

Romans Summary  
Week 10, Wednesday November 16, 2016  
Romans 6:1-14

Paul's 'questioner' is back! And the question which arises from what Paul has said is, shall we continue in sin so that grace may increase? This is an idea around location or status. If grace came to us while we were in sin, then shouldn't we stay in sin in order to experience grace. Paul's answer, NO! The reason for the 'no' is because our location or status has changed. We have, in our baptism, died to sin, so we can no longer be in it — it's impossible.

Our baptism is a baptism *into* Messiah and into his death. Our new location or status, then, is in Jesus not in sin. As well, it means that what happened to the Messiah, happens to us. To be baptized into his death means being co-buried with him, an image, perhaps, invoked by the baptized going under the water.

The matching half is that we also belong to the world of the resurrection. We don't simply wait for our own final resurrection to begin living the resurrection life. Our life now is conducted on resurrection ground.

The point is that our old selves are co-crucified with Messiah for the purpose of sin being done away with, so that we are no longer its slaves — we no longer live under the power of sin which marked out the Adam family from 5:20-21. Just like the Messiah has died once and for all, so have we to the power of sin and as a result now in this resurrection life, we live to God.

The theological base then is that God, through the death and resurrection (cross) of Jesus moved us from the sphere of Adam/death to Christ/life. This was also enacted in our baptism, that moment of solidarity with Christ, we, through the death of Jesus died to sin, and through the life of Jesus live to God. Because of this, says Paul, we should reckon — do the math — ourselves dead to sin, so we can't continue in it as first suggested, instead, because we are in Christ we should be alive to God.

The conclusion, then, is that sin should not rule in our mortal bodies — this needs to be said because Christians still experience some power of sin in their lives, because our bodies await the full, physical resurrection. However, we need to apply what we know (reckon); that sin does not rule us any longer, Jesus does. So we should not let sin rule in us.

Because we have been moved to the new location or sphere of power of being in Christ we cannot give our selves to sin, so Paul says do not present your parts (members of your body) to sin. Rather we should present our whole selves to God.

The concluding word is sin is not master over us because we are not under law. Paul here places Law under the Adam, sin, death side of the the two spheres. If we try to continue under law (works of the Law which ultimately are fleshly, especially circumcision) then we will only remain in sin. But because we are under grace we no longer need to allow sin to rule us.

**“Death Shall Have No Dominion” reflection and discussion questions:**

1. Why is Tennessee Williams' metaphor perfect for the human condition?
2. Why should sin and death be capitalized?

3. Why is it wrong to want to continue in sin to highlight grace?
4. What does the phrase 'become what you are' mean?