

## How Grace Works

Harmony M.B.C., July 22, 2012

Robert P. Myers

**Rom. 5:19** For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

**Rom. 5:20** Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

**Rom. 5:21** That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Rom. 6:1** What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

**Rom. 6:2** God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

**Rom. 6:3** Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

**Rom. 6:4** Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

**Rom. 6:5** For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness* of his resurrection:

**Rom. 6:6** Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

**Rom. 6:7** For he that is dead is freed from sin.

### I. What grace is and how it relates to the law

■ Read **V. 19** and point out that this is the essence of grace. That is, the righteousness that we have before God, by which we are accepted, came about by the obedience of one...that is Jesus Christ.

▶ This is the distilled essence of how the unmerited favor of God, in giving us eternal life, actually comes about. We are made righteous in Jesus Christ. God accepts His righteousness as adequate and sufficient enough to pass to us complete righteousness by which we are in a state to be accepted of God. Believing that message and believing that the one who is the center of that message has sufficient righteousness for us, and is ready and willing to give that to us if we ask and trust Him to do it, is how God's unmerited favor reveals itself in our souls.

■ **v. 20** - we find here the usefulness of the law as it relates to grace.

▶ The law was made a part of the mix of God's dealings with mankind in order that the offense that human-kind presents to God in the form of transgression might be shown to be as extensive as it is. The law uncovers all the sinfulness of mankind.

▶ Illustrate: Doing body work on my pickup, back fenders. One side looked like it had only a little damage until I took the rubber stripping from it. Then I could see that part of that fender was cracked the whole length of the step part. The law removes man's excuses and ignorance concerning what is transgression and then the whole of man's sinfulness is laid bare. That's what Paul is writing.

▶ Now notice that he brings this up as part of the explanation of how grace works. That is,

▶ 1) law becomes a tool of grace because it brings us to Christ (**Gal. 3:24** Wherefore the

law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.)

▶ 2) man could never understand how huge grace is if he was kept in the dark about offenses against God. The law is one way that God sheds light on man's offenses and it becomes a way for us to realize how big grace is.

✓ In **Romans 7**, Paul teaches that the law is therefore good, and as it states in **Ch. 7, v. 13**, it has the great and beneficial effect of making sin exceeding sinful. So, it not only shows man what sin is, but it shows man how bad sin really is.

✓ But, we have Paul's second statement in this verse to explain how grace is so much greater than that sin: "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound"

✓ Now, this fact of God's grace tells us that there is no such thing as sin of any size or scope that God's grace is not able to handle and put out of the way so that He accepts us. That is because, as I mentioned at first, that He doesn't look at us to find enough righteousness to accept us...rather He accepts Jesus Christ's righteousness as sufficient for us who believe.

✓ Which brings us to the teaching of **v. 21**; namely that just like sin was and is the king of death, so, Jesus Christ is King of live through that grace process of passing along to us His righteousness as good enough for God.

II. I have brought all this out in order for us to get to the **main idea of our message, which begins in the next verse (Ch. 6:1)**, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? "

- This is a great question asked by the apostle. Mainly, because this is the very conclusion that some heretics have come to in the past. That is, they have said, "Well then, if grace is larger, more abundant than sin, it makes sense to keep on sinning in order that this grace may abound even more."
- Now, this bad conclusion has shown up among Baptists throughout the centuries, and Baptists have been accused of believing it. Why is that?
  - ▶ Because some Baptists seem to teach it by the way they explain grace and security of the believer
  - ▶ Because some Baptists teach it by the way they live
  - ▶ Because some Baptists use it as an excuse for pampering and clinging to their weaknesses (i.e. "I know I should work on this, but God will forgive me" [both of these are true statements, but it doesn't get to the root of the problem; nor does it give proper glory to God's grace])
- Notice next (**v. 2**) how Paul answers this: "God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? "
  - ▶ Two things in this answer: 1) "God forbid:" a) that we should even entertain the idea of behaving and thinking like this; and b) that a born again believer should adopt this as a religious philosophy
  - ▶ 2) "How shall we, etc.:" I want to illustrate how Paul's statement is about how we ought to view any idea of continuing in sin just because grace has come or just because grace is more abounding than sin: (story about Ted, our little feist dog who was killed by 3 big dogs; object: that dog could no longer be a dog in this world. He was dead to this world and could no longer live as a dog. In the same way, when we are dead to sin through Jesus Christ, how can we live as though we were alive as sinners?)

### **III. How grace works to set us apart from what we were - vv. 3-7**

- Buried with Him by immersion into His death
- The glory of God resurrected Him, and us with Him
  - In order that when He arose, we also could arise to newness of life
- crucifixion with Christ that the old man might be put to death
  - v. 7 - Being dead (to sin) in this way we are freed from sin