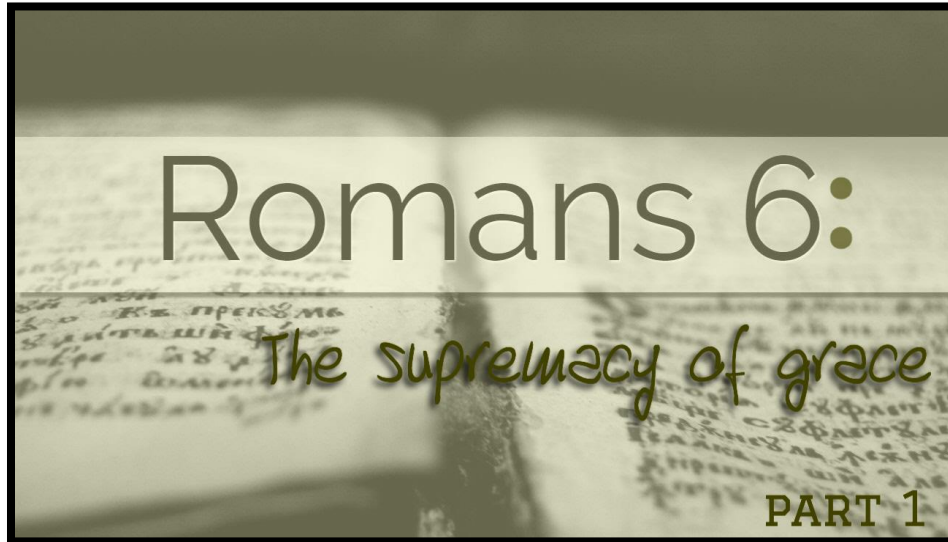


Grace-school for the week of Feb 4-10, 2019

"The supremacy of grace, part 1"

by Gene Mitchell



Romans 6 is an amazing chapter about God's grace towards us through Jesus Christ. It is divided into 2 sections: the mystery of our identification with Christ, resulting in our sanctification (v.1-14) and our submission to Him, resulting in the supremacy of grace in our lives (v.15-23). Let's look at what he said in 5:20-21 leading up to chapter 6— ***"(20) Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, so that as sin reigned in death, (21) even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."*** People normally enact laws to make offenses stop, but God enacted the law of the Old Covenant, to make offenses increase. God knew when He gave the law of the Old Covenant, that it was **impossible** for man to keep His standard of holiness— hence the words, "*sin reigned in death*". Sin reigned during that time, because of man's spiritual condition called, **death** (Please understand that spiritual "*death*" is the exact opposite of spiritual "*life*"— and as life describes God, death describes everything outside God's life). This is why that at the right time, God sent Jesus as the last Adam, to fulfill the law for us and to set it aside— thus, we read the precious words, "*grace abounded much more*"! What grace abounded much more? It's the grace of Jesus Christ, who fulfilled the law,

nailed it to the cross, and through His substitution, became our perfect Reconciliation to God!

So in chapter 6, Paul asked some key questions and then proceeds to give the answers to each of them, so that we can understand how we, through Jesus' grace, are to reign in life! So I'm going to go from verse by verse, so we can discover this amazing reality of grace reigning in our lives through the power of Righteousness—for we have to know the first part regarding our identification with Christ, v.1-14, to understand how the second part regarding the supremacy of grace works in our lives, v.15-23!

verse 1-2: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? (2) Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?" He just said, *"Where sin abounded, grace abounded much more."*

So one could take it from this statement that if he wants grace to keep abounding in his life, that he is to continue in sin. But Paul's usage of the words *"continue in sin"*, is much different than walking in sin. These words in the Greek language present an impossible scenario. It's like saying, *"This could not happen!"* This is why he follows it up with another question, *"How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?"* Paul is saying that the believer cannot continue in sin, because he's died to it.

You are no longer IN SIN, but are now IN CHRIST!

