

Romans 6

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Tape #8123
Pastor Chuck Smith

At the end of chapter of five, Paul tells us, “so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” He tells us, “where sins abounded, grace abounded much more.”

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Paul’s answer is, ²*Certainly not!* Or God forbid! *How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?* It’s interesting how that people will take a certain truth of God and then run with it to an illogical conclusion. If when we sin, God’s grace abounds, shall we then just go ahead and not worry about our sins? Shall we just continue in sin in order that God’s grace might just continually abound to us? Paul responds to that with this strong statement, “Certainly not!” or God forbid? Or perish the thought! And then he tells us what the principle is: How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

³*Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?* Notice we were baptized into Christ Jesus. Into this relationship with Him. Into this identity with Him. Into this oneness in Him. Jesus said, “In that day, you shall know that I am in the Father. You are in Me. I am in you.” We have been baptized into this beautiful relationship with Jesus Christ. I’m one with Him! He dwells within me! So being baptized into Jesus Christ, we were baptized into His death. That is as Jesus died, so my old life died, baptized into His death. Paul will tell us in a few moments that we are to reckon ourselves crucified with Christ. Declaring that we were crucified with Him, baptized into His death.

⁴*Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death,* So the water actually represents the grave. My old life lived after the flesh, my natural life of the flesh, which is sinful. And all of the activity that came out of that natural life in sin is now buried. Many people try to excuse their sin by saying, I was born this way. They’re right! They were born that way. We’ve all been born in sin. None of us are righteous. No not one! Everyone of us was born with a sinful nature that we received from Adam. So the Scripture refers to that as “the old man.” It refers to it as the “life of the flesh.” A life that is dominated by our fleshly desires. You see when God created man, He created him a three fold being: body, mind, spirit. When he created him, He created him in the other order. He created him, spirit, mind and body. The spirit uppermost. And with the spirit uppermost, man’s mind being filled with the knowledge of God and fellowshiping with God. Now when man sinned, Adam sinned. By one man’s sin, sin entered the world and death by sin. God had warned him that in the day that you eat of the tree, you will surely die. And he died spiritually. The spirit of man died when Adam disobeyed God. Adam could not pass on what he did not have. His spirit was dead and thus he could not pass on the spirit, which was now dead. What he passed on was a body and a mind. But now the body is uppermost and the mind is occupied by the needs of the body.

The thing that separated man from the animal kingdom was the spirit. Animals have a body and they have a consciousness, but they do not have a spirit. That’s what separated us from the animal kingdom, the fact that man has a spirit. But that spirit died and thus man became like an animal and his life was ruled by his body appetites. The Bible refers to that as the natural man or the old man. A man that is ruled by his body appetites and his mind is constantly occupied with the needs of his body. Now God has made our bodies. We are fearfully and wonderfully made. And God has so designed our bodies that when you study it, you have to stand back in amazement at those things that God has built into the human body. The study of the human body is just a marvel of design and creation. We have certain physical needs for the body to continue to function. We need oxygen and thus we have an air drive that insures that the oxygen level remains high enough to fuel the cells of the body. We need moisture because our body is about seventy percent moisture. And thus we need water or moisture and thus we have that thirst drive. We need food and so we have the hunger drive. We need to expel the refuse so we

have a bowel and bladder drive. We need to procreate in order that life will go on and thus we have the sex drive. And there are many biological needs of the body that are defined as drives of the human body because these are the things that we need for survival for the perpetuation of the human race. Marvelously designed by God. But God did not intend that man be ruled by these body needs. He never intended for us to be ruled by our sex drive, or by our hunger drive. They all have their place, but they are not intended to master over man and rule over man that your mind be constantly occupied with these things. And yet with the spirit dead, that's exactly what happened. The natural man does not understand the things of God, neither can he know them. They are spiritually discerned. So the natural man is alienated from God. And he lives in this animal kind of existence without an awareness or consciousness of God and thus dead. The Bible says that he is dead in his trespasses and sin. The Bible tells us that if a person is living only for pleasure. That's all you think about, then you are dead while you yet live. Paul says, you He had made alive who were dead in your trespasses and sins! So Jesus said Nicodemus, you've got to have a new birth. You've got to be born again. For that which is born of the flesh is flesh. It is now necessary if you are going to enter the kingdom of God, that you have a spiritual birth. And when he asked how, He said, by believing in Me, basically. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that who so ever believes in Him. That's how you are born again. By believing in Jesus Christ. And what happens is that you have a spiritual birth. Your spirit comes alive! And it is God's intention that your spirit be uppermost. And that you be as God originally created man, spirit, mind, and body. When the spirit is uppermost, you now experience glorious fellowship with God. For God is a spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. And thus with the spirit uppermost, you have a consciousness of God, an awareness of God, and your mind is now on the things of God.

