

# Part Thirteen

**Romans 6:1-2** [NIV] *“What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning, so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?”*

What shall we say then?

**Paul in this chapter goes further than what we should say when we realise how bountiful the Grace of God has been to us.**

He shows us how this knowledge should dramatically change our lives completely.

This change can be summed up in four words: **“Identify with Jesus Christ”**.

In doing this we can *“die to sin”* and *“live to righteousness”*.

**We need to identify not only to Jesus Christ’s words, but also to his life, death and resurrection.**

**Romans 6:3** [NIV] *“Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death?”*

*“Don’t you know”* – do we?

In the first part of this chapter Paul shows us how God deals with our *“old self”* – or *“old man”* [King James]

**To have our past sins forgiven, as we learnt in chapter three, is wonderful, but this is not enough.**

God wants us to come to a state where we *“die to sin”* where the rebel that is in every one of us is put to death.

**Until this rebel is put to death we will continue to commit the same sins we have in the past.**

It is significant to note that Adam did **not** beget any children until after he became a rebel, so that every descendant of Adam is born out of rebellion.

**Psalms 51:5** [NIV] *“Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.”*

David understood this fact, Paul also understood the nature he had.

**Romans 7:18** [NIV] *“I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.”*

**Every one of us has a rebel inside of us.**

Sometimes he is very obvious, he can be seen in all our attitudes and actions.

At other times he is very concealed, can be very religious, very polite, very nice, but he is still at heart a total rebel.

**God will make no peace pact with this rebel.**

He will **not** try to re-educate him, **not** try to convert him.

There is in God's Eyes **only one solution, the death penalty**, without reprieve.

The good news is the execution of this rebel in us took place nearly 2,000 years ago when Jesus died on the cross, that is the solution, as we will soon see from God's Word.

**First let us more fully understand this Adamic nature that is in every one of us.**

It is called in God's Word "*the old man*" – "*the old self*"[NIV] – "*the carnal nature*" – "*the flesh*" – "*the body*" – "*the body of sin*" – "*the body of the flesh*".

There are a few "*technical*" words in the Bible as there is in any other system of communication of any other subject.

To understand the subject – like electronics – we have to understand these "*technical words*".

[RAM – Quad Speed – Optical Disk – SCSI Interface – etc.]

The words "*flesh*" and "*body of flesh*" are technical words we need to understand and rightly use if we are to understand God's Word as we find it in the Bible.

The words "*flesh*" and "*body of flesh*" as used in the Bible does **not** always refer to our physical body [no more than "*RAM*" means a male sheep in electronic terms].

**"Flesh" in the Bible often refers to the nature we inherited from Adam and only the context in which we find the word can show this to us.**

For example:

**Romans 7:5** [King James] "*For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.*"

"*in the flesh*" – here it means a time before we were redeemed by God through the blood of Christ.

**Romans 7:18** [NIV] "*I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.*"

**No good dwelling in Paul's human nature.**

**Romans 7:25** [NIV] "*Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.*"

**Rebellious nature in Paul still leads him into situations where he will sin.**

**Romans 8:10** [NIV] "*But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness.*"

When Christ comes into us we do not die physically; but the old "*body*" of sin is sentenced to death.

**Romans 6:6** [King James] "*Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*"

"*body of sin*" when we are saved we don't cease to have a physical body.

The "*body of sin*" is **put out of action** unable to function any longer ["*destroyed*"] – becomes entirely useless - made to be of no effect - made void - ]

**Colossians 2:11** [King James] "*In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:*"

*“body of the sins of the flesh”* we do not lose our body, but **our Adamic nature is dealt with.**

**Another word used in this passage is “baptism”.**

To understand what Paul is going to say we need to realise that baptism in the time of Paul was **not** infant baptism, nor sprinkling, but total immersion adult baptism.

**In the early church baptism was intimately connected with a confession of faith.**

Baptism marked a dividing line in life, a decision which often meant nothing less than **starting life all over again.**

**Baptism by total immersion symbolised a burial, and coming up out of the water in a resurrection.**

**The Jew would understand this symbol.**

Every gentile entering the Jewish religion had to partake in three rituals: a sacrifice, circumcision and baptism by immersion.

