

Jan. 12, 2020

Speaker: Eric Naus **Series:** This I Believe – The Book of Romans

Passage: Romans 6:1-14

Community Group Questions: “Alive to God”

Read Romans 6:1-14 aloud as a group. And then work through the following questions:

1. In verses 1, Paul asks a question which many of his critics may have asked: “Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?” In other words, if salvation is really a free gift in Christ, and if God’s grace is always greater than our sin, then should we just sin boldly, so that God’s grace looks even bigger?! Have you ever found yourself asking such a question? (i.e. “Maybe I’ll just sin and get it over with, since God will just forgive me later...”) Why is it so natural to take advantage of God’s free grace?
2. In verses 2-4, Paul begins to show us that God’s grace does not lead us into more sin, but rather, God’s grace *frees us from sin*. He begins by reminding the Roman Christians of their baptism. The word baptism in these verses refers to water baptism – the initiating ceremony of the Christian faith. When a new believer is submerged under the water, it illustrates that they have been spiritually united to the death and burial of Jesus (vv. 3-4a). Then, coming up out of the water illustrates that they have been united to the resurrection of Jesus, and they are alive in him (vs. 4b). To be clear, baptism does not save us. We are saved by faith alone in the work of Christ (see Rom. 4:5). However, baptism is a public picture of that salvation, and it illustrates our decisive break with our past as we step into our new life with Christ. Do you remember your baptism? Was it significant to you? Share your story of baptism with the group. Why does Paul encourage the Roman Christians to reflect on their baptism in order to find strength in fighting sin’s power? What would it look like if we did this too?
3. In verses 5-11, Paul speaks of the reality that sin has lost its power over our lives because of our union with Jesus in his death and resurrection. On the one hand, Jesus was a “substitute” for his people on the cross (he died in our place). On the other hand, Jesus was the “representative” of his people (he died on our behalf and takes us with him in his death and resurrection). So, when God the Father saw Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection, he somehow saw every true believer as “crucified with him” (vs. 6) and then “alive with him” (vs. 8). Now, because we’ve already died to sin’s penalty with Christ, and because we’ve already been raised to everlasting life with him, we should “consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God” (vs. 11). According to these verses, how should our true identity in Christ give us power in our daily fight against sin? What would it look like in practical, daily terms to “consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God”?
4. Verses 12-14 instruct us not to let sin reign in our bodies. We should stop “presenting” the various parts of ourselves to sin as “instruments” (a word which also means “weapons”) of unrighteousness. Instead, we should present the various parts of ourselves to God as instruments/weapons of righteousness! It’s a

principle of replacement: take the negative things you used to offer to sin, and replace them with positive things now offered to God. Can you think of aspects of yourself which you used to offer to sin, but now you can offer them to God for his purposes? Share some examples. How does this idea of “replacement” help us in our fight against sin?