

Let Not Sin Reign in Your Body

Lesson 5

November 10

Romans 6:12-7:25

So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. (Rom 6:11-14)

What does it mean to be “not under law but under grace?” Paul has already taught us that “the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe” (3:21-22). The reason we need to be justified (4:23-5:1) is we have sinned and broken God’s law. Our only hope is Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice to atone for our sins (3:23-25).

What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. (6:15-18)

In **Romans 6:20-23**, Paul encourages us to think carefully about the “fruit” we want to harvest from our lives. Do we want to bear fruit of which we will one day be ashamed, ending in death? Or do we want to bear the sort of fruit that leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life?

In **Romans 7:1-6**, Paul emphasizes that we belong to Christ in order that we may bear fruit for God. As disciples of Jesus, “we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.” So is the law “sin”? By no means. “The law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good” (7:12).

For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. (7:14-17)

Nothing good comes from sin. Sin wages war. Sin enslaves. Sin produces death. Just listen...

Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin. (7:24-25)

This is why we *must* die to sin and be raised to newness of life in Christ Jesus. Let’s talk about it...

For Class & Family Discussion:

- In your own words, what does it mean to “present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness” (Rom 6:13)? And to present “your members to God as instruments for righteousness”?
- How would you rephrase or summarize the important question asked in 6:16?
- According to 6:17-18, how can we move from being “slaves of sin” to “set free from sin” as “slaves of righteousness”? How does this relate to the bookends of *Romans* that we’ve noticed over and over again (1:5; 16:26)?
- Paul mentions “sanctification” in 6:19 and 6:22. What is “sanctification”?
- Let’s read *Romans* 6:20-23 together. How would you summarize what Paul is communicating in your own words?
- Why does Paul bring up marriage in *Romans* 7:1-3? What is his point?
- In 7:4, Paul emphasizes that Christians “belong” to Jesus. What does that mean? What does that look like in everyday terms? If I belong to Jesus...
- *Romans* 7:7-25 can be challenging when we first read through it. Let’s take our time with this section. How does it relate to what we’ve been learning and discussing? Someone or something is going to “reign” in our mortal bodies. What are the possibilities? What are the stakes? How can we make sure we’re on the right track?