

(T) Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this Bible study series two teachers will do Bible study from ROMANS 6:1-11.

Romans 1:16 says that the gospel is “the power of God for the salvation” of everyone who believes. Romans chapter 3 to 5 teaches “the power of God to save or to justify” the believer in Christ. Romans chapter 6 teaches “the power of God to make the believer in Christ holy”. While Romans 5 speaks of the Christian’s *legal status (or position)*, that is, he has been justified once-for-all, Romans 6 does not speak of the process of sanctification, but of the Christian’s *moral status (or condition)*, that is, he has been made holy once-for-all. Romans 6:1-10 is a doctrinal exposition, “what to believe”, while Romans 6:11 is an exhortation “how to live.”

(S) **STEP 1. READ**

Let us read Romans 6:1-11 together. When you are two or more people, take turns to read one verse each until you have completed the reading. Due to shortage of time, please read Romans 6:1-11 for yourself.

(T) **STEP 2. DISCOVER**

Let us discover and discuss some important truths in Romans 6:1-11. “Which truth in this passage is important for you?” or “Which truth in this passage touches your mind or heart?” Think and write your answer in your notebook. After a few minutes take turns to share your discoveries with one another.

(S) An important truth for me is from Romans 6:1-7. Paul argues that it is impossible for a Christian to continue to live in sin. In Rome, the one party, called *the Legalists* falsely taught that a person is justified by doing the works of the law. The opposite party, called *the Antinomians* falsely taught that a person, who is justified, does not have to live according to the law at all; he may even live in sin. The apostle Paul rejected both false teachings. Against the Legalists, Paul taught that a person is justified, not by doing the works of the law, but by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Against the Antinomians, he taught that a person who is justified by grace through faith must still live his life according to the law. He must still live the new and holy life. Paul taught that the law is not *the means* of salvation, but it is *the standard* according to which the saved people live their lives.

First. Romans 6:1-2 teaches that the doctrine of the Antinomians is a contradiction. Paul says that it is a contradiction in terms to suppose that any person should come to Christ to be delivered from sin, in order that he might continue to live in sin.

Second. Romans 6:3-4 teaches that the Christian is united to Christ’s death and therefore has died to the power of sin. In his argument, Paul appeals to Christian baptism. He says that people, who have been baptised in Christ, have been united to Christ in his death. Thus, while Christ “died *for* sin”, Christians “died *to* sin”. This once-for-all definitive break with sin is the identity of the Christian! For a Christian, deliverance from sin is not merely a deliverance from the *penalty* of sin, but a deliverance from the *power* of sin! A Christian is not just justified, but also sanctified! Everyone united to Christ has died to the power of sin! He is no more a slave to sin. Therefore, when someone has become a Christian, he cannot continue to live in sin anymore. And therefore also, if a person continually lives in sin, he cannot be a Christian!

Third. Romans 6:5-7 teaches that the Christian is united to Christ’s resurrection and therefore he wants to, can and will live the new life. In his argument, Paul appeals to Christ’s resurrection. He says that people who have been united to Christ in his death, will certainly also be united to Christ in his resurrection. There is *a causal relationship* between death and resurrection. Just as the certain consequence of Christ’s death was his resurrection, likewise the certain consequence of the believer’s dying to the power of sin is a new and holy life. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ renders *the legal state of justification* and *the moral state of holiness* of the believer certain. A Christian shares in Christ’s death in order that he may share in Christ’s life. Christians cannot enjoy the benefits of Christ’s death unless they are partakers of the power of Christ’s resurrected life. In order for people to be holy, God must first justify them. People cannot become holy without justification. *In the Bible, justification and holiness are inseparable!*

(T) An important truth for me is from Romans 6:8-11. Paul argues that the Christian is definitely changed. In this paragraph, Paul draws the conclusion of his argument. Christ died once-for-all in history and his death will never be repeated. In his resurrected human nature he now lives a life devoted to God. Likewise, the Christian died once-for-all in history to the power of sin and is now able to live a life devoted to God. The Christian’s *separation from the power of sin is final* and *his ability to live the new and holy life is certain*. This once-for-all decisive event in history of “having died with Christ” shows that our “being dead to the power of sin” is an abiding state or condition. Likewise, this once-

for-all decisive event in history of “having been resurrected with Christ” shows that our “being alive to God” is also an abiding state or condition. Our life as a Christian is no longer conditioned or controlled by the power of sin to condemn, to pollute or to enslave us. We are no longer conditioned or controlled by either our old sinful nature or by the sinful deeds we do in our physical body. This *state* of being dead to the power of sin and being able to live the new life in obedience to Christ, is called *holiness*.