As we get to the eighth chapter, Paul will talk about the mind of the flesh, occupied with the fleshly needs, is dead! But the mind of the spirit, that is the mind that is aware and conscious of God, and living in this conscious fellowship with God, that is life and peace. So the principle is, that when I receive Jesus Christ, the old life of the flesh no longer is to rule over me. I was baptized into His death. Thereby that life of the flesh is now dead and thus we bury it. And thus you were buried with Him by baptism into death. So when you are baptized and you are put under the water, you should have the feeling that I'm buried. The old life buried, dead, buried, in the grave. That's why I, sometimes, hold people down, a little while. I want them to get the feeling of being buried. But then Jesus rose from the grave! And so in likeness as we come up out of the water, it is like resurrection! Now a new life. A life that is governed by the spirit. A life that is in fellowship with God. So I have been baptized into Jesus. Into His death and burial and resurrection. I am not fully identified with Him.

Therefore we were buried with Him by baptism into His 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.* Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid! I'm dead to sin! I now should walk in that newness of life in Christ Jesus.

⁵For, Paul said, *if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,* If we have been planted in the likeness of His death, then also the likeness of His resurrection.

⁶*knowing this, that our old man was crucified* The Greek is in a past tense there. The old man was crucified with Him, *that the body of sin might be done away with*(destroyed, *katargeo*, put out of business,) that is, *that we should no longer be slaves of sin.* That I should no longer be a slave to my physical drive. I should no longer be ruled over by my physical drive, by the needs of my flesh. I still have to breathe and drink water and eat food to survive. That doesn't stop. But these things do not control my life anymore. I'm not a slave to these things. They have their place but they don't rule over me any longer because I live that new life governed by the Spirit of God or ruled by the Spirit of God. So the old man was crucified.

Now, the problem. That is, I still have the fleshly desires. What do I do with them? Well, I have to take this position. That that old life governed by the flesh is dead. It is no longer to rule over me. So that when these fleshly desires arrive, I don't have to yield to them. They are very strong. They are very demanding. But I don't have to be ruled by them anymore. Now there are times when we falter. There are areas in a person's life where the flesh still dominates and rules. And people fall. And there are places where a person has a certain weakness of their flesh. And they have failed, over and over. What do I do? Every time I find myself faltering or failing because of my flesh, I have to take the position of faith in reckoning that old man to be dead, crucified with

Christ. I have to say, Lord, that's a part of the old life. Forgive me. And Lord, I reckon that to be dead. Make that a reality. In time, God will deliver. God will set you free. And that part of the old nature will lose its hold if you will continually, until that time of victory, reckon that to be dead. The fact that you are aware. The fact that you feel guilty is good because you can then come to God and say, I'm sorry. I failed. I yielded to the desires of my flesh. Oh, God, forgive me. I reckon that to be dead. Lord, help me! Why does the Lord take so long to help us in some areas?

My little seven year old granddaughter just moved to England. She was having a tough time as I was with their move. But she just kept saying that it's the Lord's will that we go to England. And she gulp and try to hold back the tears by saying, but it's the Lord's will that we go to England. And finally she just burst out and said, "Why is it the Lord's will that we go to England?" A question that I couldn't answer. But sometimes we wonder, why does it take so long for God to help us? I think it's because we get in the way! Somehow we feel that we are able. Certainly I'd like to be able. I want to have victory over that area of weakness in my flesh. I want to feel that somehow that I don't have to be mastered by that. That I can master that. Sort of following that indictive, "I am captain of my fate. I am master of my soul. My head is bloodied but unbowed." I can do it! And so many times, we want to sing, "I did it my way." I conquered! And we like to think we are stronger than we really are. And so we keep trying. And we haven't fully given it over to the Lord. And I think that sometimes God just lets us struggle until we finally give up!