He didn't say, "continue TO sin", but "continue IN sin". If we can start to understand our position in Christ, our lives will never be the same! Paul's laying the premise that when the believer was positioned in Christ, he died to sin!

verse 3: "Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?" Notice that the word, *"WERE"* is used twice in that verse, because it's past tense. The word *"baptized"*, which is also used twice, implies both, our union with Christ and our participation with Him. So the words of this verse are giving meaning to what he had just said in reference to us having died to sin. That *"death"* was not something that we did,

but something that Jesus did (Sadly, many believers are still trying to die to sin and the flesh, which is nothing more than works). When Jesus died on the cross, we also died with Him— for by the grace of Jesus Christ, we were identified with Him in what He did. Again, we don't have to try to die to sin or even to our flesh (which is works), but we must REALIZE (Paul used the words "*do you not know*"), that we have already spiritually died with Christ. Any belief, or teaching that instructs you that you still have to die to something, despite all sincere intentions, is contrary to Paul's teaching of grace. Many still ask the question, "*If that is true, why do I still have a problem with sin, bad habits and addictions?*" That's a great question and deserves to be answered. Paul answers this question and many others like it in this chapter. However, if one believes that he still has to die, then he will continue to struggle with his flesh.

verse 4-5: "(4) Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into 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. (5) For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection."

Keep in mind that the words of these verses are not just Paul's good intentions for believers, as if we had to pray hard enough for these things to happen in our lives, but he is revealing the truths of what God has done with every believer through Christ!

I can hardly contain myself as I read these words! Paul identifies the life that every believer should be living in the words of v.4, the "*newness of life*"! This newness of life, describes the new quality of life that's inside of you! It's the same creative power that created all of the worlds, stars and galaxies in the universe, but more importantly, it's the kind of life that raised Jesus from the dead! This is the quality of life that you have on the inside of you is through the grace of Jesus Christ, not by one's own works. That's the reason why Paul said that we "*should*" walk in this quality of life. Sadly without receiving this truth of what grace has done in one's life, this newness of life will not be working in him.

In v.5, we see the words, *"united together"*. This Greek word is interesting, because it means *"planted together"*. It describes the growth of plants. It's just like Jesus illustrated it as the Vine and its branches, in John 15. The vine and its branches are together as one (1) plant. A vine that has no branches is not much of a vine and a branch that is not part of a vine is not a branch— it's just a stick. But as the vine grows, so will its branches.

So notice the wording, *"in the likeness of His death ... in the likeness of His resurrection"*. Just like we were planted and united together in the death of Jesus, we were planted and united together in His resurrection! You were united with Christ in the Redemptive work that He did!

verse 6: *"knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin."* Again, this is something that we are to *"know"* as believers. The majority of Ministry sites on the internet have a section on it entitled, *"What we believe"*. In that section, it's listed the main core of what that ministry/church believes and holds fast to. Here in Romans 6, Paul mentions a few things that all believers are to believe about the grace of Jesus Christ (See [v.3, 6 and 9](#)). It's also interesting to note that Paul used 3 different terms for knowledge in each of those verses). This verse is to be seen in 3 different parts.

- **1** - *"that our old man was crucified with Him"*. Someone asks, *"What is the old man all about? Is it still present, or did it die off when we died to sin with Christ?"* Your old man describes both, the past and the present. Look at how Paul described this about the old man in Eph 4:22— ***"that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts"***. Your old man describe the personalities, habits and behaviors that came from the old spirit (person) that you use to be before you came to Christ and was born again (This is what Paul meant when he said in 2 Cor 5:17, *"old things are passed away. Behold, all things have become new"*). In Eph 4:22, see the words *"your former conduct"*? This former conduct is what you're to *"put it off"*, in order to be renewed in the *"spirit of your mind"* (see [Eph 4:23-24](#)). So it's as you grow in this awareness of having been united

together in the likeness of Jesus' death and are in the likeness of His resurrection, that renewal of putting off ... be renewed ... put on, takes place inside of you!

- **2** - *"that the body of sin might be done away with"*. This *"body of sin"* is explained a few verses later in v.12— ***"Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts."*** The body of sin is called your mortal body— the body that you use in carrying out sin. If something is *"done away with"*, it's discontinued! And this is exactly what the supremacy of grace does in one's life— it causes sin to be discontinued, or not to be carried out (This is what Paul also meant in [Gal 5:16](#)).

- **3** - *"that we should no longer be slaves of sin"*. Here is the result of the first 2 parts— we are no longer sin-slaves! This is the true freedom of Christ that we are to stand firm in, see [Gal 5:1](#)! If one is going to walk in this freedom from the power of sin (not having sin to control him), he will have to be *"KNOWING"* these 3 realities of grace seen in this verse.

Next time that we come together, we will continue our study on the supremacy of grace seen in Romans 6. Please stay tuned!