

Shall We Continue In Sin?

by

Ellis P. Forsman

Shall We Continue In Sin?

by

Ellis P. Forsman

October 7, 2011

Shall We Continue In Sin?

Rom. 6:1-23

In Romans, Paul addresses the problem of sin.

In the first two and a half chapters, he demonstrates that all have sinned.

Rom. 3:23, *“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”*

In the next two and a half chapters, he declares how we can be justified through faith in Jesus Christ.

Rom. 5:1-2, *“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”*

He concludes that where sin abounded, grace abounded much more.

Rom. 5:20-21, *“Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

Paul then anticipates an erroneous inference. Rom. 6:1, *“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?”*

A conclusion that was repulsive to him. Rom. 6:2, *“God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?”*

Today, many Christians may live in reference to sin as though they had the same idea. Living as though there is no need to be diligent in overcoming sin. Perhaps reasoning, “If I sin, I can simply confess and God will forgive”.

So then, “Let’s continue in sin that grace may abound!”

Yet, a careful study of the sixth chapter reveals why such a thought is absurd.

Paul provides four reasons why we should not continue in sin. When understood, they will prompt us to say with Paul: *“God forbid!”*

“Shall we continue in sin?” No! We died to sin!

We were crucified with Christ in baptism.

- Rom. 6:2, “*God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*”
- Rom. 6:3, “*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*”

Baptism is a burial into the death of Christ. Baptism is where we were crucified with Christ.

Rom. 6:6, “*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.*”

Thus baptism (not repentance) is where we die to sin. Having been crucified with Christ should impact how we live.

Gal. 2:20, “*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*”

We can now walk in newness of life. Rom. 6:4-5, “*Therefore 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. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.*”

Just as Christ rose from the grave, so we rise from baptism to walk in newness of life. We are now a new creation in Christ.

2 Cor. 5:17, “*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*”

We are no longer slaves of sin. Rom. 6:6-7, “*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. For he that is dead is freed from sin.*”

The very purpose of dying to sin in baptism, to be free from sin! A point Paul expounds upon later.

We can now live with Christ.

Rom. 6:8-10, “*Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in*

that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God."

Christ now lives with God in newness of life, because we died with Christ, so can we live in newness of life!

Eph. 2:4-6, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

The idea of being alive in Christ leads to Paul's second major point in response to the question:

"Shall we continue in sin?" **No! We are alive to God.**

Sin does not have to reign in us.

- Rom. 6:11, *"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."*
- Rom. 6:12, *"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."*

We who were dead in sin can now choose not let it reign in us! We are no longer debtors to sin.

Rom. 8:12-13, "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

Our bodies can now be instruments of righteousness. Rom. 6:13, *"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."*

We can present ourselves to God...

- As alive from the dead.
- As instruments of righteousness to Him.

We can now glorify Him even with our bodies. 1 Cor. 6:19-20, *"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."*

God's grace frees us from sin's dominion. Rom. 6:14, "*For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*"

Sin no longer needs to be our master. In Christ, we have been set free!

Rom. 8:1-2, "*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*"

This freedom is not license to sin. On the contrary, consider Paul's third point in response to the question...

“Shall we continue in sin?” No! We are to be slaves of righteousness!

We are slaves to whatever we obey, but we should be slaves to righteousness.

- Rom. 6:15-16, "*What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. 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?*"
- Rom. 6:19, "*I speak after the manner of men 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.*"

Grace is no excuse to sin. We are either slaves of sin, or slaves of righteousness. If we continue in sin, we once again become slaves of sin!

John 8:34, "*Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.*"

For Christians to continue in sin makes things worse. 2 Pet. 2:20-22, "*For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned*

to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.”

We became slaves of righteousness.

Rom. 6:17-18, *“But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”*

We were slaves of sin. But when we obeyed from the heart the doctrine (the gospel which commands baptism), we were set free from sin.

Not just sin’s condemnation.

- Acts 2:38, *“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”*
- Acts 22:16, *“And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”*
- Rom. 8:1-2, *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”*

But also sin’s dominion - see Rom. 8:12-13. We were set free from sin so we could become slaves of righteousness!

We are to serve righteousness like we once served sin.

Rom. 6:19, *“I speak after the manner of men 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.”*

We previously offered our bodies as slaves of sin. So we now offer our bodies as slaves of righteousness for the purpose of producing holiness.