When I was years ago, taking training to become a lifeguard, we were warned concerning approaching a swimmer who was drowning, lest they grab hold of you and get you in a death grip and can take you down with them. So they were saying that it is wise when you approach a person that is drowning that you keep a distance from them until they really sort of just give up. And then you take and rescue that person. As long as they are struggling, there is danger of them grabbing hold of you and taking you down. And I think that as long as you are struggling, He just sort of keeps His distance. Until we finally in despair, say, "Oh God, help me! I can't do it!" And those are the words that He is often listening for. For when I give up and He does it for me, I can't go around and boast for what I have done. I can't boast of my resolve or my determination. All I can do is boast in what He has done and praise Him that He did for me what I could not do for myself. Now we need to reckon that old nature to be dead. So Paul said, "Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, (put out of business, destroyed) that we should no longer be slaves of sin."

⁷*For he who has died has been freed from sin.* It's hard to tempt a dead man to do anything! You know a guy has a problem with pornography, if he's dead, you know, you could surround him with magazines but it's not going to do anything. He's dead. So he that is dead is freed from sin. Sin no longer has hold on a person's life who is dead. So we need to reckon ourselves, dead with Christ.

⁸*Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,* (Crucified with Christ, I was baptized into His death, into His burial, but now) ⁹*knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.* So a new life. We live in Christ! And the old life no longer has dominion.

¹⁰*For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.* I've been baptized into Christ, into His death. Now alive unto God through Him!

¹¹*Likewise (And here he gets to it.) you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.* The word reckon is a word of faith. If I really have no fleshly desires any more, then I wouldn't have to reckon anything. If I weren't living still in this body, where the desires of the flesh are manifested, then reckoning would no longer be necessary, but the fact that I am living in this body, and still subject to the desires of the body, I have to take a position of faith. And reckoning is a position of faith. It is to account. And so I account that my old life governed by my flesh is dead. It's a thing of faith. I account that to be dead. But alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord. But it is a position of faith that I take. Now when we get to Romans chapter eight, Paul will tell us how we with all of creation do groan, travailing together until now as we wait for the manifestation of the sons of God, to wit, the redemption of our bodies. You see the problem is, my spirit is alive, redeemed. But my redeemed spirit is still living in a body of flesh. So Paul tells us that there is this warfare that is going on. Galatians five. The flesh is warring against the spirit. The spirit against the flesh. And these two are contrary, so that I do not always do the things that I would. The mind of man is either

controlled and governed by the spirit or by the flesh. Now there is this struggle within, as the flesh still wants to control my mind and thus control me. But the spirit also wants to control my mind. And thus there is this warfare that is going on, the flesh against the spirit, the spirit against the flesh. Which one will control over my mind? Now if my mind is controlled by my flesh, the mind of the flesh is death. So I'm to reckon myself crucified with Christ. Dead with Him, yet alive to God through the resurrection unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And now the command, ¹²*Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.* Don't let it be. Take your stand of faith. I don't have to be ruled by my fleshly desires. I reckon that to be dead. Don't let sin reign over you!

¹³*And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin* (Now the members are the parts of your body. Don't yield them to become instruments of unrighteousness to sin), *but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.* Now you see, I can use my body to sin or I can use my body to glorify God. I can use my hands for evil or I can use my hands for good. My body can be controlled by my flesh or it can be controlled by my spirit. Then he said, don't yield to the flesh, to the things of the flesh. But yield to the spirit! Yield your body to the Spirit of God. In chapter twelve, he will tell us, I beseech you brethren by the mercies of God, present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which makes sense. And so here we are commanded, don't yield your body as an instrument of sin, but yield it to God. Lord, here's my body. Take it Lord! Dwell within me by Your Holy Spirit. And use my body, Lord, for Your purposes. I offer my body to You, that You might use my body, Lord, to accomplish Your will and Your desires and Your purposes.

¹⁴*For* (and I like this) *sin shall not have dominion over you,* (You don't have to be ruled by sin any longer. It shall not have dominion over you.) *for you are not under law but under grace.* The fact that you have died with Christ, means that the law no longer has any authority over you. You are dead to the law. But alive unto God. Now when you say, dead to the law, again people just run to these mental extremes. Oh, dead to the law. Wonderful, it means that I can do whatever I want now! Oh, that is the flesh talking. That is just the problem that we are dealing with. It doesn't give you the freedom to live after the flesh. What it does it to give you the freedom to live after God! And to completely surrender your life to Him. You see the principle is that you are dead to those old things. How can you live any longer in them?

