

Introduction: Paul's question in 6:1 responds to "Where sin abounds grace abounds much more!"

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| I. Dead to Sin, Alive to God | 6:1-14 |
| II. Set Free from Sin, Now Slaves of God | 6:15-23 |
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| I. Dead to Sin, Alive to God | 5:1-14 |
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A. 6:1-2 **Stupid Question #1** "Of course not!" (NLT)

B. 6:3-4 Baptism as a Symbol of Death and Resurrection

i. Baptism links us to the death and resurrection of Jesus:

- We walk down into the water like Jesus being led to the cross.
- There is no symbolism within baptism for the actual crucifixion. Why not? Because Jesus took that part for us. We died on the cross with Him, as this chapter says.
- We then go under the water, as in a burial, and come back up as in a resurrection.
- Finally, we walk away from the water to go out and live a new life.

C. 6:5-11 United with Christ both in Death and in Life

- i. 6:8 We have strong assurance based on Christ's resurrection. Because of His resurrection, we, His followers, need never fear death. This frees us to fellowship with him and do his will. When you lose your fear of death, your life is more alive.
- ii. 6:10-11 We can enjoy our new life in Christ because we are united with him in his death and resurrection. Our evil desires, our bondage to sin, and our love of sin died with him. Now, united by faith with him in his resurrection life, we are free from sin's hold on us.

D. Further Explanation:

i. What does it mean to have died with Christ (v.8)?

- a) **Legally**, God looks at us as if we had died with Christ. Because our sins died with him, we are no longer condemned.

Colossians 2:13-14 (NKJV) ¹³And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

- b) **Relationally**, we have become one with Christ, and his experiences are ours. Our Christian life began when, in unity with him, we died to our old life. That's what we just read about in Romans 6.
- c) **In our daily life**, we must regularly crucify all sinful desires that keep us from following Christ. This too is a kind of dying with him (Luke 9:23-25).

Luke 9:23-25 (NKJV) Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?"

ii. What does it mean to walk in newness of life (v.4)?

- a) The focus of Christianity is not dying, but living. Because we have been crucified with Christ, we have a share in the likeness of His resurrection (See 6:5 & 8).
- b) **Legally**, we have been reconciled with God and are free to grow into Christ's likeness. All possible animosity between God and us is gone.
- c) **Relationally**, we have fellowship with God and with other believers.

1 John 1:3-4 (NKJV) ³that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.⁴ And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.

- d) **In our daily life**, Christ's power is working within us to aid in our fight vs. sin.

Ephesians 3:20 (NKJV) Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.

- e) **That power comes from the risen Christ actually dwelling within us.** He is our power for living and our hope for the future.

Colossians 1:26-27 (NKJV) ²⁶the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. ²⁷To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

- iii. Ah, you may say, "But I sure don't feel like that old man (or woman) is crucified. That old me still feels very much alive as I struggle against my sin. How can Paul say, "the old man is dead"?"

- Illustration: Q: The chicken with its head cut off: Is it alive or dead?

A: Who cares? That's a distinction not worth making. The bird has been decapitated. It's flopping around aimlessly, looking alive, perhaps, and it's never going to do anything a chicken is really supposed to do.

Same with your old self. Nothing is going to come of that old person any more if you are now in Christ. He or she is eventually going to quit bouncing around and giving you trouble, but to ever expect anything to come of your old self and your old ways makes about as much sense as expecting a chicken with its head cut off to eat chicken feed and lay eggs.

- Read v. 11 again for emphasis: Reckon = "Count" or "Consider".

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

II. Set Free from Sin, Now Slaves of God

5:15-23

A. 6:15 **Stupid Question #2** “Of course not!” (NLT) This verse is super relevant, because many believers live and think exactly as if this were the case. When confronted with their wrongdoing, they point out that we are no longer “under the law.” This is so wrong.

