

20:20 Vision Ministries—Devotions by Roger Browning Week 22 (May 26-June 1, 2019)

In recent years, I have emphasized the ingredients of basic salvation (mercy, grace, faith etc.). The story starts when we accept Jesus into our heart as full payment for our sins (past, present, future). Jesus' death paid the **penalty** for our sins, but I want you to experience deliverance from the **power** of sin. The Biblical word is **sanctification**, and that will be the subject of the devotions for the next few weeks.

Sunday, May 26 (read Romans 6:1-4)

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? (Romans 6:1)

Today's text is a great place to start in our study of living for God's glory following our salvation. The two questions printed above follow a discussion on the purpose of the Old Testament laws. God gave us more than 600 laws so that we will realize just how sinful we are and so that we will see our need for **mercy, grace** and a **Savior** (Romans 5:20-21). Now that we have accepted His free gift of eternal life, shall we continue to live as we did before we accepted salvation? God answers the question for us: "By no means! We died to sin; how can we **live in it** any longer" (v.2, emphasis mine)? Paul paints a picture of our Christian baptism to remind us that we are buried with Christ and then raised with Him so that we can live a new life for the glory of God (v. 3-4). Praise God for the power given to each believer!

Monday, May 27 (read Romans 6:5-7)

*If we have been united with Him like this in His death, we will **certainly** also be united with Him in His resurrection. (Romans 6:5, emphasis mine)*

True salvation is **permanent** and cannot be lost or given away (see John 10:27-30). Having said that, I'm afraid that many people get baptized just to join the church and participate with the other members; therefore, they are not truly saved. They may believe with their **head** in the plan of salvation, but, in their heart, they have no desire to repent of their sins and live a new life for the glory of God. These pretenders fool themselves as well as the congregation because they are often some of the best "church workers." Sadly, they will be part of the "Lord, Lord" crowd outside the gate telling Jesus how much they have done for Him (see Matthew 7:21-23). The true Christian, however, realizes that he is no longer a slave to sin (v. 6-7), because he has been set free to live for the One who died and rose again!

Tuesday, May 28 (read Romans 6:8-10)

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him. (Romans 6:8)

Yesterday, I issued a warning that it is possible to **join the church** without repenting and surrendering the control of your life to Jesus. Thus, the word "if" becomes a key part of today's total passage (v. 8). Salvation is secure for all who have died with Christ in baptism (v. 3-4). How will you know whether your salvation experience is real? A true Christian does not "**live in sin**" (v.2)! We all sin, but no true Christian should be living a lifestyle of unrepentant sin. Anyone who can live in known, willful sin without any conviction from the Holy Spirit is not truly born again! Jesus died for your sins as well as the sins of the whole world. He **cannot** and **will not** die again (v. 9-10)! Don't be guilty of accepting His wonderful gift of salvation without bringing a desire to live a new life for His glory!

Wednesday, May 29 (read Romans 6:11-14)

*Therefore do not let sin **reign** in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. (Romans 6:12, emphasis mine)*

We will not be fully delivered from the **practice** of sin until we see the Lord face to face (see 1 John 3:1-3); however, Jesus, not sin, should **reign** on the throne of your life following the salvation experience (v. 12). Our lives should be continually evaluated according to the new truths we are learning from God's Word. The Lord is molding us into the image of Christ (see Philippians 3:20-21). The "parts of our body" that cause us to sin will change as we get older (v. 13), but we are called to yield our bodies to God as living sacrifices (see Romans 12:1). For most of us, our mouths will be the last part to surrender to the will of God. As a Christian, you are under the protection of God's **grace**, but be careful that you do not use that truth as a license to continue to sin (v. 14). Jesus, not sin, is your Master!

Thursday, May 30 (read Romans 6:15-18)

You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. (Romans 6:18)

Today's text picks up right where we left off with yesterday's devotion. A true Christian knows that he/she was a **slave** to sin prior to receiving Jesus. You **used to** obey your sinful nature and lead a life that would have ended in spiritual death, **but now** you have obeyed Christ and live a life that leads to righteousness (v. 15-16). You **used to** be a slave to sin, **but now** you are a slave to righteousness (v. 18). I have emphasized a few words in this devotion to remind you that a true Christian will have an ever-increasing group of "used to, but now" expressions in his/her testimony. Praise God for each change He has brought about in your life (v. 17)!

Friday, May 31 (read Romans 6:19-23)

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

The **wages of sin** may be the only wages that have not changed since the beginning of time. Paul reminds his readers of the ongoing process of **sanctification**, the process of changing our naturally sinful bodies into the image of Christ (v. 19). This is still happening in my life at age 75 and will continue to take place until I see Jesus. We should be ashamed of our life's actions prior to receiving Christ (v. 20-21), but we can rejoice in the truth that Jesus died for our sins and set us free from the law of sin and death (v. 22). The result is the wonderful gift of eternal life! Don't ever forget the price He paid to deliver you from the **wages of sin** (v. 23)!

Saturday, June 1 (read Romans 7:1-6)

But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code. (Romans 7:6)

Before launching into a discussion of the power of our sin natures (Romans 7:7-25), Paul illustrates the fact that we have been delivered from the impossible demands of the Old Testament laws by accepting freedom in Christ. He uses marriage to illustrate how a person is freed from the law of marriage by the death of a partner (v. 1-3). Likewise, we died to the laws that were impossible for us to keep and accepted the **free gift** of salvation from our Lord, Jesus Christ. The struggle to allow His Spirit to crucify the sinful desires of our bodies still continues, but God lets us bear fruit for Him, even as we continue in the long process of dying to our former lifestyles (v. 4-6). Praise Him today for the Spirit's daily work in your life!