

Shall We Sin Under Grace?

Rom. 6:15-23

Introduction:

1. Paul reasons in Romans 6 that since we have been baptized we cannot continue sinning. He does not mean that it is impossible to sin. He means that we cannot continue on in our sinful lifestyle like we did before we became a Christian.
2. We cannot continue on in sin because . . .
 - a. Baptism unites us with Christ in His death and His resurrection (3-5).
 - b. We have died to sin and can no longer live in it (7).
 - c. Our old self has been crucified with Christ and the body of sin done away with (6).
 - d. So, consider yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus (11).
3. Paul has reasoned that we are under grace. Christ has died for the ungodly and now that we have committed ourselves to Him we are forgiven: justified by His blood, saved from the wrath of God through Him.
4. He says, "We are not under law but under grace" (14).
5. Now some might say, "If I am not under law, but under grace, I am free to sin." Paul anticipates their objection and answers it.
6. Read Rom. 6:15-18.

Discussion:

- I. What does it mean, "we are not under law but under grace?"
 - A. One might think, "not being under law," means that Christians are not under the Law of Moses.
 1. While it is true that Christians are not under the Law of Moses this is not really the point that Paul is making in my judgment.
 2. Christians are not under law as a system of salvation, but they are under a grace system.
 - B. To be under a law system means that one would be condemned.
 1. One of the purposes of the law is to reveal sin.
 2. Paul makes this clear in Rom. 7:7: "I would not have come to know sin except through the law; for I would not have known about coveting if the law had not said, 'You shall not covet.'"
 3. Like dust is revealed in a beam of light so the law shines light on our sin. It was there already, but until it is in the presence of the light of God's revelation we do not see it.
 4. Gal. 3:21-22 says, "If a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would have been based on law. But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin."
 - C. In our recent studies about the "Covenant of Blood" we have observed passages that speak of "a law written on the heart" (Jer. 31:31ff; Heb. 8:10).
 1. This is associated with the new spirit, the removal of the heart of stone and being given a heart of flesh (Ezek. 36:26). In Ezek. 36:27 God says, "I will put My spirit

within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.”

2. Many in ancient Israel had hearts like flint. They were resistant to what God wanted them to do. But hearts that are soft are moved to obedience. God has softened our hearts with the death of His son for our sin. This indicates that He loves us and wants what is best for us. Why would we not want to be careful to walk in His statutes and observe His ordinances if it was for our benefit?
 3. This is the way of grace. It involves “a law written on our hearts” motivating us to obedience out of recognition of His good will.
 4. Paul has reasoned in the first several chapters of Romans “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (5:8). “We are saved from the wrath of God through Him” (5:9).
- D. Being under this grace shall we continue in sin?? “May it never be!” says Paul.
1. Under grace “we bear fruit for God.” (Rom. 7:4).
 2. Before we were baptized and brought under grace we bore fruit for death (Rom. 7:5).
 3. We used to be slaves of sin, but now we are slaves of righteousness (Rom. 7:17-18).

II. But some might insist on law as a force to curb and restrain sin.

- A. Some seem to have the idea that no one will do right unless they are forced to.
1. They may attempt to force their children to do what they want.
 2. They may attempt to force their spouse to do what they want.
 3. They may attempt to force their work associates to do what they want.
 4. In the church they may attempt to force their fellow Christians to do what they want.
 5. Such “lording over” is marked by the abusive use of power to dominate and control. It is often marked by threatening and condemning.
 6. Sometimes it results in rebellion. Sometimes it results in crushed spirits.
- B. Some even perceive God as acting in this way.
1. And so, they use law as the means to curb and restrain sin.
 2. They may get conformity of behavior, rarely do they win hearts however.
- C. Paul says it is not law, but grace that masters sin (Rom. 6:14).
1. Law operates from the outside in.
 2. Grace operates from the inside out. Hearts touched by the graciousness of God leads to willing submission.
 3. Grace results in sanctification (Rom. 6:19, 21).
 4. The outcome then is eternal life (Rom. 6:21).
 5. Rom. 6:23: “The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
- D. Under law we are condemned to death. Under grace we are forgiven. Having been forgiven we willingly submit to the law, not as the means of our forgiveness, but as the right thing to do.

III. Shall we sin now that we are under grace?

- A. Continuing in sin makes grace cheap.

1. Continuing in sin depreciates the value of the price paid for our sins.
 - a. We were not redeemed with perishable things like silver and gold, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:19).
 - b. To continuing in sin fails to appreciate the cost of our redemption.
 2. Will we trample under foot the Son of God, regard as unclean the blood of the covenant, insult the spirit of grace? (Heb. 10:29).
- B. Continuing in sin results in death (Rom. 6:16, 21, 23; 7:5, 13).
- C. Continuing in sin means slavery to sin (Rom. 6:17, 20).
- D. Continuing in sin is shameful (Rom. 6:21).

Conclusion:

1. Shall we continue on in sin now that we are under grace? May it never be!
2. It does not mean that it is impossible for us do wrong, but it means that to give our lives to sin is completely incongruent with our acceptance of grace.
3. The law is now written on our hearts; a different spirit now rules us. We put sin to death in our lives, not because we are under law, but because we are under grace.