**“Baptized Into Christ Jesus”**

**Romans 6:1-4**

1What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? 3Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

As soon as you read this paragraph in the Bible you know this is important. You know this because it is written in the Word of God. But also, in reading this passage you observe mention of some very basic things: Sin, the grace of God, the death of Christ, being buried with Him in baptism and walking in newness of life.

What a marvelous statement that weaves together these matters of such great importance to us today. Our problem is sin; the grace of God gave the solution in the death of Christ. We apply that solution by being buried with Christ in baptism, to arise to walk in newness of life. This is information we need and this is information we should feel compelled to share with the world. This instruction in Romans six actually begins back in chapter five.

Near the end of chapter five, Paul made the statement: “Where sin abounded, grace abounded much more.” Our problem is sin. God’s provision to solve our problem (the gospel) is a product of His grace. So, where sin abounded grace abounded much more! God’s provision for our problem of sin is more than adequate to meet the requirements of pardon. Where sin abounded, grace abounded much more.

Regarding our problem and God’s gracious provision to solve our problem – we must be very careful in our thinking; in fact, our thinking about such matters should be in harmony with what God has said. We should not be influenced by religious tradition, denominational affiliation, subjective emotion or anything but the Word of God.

As we move from Romans chapter five into Romans chapter six, here is the issue: We must never let the truth of God’s grace become any excuse to continue to sin!!

We should not think that because God’s grace abounds to provide a remedy for sin, sin is no big deal; or, sin can be continued. We should not think that since God’s abundant grace offers forgiveness of sin, the more I sin, the more grace I will call forth from heaven. This is flawed thinking. This shows a misunderstanding of God, His grace, His plan and what our response should be. Some may even argue that their sin becomes an advertisement for, publicity for the grace of God. Thus, as they continue in sin, attention is drawn to the grace of God. God never intended that His grace become any encouragement to anyone to continue in sin!

In the opening verses of Romans 6, you will see two questions: “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?” Even if we didn’t have the next verse, or context, we already know how this inquiry should be answered.

“Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?” The answer is “no,” we must not! The whole point of the abundant grace of God is to enable us to get out of sin! This is why God sent His Son. This is why Jesus died. This is why the apostles gave us the New Testament. This is the reason for gospel preaching. The whole point is: God wants us out of sin, into His family, doing His will and prepared for heaven!

So the answer is NO. “Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?” Of course not. The whole purpose of the abundant grace of God is to enable us to get out of sin, be saved from it. God’s grace in sending His Son to die – had this point: to enable us to be forgiven, to get out of sin and live right.

Soberly consider again the logic presented by the apostle: “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not. How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?” The apostle Paul directs a question to the Christians at Rome, in the second part of verse 2: “How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?”

In their response to the gospel, they “died to sin.” They gave up that old life of sin expressed here as a death. They “died to sin.” Why would you give up that old life of sin, then use the grace of God as an excuse to return to it? This is the logic Paul applies to subject, and this is his appeal to his readers, then and now. If we respond to the call of the gospel – accepting God’s gracious invitation to come out of sin into Christ – why would we use God’s grace as an excuse to continuing living in sin? If our heart is right, we will not.

“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?”

When Paul says, “do you not know?” his question implies they did know; they had been taught about these things. In fact, these people Paul wrote to – had heard the gospel, believed in Christ and had been “baptized into Christ!” Is there any doubt about this in your mind? Paul is writing to the church at Rome in this passage: “Or, do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death!”

The grace of God, expressed in the gospel of Christ, should cause us to turn from sin, as a function of our belief in Christ – then be “baptized into Christ” to participate in the sacrifice and have personal pardon. Instead of using the grace of God as an excuse for disobedience, it should be the other way. The grace of God should cause us to respond, to obey, to be baptized into Christ! Then, to walk in newness of life.

And observe in the passage, when the grace of God has it’s intended impact in our minds, and we turn from our sin, trust in Christ and submit to baptism – when we are baptized into Christ, we are baptized into His death. We become personal participants in the benefits of Christ’s death, when we are baptized. We enter into Christ, enjoy the remission of our sins – made possible by His death! The gospel is so simple!