The convert was born anew, and then all his sins were remitted as God cannot punish for sins committed before we are born.

**The Greek would understand.**

At the time of Paul the only real Greek religion was found in the mystery religions.

These mystery religions were based on the story of some god who suffered, died and rose again, this story being played out in a drama.

Before a person could see this drama he had to undergo a long course of instruction on the inner meaning of the drama, as well as a course of ascetic discipline.

**This initiation was regarded as a death followed by a new birth.**

In one type of recorded initiation the person was buried up to their neck in a trench then afterwards addressed for a period of time as a very young child and even fed only with milk as a baby.

**Romans 6:1** [NIV] *“What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning, so that grace may increase?”*

**It is a terrible thing to seek to trade on the mercy of God.**

To use His great mercy as an excuse to sin so God could show how great His mercy was.

**Yet this is a trap any of us could fall into, knowingly or unknowingly.**

**Romans 6:2** [NIV] *“By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?”*

Paul’s reaction is *“perish the very thought of such a response to God’s expression of unconditional love”*

**Romans 6:3** [NIV] *“Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death?”*

Paul then uses the well known **symbol of baptism to help us to identify with what Christ did for us.**

Identify in a very intimate way of our experiencing the same events spiritually in our own lives.

Paul uses this example of baptism to counter the selfish, ignorant reaction to God's Grace mentioned in verse one, and shows us how God's Grace operates; it **never** leaves us in the condition of sinning.

It is a contradiction of terms to say we are in the Grace of God and continue to live in a state of continual sin.

### **God doesn't give grace to people who live in sin.**

The condition on which we receive grace is that we cease to live a life of sin.

Grace of God is free but it is **not** cheap, there are radical conditions attached to it.

### **Never underestimate the importance of baptism.**

**Mark 16:15-16** [NIV] *"Others said, "He is Elijah." And still others claimed, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of long ago." But when Herod heard this, he said, "John, the man I beheaded, has been raised from the dead!"*

### **Baptism and salvation are linked throughout the New Testament.**

Paul is assuming that every Christian he is writing to has been baptised.

**Romans 6:4** [NIV] *"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."*

Note we are baptised into Jesus Christ **not** a particular denomination of the Christian church.

### **We are buried in a watery grave so that we can be resurrected as Christ was not by his own strength but by the power of the Holy Spirit.**

*"Glory of Father"* is Holy Spirit's Power.

What we are saying to God through the symbol of baptism is that from now on I am **not** going to live by my own strength.

### **I have died, the power that is going to keep me going from now on is the supernatural power of your Holy Spirit in me.**

**Romans 6:5** [NIV] *"If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection."*

### **The promise of the resurrection is for those who have died in baptism with Christ.**

**Romans 6:6** [NIV] *"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"*

*"Crucified with Him"*

The key to understanding this passage is identification.

a) **When Jesus died – my old self died** – "I" was baptised into death, the "I" was not to be resurrected, "I" died

b) **As Jesus was resurrected to a spirit life** – so our resurrection from waters of baptism is to a *"spirit led"* life

**Colossians 2:9-12** [NIV] *"For in Christ all the fulness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fulness in Christ, who is the Head over every power and authority. In him you were also*

*circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, **having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.***”

Jesus Christ is the godhead in physical form.

In baptism into death with him our old sinful nature is cut off; and we are raised with him through faith in the power of God. [Holy Spirit]

“*Power*” Greek word meaning – active – effectual working power of God.

**God operates on earth through the Holy Spirit**, we see recorded proof of this in both Old and New Testament times.

Christ lives in us now, our new man, “*the emmanuel man*”, by the Holy Spirit dwelling in us.

**1 Thessalonians 5:19** [King James] “*Quench not the Spirit.*”

So we need to take the warning given to us not to “*quench Holy Spirit*”.

In both Hebrew and Greek the word used for “*spirit*” also means wind – moving air.

God has given us a very vivid analogy that is part of every moment of our lives to understand this spiritual truth.

Air, the breath of life.

**We cannot live our physical lives** unless we are in the air, and the air is flowing in and out of us constantly.

**We cannot live our spiritual life** unless we are in the presence of God constantly and that God [in form of Holy Spirit] is constantly flowing in and out of us.

**Remember this analogy with every breath we take.**