1 Pet. 1:14-16, *“As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”*

Finally, we note Paul’s concluding point in response to the question...

“Shall we continue in sin?” **No! The wages of sin is death.**

The fruit of slavery to sin is death.

- Rom. 6:23, *“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*
- Rom. 6:20-21, *“For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.”*

The end of those enslaved to sin is “death”. Such “death” is separation from God. Living in sin separates us from God now.

Isa. 59:1-2, *“Behold, the LORD’S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.”*

Dying in sin will separate us from God for eternity. Rev. 21:8, *“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”*

The grace of God offers eternal life.

Rom. 6:22-23, *“But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

By His grace we have been set free from sin, via baptism! (Rom. 6:2-14).

Tit. 3:4-7, *“But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”*

By His grace we can now be slaves to God, through continued obedience!

Rom. 6:15-19, *“What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. 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? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men 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.”

By His grace we can bear the fruit of holiness, which in turn leads to eternal life!

- Rom. 6:22, *“But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”*
- Rom. 2:4-11, *“Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God.”*

Conclusion

Shall we continue in sin? If we understand what Paul has written in this chapter, then we will cry out with him: **“God forbid!”**

- Rom. 6:2, *“God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?”*
- Rom. 6:15, *“What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.”*

Have you been set free from sin? Have you become enslaved to sin once again? Let the grace of God deliver you from the guilt and power of sin by responding to the gospel of Jesus Christ!

The following are the steps necessary to make that happen:

- **Faith.** Heb. 11:6, *“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”* When I was in high school (I was about 17 years old), a neighbor boy my same age told me he was an atheist. Since I had been baptized, I took the opportunity to talk to him about the scriptures. He told me that he could see that living the life of a Christian was good, but he wasn’t sure if he believed there was a God. But to be on the safe side, maybe he should go to church, and when he dies and stands before God (if there is a God) on the day of Judgment (if there is a Judgment), maybe if God sees that he has gone to church and lived a good life that God would send him to heaven (if there is a heaven), and not to hell (if there is a hell). I told him, “It doesn’t work that way. You have to believe in Him with all your heart or you cannot please Him.”
- **Repentance.** Acts 2:38, *“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”* Acts 11:18, *“... Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.”* If while you were sleeping, you heard a noise in the other room, and you think to yourself, “There’s a burglar in my house!” So you reach for your cell phone, and as quietly as you can, you call the police, tell them there is a burglar in your house, and you give them your address. Soon, you heard them arrive and capture the thief. He yells, “I’m sorry; I’m sorry!” What is he sorry for? He is sorry that he got caught; not that he stole. In true repentance the thief would be sorry that he ever stole and wants to change his life so that he would never steal again. That is true repentance. It is a change of mind that brings about a change of action. That is what we have to do before we can become a Christian.
- **Confession.** Rom. 10:9-10, *“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”* What do we confess? That we believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Note that in the above scriptures that faith (believing), repentance, and confession are “**UNTO**” righteousness, life,

or salvation. “Unto” means toward something; not that one has already attained.

- **Baptism.** It is baptism where righteousness, life, and salvation are attained. Jesus, himself, was baptized to fulfill all righteousness, “*But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*” (Matt. 3:14-17). Jesus was baptized because God said it was the right thing to do. Did you see how pleased God was about Jesus being baptized? Jesus also said “*it becometh **us** to fulfil all righteousness.*” We are baptized because it fulfills His righteousness, not because it is of our righteousness.

In fact, if we are not baptized, we are still in our sins. “*Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*” (Acts 2:38). Peter, what did you say the reason of baptism is? “for the remission of sins”. Why would anyone want to leave out the step that removes our sins?

Jesus commanded that to reach salvation we must be baptized. “*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*” (Mark 16:15-16).

Ananias told Saul (before he was rename Paul) the very same thing, “*And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.*” (Acts 22:16). Baptism is a requirement given by God.

Baptism is called a burial. “*Therefore 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.*” (Rom. 6:4). Our old man is to be dead to us. “*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore 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. For if we have been*

planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: 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.” (Rom. 6:3-6). Baptism is God’s blueprint for applying the blood of Christ in our lives by baptism. We are free from our old sins only when we are baptized.

This doesn’t mean “sprinkling. The scripture above says baptism is a burial. We don’t take a dead body to the cemetery and sprinkle a little dirt over it; we bury the body.

If you have not yet become a Christian, won't you consider it today?