Instead of defending any continuance in sin, our hearts should be so changed by the grace of God, we want to repent – that is, die to sin; we want to believe in Christ; we want to confess our faith in Him, and we want to do what Paul is writing about here: be baptized into Christ; baptized into His death.

What is your conclusion about these things when you read this?

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?”

We must add verse 4 to our study. “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

We cannot ignore the pronoun. I’m talking about that little word “we.” It certainly includes the writer, the apostle Paul. It would also include his readers, the original recipients of the epistle, the Christians at Rome.

He said, “we were buried with Him through baptism into death.” When Paul was converted, his response to the gospel included baptism. Acts 9:18 says, “he arose and was baptized.” Likewise, those people at Rome who were now Christians – looking back to their conversion, they were baptized. Thus, Paul’s statement: “we were buried with Him through baptism into death.”

They were immersed in water, in response to the command to be baptized. In this burial, they not only activated their faith, they identified themselves with the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, to arise to walk in newness of life.

Who walks in newness of life? The answer is, “as many of us as were baptized into Christ.” It is in your Bible and mine - Romans 6:3,4 - “Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” The question I brought up is, “Who walks in newness of life?” The answer is, “as many of us as were baptized into Christ.”

What Should We Learn Today,
From This Part of God’s Word?

(1) The truth of God’s grace should always take us away from sin, never closer.

When we think about the grace of God toward man, if our thoughts lead us to minimize sin, take sin lightly or discount the importance of obedience – we are thinking in the wrong direction. No argument can be made in defense of sin; certainly, no argument based on God’s unmerited favor! When religious teachers dismiss obedience and take a relaxed view of sin, while making claims of their appreciation for the grace of God – something is wrong. God never intended that His love for man and His grace toward man should have any other effect – but to call men out of sin, and into Christ.

Over in the book of Jude, the writer sounds an alarm concerning men who had crept in among the saints. Jude calls them “ungodly men.” He says, in Jude verse 4 – They were turning the grace of God into lewdness. One translation says, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness. God never intended that His grace be perverted into anything lewd or lascivious or permissive. I hope we learn that.

If you hear such teaching or suggestion, it is not from the text of Scripture. The grace of God should always take us away from sin, never closer. That point is made in Romans chapter six; in Jude 4. (See also Titus 2:11-14). Any talk about the grace of God that lessens obligation and promotes sin is not based on Biblical teaching.

(2) Our conviction and practice in regard to baptism, should be based on only one thing – What The Bible Teaches!

What you believe and do about baptism should not be governed by the writings of John Calvin.

What you believe and do about baptism should not be governed by a creed written by men, or a manual of faith assembled by men.

What you believe and do about baptism should not be dictated by tradition; by family; by emotion or conformity.

Our conviction and practice regarding baptism should be based on one thing – what the Word of God teaches. Paul was a Christian, an apostle of Jesus Christ. He was writing to Christians, and he said in this passage we have studied: “we were baptized into Christ.”

There is no evidence this is about the sprinkling of an infant. There is nothing about this being just a symbol of salvation already enjoyed. They were “baptized into Christ” as a result of hearing and believing the gospel of Christ. {See also Matt. 28:19; Mrk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:27; Col. 3:12; 1 Pet. 3:21. You should undertake a careful study of these passages – influenced by only one thing: What the Bible says.}

The truth is, the grace of God provides the gift of salvation in Christ. We receive that gift, when we are baptized into Christ. Baptism is not a work in the sense of earning salvation by human merit. Baptism is a necessary part of our response to the gospel.

(3) True conversion means – walking in newness of life after baptism.

Baptism marks our initial obedience to Christ, to receive what God offers in Him. After baptism – to keep what we have received, we must walk in newness of life. Continuing in sin – NO. Walking in newness of life? Yes.

This means living day by day, seeking to follow the example of Christ; doing God’s will from the heart; growing in your faith; participating with other Christians in the Lord’s work; worshipping in spirit and in truth; praying; resisting the devil; coping with life’s difficulties – based on the activity of your faith in Christ. Walking in newness of life.

Conversion to Christ is a very active thing. It requires the activity of our faith initially, then after baptism – as we walk in newness of life.