

Romans 6:1-2

Til Death Do Us Part

Introduction: Romans 6 is a difficult, but important chapter. It must be important, because Paul has already answered in 5:21 the question that he now spends an entire chapter answering again. Parable of the orphan with the foster parent who would stand on his back and neck while he was face down in filth and make him eat it and tell him that he was really enjoying it.

- I. Three reasons Paul would hear this question: “Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?”
 - a. Legalism: this kind of person loves his interpretation of the law because it brings God down to a reachable level, puts himself in control of his own standing with God, and allows him to pour contempt upon everyone else who doesn’t reach his level. Since this is what they want, they are extremely offended at 5:20. In our parable, this would be like the orphan not even wanting a new master, because he has made his situation manageable, choosing just one kind of filth.
 - b. Licentiousness: this kind of person thinks of freedom not as freedom to do what God wants but freedom to do whatever I want. Since this is what they want, they completely miss the “through righteousness” in 5:21. In our parable, this would be like the orphan refusing the guidance or help of the new master and continuing to press his face in filth; whenever the new master gives directions, he shrieks that he likes it the way it is and accuses the new master of being oppressive.
 - c. Limited view of salvation: this kind of person feels like the law is soooo big and soooo heavy and that all of that weight is upon them after conversion; the task is so great to them that discouragement pretty much just keeps them from trying. In our parable, this would be like the orphan refusing to see that the new master actually shows him and puts his arm around him and guarantees he will not fail.

- II. One answer to all three problems: grace’s reign begins with death.
 - a. What death is: an end, separation, discontinuity. (died, v2; buried, v4; crucified, v6).
 - b. Answering legalism: death breaks our sin addiction. Legalism just wants to manage it but actually makes it worse. But death brings a clean break, a complete discontinuity, a severing of the previous relationship. Legalism just doesn’t make sense if you’ve been set free by death.
 - c. Answering licentiousness: dead people don’t ask questions like that. If you really are dead, you’re not even going to want to continue in sin.

- III. Conclusion. Answering a limited view of salvation
 - a. Death is not the end. It’s a new beginning. When at conversion you die to sin, you’re not done living. You must continue in something, and continuing in sin at that point makes absolutely no sense.
 - b. Christ is a complete Savior. He doesn’t just earn your hypothetical salvation and leave the rest to you. He doesn’t just convert you and leave the rest to you. He dies and rises again in part to show that everyone He saves makes it all the way to eternal life. And He gives His Holy Spirit, to make us alive and give us faith so that we are joined to Him in His death and joined to Him in His resurrection life. His death provides the clean break at conversion, freeing us from the old master. His resurrection life provides the reigning of grace for the rest of your life and the guarantee that you will finally arrive in glory.
 - c. Grace reigns! We may yet sin, but we are not *continuing* in sin. We are continuing in grace! Ultimately, there is more at stake here than your personal happiness. At stake in how you continue, now that you belong to Jesus, is what kind of a Savior you show Jesus to be.

PRAYER

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