This abiding state of holiness is not destroyed by our future sins. Just as Christ’s death and resurrection was once-for-all for him, likewise when we believe in Jesus Christ our state of justification and holiness is once-for-all for us too! In Romans 6:11, Paul commands, “Count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus”. In the first place, note that we are not commanded to *become dead* to sin or to become alive to God, because it is presupposed that we *are already dead* to sin and *already alive* to God! In the second place, note that it is not by believing or counting these things to be facts that they *become facts*, because it is proclaimed that they *are already facts*! It is already a fact that we are spiritually united to Christ’s death and resurrection. Therefore it is already a fact that we have been justified and that we have been made holy, that is, that we have died to the power of sin and are able to live the new and holy life to God. What Paul commands us to do, is *to believe* that these are already facts and to appreciate these facts!

(S) STEP 3. QUESTION

Let us try to understand all the truths in Romans 6:1-11 and ask our questions about the things we still do not understand. “Which question about anything in this passage would you like to ask to the group?” Think and write your question in your notebook. Then discuss the questions and try to find answers.

1st Question. (6:1,14). Who were the people that believed that Christians may go on sinning?

(T) Romans 5 closed with the statement that “the law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more” (5:20). A particular group of people developed a false doctrine out of this. They falsely taught, “God gave the law with the purpose that people should sin more.” And they falsely taught that: “The more people sinned, the more God would be glorified by showing his grace to people.” Therefore, they concluded that people must be encouraged to sin more and more. They said, “Let us go on sinning, so that God’s grace may increase!” This teaching is obviously a false teaching. The people who distorted the biblical doctrine of grace are called *Antinomians*, which literally means “the people who are against the law”.

One. Antinomians stressed the work of God, but ignored the responsibility of man. They stressed the completed work of Christ to the extent of rejecting the need of people to be regenerated, converted and sanctified. Although it is true that Christ *acquired* complete salvation for Christians, they falsely believed that Christians had to do nothing to be saved.

Two. Antinomians stressed the grace of God to the extent that they rejected the law. They falsely believed that Christians are only “under grace” and therefore they have nothing to do with the law. They falsely taught that the good works, which the law commands, were not required of Christians. They also falsely taught that the evil works of Christians, which the law forbids, would be graciously ignored. The Antinomians falsely believed that all evil deeds of Christians belonged to their “old nature”, which would not inherit salvation and therefore did not matter at all. The apostle Paul’s argument against the Antinomian distortion of the doctrine of grace is that the *acquisition* of salvation by Jesus Christ does not exclude the *application* of salvation by Jesus Christ. Yes, Jesus Christ *merited* salvation by his sacrificial death on the cross. However, Jesus Christ *applies* this salvation to people through the Holy Spirit by regeneration, by conversion and faith in the gospel, and by obedience to the moral law. Paul argues that justification can never be separated from holiness. The *legal state* of justification and the *moral state* of holiness belong inseparably together. The person, who shares in the benefits of Christ’s death, also shares in the benefits of Christ’s resurrection. *Justification or salvation may never and can never be separated from living the new and holy life!*

2nd Question. (6:3-4). What is the meaning of Christian baptism?

(S) In Romans 6:3, “to be baptised into Christ” signifies *union with Christ, fellowship with Christ and participation of all the privileges in Christ*. Baptism does *not cause* these facts, but *only signifies* these facts. In Romans 6 baptism particularly signifies union with Christ in his death and partaker of all the benefits of his death. Baptism in Christ signifies union with Christ in all that he is and in all the phases of his work as the Mediator. Union with Jesus Christ himself cannot be separated from union with his accomplished work. And union with his death cannot be separated from union with his resurrection.

Romans 6:3-4 and Colossians 2:12 teach that Christians that were “baptised into Christ Jesus” were “baptised into his death”. Their burial with Christ is proof of the reality of their death. While regeneration by the Holy Spirit *causes* spiritual union with the death and resurrection of Christ, baptism *signifies* the believer’s spiritual union with the death and resurrection of Christ. The tenses of the verbs in Romans 6:3-4 (Greek aorist) show that Christians have once-for-all in died spiritually in their past history and were buried spiritually. They are as effectively shut out of the realm of

sin, the sinful world and the kingdom of Satan as a dead person in a grave is shut out from human life. Thus, they are once-for-all forgiven and justified. The tense of Romans 6:5 (Greek perfect) shows that this forgiveness or justification is a continuing present reality.

Romans 6:5 teach that Christians will certainly be united to Christ's resurrection. The resurrection of Christ here refers primarily to the resurrected life *now* and secondary to the resurrection of the body in the *future*. The argument of Romans 6:5 is that the intimate spiritual union with Christ's death and burial cannot be separated from the intimate spiritual union with his resurrection. *By faith in Jesus Christ, Christians have been intimately united to Christ's death and burial and this resulted in their justification. Likewise, by their faith in Jesus Christ, Christians have certainly been intimately united to Christ's resurrection and this resulted in their holiness!* The death of Christ as a sacrifice of atonement for sins is necessary and certain for justification. Likewise, the resurrected life of Christ is necessary and certain for holiness. Christians *shall* more and more be conformed to Christ in a holy life here and now on earth. And finally Christians *shall* be completely conformed to Christ in a life of glorious immortality of soul and body hereafter! The whole discussion in Romans 6 revolves around the necessary connection between the state of justification and the state of holiness.

