



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

Introduction: In Romans 5:20-2, Paul writes "20 But law came in, with the result that the trespass multiplied; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, 21 so that, just as sin exercised dominion in death, so grace might also exercise dominion through justification leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." We are justified by faith, and through grace our sins are forgiven, "what then shall we say?" "Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound?" (6:1) or as Matthew Henry puts it, "Shall we hence take encouragement to sin with so much the more boldness, because the more sin we commit the more will the grace of God be magnified in our pardon?" or perhaps being justified by faith means that sin is nonexistent, Martin Luther explains that like this "He [Paul] teaches us that faith doesn't so free us from sin that we can be idle, lazy and self-assured, as though there were no more sin in us. Sin is there, but, because of faith that struggles against it, God does not reckon sin as deserving damnation. Therefore, we have in our own selves a lifetime of work cut out for us; we have to tame our body, kill its lusts, force its members to obey the spirit and not the lusts. We must do this so that we may conform to the death and resurrection of Christ and complete our Baptism, which signifies a death to sin and a new life of grace. Our aim is to be completely clean from sin and then to rise bodily with Christ and live forever."

Pray: Dear Lord, we come to you as sinners still, we pray that the presence of the Holy Spirit would fill this space, to guide us as we strive to do the work that is before us, to tame our body and obey the spirit. For it is from your grace that we are able to have a place at Your table, we pray that we don't take that for granted, but gratefully and dutifully follow You. Through Christ our Lord we pray, Amen.

Discussion:

1. What does Paul say about using grace as an excuse for sin?
2. Have you ever been conscious that you were sinning, but continued the behavior because of God's grace?
3. What do you think it means that we are baptized into Jesus' death?
4. What do you make of the newness of life also having temptation?
5. Did you think or ever feel like your desire to sin would disappear once you found faith?
6. How does this passage help you now that you realize that sin is still there?
7. In verse six we learn that we are not under the law, but under grace, what does that mean?
8. Paul talks about being a slave, what does it mean to be a slave of sin?
9. What about a slave of righteousness?
10. Can there be a neutral?
11. Does the slave pick and choose what he wants to obey? How about when he wants to obey?
12. What does it mean to be a slave to God?
13. What are the results of these two ways of life?
14. What should we do when we face temptation according to the Bible?
15. What benefit do we get from sin? What benefit do we get from righteousness?

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The Wages of Sin
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Application: We can all think of areas of our life where we are not fully devoted slaves to God. Think of the areas in your life where you are a slave to something other than God, where you obey your mortal passions, and not God's plan. Pray for those areas specifically that you will turn those things over to God's dominion.

Pray: Dear Lord, we pray that our hearts will be obedient to the teachings that you give to us. That we enslave ourselves fully to You, that we will not take your grace for granted, but accept the free gift from You as slaves to righteousness for sanctification. Amen.