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Class Notes

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Sanctification: Dead to Sin, Alive to God in Christ Jesus

Romans 6:1-14

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We 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 If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— ⁷ because anyone who has died has been freed 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 the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.

I. Main Questions:

1. Why do some people believe that the doctrine of justification by faith apart from works of the law means we can sin as much as we want with no worries? How does Romans 6 refute that false understanding?
2. What does this section teach us about our relationship with Christ in His death and resurrection?
3. What are the implications of our spiritual union with Christ in the way we live our daily lives?
4. How does the concept that we died to sin once for all help us in our constant battle with sin?
5. How should we “count ourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus”? How do we go about doing this? Why is it vital that we do it?
6. What does it mean to “offer the parts of our body to sin”? By contrast, what does it mean to “offer the parts of our body to God as instruments of righteousness”?

II. Verse by Verse Questions:

verses 1-4: *The Misunderstanding Addressed: Union with Christ Means Death to Sin*

1. What misunderstanding of the doctrine of justification by faith does Paul address here? In other words, how does Romans 6:1 relate to Romans 5?
2. Why do some people persist in saying that this doctrine encourages sin? Why would some say “Let us go on sinning so that grace may abound?” (1)
3. How does Paul answer this grave misunderstanding of grace? (2)
4. What does Paul mean when he says, “We died to sin”? When did we die to sin? (2)
5. And what is the implication of our having died to sin according to verse 2? (2)
6. How does verse 3 support verse 2? In what sense did Christians die with Christ? How do you understand our spiritual union with Christ? (3)
7. What does Paul say about baptism here? Do you think Paul is speaking of water baptism or of something else? (See Matthew 3:11, 1 Corinthians 12:13 for another possible angle on baptism).

Matthew 3:11 I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

1 Corinthians 12:13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body-- whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free-- and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

If Paul is in fact meaning water baptism here, wouldn't it imply that water baptism saves us and that it is required for salvation? (3-4)

8. How are all believers united with Christ in both His death and His resurrection? (3-4)
9. What does it mean that Christ was “raised from the dead through the glory of the Father”? (4)
10. What is the ethical outcome of our union with Christ in verse 4? In other words, what does it mean that we should “walk in newness of life”? How does it answer the misunderstanding that Paul is seeking to address? (4)

verses 5-11: *Living the Resurrected Life*

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

11. Why is it true that, if we have been united with Christ in His death, we will certainly be united in His resurrection? What difference will understanding that make in our battle against sin? (5)
12. Verse 6 is one of the most important and misunderstood verses in the Book of Romans. What does it mean that “the old self” (KJV “old man”) was crucified with him (Christ)? According to Paul, what is the result of that fact? What is the “body of sin”? What does it mean that the “body of sin” might be “done away with”? How does that relate to us no longer being slaves to sin? (6)

13. What does verse 7 add to Paul's argument? How does the fact that we died with Christ help us not to sin? (7)
14. How does Paul build on verse 7 in verses 8-10? How are we like Christ in His resurrection? What is the significance of the fact that death no longer has any mastery over Christ? (8-10)
15. How is our present life in the sinful body like Christ's present life in His resurrected body? Is this fact surprising to you? (10)
16. How are we to "count ourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus"? What does "count yourselves" mean? (KJV translation is "reckon") How do we "reckon" ourselves dead to sin and alive to Christ? How is it similar to Romans 4:3 "Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness." (The word "credited" is the same Greek word as "reckon" or "consider" here in this verse). How would "considering" yourself dead to sin help you resist specific temptations? (11)

verses 12-14: ***Do Not Offer Your Body to Sin***

17. What does Paul command in verse 12? How does verse 12 connect with verse 11? (12)
18. Why does Paul call our bodies "mortal bodies"? How do Christians sometimes act as though sin reigns in their mortal bodies? (12)
19. Verse 13 is a very significant practical teaching on sanctification. What does Paul prohibit? What does Paul command? How is sanctification then both a negative work and a positive one? Why do the two aspects (negative: "Do NOT offer..." and positive "DO offer...") necessarily go together? (13)
20. The word "offer" is the same Greek word as Jesus refers to in Matthew 26:53 in which Jesus says "***Do you think I cannot call on my Father and He would at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?***" The idea is to "put at the disposal" of a commanding officer. How do we put the parts of our body in the service of sin? How are we supposed to put them in the service of God? Why does Paul say that we must first offer ourselves to God as those who have been brought from life to death AND THEN offer the parts of our bodies in service to Him as instruments of righteousness? Why is this order important? (13)
21. The Greek word "instrument" in verse 13 is *hopla*. In the ancient world, Greek soldiers were called *hoplites* after the weapons they were trained to use. How are the various members of our bodies weapons in the battle between righteousness and unrighteousness? (13)
22. What final statement does Paul make in verse 14? What is the significance of this statement that sin shall not be our master? What does it mean that we are not under law but under grace? How is grace like a master? (14)

III. Summary:

Paul applies the doctrine of justification by faith alone to the ongoing battle we all have with indwelling sin. He teaches that, because of our spiritual union with Christ we are dead to sin and alive to God. Based on this, we are to consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God, and we are to stop presenting the members of our bodies to sin, but rather are to present ourselves to God as new creatures and subsequently to present our bodily members to Him as weapons of righteousness.