3rd Question. (6:6). What is the difference between "the old man" and "the new man"?

(T) Christians should distinguish between the terms: "the old man", "the sinful nature" and "the outward man".

One. The old man has definitely died and the new man definitely exists. According to Romans 6:6, "*the old man*" represents "*the unregenerate nature*" of people. It is the natural man who has voluntarily chosen to be a slave of his sinful nature (Romans 6:16) and thereafter is completely dominated by his sinful nature (Romans 8:6-8). By faith in Jesus Christ, the unregenerate nature has been crucified once-for-all (cf. Galatians 2:20). According to Ephesians 4:22, the unregenerate nature has been put off once-for-all! "*The new man*" represents "*the regenerated nature*" of Christians. According to Ephesians 4:24 (cf. Ephesians 2:15), the regenerated nature has been put on once-for-all! According to Colossians 3:9-10, the old man is put off when the new man is put on. They do not exist together at the same time.

Two. However, the new man still has a sinful nature. *Non-Christians are not free from the absolute dominating and enslaving power of the sinful nature.* But according to Romans 6:7, 7:18 and 8:2, although *Christians are once-for-all set free from its dominating and enslaving power, "the sinful nature" is still a present and forceful power in their life.* And according to Romans 6:13,19 and Galatians 5:16-23, the sinful nature is in continual conflict with the Holy Spirit dwelling in the new man. According to Romans 8:9 and 13, genuine Christians again and again choose to be controlled by the Holy Spirit and not by their sinful natures. According to Romans 12:1-2, the new man grows continuously. Again and again he resists conformity to the sinful world. Again and again he chooses to be transformed into the likeness of Christ. The standard and aim of this continual renewal is Christ and Christlikeness. According to Colossians 3:10, the new man is being renewed continuously into "the image of God".

Three. The new man can be distinguished as the outward man and the inward man. *The new man's outward appearance is called "the outward man" and his inner being is called the inward man".* 2 Corinthians 4:16 says that although the outward man is wasting away, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. The outward man is "the jar of clay" (2 Cor 4:7), "the mortal body" (2 Cor 4:10-11), and not the old unregenerate man. It is the whole human constitution with all its faculties and energies, both mental and muscular, perceptive as well as practical, which is undergoing decay and is moving towards the grave. The present tense indicates that this decay is a steady and irreversible process. The outward man is the new man as he is outwardly manifested and is visible to his fellow-men. The inward man is the Christian heart in which God's light shines, giving him real and experiential knowledge of God's glory through Christ (2 Cor 4:6). The inward man is the Christian heart in which the Holy Spirit dwells as the guarantee of the future fulfilment of everything God promised (2 Cor 1:22; 5:5). It is there that the Holy Spirit has implanted the principle of new life. It is there that the Holy Spirit exerts a controlling influence. It is there that the Holy Spirit imparts power to grow in all the Christian virtues (Eph 3:16-17). The inward man is the new man as he is inwardly hidden from the gaze of the people of the world and inaccessible to their analysis. After regeneration, the Christian is still an indivisible personality, seen from without or seen from within. Paul is speaking of the great Christian reality, that the visible advance in outward decay is accompanied by the experience of inward renewal, day after day!

(S) **STEP 4 and 5. APPLY and PRAY**

After brainstorming with one another and recording a list of *possible applications*, consider which possible application God wants you to turn into a *personal application*. Then take turns to pray about one truth that God has taught you in Romans 6:1-11.

I want to count myself dead to the power of sin and alive to God. I delight myself in the fact that the absolute power of my sinful nature has been broken and that I am set free from continual slavery to sin. I want to remember the fact that I am now alive to God and that I not only *should*, but *can* and *will* live the new and holy life.

(T) I want to remember that Christians not only share in all the benefits of Christ's death, but also share in all the benefits of his resurrection! My spiritual dying with Christ results in the breaking of the absolute power of my sinful nature. According to Romans 6:7, my sinful nature has already been sentenced to death and throughout my life that judgement is being executed. Through the work of the Holy Spirit in me, the power of my sinful nature is again and again broken and again and again I am given the ability to live the new and holy life.

(S) **ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK**

First. Join a house fellowship that does Bible study. Use "the five steps" Bible study method to prepare Romans 6:12-23.

Second. See the workbooks "Go and preach God's Kingdom" and Internet on www.dota.net

Third. Listen every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY on the radio to "Discipleship training on the air".