

Study 7 – The epistle to the Romans by Neville Clark

Reading: Romans Ch 6

The righteousness of God with believers

I am very conscious as we commence Romans Ch 6 this evening that we are speaking on a chapter which we all know very well, in fact, Romans 6, 7 and Romans 8 are probably chapters we know quite well, but particularly of those three, this chapter, that perhaps I'd be so bold to say, that knowing it well is not really the right interpretation, reading it often perhaps might be more accurate, how much do we really think about this chapter as we read it so frequently. This is where we are in the break up of the book of Romans. We are commencing a new section, Ch 6-8 are a section which we have entitled "The righteousness of God with believers." So, basically, we are out of the major, if you like, heavy doctrinal section of Chs 3,4 and 5, and now the Apostle starts to speak about practical applications of these things in our lives.

So what was the story of Romans? Well you remember from Ch 1, we were introduced to the Gospel of God which would be the means of salvation for man. How much did man need that salvation? Well it became evident in Chs 1-3 that the Jewish world had completely corrupted itself as had the Gentile world in Ch 2, so by mid-way through Ch 3 you were in a situation where both Jew and Gentile equally had failed to attain any form of righteousness, and both, therefore, needed salvation. From Ch 3:21 through to the end of Ch 5, having shown man's need, the Apostle now explains how that need would be accomplished, that is, how God would save man, and the simple answer was, he sent his son. God then could forgive man if man copied the example of that son on the basis of man's acknowledgment of God's righteousness. That meant that God who is a righteous God could take an unrighteous man and pronounce him righteous without compromising his own righteousness. What that means then is by the time you get to the end of Romans Ch 5, the whole world is divided in to two groups under two federal heads, Adam and Christ. We are, that is to say, spiritual descendants of Adam or Spiritual descendants of Jesus Christ. The whole world are descendants of one man or the other, but, and this is the but, Christ did enormously more than Adam lost, that is, Christ reversed the problem that Adam created, but he didn't simply reverse the condemnation of Adam. Adam lost a very good life, the Lord Jesus Christ brought life and immortality, so there was a contrast, if you like, in quality. Adam sinned one sin, Christ brought forgiveness of many sins, so there was a contrast there in quantity, and the key phrase that illustrates that, your read over and over in Ch 5 is this phrase, "much more," much more was achieved in Christ than was ever lost in Adam, and you see that in v 9, v 10, v 15, v 17, v 20, much more achieved in Christ.

That brings us then to Ch 6 The righteousness of God with believers, and we talked last time, in the context of Ch 5, about the fact that a man has to leave the side of Adam and cleave to the side of the Lord Jesus Christ and become thereby, part of the family of Christ. That formal cleavage occurs by baptism, that's how we leave Adam's side and cleave to the side of the Lord Jesus Christ. And Ch 6 now begins to explain how that is done, and this is how Ch 6 breaks up, now I've broken up the entire section on this slide, but we are only going to look at Ch 6 tonight. Just while I

am looking at this, just notice, I've highlighted at the top of the slide the section in orange which is the first section of Chs 6-8, and you'll notice the implication of what I have said here is that the chapter break that finds itself at the end of Ch 6 really ought to be after Ch 7 and v 6. Now I'm only going to talk about Ch 6 tonight, but the first section of Ch 6 - 8 really runs between Ch 6:1 and Ch 7:6, so the chapter break, while it might be a fine sub-section break isn't really a very good section break in that sense. As you look at these three chapters you might say, "Well, they are pretty easy chapters," Ch 6 is the baptism chapter, Ch 7 is the flesh chapter, Ch 8 is the spirit chapter, in fact, it is not quite as easy as that, the whole section is one big argument. Not only should Ch 6 really finish in Ch 7:6, but Ch 8 continues the argument that is begun in the last verses of Ch 7. The Ch 7 - Chapter break really isn't helpful either, you see? And as far as Ch 6 is concerned, it is not just a chapter on baptism, it is a chapter about how we leave Adam's side and cleave to Christ's. Baptism is one example, but as you can see here, between Ch 6:1 and Ch 7:6 there are three examples of how we make that transition, and each of those examples, or each of the examples that the Apostle uses here commences the same way. There is a key work in Ch 6 and Ch 7, key phrase, and it is the phrase "know ye not," you'll see it in Ch 6:3. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into his death." You see it again in v 16, "Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey his servants ye are. Ch 7:1, "Know ye not brethren, I speak to them that know the Law," and he begins a dissertation on marriage and the reason those three "know ye not's" appear is because they are Paul's three examples, the three examples he gives of how you leave Adam's side and cleave to Christ's, are the parable of baptism. You have a new life in baptism. The parable of "service," you have a new master in Christ, and the parable of "marriage," you have a new husband in Christ. And Ch 6:3, Ch 6:16, Ch 7:1, "Don't you know?" he says, "have you never understood?" these are elementary things. "Don't you know?" "don't you know?" "don't you know? One, two, three examples, you see? So that's how the chapter breaks up, Ch 6 at least, and the early verses of Ch 7. Let me show you how the section breaks up, this is Chs 6 through Ch 8, and just look carefully, in the blue text I've got the section headings, and all I have done here is injected questions and answers in between that blue text, because the whole story of Chs 6 to Ch 8 is a story of questions and answers. It's really not that complicated.

