰⁵ Isaiah 45:22

- To pray three times a day¹⁰⁶.
- To fast during several months a year¹⁰⁷ and twice every week¹⁰⁸.
- To give one tenth of their possessions to their religion¹⁰⁹.
- To make three pilgrim's journeys to Jerusalem every year¹¹⁰.
- To physically circumcise their boys¹¹¹.
- To eat only certain clean foods¹¹².
- To observe specific purification rituals¹¹³.
- The priests had to wear religious robes¹¹⁴.
- The priests were not allowed to shave their heads or trim their beards¹¹⁵.

The Legalists were mistaken, because the regulations of the ceremonial law were “only a matter of food and drink and various ceremonial washings – *external regulation applying until the time of the new order*”¹¹⁶. At the first coming of Christ the regulations of the ceremonial law have been *fulfilled, cancelled and abrogated*¹¹⁷.

The two things that the law could not do and still cannot do.

- The law cannot give grace¹¹⁸. The law demands righteousness, but it cannot give righteousness. The law cannot supply grace to forgive people their sins or to help them in their needs.
- The law cannot give the truth¹¹⁹. The law cannot supply truth in the sense of the reality of the shadows (illustrations, types) it pointed to.

For example, the law did not reveal the real nature (truth) of the Old Testament temple, priesthood, sacrifices, etc., which were *shadows, illustrations or types* of the New Testament realities¹²⁰!

- The Old Testament temple was a type of the real physical body of Christ¹²¹ and the shadow of the real New Testament Church¹²².
- The Old Testament priesthood was a type of the real High priesthood of Christ¹²³.
- The Old Testament sacrifices were a type of the real sacrifice of atonement of Christ¹²⁴.
- The Old Testament physical circumcision was a type of the real spiritual circumcision done by the Holy Spirit (2:28-29)¹²⁵.
- The law did not reveal that Israel and its prophets, priests and kings were *types* of the New Testament reality of the Church consisting of people from all nations and it's Christ¹²⁶ as the final and greatest Prophet, as the everlasting High Priest and as the King of kings!

Only Jesus Christ, through his death and resurrection could supply both grace that forgives sins and supply truth that reveals the real nature of God's plan of salvation. Jesus Christ revealed truth by fulfilling the shadows (illustrations, types) of the Old Testament law¹²⁷. And Jesus Christ merited grace that saves people by his death on the cross (3:24-25).

During the Old Testament period God never intended the law to teach people how to be justified (saved), but how to live as God's Old Testament people.

The moral law taught God's already saved Old Testament people¹²⁸ how to live spiritually and morally as his holy (set apart) people¹²⁹.

¹⁰⁶ Daniel 6:10

¹⁰⁷ Zechariah 7:5; 8:19

¹⁰⁸ Luke 18:12

¹⁰⁹ Malachi 3:10

¹¹⁰ Deuteronomy 16:1

¹¹¹ Genesis 17:12

¹¹² Leviticus chapter 11

¹¹³ Leviticus chapters 12-15

¹¹⁴ Leviticus 21:10

¹¹⁵ Leviticus 21:5

¹¹⁶ Hebrews 9:10

¹¹⁷ Matthew 5:17; Colossians 2:14; Ephesians 2:15

¹¹⁸ John 1:17

¹¹⁹ John 1:17

¹²⁰ Colossians 2:17; Hebrews 9:8-10; 10:1

¹²¹ John 2:19-22

¹²² 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:19-22

¹²³ Hebrews 7:15-18,22-28

¹²⁴ Hebrews 9:12-14; 10:1-4,8-14

¹²⁵ Colossians 2:11

¹²⁶ Isaiah 49:3,6

¹²⁷ Matthew 5:17

¹²⁸ Exodus 20:1

¹²⁹ Exodus 20:2-17

The ceremonial law taught God's saved Old Testament people how to approach God in worship. And the civil law of Israel taught God's saved Old Testament people how to live as good citizens in the society of the theocratic state of Israel.

(2) The second misunderstanding: God's grace has replaced God's moral laws. The second misunderstanding concerning the law teaches that no one needs to keep the law (the moral laws like the Ten Commandments) because grace has replaced the law. This was the teaching of the false teachers called the Antinomians in the first century A.D. And so the Antinomians became very lawless. They taught that because grace replaced the law, people may continue to sin, so that they may receive more grace (6:15)!

They were mistaken, because to shamelessly continue to sin is opposed to the doctrine of righteousness and holiness. Moreover, the moral law has never been replaced; it is summarised in Mark 12:29-31 and Romans 12:8-10!

(3) The right understanding: the law is God's righteous requirement. The right understanding of 'the law' teaches that the law is God's holy and righteous requirement for all people. Because God is holy and righteous, he demands that all people live perfect holy and righteous lives and that all sin (unholiness and unrighteousness) must be completely punished. This is the teaching of the Bible and particularly the letter to the Romans.