B. 6:16 You are that one's slaves whom you obey. Check out this week's news:

*WASHINGTON -- A retired State Department worker and his wife have been arrested on charges of **spying for Cuba over three decades**, using grocery carts among their array of tools to pass government secrets, according to an indictment unsealed Friday.*

*The indictment says Walter Kendall Myers worked his way into higher and higher U.S. security clearances while secretly partnering with his wife, Gwendolyn Steingraber Myers, as clandestine agents **so valued by the Cuban government that they once had a private four-hour meeting with President Fidel Castro.***

David Kris, assistant attorney general for national security, described the couple's alleged spying for the communist government as "incredibly serious."

- i. Walter Kendall Myers worked for the State Department. The U.S. Government gave him his paycheck.
- ii. But who was really his master over these last 30 years? Fidel Castro. That's who he was actually obeying all that time. You get the point.
- iii. Now as Christians, we have to make a conscious choice.

C. 6:17 Wholehearted Commitment: To obey “from the heart” means to give yourself fully to God, to love him “with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” (Matthew 22:37). And yet so often our efforts to know and obey God’s commands can best be described as “halfhearted.” How do you rate your heart’s obedience? God wants to give you the power to obey him with all your heart.

- i. Some Christians need more knowledge. They need to understand the power available to them after they believe.
 - ii. Other Christians need more heart put into their obedience. They know what to do. They know they can do it with God's help. They are not, however, **dead serious** about living a life of true obedience.
- What kind of Christians are we? Who is our real master? Is it really Jesus? If so, then can we say we are truly walking in obedience to Him? Obedience from the heart?

(See also the *Handbook of Bible Application*)

Conclusions:

- 6:23 Two choices two results:
 - **Without Christ, the results of sin are death.** You are free to choose between two masters, but you are not free to manipulate the consequences of your choice. Each of the two masters gives you something as part of the deal. Sin gives you death in repayment for your efforts. That is all you can expect or hope for in life without God. Christ gives you eternal life—new life with God that begins on earth and continues forever with God. What choice have you made?
 - **With Christ, sins are forgiven and eternal life is given.** Eternal life is a free gift from God. If it is a gift, then it is not something that we earn, nor something that must be paid back. Have you ever seen a child offer to pay for his or her own Christmas gift? If a gift is purchased by the recipient it is no longer a gift. A more appropriate response to a loved one who offers a gift is kindly acceptance with gratitude toward the giver. Our salvation is a gift from God, not something of our own doing. He saved us because of His love, kindness and pity, not because we were good enough to be saved. If we accept gifts from friends and family, how much more we should accept with thanksgiving the gift that God has freely given?
- Presenting (KJV = “yielding”) ourselves to God in obedience or presenting our members to sin. Begin with the end in mind. Think about where you are going. An Illustration:
 - **I love water slides.** To enjoy them, all I have to do is present myself, yield myself to the slide. Water and gravity do the rest. I sail down the slide and have fun. It's an absolute thrill going down and around – sometimes even in the dark. I have gone up the stairs and down the slides countless times, just about all day when I've had the opportunity. They all have one thing in common. They end with a cheerful splash in a swimming pool at the end.
 - **I grew up near Niagara Falls.** Our house was about 20 miles from that enormous cataract. I have, on occasion, wondered what it would be like to hop onto a big inner tube in the relatively tame waters up stream and just go with the flow – yielding myself to the current. It would gradually get stronger, the speed would increase. You would soon be riding the waves in the rapids of the upper Niagara River. That would have to be at least as good as any water slide and probably better. **The only thing missing would be the cheerful splash into the swimming pool at the end.** With a little luck, you might even survive the 176 ft. drop into the turbulent turquoise waters. A few people have actually made it. There's another part of the river that falls 184 ft. (8 ft. higher) onto a great big pile of rocks. Your chances of survival there are greatly reduced.
 - If I continue to begin with the end in mind, I'll continue yielding or *presenting* myself to water slides.
- Read 6:13, 16 & 19 once more.
- Q: How do we do that?
A: When sin offers us an opportunity, we don't simply say no. At that moment we can deliberately, consciously and purposefully present our tempted members to God.

I can offer God my hands, my feet, my mind, my eyes or my ears, depending on the potential sin in question.