

“Dead to Sin but Alive to God in Christ Jesus”

A Devotional Bible Study on Romans Chapter Six

The apostle Paul’s letter to the “beloved” believers in Rome, written in the early Spring of A.D. 57, is the greatest doctrinal book in the New Testament. Martin Luther called Paul’s letter to the Romans “the true masterpiece of the New Testament and the purest gospel.” In his letter to the Romans, Paul establishes the purpose and power of Jesus Christ’s sacrificial death on the cross to redeem mankind from the depravity and doom of sin. If the Book of Romans had a subtitle, it would be entitled “The Obedience of the Faith,” since Paul both opens and closes his letter to the Romans with this goal of the gospel (Romans 1:5; 16:26). Paul’s letter to the Romans is so important to the Christian faith that one historian has concluded that not only was the Protestant Reformation a direct result of a greater spiritual understanding of this letter, but every spiritual restoration of the church since then has been linked to a deeper knowledge of the Book of Romans.

Paul’s letters to the saints at Ephesus and Colossae, written during his imprisonment in Rome, are breathtaking in their divine presentation of God’s heavenly perspective of both the church, which is Christ’s body, and of Christ, who is the head of the body. But it is Paul’s practical, foundational teaching in his letter to the Romans (particularly Chapter Six) which provides the way we can know and experience the glorious reality of Jesus Christ and His body, the church. If we do not have a divine understanding and practical application of Romans Chapter Six, we will fall short of truly experiencing God’s eternal purpose as presented in Paul’s letters to the Ephesians and Colossians.

In Romans Chapter Five, Paul declared the doctrine of *justification by faith*. Now, in Chapter Six, Paul declares the doctrine of *sanctification by faith*. What do the Biblical words “*justification*” and “*sanctification*” mean? Justification refers to our salvation and new birth in Christ, whereas sanctification refers to our separation from the world and obedience to Christ. In Chapter Five, Paul taught that our salvation (our justification to God) depended solely on our faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement (His sacrificial death on the cross). In Chapter Six, Paul now teaches that our sanctification (our obedience to God) also depends solely on our faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement. For when Christ died on the cross, He died not only to forgive us (justify us) from the penalty of our sins, He also died to free us (separate us) from the power of sin. In Chapter Five, Paul explains that we have been judicially declared righteous on the basis of faith in Christ alone (justification). In Chapter Six, Paul introduces and explains the divine exchange that God performed on our behalf through Christ’s crucifixion. In Chapter Six, Paul declares our sinful nature has been removed from us and we

have Christ's righteous life actually imparted into us, through our union with Him (sanctification). Therefore, we are not only righteous positionally in Christ; we are righteous experientially in Christ *if we believe and act* on this divine exchange of the cross.

Understanding the power of Christ's death on the cross is the key for any Christian who wants to live in victory over sin. This is the whole gospel that Jesus Christ personally revealed to Paul (Galatians 1:11-12) and this is Paul's personal testimony (Galatians 2:20). Salvation is only the beginning and not the end of God's purpose for His people. Knowing and acting on the whole gospel is vital to every Christian since only those who overcome the sin of this world can truly know Jesus Christ and receive the riches of their glorious inheritance in Christ (Ephesians 1:15-18). In Romans Chapter Six, verses 1-11, Paul focuses on spiritually understanding Christ's completed work on the cross. Then, in verses 12-23, he focuses on spiritually applying that divine understanding. Our hope and prayer is that this verse-by-verse study of Romans Chapter Six will firmly anchor your faith in the divine truth of the cross of Christ. Every verse in Romans Chapter Six is important to understanding and applying this divine truth that we have been freed from sin and enslaved to God through Christ Jesus. Each devotional study podcast is about ten minutes long.

Part I (Verses 1-11) Spiritual Understanding

Part II (Verses 12-23) Spiritual Application - Coming Later

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