



**Welcome to Faith**

# **The Letter of Paul to the Romans**

**Romans 6 & 7**

## Chapter 4 Summary

1. God had always intended to include the Gentiles in His covenant promise to Israel.
2. Righteousness will be reckoned to us as we learn to trust God the way Abraham and Sarah did, the way Jesus Christ did.

We can trust God because God is powerful enough to create something out of nothing (Isaac) and bring forth life out of death (Jesus).

## Chapter 5 Summary

### Four Views of Eternal Salvation and Punishment

Universal Salvation	Reverent Agnosticism	Annihilation of Unrepentant	Eternal Punishment of Unrepentant
Origen	Clement of Alexandria	Arnobius	Augustine
J. W. Colenso	Maximus the Confessor	John Stott	Martin Luther
F. D. Schleiermacher	Karl Barth		John Calvin
J.A.T. Robinson	Hans Urs von Balthasar Richard John Neuhaus		

## Summary

"...Genesis shows that God called Abraham to address Adam's disobedience. God called a people to be in covenant with God and to be a light to the world in order to deal with the effects of Sin and Death brought on by Adam's disobedience. But, as we saw in Romans 1–3, Israel was too compromised by its own disobedience to be a light to anyone, even to itself. **So God had to do on Israel's behalf what Israel could not do for itself or for the world. God accomplished this work by putting forward Jesus Christ as an atoning sacrifice** (3:25) to deal with Sin and to redeem the lost world from slavery to Sin and Death. Now, in Romans 5–8, Paul wants to speak of the life of those who have been redeemed."

A. Katherine Grieb, *The Story of Romans* (2006), p. 64

## What Shall We Say?

### Romans 6:1-4

<sup>1</sup> What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? <sup>2</sup> By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? <sup>3</sup> Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup> We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

Baptism for Paul is about death and resurrection—we are "baptized into Christ's death" (verse 3).

For Paul, baptism is eschatological (it points to the future)—while we live in the **present age** (death and sin still reign), in Christ we are claimed (in baptism) for the **age to come**. Baptism is not so much an "inoculation against sin" as it is a **sign that we belong** "in life and in death to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ." To get from the present age to the age to come, we have to "**pass through death**"—we are baptized into Christ's death that we may be resurrected with Him.

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The meaning/purpose of baptism in Romans is thus different from understanding baptism as a sacramental event that washes away our sins.

## More on Baptism

Romans 6:5-9

<sup>5</sup> For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. <sup>6</sup> We know that our **old self was crucified with him** so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. <sup>7</sup> For he who has died is freed from sin. <sup>8</sup> But if we have **died with Christ**, we believe that we shall also **live with him**. <sup>9</sup> For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him.

**v. 5** - Greek word suggests **grafting**, reminiscent of Jesus' saying that he is the vine and we are the branches. We are grafted/united/joined together with Jesus. Christian existence is being "rooted" in Jesus Christ—baptized in his death and resurrection.

**v. 7** - Death with Christ is an ethical experience ("for me to live is to die ...")

**Old Man**—in union with Adam

**New Man**—in union with Christ

## Don't Sin That Grace May Abound

Romans 3:1-8 raises the question of Christian morality: **Can we be good without God?**

Paul in argument for "grace and faith alone" which left him open to charges of being **antinomian**. Beginning in verse 10 he responds that he is not.

## Romans 6:10-14

<sup>10</sup> The death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. <sup>11</sup> So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. <sup>12</sup> Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. <sup>13</sup> Do not yield your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but yield yourselves to God as men who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments of righteousness. <sup>14</sup> For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

## Sin is a Contradiction to Followers of Jesus

What kind of life should we live? We should live as Jesus lived—he died obedient to God (v. 10 "... the life he lives he lives to God"). So, "let not sin ... reign in your mortal bodies" (v. 12).

### **Jesus died refusing to sin.**

1. We are dead as far as sin goes.
2. In baptism we are promised resurrection from the dead to new life.
3. New life belongs to God—so continuing to sin is a contradiction.

## Essence of Christian Life

### **Simul justi, simul peccatares**

At the same time, we are sinners and we are justified.

v. 14 - "For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace."

Sin cannot be your Lord—only Jesus Christ can rule your passions and desires.

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In this life (present age) Christ is hidden (remains so until the parousia), so we see sin everywhere—without our hope, we might even assume/believe that sin reigns, death is in control.

## We Are Slaves to Christ—To Righteousness

Romans 6:15-23

<sup>15</sup> What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!

<sup>16</sup> Do you not know that if you yield yourselves to any one 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? <sup>17</sup> 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, <sup>18</sup> and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. <sup>19</sup> I

am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification.

<sup>20</sup> When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. <sup>21</sup> But then what return did you get from the things of which you are now ashamed? The end of those things is death. <sup>22</sup> But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification and its end, eternal life. <sup>23</sup> **For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

## Chapter 6 Summary - Baptism

Baptism ends the claim of one ruler, **Sin**, and places the Christian under the claims of a new ruler, **Christ**.

**But beware . . .**

Sin attempts daily to conquer the ground that has been lost!

The baptized Christian is now out of the territory of Sin and placed in the territory of God's grace "... so that we might walk in newness of life." (6:4) This "walking" is the ethical behavior appropriate to membership in the new family of Jesus Christ.