Chs 6-8 is a story of questions and answers

V 1 of Ch 6, Here's the first question, "What shall we say then, shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" he says. So he begins the section with a question. "No," the answer comes back, we live a new life in Christ, we no longer identify with the old life, that's the point of developing from faith to faith, that's what baptism signifies. All right, Question number 2, Ch 6:15, "What then," he says, "shall we sin because we are not under the Law but under grace?" Since Law no longer applies, that is the Law of Moses has been done away, sin is not quite as simple as it once was. We don't have the same illegality before our eyes, as once we did. Does that mean we can sin on that basis? Perhaps not garrulously giving ourselves away to sin but can we sin a sin, or a class of sins? "No," he says, "you cannot, you've got a new master, you've changed your allegiance, you've changed your jobs, you can't go back and serve your former employer." All right next question, Ch 7:7, he says here, "What shall we say then, is the Law sin?" that is to say, "is the Law the cause of sin?" Now what is behind this question is the fact that, well you know from your own

human nature, if I was to give you a law, a prohibition of any kind, stopping you doing something, there is something inside you called human nature that says immediately you now want to do that thing more than you ever did before. So that not only does the Law expose what sin is, by very nature it increases the quantity of sin that is done in the world because people now want to fight the Law, Human nature wants to fight any kind of restraint. Is the Law sin? Or is the Law the cause of sin, the Apostle says, "No," he says, the Law is not the problem, the Law is Holy, Just and Good, it is man that is the problem. You can't blame the Law because you want to fight the Law. Next question, number 4, Ch 7:13, "Was then, that which is good made death unto me?" he says, "has the Law failed?" It was meant to be for mans good, but it has only killed him, "Is the Law a failure?" The answer is, as the Apostle says, "No, it is not the Law of Moses that kills man, it is the law of his nature that kills man." Man's got a nature so powerful that he can't resist it, that's what kills him, it is completely self-destructive. And then, finally, the last question which you read toward the end of Ch 8, in Ch 8:31, having answered four rhetorical questions from the Jew, the Apostle now asks his own question in Ch 8:31, "Well," he says, "What shall we say to these things, if God be for us who can be against us?" having now gone through the best part of three chapters of question and answer, he says, "What will prevent you from being in the kingdom of God?" "What is it that will prevent you from being in the kingdom of God?" and the answer is, of course, in the final verses of Ch 8, "Only yourself." God will not stop you being there if you really want to be there. You are your own worst enemy, and that's how he wraps up this section. So you see question answer, question answer, question answer, all the way through this section, you see? That's really what Chs 6 to 8 are about.

Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

Now let's talk about Ch 6. There's the wider context of the section, lets specifically look now at this chapter. V 1 of Romans Ch 6, "What shall we say then he says, shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" Now that question is a direct result of what he has just said in Ch 5:20, look at the similarity of the words in Ch 5:20 and Ch 6:1. Ch 5:20, "moreover, the Law of Moses entered that the offense might abound" that is to say that the specific purpose of the Law of Moses was to make you aware of sin. Unless the Law defined "sin," you wouldn't even know what sin was, but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, that is to say, where sin was revealed grace was revealed even more. As much as sin accelerated in a person's life, grace outpaced it, you see? Hence the question of v1 of Ch 6. Now this question might appear to be a somewhat disingenuous question, but think about it from the Jewish point of view. What the Apostle has done is he has rocked the entire Jewish world by the argument that he has had up until the end of Ch 5. What he is saying here is, as much as sin increases in life, God is able to forgive it. Nothing is beyond forgiveness if a person has the right disposition. Well the Jew took one look at that, and he throws his arms up and says, "Paul, you have just opened the floodgates to sin. I mean, look at Ch 5:13, "Until the law, sin was in the world, but sin was not imputed when there was no law," or people were not held accountable for sin, because they didn't know they were sinning, but they still were, so the Jew says, "How can you abolish the Law of Moses, how can you do that Paul? You've just opened the floodgates you see, the world's going to go wild, as soon as you remove that," this is the Jew's problem. "Nobody's going to know what sin is, all restraint will be cast away, and your solution to that Paul is to simply tell us that grace is better

than Law because the righteousness of Law won't save you, but the righteousness of God can. Well, if all we are interested in is the righteousness of God, then let's sin even more and give God the greater scope to demonstrate it, and you can't really argue with that Paul, can you, because you've already told us back in Ch 3:20, that we have no righteousness of our own and God does the whole job anyway?" So you see now the problem that Paul's got in front of him. Well as we said, Paul's going to answer this question in Ch 6 by giving these examples. He gives three examples, two of which find themselves in Ch 6. What is, brothers and sisters, what is the simple answer to that question in Ch 6:1? Well, here is what the answer is, here's what Paul's going to say, but I will tell you the answer now. Our works, now listen carefully, our works do not prove our righteousness they prove our identification to the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember in Ch 5, the whole world has been re-classed between two individuals, Adam and Christ. How do you know which class you are in? Well, baptism is the formal distinction, but beyond that, how do you know which class you are in? Answer: by your works. Do you act like Adam, natural man, or do you act like Jesus Christ, that's the final discrimination between the two classes. Now it is obvious to you as it is to me, that even in Christ we still will sin, so there is no way that our works can really establish our righteousness because they are pretty paltry things at the end of the day, but here's the point, we are not saved by our works, we are saved by Christ's works, and in measure as we approach in likeness to him, God will forgive us our sins and will credit us with the righteousness that Christ demonstrated. That's how God forgives sinners. But do you see now, the problems that the Apostle has when he comes to Ch 6? Having just spend five chapters saying that righteousness doesn't come by the Law, that a man can't be saved by his works, he now has to explain the need for works, you see that? Having demonstrated in the last five chapters that works won't save you, he's got to, when he comes to Ch 6, demonstrate the need for works, and you will appreciate, therefore, just how carefully he's got to tread, because this subject, especially in the face of a Jew, would be a mine field for the inexperienced. Well what's his answer going to be? Once again, it is very, very, simple, works are vital, but those works are not the works of Law, they are the works of love, that is to say, the works we do are not done as a matter of mere adherence to Law, they are the voluntary response to the love that God has shown to us, and those works demonstrate our allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ as opposed to the nature we were born with. They are works of identification in the context of Ch 5, not works of righteousness or self-righteousness in that sense.

Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

Well that's going to be the whole argument of Ch 6, you see, it's really not that complicated, but this is the nature of the issue that he has to deal with, particularly in the face of the Jews. "What shall we say then," Ch 6:1, "shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" Can you see now how frivolous this question becomes. The suggestion that salvation by grace means that you can now live as you please without any Law whatsoever, simply exposes your complete ignorance of the gospel of God, doesn't it, and you can almost feel the Apostle's exasperation, he is going to give, as we have found, three examples in Ch 6 through to Ch 7:6, three examples of how we participate in our own salvation; baptism, a change of master, a change of husband, and as I showed you a moment ago, v 3, v 16, Ch 7:1, "Know you not?" he says. "Don't you know this?" "Really, do I have to answer this sort of question?" This

question, by the way, I'm saying that Ch 6:1 is based on Ch 5:20 and you can see the verbal links, in fact, it has already come up before, hasn't it? Flip one page back to Ch 3:8, because the Apostle has alluded to this problem. Remember the four questions that came in Ch 3:1-8, the questions were in vv 1, 3, 5 and 7, well in v 5 you've got a question and in v 7 through almost to the end of v 8 you've got almost the same question, and the question simply was, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound," I mean that is basically the question of v 5 and v 7 of Romans Ch 3, and you can see in v 8 "and not rather as we be slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say, 'Let us do evil that good may come.'" You see there really was the belief in Paul's own day that he was teaching "licence." Now it wasn't true, and that's why he's got to tread so carefully in Ch 6, but that was a belief amongst some, so my point is, that it is not just a hypothetical question, in Romans Ch 6, it was a real problem in the first century amongst those with whom Paul was dealing. But you know the interesting thing, this question of Ch 6:1 wasn't unique just to Paul's day either, and wasn't unique just to Jews. Look at this! This is not a completely hypothetical objection, Ch 6:1, In fact there have always been people to insist that this is the logical corollary of Paul's teaching about Justification by faith, and unfortunately in every generation people claiming to be justified by faith have behaved in such a way as to lend color to this charge, that is to say, because we are not under the Law of Moses we are not under any law whatsoever, we can do what we like. A notable historical instance of this may be seen in the the Russian Monk Gregory Rasputin, the evil genius of the Romanoff family in its last years of power. Rasputin was an adviser to the Russian royal family before the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. Rasputin taught and exemplified the doctrine of salvation through repeated experiences of sin and repentance. He held that as those who sin most, require most forgiveness, are sinners who continue to sin with abandon, enjoys each time he repents, more of God's forgiving grace, than any ordinary sinner. Now what a ridiculous doctrine, but you can only ponder what the real reason was that Rasputin wanted to believe something like this, and perhaps the reason is that he wanted to maintain the ticket to salvation but in this life, do whatever occupied his mind. But the point is, he had what he thought was a doctrinal justification for leading a life of licence. Well this is, you might say, a contemporary interpretation, come with me to Jude v 4, because much later in the first century this thing comes up again, and Jude refers to it, in fact Jude refers to it at a time that he didn't want to refer to it. What I mean by that is Jude v 3, Jude says, "I want to write to you about the common salvation," I want to write to you about the hope of the Gospel, about the joys of the Truth, but I am constrained, he says, I can't do so, because, v 4, there are certain men crept in unawares who were before of old, ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness and denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ." Now who is he talking about brothers and sisters and young people, who is he talking about, "these certain men crept in unawares?" Well, they were brethren in the Truth, that's who they were "False prophets," Peter calls them in his 2nd epistle and 2nd chapter, they had infiltrated the ecclesia, they had turned "liberty" into "licence," hadn't they? Peter says, not only are they false prophets but they bring in "condemnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them," and that's the point, as Jude makes it here, at the end of v 4, "they deny the Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ." By their works they completely deny the identification with the Lord Jesus Christ that is required in Romans Ch 5, if you would stand at the side of the Lord as opposed to the side of Adam. They had besmirched that whole doctrine completely by their wickedness, you see? They

make no attempt to identify themselves and therefore they seal their fate, but understand the point. These people were Christadelphians, weren't they? They were Christadelphians and you might say, "Well, would God just destroy them like that, these people in v 4? Look at v 5 of Jude. God delivered Israel from Egypt and then destroyed a generation in the wilderness, he delivered them and then destroyed them. Well, that's exactly the same God as we worship, you see? We either identify with Christ, or we identify with Adam, and if by our conduct we maintain our identification with Adam, then the simple answer is, baptism won't help us any more than it helped the wilderness generation that passed through the Red Sea. Our works are critical, not because they establish our righteousness, but because they establish our identification with Christ's righteousness, you see? It is as simple as that.