¹⁵*What then?* (And here it is.) *Shall we sin because we are not under law* (Oh wonderful.) *but under grace?* *Certainly not!* (Or God forbid!) *For* (And again another principle.) ¹⁶*Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?* Don't you understand that if you yield yourself to obey the fleshly desires, you become a slave to your fleshly desires? Whoever you yield or present yourselves slaves or servants to obey, his servants you become. A classic example of course is Adam and Eve in the garden. When God created them, spirit, soul and body, their spirit uppermost, they lived in fellowship with God. They were serving God. When Satan came and tempted them to disobey God, it was a double action. It wasn't just disobedience to God, but it was obedience to Satan! It was a double action. In their disobeying God they were obeying Satan and his suggestion, "Eat it. It won't hurt you. It will make you wise like God!" So that double action. They immediately no longer were servants of God, but now they became servants of sin. They became servants of Satan. So we, if I am yielding my body to disobedience unto sin, I become then a slave to sin! But if I yield myself to obey God unto righteousness, then I become a servant of God!

¹⁷*But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.* ¹⁸*And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.* You were once the servant of sin, but oh, thank God, through obedience to His Word, we've become the servants of righteousness!

So Paul said, ¹⁹*I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh.* And that is what we are dealing with here, the weakness of our flesh. As the Lord said to Peter, the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak. That's the problem, Peter. It's not your spirit. Your desires are right. Your flesh is weak. And we have, all of us, I'm certain, come to that same realization, that it is hard to live up to my expectations and my own desires. I

desire to serve God fully and completely. I desire to be committed. I desire all of these things. But my flesh often is rebelling against the spirit. And I don't always do those things that I should. I think, oh, I'm so tired, I know I ought to but I'm just tired tonight and I yield to the flesh. And so often, we know what we should do, but the flesh is weak. So Paul said, I'm writing and I am speaking to you after the manner of men because of the weakness of your flesh.

For just as you presented your members (your members of your body) as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness. You've yielded yourself to sin. Now yield yourself to God! Give your body to God. Offer it to God!

²⁰*For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.* You weren't doing righteous things. You were a slave to sin.

But ²¹*What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed?* Looking back to the old life, the things that you did. What do you have to show for it? What fruit do you have? There is nothing worthwhile or lasting that is done in the flesh. What fruit do you have? From that old life governed by your flesh? In the things that you did of which you are now ashamed? Oh, how could I have ever done that, you know?

For the end of those things is death. A life of the flesh will end in death. Now, the life of the flesh for us has ended in death. We were baptized into His death. We were crucified with Him. Had that not been the case, ultimately it would have just ended in our death, spiritually and physically.

²²*But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.* Now that this transformation has taken place. Now that I'm yielding myself to God to be a servant of God. The effect of that is holiness. Living a holy life. No longer polluted by the world and the things of the world and the things of the flesh. A life of purity. A life of holiness. The end result of that is everlasting life.

²³*For the wages of sin is death,* (It has never changed! The reward of a sinful life is death.) *but (in contrast) the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.* So here I am with choices. The choice to live after my flesh or the choice to live after the spirit. To yield my body to fulfill the desires of my flesh. Or to yield my body to God, that He might use it to His purposes. To walk after the flesh or to walk after the spirit. Now God has made provisions whereby I don't have to be ruled over by the body any longer. I can now live a new life ruled and governed by the spirit. And it's my choice. Whether or not my life will be ruled by the flesh or by the spirit. But the wages of sin, the life of the flesh, is death. But this wonderful gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Father, we thank You for that life that I now live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me. Thank You, Father, that You've provided for us. Thank You, Father, for Your patience and Your longsuffering with us. That You are understanding of the weakness of our flesh. And thus You have provided for us, that dynamic of Your Holy Spirit. And Lord, as we look at Paul's struggle in chapter seven, we'll realize, Lord, that it is mirrored in the struggles that we have gone through. And Lord, we thank You, that having gone through the struggle to the place of giving up, as He cried in desperation. You filled Him with Your Spirit and gave to Him, Lord, the power that He needed to live the life that You wanted. And so thus, Lord, we thank You that You have freed us from our slavery to the flesh. Filled us with Your Spirit and brought us into that glorious walk in the Spirit. And the victory that we now experience in and through Jesus Christ. Lord, there are many who are still in chapter seven. They are still going through the struggling. We pray Lord, that as we move through, in these next couple of weeks that they indeed, might move from the struggling into the victory that you have wrought through Jesus Christ and the empowering of the Holy Spirit in our lives. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.