## Chapter 6-The Church, the New Community of God

Early church thought in terms of community, not individuality.

Family/church solidarity determines who we are, how we think, and what we do.

Most of the world, then and now, still thinks in terms of family solidarity as shaping who we are and what we think, feel, and do.

**We** have been "put right" with God and now enjoy results:

- ◆ Peace
- ◆ The hope of sharing God's glory.
- ◆ The ability to rejoice even in suffering.

# Romans Chapter 7

## Paul now moves to his 3<sup>rd</sup> point

I. Chapter 5 Peace with God

II. Chapter 6 Union with Christ

**III. Chapter 7 Freedom from the Law**

## You think your marriage is bad ...

- Marriage in the first century was not unlike certain types of slavery.
- **Talmud**: Is there any difference between the acquisition of a wife and the acquisition of a slave? Answer: No.
- A girl under 12½ was under the rule of her father, she could not refuse a marriage offer agreed to by the father. After 12½ she had rights of refusal.
- Age of betrothal in that culture was 12 to 13½ (some examples of betrothal as young as 6 years old).

- Once betrothed, she was considered a "wife," and if she died, he was considered a "widow."
- At marriage, power over a girl transferred from father to husband—this authority/power was absolute.
- Some things she **must** do—wash his hands, feet, and face; any money she earned or found was his. He could divorce her simply by writing up a decree (though the husband would have to return the dowry fee to her).
- Man was absolute and uncontested head of the household (he controlled the remote control of the television!).

### **In Romans 7:1-6, Paul makes his point through an illustration using marriage.**

<sup>1</sup> Do you not know, brethren—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only during his life?

<sup>2</sup> Thus a married woman is bound by law to her husband as long as he lives; but if her husband dies she is discharged from the law concerning the husband. <sup>3</sup> Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies she is free from that law,



and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress. <sup>4</sup> **Likewise, my brethren, you have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead in order that we may bear fruit for God.** <sup>5</sup> While we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. <sup>6</sup> But now we are discharged from the law, dead to that which held us captive, so that we serve not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit.

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## Paul's Point

OLD LIFE–The letter of the law (v. 5–Flesh has power to corrupt).

NEW LIFE–The spirit of the law (v. 6–Christ is internalized).

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Verse 4–With no fruit/children, a marriage could be nullified. Since the law has died (no fruit) you are now free to marry Christ.

Verse 6–**We are discharged from the law that we serve ... to live in the new life of the Spirit.**

## Sin



Genesis, Chapter 3: Adam and Eve, the "fall" of humankind, universal.

Exodus, Chapter 32: The "fall of Israel," the story of the "golden calf." The generation that bowed to the calf perished in the wilderness and never reached the promised land.

## The Law and Sin Romans 7:7-8

<sup>7</sup> What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet, if it had not been for the law, I should not have known sin. I should not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet." <sup>8</sup> But sin, finding opportunity in the commandment, wrought in me all kinds of covetousness. Apart from the law sin lies dead.

## The Law and Sin

**Sin works in the law**—There is nothing wrong with the law per se, but it gives a false security if one depends on following the law to be righteous. If one depends on the law to be "right with God," in time one can come to replace the concern for God with a concern solely for the law. The law becomes the end rather than the means. We become "law-centered" rather than "God-centered" ... the law exists for itself.

## Good and Evil

Romans 7:9-12

<sup>9</sup> I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died; <sup>10</sup> the very commandment which promised life proved to be death to me. <sup>11</sup> For sin, finding opportunity in the commandment, deceived me and by it killed me. <sup>12</sup> So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good.

Jewish idea: **The evil impulse** is born within us; **the good impulse** does not come until our "new birth" (which is the Bar Mitzvah). Hence, a Jewish child is blameless until age 13, age of Bar Mitzvah.

## Wesley on the 3 Uses of the Law

The purpose of the law is to:

1. Slay the sinner
2. Bring the sinner to Christ
3. Keep the sinner depending on Christ's grace.



## The Power of Sin - Romans 7:14-20

<sup>14</sup> We know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. <sup>15</sup> I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. <sup>16</sup> Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. <sup>17</sup> So then it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me. <sup>18</sup> For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. **I can will what is right, but I cannot do it.** <sup>19</sup> **For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do.** <sup>20</sup> Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me.

## The Enemy Within

Romans 7:17 - So then it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me.

Paul personalizes sin. **Sin is an evil that takes up residence within human nature.** Instead of looking "out there" for temptations, I can look within.

James says much the same thing ... it is not God who tempts us, the temptations are embedded within our lives.

Romans 7:18 - For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it.

Paul believes (with Rabbinic Judaism) that there is a corruption (flesh) in all of us that precludes any good and corrupts all our good intentions.

Reformed tradition calls this "**the total depravity of man.**" (The "T" in TULIP.)

## Despair and Release

### Romans 7:21-25

<sup>21</sup> So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. <sup>22</sup> For I delight in the law of God, in my inmost self, <sup>23</sup> but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members. <sup>24</sup> **Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?** <sup>25</sup> Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I of myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

## Next ...

Chapter 5 and 6

**Already** ... already Christ has died and risen.

Chapter 7

**Not yet** ... In the age to come, death will be vanquished.

Chapter 8

The pilgrimage leading to the new age.