By no means?

Well, what does the Apostle say, what is the answer? Ch 6 of Romans again, Ch 6 and v 2. "God forbid," he says, how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein." The first thing you've perhaps got to observe on this verse is, I read it, but it is a poor translation "God forbid," simply because the word 'God' doesn't exist in the Greek text. The RSV and the NIV say, "By no means." The Diaglott says, "Let it not be." "How shall we who are dead to sin," he says, "live any longer therein. We've left behind the ranks of Adam, we've joined the ranks of Christ, therefore, the natural conduct we had in Adam ought also to be left behind, you see, that's the point? The point he is making, and now he begins his first example. V 3, the example of baptism. As I say, the three examples he gives, two of which are contained in Ch 6. Now, I am fully aware that we are now all very familiar with the concept of baptism, but, in fact, there is a lot to talk about in these verses. First and foremost, baptism is an identification with the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and because Paul is emphasising the fact that sin can no longer be part of our lives in the Truth, that is, no longer a deliberate part of our lives in the Truth, he emphasizes the death of an old way of life, here, more than he emphasizes the resurrection of Christ. So if you just cast your eyes down these verses, the word "death," or "dead, one after the other. V 2, v 3, v 4, v 5, v 7, v 8, 9,10,11,13, almost every verse between v 3 and v 14 which is the end of this sub-section, the word "death," or "dead" occurs because we have died to an old way of life, the "old man of the flesh," has died, and a new man has ascended out of the water. "Know ye not," v 3, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into his death" and there's the point to notice, look what the verse says, and look what it doesn't say. "Know ye not that so many of us who were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into His death. It doesn't just say that we were baptised into "death," we were baptised into "His death." Now how did Christ die? Did he die by accident? Did he die in his sleep? Brothers and sisters, he was executed, he was executed, so there's the first lesson about sin, you can't wean yourself off sin. Christ wasn't, as it were, weaned into death, he didn't die slowly, he didn't just expire slowly, he was killed, wasn't he? You can't wean yourself off of sin, you've got to execute sin, "if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out." "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off," that's the Lord's own instruction as far as sin is concerned, you can't parley with this. If you fool around with it too long, it will kill you, you become like it, you change your allegiance, you cleave back to Adam's side, you're gone. It's not a negotiant with sin, that's the point. It's going to hurt, if there is an execution of any part of your life which is natural to

you, it's going to hurt, any amputation is going to hurt. There is going to be some loss of blood but it might be to save your life, you see? Before the crucifixion, the Lord prayed to his Father, if there was any way, can you remove the cup from me, he says. If there is any way that this can be achieved without going to the cross..you see very fibre of his natural being revolted at the prospect of death, as it would for you and me. Well, the simple message therefore of Romans Ch 6 is, we've got to die, we have to die, and the even simpler message of Romans 5 and 6 is not just that we have to die, we will die. The issue is, if you don't want to die eternally, you must die figuratively. Think of this, Luke 9:24, "Whosoever shall save his life shall lose it and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it." So, you either lose your life now, or you lose your life later, but death is going to happen to every one of us in this room, like it or not. The only question is, do you want to die now, or do you want to die later? That is to say, do you want to die to sin now, or do you want to die eternally later? That's the question, "choose your poison." You have no choice to make, no choice, choose which path of death you'd like to commence, Gal 5:24, "Crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts." Col 3:5, "Mortify your members which are upon the earth." Rom 13:14, "Make no provision for the flesh," you see? Now what do you think the natural man inside of everyone of us is going to think of that? Well, he's going to fight against that, with every fibre of his natural being. So you've got an instant warfare, you are going to take the "old man" and you are going to pin him to a tree, and the "old man" is not going to like that and therefore the only way you can destroy sin in your life, is if it goes kicking and screaming because that's what's going to happen, it's not natural thing to do to kill the "old man." Welcome to the Truth, that is what we are called to, because that is exactly what Jesus Christ did. But it is not just about death, it is also about resurrection, look at v 4. "Therefore" he says, "we are buried with him by baptism into death that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father even so we also should walk in newness of life." Now think about what he is saying here, it doesn't mean that we simply climb out of the waters of baptism and live as Christ lived after his baptism. It means we climb up out of the waters of baptism and live as Christ lived after his resurrection. I mean, that's the type isn't it? After his baptism Christ could still have sinned if he wished to. I know he didn't, but he was still just as prone as you and me. After his resurrection, that was impossible. You see, that's what we are called to. The life, not just the life of a sinless man, but the life of a sinless man for whom it is impossible to sin, angelic life, you might say. And in v 5, "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of Christ's death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection." Now I am not going to turn it up for times sake, but there is an excellent reference to put beside v 5, Phil 3:10, 21, they are companion verses. V 10 of Phil 3 says, "If this body is made conformable to Christ's death," then v 31 of Phil 3 "it shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body in the resurrection." And the point in Phil 3 is the word "conformable" in v 10, and the word "fashioned" in v 21 are the same Greek word. That is, therefore to say, if you conform to Christ's death now, you will conform to his resurrection in the future, that's the point. That is exactly what v 5 is saying of Rom 6, you see? That's the hope we have in Christ. And it says here in v 5, "that we might be planted together," "planted together," that figure is taken from agriculture from the grafting of plants, the grafting of one plant into another, so we are in a manner of speaking grafted onto the example of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are not the same tree as Christ is, we are a little sapling, grafted onto the side of this great oak, but as time goes by, we become more and more like the great oak. We never become really, that much like the great

