

## Romans Session 71

### Christ and the Reign of Life 4

### Dying to Live 1

*Romans 5:19-21 (NASB)*

<sup>19</sup> *For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.*

<sup>20</sup> *The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,*

<sup>21</sup> *so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

We have been exploring the truths of Paul's argument, that exposes the contrast between the condemning act of Adam and the redemptive act of Christ.

1. Different in effectiveness (v15)
2. Different in their extent (v16)
3. Different in their efficacy (v17)
4. Different in their essence (vv18-19)
5. Different in their energy (vv20-21)

We have looked at all but the last one and today we will take that on.

#### DIFFERENT IN THEIR ENERGY

<sup>20</sup> *The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,*  
<sup>21</sup> *so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

The last contrast between the one act of Adam and the one act of Christ is in regard to energy.

As Paul explains more full in chapter 7, the energizing force behind man's sin is **the Law**, which **came in that the transgression might increase**.

Knowing that he would be charged with being antinomian and with speaking evil of something God Himself had divinely revealed through Moses, Paul states unequivocally that;

*Romans 7:12 (NASB)*

<sup>12</sup> *So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.*

Nevertheless, God's own Law had the effect of causing man's **transgression** to **increase**.

It should be noted here that God's Law, ceremonial, moral, or spiritual has never been a means of salvation during any age or dispensation.

The divinely ordained place it held in God's plan was temporary.

As the Biblical Scholar F. F. Bruce, has stated, "*the Law has no permanent significance in the history of redemption*" (*The Letter of Paul to the Romans* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985], p. 121).

Paul has already declared that Abraham was justified by God solely on the basis of his faith, completely apart from any good works he accomplished and several years before he was circumcised and many centuries before the law was given. (4:1-13)

**The Law** was a corollary element in God's plan of redemption, serving a temporary purpose that was never in itself redemptive.

Disobedience to the Law has never damned a soul to hell, and obedience to the Law has never brought a soul to God.

Sin and its condemnation were in the world long before the Law, and so was the way of escape from sin and condemnation.

God gave **the Law** through Moses as a pattern for righteousness but not as a means of righteousness.

The Law has no power to produce righteousness, but for the person who belongs to God and sincerely desires to do His will, it is a guide to righteous living.

The Law identifies particular transgressions, so that those acts can more easily be seen as sinful and thereby cause men to see themselves more easily as sinners.

For that reason, **the Law** also has power to incite men to unrighteousness, not because **the Law** is evil but because men are evil.

The person who reads a sign in the park that forbids the picking of flowers and then proceeds to pick one demonstrates his natural, reflexive rebellion against authority.

There is nothing wrong with the sign; its message is perfectly legitimate and good.

But because it places a restriction on people's freedom to do as they please, it causes a resentment and has the effect of leading some people to do what they otherwise might not even think of doing.

**The Law** is therefore a corollary both to righteousness and to unrighteousness.

For the lawless person, it stimulates him to the disobedience and unrighteousness he already is inclined to do.

For the person who trusts God, the law stimulates obedience and righteousness.

Again, focusing on the truth that Christ's one act of redemption is far greater than Adam's one act of condemnation, Paul exults, **but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more.**

God's **grace** not only surpasses Adam's one sin but all the sins of mankind.

Like a master weaver, Paul pulls all the threads together in his tapestry of redemptive truth, declaring;

***<sup>21</sup> so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.***

## DYING TO LIVE

*Romans 6:1-10 (NASB)*

*<sup>1</sup> What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?*

*<sup>2</sup> May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?*

*<sup>3</sup> Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?*

*<sup>4</sup> Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead*

*through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.*

<sup>5</sup> *For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection,*

<sup>6</sup> *knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin;*

<sup>7</sup> *for he who has died is freed from sin.*

<sup>8</sup> *Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,*

<sup>9</sup> *knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him.*

<sup>10</sup> *For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.*

In his early teens, John Newton ran away from England and joined the crew of a slave ship. Some years later he himself was given to the black wife of a white slave trader in Africa.

He was cruelly mistreated and live don leftovers from the woman's meals and on wild yams he dug from the ground at night.

After escaping, he lived with a group of natives for a while and eventually managed to become a sea captain himself, living the most ungodly and evil life imaginable.

After his conversion in 1748, he returned to England and became a selfless and tireless minister of the gospel in London. He left behind, many hymns that are still among the most popular in the world.

By far the best known and best loved of those is "Amazing Grace". He became the pastor of a church in England, and to this day the churchyard carries an epitaph that Newton himself wrote; (*Out of the Depths: An Autobiography* [Chicago, Moody, n.d.], p. 151):

John Newton, Clerk,  
Once an infidel and libertine,  
A servant of slaves in Africa,  
Was, by the rich mercy of our Lord and Saviour,  
Jesus Christ,  
Preserved, restored, pardoned,  
And appointed to preach the faith  
He had long labored to destroy.

How could such a debauched, self-proclaimed enemy of the faith eventually be able to say with Paul;

**1 Timothy 1:12-13 (NASB)**

<sup>12</sup> *I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service,*

<sup>13</sup> *even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief;*

How could that apostle have addressed the Corinthian believers as;

**1 Corinthians 1:2 (NASB)**

<sup>2</sup> *To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling,*

And yet say to them;

**1 Corinthians 6:9-11a (NASB)**

<sup>9</sup> *Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals,*  
<sup>10</sup> *nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.*  
<sup>11</sup> *Such were some of you;*

Paul immediately gives the answer;

**1 Corinthians 6:11b (NASB)**

<sup>11</sup> *but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.*

It is those and similar vital concerns that Paul deals with in chapters 6-8 of Romans.

At this point in the epistle Paul begins a new development in his teaching about salvation and its practical effect on those who are saved.

After taking on the subject of sin and man's sinfulness, he now turns to the subject of the believer's holiness, the life of righteousness that God demands of and provides for all His children, the life of obedience to His Word lived in the power of His Spirit.

In his letter to the Galatian churches Paul gives a brief and beautiful summary of the divine principle that makes transformed life and transformed living possible:

**Galatians 2:20 (NASB)**

<sup>20</sup> *"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.*

In Romans 6:1-10, Paul links three elements in his opening defense of the believer's holy life:

1. The antagonist (v1)
2. The answer (v2)
3. The argument explaining and defending that answer (vv3-10)

We will begin to take these up in two weeks. Remember, there will not be a Romans class next week. We will be skipping one week.