

OBJECTIONS TO JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH: CAN I NOW LIVE HOWEVER I WANT?

Romans 6:1-14

Introduction: The Proper Role of Works in the Christian Life

I. The Objection (v.1)

- A. Some Feared Paul's Gospel of Grace Would Give People an Excuse to Sin
 - o The prior verses said that when sin increased, grace "abounded" all the more (5:20)
 - o Some thought this statement might lead people to sin; people might think sinning is good because it leads to an increase in grace! (v.1)
- B. Behind this Objection are Really Two Wrong Responses to the Gospel of Grace:
 - o Wrong Response #1 is *legalism*: The gospel of grace will lead to anarchy and licentiousness; therefore we must make good works part of the condition of salvation.
 - o Wrong Response #2 is *antinomianism*: The gospel of grace means that good works are irrelevant; I can live however I want. Paul condemns this view: "By no means!" (v.2)

II. The Response (v.2-11)

- A. If we are in Christ, we died to Sin
 - o Before we knew Christ, we were "enslaved to sin" (v.6)—sin had complete dominion over us
 - o But when we are joined to Christ by faith, our "old self" (v.6), which was trapped by sin, is put to death.
 - Although our dying to sin happens at conversion (when we first trust in Jesus), Paul links our dying to sin to the death of Jesus: "our old self was crucified with him" (v.6).
 - To say we are "baptized into his death" (v.3) is just another way to say that our conversion (symbolized by baptism) joins us to Christ in his death.
 - o Why does this matter? Because "the one who has died has been set free from sin" (v.7)!
 - If you are a Christian, you are not the person you once were. The old self is dead.
 - This doesn't mean we never sin. But it does mean we *don't have to sin*. It no longer has mastery over us.



B. If we are in Christ, we are alive to God

- o When we are joined to Christ in faith, we also join him in his new life: “just as Christ was raised from the dead...we too might walk in the newness of life” (v.4)
- o This means we have a new heart, new desires, and a new ability to follow God faithfully.

****Big take away:** In Christ, you have passed from death to life. You have a new identity that has the *power* and the *motivation* to obey God!

III. The Application (v.12-14)

A. Do Not Obey Sinful Passions (v.12)

- o Since the power of sin is broken, you can really stop sinning: “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body” (v.12).
- o This doesn’t mean you will be perfect; but it means that progress in holiness is possible.

B. Instead, Present Yourself to God for Righteousness (v.13)

- o The key to holiness is to not just stop sinning, but also to positively seek out righteousness.
- o A good place to begin is to use your gifts to start serving the church in some capacity

C. Remember the proper Motivation: Grace (v.14)

- o Notice that when Paul wants to encourage holiness, he doesn’t threaten with the law, but motivates with grace. Why is grace the only thing that can generate obedience?
- o Notice that we obey not in order to be saved, but we obey because we are *already* saved. God gave his law to Israel *after* he had already redeemed them from Egypt (Ex 20:1).



Discussion Groups

1. Do you find yourself using grace as an excuse to sin? Do you see others doing that in our world?

2. In what ways do we live our life as if sin still had dominion over us? In what ways do we live like we are defeated?

3. How does this passage help you form a new identity as a new person that now has the power to really fight against sin successfully?

4. How does grace motivate you to obey better than law? Does this mean we should never talk about the law?