oak, but can you see, that by virtue of our allegiance to that great oak tree, we are saved because of the great oak tree? That's the figure he is using here, you see? We become the same, in a manner of speaking, over time, but since we have a new life, what becomes of the old life? What becomes of our conversation, as it were, in this world prior to baptism? V 6, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Christ that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. So the "old man" is dead, and that's the thing about death, you can take the worst tyrant that humanity has ever known, I mean, pick one, worst tyrant that humanity has ever known, one of the monsters of history, and they might sin the sins of 100 men in one life time, but when they are dead, they don't commit a single crime, they don't do one other single thing wrong, no matter what they were like before, not one more sin. That's the thing about death, dead men don't sin, you see, and that's the point. But here's the question for you and me in v 6, how do we do it? How do you kill the old man? How, practically, do you kill the old man of the flesh? How do you renovate your life? Which is really what he is saying here in v 6. Well, I will show you the answer. Come across a couple of pages to Ch 8 and v 13. Now I will read the verse and you tell me whether you can see in Ch 8:13, how the "old man" of Ch 6 and verse 6 is killed. V 13 of Romans 8, "For if you live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body you shall live. Can you see it? There are two men spoken of in Rom 8:13, the man after the spirit, and the man after the flesh. Rom 6:6 says the old man after the flesh is crucified, how? By the new man. Can you see, the new man kills the old man, isn't that what Ch 8:13 is saying? What Paul does not say, is that you kill the old man and you leave the house vacated and then wait for the new man to walk in, he does not say that. I mean, goodness me, you know the parable as well as I do, the risk of that, the risk of that is that the old man comes back with seven mates, that's a big problem. Instead, the new man has to kill the old man and then the new man occupies the house. You see, that is what Ch 8:13 is saying. When we live a new life in Christ, the old life takes care of itself, if your new life is conscientious. Back to Ch 6, remarkable isn't it? I should put Ch 8:13 in my margin beside Ch 6:6, if I were you. V 7 of Rom Ch 6, "For he that is dead is freed from sin, now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him, and there's the hope, you see? We copy Christ in this life, and we will copy him also in the next. It is as simple as that.

V 9, "Knowing this," he says, "that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him, now look at v 9 carefully. Look at what it says, and look at what it doesn't say. "We know by experience that Christ has been raised from the dead and he dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him. You notice it doesn't say "sin" hath no more dominion over him, it says "death" hath no more dominion over him. Now there is no question that Christ had human nature in his life just as we do, sin never had dominion over him. The contrast in v 9, is in v 14, "For sin shall not have dominion over you for you are not under law but under grace," but you see the difference? Sin has dominion over us, or sin and death, you might say has dominion over us, only death had dominion over Him. You see, look how careful the Apostle is with his reasoning, you see? Very very precise. V 10, "For in that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." He died unto sin, now think about that. Why doesn't it say he died "for" sin? I mean John 1:29, "Behold the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," he certainly did die for sin, but the Apostle wants to make a specific point, "He died unto sin," you

see there was a time when he was related to sin, he bore the same nature as we do. He had the same proneness to sin that we do, and having died, sin can never affect him again, you see? That's v 10. "Likewise, reckon also yourselves to be dead, indeed, unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Now think about that carefully, do you reckon you are dead to sin? Well, you might be half dead, you might not even be that. Are you alive to God? Well, you might be half alive to God, you might not even be that. There is a parallel between vv 10-11, you see? "Christ is dead to sin and he liveth unto God" in v 10. We are dead to sin and we are alive to God, how? Through Jesus Christ our Lord, we are grafted on to the great oak. We are really not independent oak trees, but we have identified with that man, you see? That's how we are alive to God, that's how we are dead to sin. The point is, not that we will never sin, but that sin doesn't have the same hold on us that it did when we were in Adam, and we will wrestle with that, we'll fall, and we will get up again seven times, but, things have now changed, because the old man has been killed. V 12, "Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body that you should obey it in the lust thereof," don't forget the question we are answering here Ch 6:1, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" There's the answer in v 12, absolutely not. Do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey it in the lusts thereof, you see? And the point of v 12, if you look carefully, is that sin reigns, and so in Adam, sin 'enthrones' itself in us, in Christ, that throne is removed. v 13, "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Interesting here, that the word "yield" is a military term, It means to 'place at one's service,' that is 'to turn up for work,' 'to report for duty.' Neither yield your "instruments," the word instruments as your margin tells you is the word 'weapons,' it is another military term. You see there was a time when we all went to war in the cause of 'sin,' that can't happen now, we've left that army. Well we might be in a different army, but we are certainly no longer in that army. It may be that in our lives sin has certain temporary victories, but the old supremacy is broken, that's the point, you see? The old supremacy of sin is broken. V 14, this is the conclusion of the first example, "For sin shall not have dominion over you for ye are not under law but under grace. Now think about what that's saying. The question of v 1 was "shall we sin that grace may abound?" 'No,' he says in v 14, 'Ye shall not sin because ye are under grace rather than law.' How does that answer the question? What does that mean in v 14? Well think about the Law. The Law defined sin. The existence of the Law gave you an awareness of sin. The problem is that the moment human nature sees a law it immediately wants to break the Law, it rails against that Law, you see? Do you remember what it says, have you ever wondered what this verse really means, in verse 12, I'll read it to you. In 1 Cor 15:56 it says this, "The sting of death is sin and the strength of sin is the Law," what does it mean that the "strength of sin is the Law?" What is it in the Law that gives sin its strength? Well it is the existence of a Law. How? Rom Ch 7:7, "Is the Law sin? By no means, nay," he says, "I had not known sin but by the Law." If the Law did not exist I wouldn't have even known what sin was. For example "I had not known lust except the Law said thou shalt not covet," but here's the problem, "but sin, by taking occasion by the commandment wrought in me all manner of concupiscence, for without the Law, sin was dead." Do you know what, the very Law that said thou shalt not covet not only did it make me aware that covetousness was a sin, it made me covet. The Law is the strength of sin. So you might say that the Law has now created a sin in the Apostle that wasn't there before, you see? All right, so that's how sin takes its strength from