No other religion in the world deals with 'law' in this sense. For them 'the law' consists of religious duties which they hope would justify them before God. (See the first misunderstanding).

Because no human being in history qualifies with respect to God's demands, all human beings stand condemned under the law (God's righteous requirement). Jesus Christ is the only One who fulfilled the law (God's holy and righteous requirement). He fulfilled it in the place of the people who believe in him.

Jesus Christ lived a perfect (sinless) life on earth and died on the cross to make atonement for all the sins of people who believe in him. Therefore *only believers in Jesus Christ do not stand 'under law' (God's righteous requirement) and its curse (condemnation and death).*

Instead believers in Jesus Christ have received the baptism with the Holy Spirit (are born again) and consequently are heirs of God's covenant (6:3)¹³⁰. Christians no longer live 'under law' (God's righteous requirement), because it has been fulfilled in their place. Therefore Christians live 'under grace', that is, they experience God's grace as the rolling of the waves towards the shore: grace upon grace upon grace¹³¹!

Whoever still lives 'under law' in the Jewish sense as trying to be justified by keeping the moral, ceremonial and civil laws, will never be justified by God and can never become righteous and holy! Whoever lives 'under grace' because he has been justified by faith in Jesus Christ, can and wants and shall never continue to live in sin, but instead can and wants and shall live the new, righteous and holy life! This includes obeying the moral commandments (13:8-10).

The difference between living under the law or living under grace. Paul exhorts Christians. They have the responsibility to no longer live the wicked and unholy life, as non-Christians do by nature and as the false Antinomians in Rome teach.

Living under law. The Legalists, who try to keep the law, are slaves of the law. Because they have not been justified by faith in Jesus Christ, they are also slaves of sin (6:16)¹³². The Antinomians, who reject the law, remain slaves of sin. Their lord is 'sin'.

Many people are still 'under law', that is, they either stand condemned under God's holy and righteous requirement (they do not yet believe in the gospel), or they try to be justified (saved) by doing the works of the law (the moral, ceremonial and civil laws) in their own power.

However, the Bible says that such people do not have the legal state of righteousness (they are not justified or forgiven) and they also do not have the moral state of holiness (they can never live the new, righteous and holy life). People 'under law' in the sense of God's righteous requirement are still slaves of sin. People 'under law' in the sense of God's moral, ceremonial and civil laws are still slaves of the law.

Living under grace. Romans 6:14 teaches that Christians must not live 'under law'. Instead, they must live 'under grace'. Paul teaches the relationship between law and grace. He encourages the Christians in their efforts to resist the corrupt desires of their sinful nature and to live 'under grace'. Compare "living under grace" (6:14) with "living by the Spirit"¹³³.

People who are 'under grace', that is, who have been saved by God's grace through faith, have not only the legal state of righteousness (they are forgiven), but also the moral state of holiness (they can live the new, righteous and holy life)! The Bible says that such Christians *can never continue to live in sin*. They may still fall into a sinful act, but they will

¹³⁰ Galatians 3:10-14

¹³¹ John 1:16-17

¹³² John 8:34

¹³³ Galatians 5:16-26

not continue to live in that sin¹³⁴. They will repent of their sin, confess their sin and receive God's forgiveness¹³⁵ and grace to keep on resisting that sin¹³⁶!

Thus, in order to live the new, righteous and holy life continually, Christians should enjoy God's grace and make use of God's grace¹³⁷! By continually receiving God's grace through faith, they are able to keep on resisting the sinful nature and able to keep on devoting themselves to live the new, righteous and holy life. The sinful nature *should not* be the master in a Christian's life (6:12). The sinful nature *need not* be the master in a Christian's life. By depending on God and his grace, the sinful nature *will no longer* be the lord in a Christian's life (6:14).

In Romans 6:15, Paul says that the doctrine of justification by grace through faith does not give anyone the right to reject the moral law, that is, the Ten Commandments, and continue to sin with impunity. Although Christians are never justified by keeping the law, they still *need the law to show them how to live the Christian life* (cf. chapter 7).

Living under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. "For sin shall *certainly* not be lord over (you)" (6:14). Believers in Jesus Christ have been baptised with the Spirit into union with Christ's death and resurrection. They have been made righteous (justified) and holy (sanctified) in Christ¹³⁸. They have Jesus Christ as their Lord¹³⁹.

Only in this way does God set up a Kingdom that will never be destroyed and never be conquered by any nation. God's Kingdom will crush all the other kingdoms of people on earth and bring them to an end. Only God's Kingdom will endure forever¹⁴⁰!

¹³⁴ 1 John 3:6-9

¹³⁵ 1 John 1:9

¹³⁶ 1 Corinthians 10:13

¹³⁷ John 1:16; Hebrews 4:16; 12:14-15

¹³⁸ 1 Corinthians 1:30

¹³⁹ 1 Corinthians 12:3b

¹⁴⁰ Daniel 2:44; Hebrews 12:28