the existence of the Law. Now come back to verse 14 of Ch 6, does that help us? "Sin shall not have dominion over you because you are not under Law but under grace." Yes it does help you, you see, because the very fact that the Law no longer applies, that is the Law of Moses, not any law, but The Law of Moses, the fact that it no longer applies it has taken the wind out of the sails of sin, you see? Because the Law is the strength of sin. But we are under grace, how does grace help you? And there is a remarkable quote on this, you come to Titus Ch 2. What do you make of this quotation? Titus Ch 2 and v 11, look at this. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us," so grace 'teaches us' "that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present life." This you see is the moral power of the doctrine of the Atonement. How does grace, in v 11, teach you anything in v 12? Well it is very simple, you see it is only when we understand what God has done for us that we can respond accordingly. It is only when we appreciate what God went through to save us from the consequences of sin that we would ever serve him with the love he desires. If God did go through all of this to save us from sin, that is, if we can receive forgiveness for sin by cleaving to the example of the Lord Jesus Christ, why would we ever want to add to that burden, why would we ever presume that we should "sin that grace may abound."

Who is your master? Two masters contrasted.

You see the legalist could never understand that, for him salvation was purely transactional, he keeps the Law, he gets salvation, and it is as simple as that. There is no morality in that there is no relationship with God, there is no abhorrence of sin. He could never ever see sin like God saw sin, because sin for him was just a matter of Law, and obedience was a matter of keeping the Law, it was not a matter of love. But Titus says, once you understand what God has done for you and you are going to receive a forgiveness which you do not deserve, that teaches you to disavow all the affections of the 'old man,' that's what he is saying, you see? And so back in Rom 6, read it again. "For sin shall have no dominion over you," why? Because you are not under Law, so you no longer have the same incitement to sin that you once did, but you are under grace, which means you do not want to sin. You do not want to add to the burden that you've already borne before God, or you have given God, as it were. Remarkable isn't it? Well that's the first answer to the question. The first question was "shall we sin that grace may abound," and he's given the example, clearly the answer is "no," because you have changed lives. Now here comes the 2nd question, v 15. "What then, shall we sin because we are not under the Law but under grace? By no means," he says, now what do you make of that question in v 15? At first flush it reads as though it is just a repeat of the question in v 1. I mean, look at v 15, v 1 said, "shall we sin that grace may abound?" v 15 says, "Shall we sin because there's no Law?" It is almost as if it is asking the same question perhaps from the positive compared with the negative, but there is a difference. V 1 said, "Shall we continue in sin," V 15 doesn't say anything about 'continuing' in sin. V 15 says, 'can we commit a sin' or a class of sin? A deliberate act. To 'continue in sin' in v 1 would simply be to allow the weakness of human nature to take over and to throw all caution into the wind and embark on a life of license. To commit one deliberate act of sin in v 15 or a deliberate class of sins is to make a rational choice and when you make a choice like this in v 15, that is service, you are rendering allegiance and that's the next analogy. Who is your master? Who is your master?

You notice also in v 1 the emphasis was different, in v 1, the emphasis was on grace, in v 15, the emphasis is on the absence of Law. Shall we sin that grace may abound v 1, shall we sin now that Law doesn't abound, v 15. You see what is happening? Now that the Law is abolished the Jew will say, 'Well, I always did have a problem with this prohibition or that prohibition, I never ever could keep track of everything, I don't just want license to cast caution to the wind and become completely profligate, I don't want to do that, I just want to reserve to myself one part of my life which is just mine. I don't want to talk about it with you, this is a door that we don't open in public, one sin, or one class of sins, I just want Sunday afternoons to be mine to do with whatever I like. Can I do that? So you see now the difference between v 1 and v 15. V 1, no Law whatsoever, v 15, I want to cordon off a portion of my life for my own use, corollary just this afternoon, for example, and to do something which might be a sin, but it is not out of control, it is restricted. This is the question, for example.. You know you might not be able to relate to v 1, I don't know that I can relate to v 1, but we are talking in v1 about a complete lack of restraint all together, but can you relate to v 15? I can relate to that, and I am sure you can relate to that. This is the question in v 15 that says, 'I've worked so hard for God, I can justify this or that.' That's really the question of v 15. 'Well, think about it like this,' says Paul in v 16, "Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness." So here is the next analogy, the figure of slavery. Whose servant are you? Who really is your master. It is one thing, you see, to fall under the temptation of flesh, and the pull of that temptation perhaps too great for the moment and you capitulate and you hate yourself for it, I mean, look at Ch 7:15, "That which I do I allow not, that which I would, that do I not, that which I hate, that do I." So there is somebody falling in the weakness of the moment for a sin. They don't premeditate it, they don't want to do it, and they hate themselves when they have completed it, but it happens. Ch 6:15, is planned. You write an agenda, you consciously plan to do this particular sin, or this class of sin, or this sort of activity. There is a voluntary service, there is no resistance at all, you don't hate yourself once you've done it, in Ch 6:15, see the difference. Jesus is very clear, John 8:34 "Whoso committeth sin is the servant of sin, period, and if you choose that master, then he's your king and you will reap whatever he sees fit, because he is the king. If the keyword in the last section, up to v 14 was the word 'death,' the keyword in this section is the word 'servant.' V 16 it appears twice, v 17, v 18, v 19 twice, v 20, v 22, all the way through, this is all about whose servant are you? Who is your master? Now look at v 16 again, look at it carefully, "Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness," he says. 'Sin unto death' or 'obedience to righteousness.' Why doesn't he say, 'sin unto death,' or 'obedience unto life?' I mean, that would be the opposite, wouldn't it? Why doesn't he say, 'You serve this master in sin unto death,' or 'this master in obedience unto life' why doesn't he say that? Well because if he said that, it would prove that Law could save you wouldn't it? It would prove that you could earn life. You can't, you see? He is carefully choosing his words, isn't he? And note that it is not obedience of righteousness it is obedience unto righteousness. Your obedience gives you an identification with the Lord Jesus Christ which leads to God pronouncing you righteous. Your obedience is not righteous, you are not righteous of yourself, you are credited with righteousness because you are grafted on to that great oak tree, you see? It is by the grace of God, you don't earn it. And throughout all this section from v 15 through to v 23, these two masters are

contrasted. V 6 sin is contrasted with obedience; in v 18, sin is contrasted with righteousness; v 19, uncleanness and iniquity is contrasted with righteousness and holiness; v 20, sin contrasted with righteousness; vv 22-23, sin in contrast to God, and when you see it like that brothers and sisters and young people it is difficult, I believe, to escape the conclusion that if we deliberately embark on sin, if we deliberately give our service to another master, we really don't love God. Matt 6:24 says, you can't serve two masters, you either love one and hate the other, or hold to one and despise the other. Difficult to read it any other way, isn't it? Very difficult to read this any other way. Jesus says, as I say, John 8:34, "Whoso committeth sin is the servant of sin." You have changed your master, the moment you plan to commit sin. Well v 17, is like a transition verse, we don't have any contrasts in v 17, you know I mentioned, sin vs obedience, sin vs righteousness, well you don't read of a contrast of any kind in v 17, because v 17 is like a transition verse. This is the verse that describes our change, from one master to the other. And look how he says it, "God be thanked," he says, "that ye were the servants of sin, you've obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to you," you did it from the heart, and there's the point we made earlier, it is voluntary. You have elected to change masters. You have done it in response to God's love for you which is become evident by the doctrine that you have learned, and it must be voluntary, because think about the heart of man. What do you know about the natural heart of man? Mark 7:21, "evil thoughts," "adulteries," "fornications," "murders" and such like. That's the heart of man, but from the heart of man you've obeyed a doctrine, repudiated an old Adamic, call it, way of life, and cleaved to the side of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's the problem, by the way, for the Judaiser, never ever affected the heart, his response to God was purely transactional, 'there's the law, if I keep the Law, if I can't keep the Law, I'll offer a sacrifice.' When Christ returns, then it will affect the hear the Jew, Jer 31:33 says, "God will write his law on their heart." It was never, it never ever made it to their hearts in all the thousands of years they had the Law of Moses, but it will here, you see? And v 18, "being then, made free from sin, you become the servants of righteousness." You've got a freedom from sin, but you don't have a freedom to do whatever you like, you've simply got a freedom to serve the ultimate master, that's the point, isn't it? "I speak," v 19, "after the manner of men, that because of the infirmity of your flesh for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, even so now, yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness." The NIV for the early portion of v 19 says it like this, "I put this in human terms, because you are weak in your natural selves," now what that means is, the Apostle is apologizing in v 19 for using the figure of slavery, I mean, it is a rather crude figure, you are a slave to this master or you are a slave to that master, he said, 'look I apologize for using such a crude figure,' particularly, as you will appreciate, there were slaves in the ecclesia, 'but I am using it so you will understand the point,' that's what he is saying. This is how you change allegiance, v 20. "For when you were the servants of sin, you were free from righteousness. You notice v 20 is exactly the opposite of v 18, like the precise opposite of v 18. V 21, "Well then, what fruit had you then in those things whereof you are now ashamed, for the end of those things is death." What was the fruit you harvested when you lived in sin? There was none, sin doesn't produce fruit, does it? For each one of these things it takes a very long time to come, the tree, the tree's got to have a certain purity in order to produce fruit. A seedling doesn't produce fruit, so fruit is a very valuable commodity which only comes after years of persistence, that's the thing about fruit. But even though sin doesn't produce any fruit, it is not that sin

produces nothing at all. Oh yes, it produces death eventually but it does produce some other things along the way. Come with me to Heb 12, look at this, here's what sin produces, as a contrast to fruit. I'm going to compare v 11 and v 15 of Hebrews 12. In v 11, it says of Hebrews 12, "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous," that is to say, if you are not chastened today, you rejoice, "but in fact it is grievous. Nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceful fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby." So here is fruit that comes from discipline being enforced upon us in life, but it is not instant, it takes time, and perhaps for years and years you invest yourself in the study of the Bible or in other important thing that is worth spending time in, and eventually it yields its fruit, eventually there is a pay back if it is a wholesome thing. Even when you plant a garden, if you plant a seed, the fruit doesn't come straight away, it takes time. Look at v 15, here's the contrast. "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you and thereby many be defiled." Sin has got the opposite effect, it doesn't produce fruit, and what it does produce it produces immediately. It produces a "root of bitterness" and that root of bitterness doesn't come after a long time, it springs up in trouble, you see? So sin will leave you with a sour taste, a troublesome taste, a defiling taste. It is almost like, I don't know, you have a crate of chocolate and you say, 'give me a bar of chocolate,' and I give you a block of chocolate and you eat the whole block afterward you regret eating the whole block, you just wanted a taste. You ate the whole thing, and now you feel ill. This is what sin does and it is very appealing at the moment but it has these by-products you might say, in v 15. So if you want a fruit of sin, there's the fruit of sin, by-products. But don't forget back in Rom 6 we are contrasting two masters, and therefore in the context of Rom 5, two groups of people, one aligned to Adam, the other aligned to the Lord Jesus Christ. What did Rom 6:21 say? It said the result would be shame and death, "What fruit had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed, the end of those things is death." Remarkable, you know, exactly the consequences of Gen Ch 3 they took a fruit and it resulted in shame and that was followed by death. Their sin had a fruit of sorts, and the consequences of that from the words of Heb 12:15, "many were defiled." Every descendant of Adam after that sin was defiled because of Adam's sin, so there's the root of bitterness that sprung up on the human race because of the consequences of Gen Ch 3. Well, finally, in Rom 6, it says in v 22, "But now being made free from sin," he says, "and become the servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end, everlasting life." The fruit might be a long time coming in this life or in the life to come, but it will come eventually, "for the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," and there's the final contrast, you see, "the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life." Eternal life is not a wage, it is not something that is earned, it is a gift by God, but interestingly, the word 'wages' in v 23 is a military term, it literally means 'the pay of a soldier.' Luke 3 as we heard just on the weekend "soldiers be happy with your wages," it is the same word. The point is, however, Sin is a tough master, he is a very tough master, you don't get paid well by sin. Sin will employ you, he will employ you all the days of your natural life, you won't get much more than a private's wage from sin, you won't die rich, and you will die. You know it reminds me of Hitler in the 2nd world War, just as I think about this, we are talking about sin as and abstract commodity here, it is part of all of us and we understand it, but it is metaphorical, if you had to put a face on sin, like Sin as a 'slave-master,' sin as a person who we are going to line up and serve, as opposed to the Lord Jesus Christ, what would that face look like? Well think of any of the despot's that history has given us. In the 2nd

world War when it was obvious that Hitler was going to lose the war because the allies were encroaching on Berlin, instructed Albert Speer who was his engineer, to destroy every factory, every building, every power plant, every dam, every railway in Berlin and Speer said to the Fuhrer, "What about the people?" It is not as if the Allies haven't bombed everything else to pieces, Dresden is just ash on the ground, "what about the future of the nation after the war is concluded, even if we lose the war?" Hitler says, "We do not need to consider the nation any longer, the nation has proven itself weak, those that remain after the battle are of little value" he said, "because the good have already fallen. Destroy Berlin." Well, needless to say, Speer didn't do it. The Point is, however, that those people who had fought so hard for that nation now meant less than nothing to the Fuhrer. He planned to commit suicide. Did he care about them? No he did not. That's the master we are talking about, that's the kind of master we are talking about. Now just pause and consider for a moment v 15, as I said, you might not be able to relate to v 1, because v 1 is to consider the abandonment to sin, but v 15 is to simply to corral a certain portion of your life and reserve it for activities which are illegal before God. You might look at that and say, 'Well, really, would we really do that? Would we really give voluntary service to something which God frowned upon?' You know, sin's a terrible thing isn't it, it is a deceiver, we don't talk about "deceitful lusts" for nothing, and it is a strange feature of human nature, you know, that when we work hard and we perhaps achieve a lot, we can feel as though it is our right to take a liberty or two. It is a fact, in business, that men, particularly men, who are very successful develop a sense of entitlement and before long they think that the laws that apply to everybody else no longer apply to them. Generally those men are risk-takers which is why they have got into the powerful positions that they now find themselves in, so that the behavior that they are embarking upon where they become above the law doesn't feel strange to them because they have always been risk-takers, you see, until one day, the police come calling, and they've got their hands in the till, and they are imprisoned. Sadly, the same thing can happen in the truth, very capable competent successful brethren, in that sense, find themselves in a position they might never have thought they'd be in, never ever have dreamed possible, because it had happened by degrees, they were high contributors, they took liberties and Sin was in their ear, 'it's all right, you deserve it, it doesn't matter for you, that's for the little people, but not for you.' Never make that mistake. I mean as I describe it, you can see the arrogance of that position, it happens, it happens in life out there, it happens in life here. Every servant receives his reward. Never forget, never ever forget brothers and sisters and young people, works are critical, sin is forbidden, but our works do not prove our righteousness, they simply prove our identification with the Lord Jesus Christ. And our works are not the works of Law, they are not the works of compulsion, they are the works of love, those are the heart-felt responses, to God. For all that he has done for us. -