



CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

BIBLE SURVEY

THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

ROMANS 1-8

Week 3

Extraordinary Love

Romans 5:6-11

OPENING
up to the Word

Have you ever been rescued from death or injury by someone who risked their life for you? How did you thank that person?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. What do you think is meant by “the right time” in verse 6?
2. You have probably heard that *God hates sinners*. Yet verse 8 tells us that the opposite is true: *God loves sinners*. What assures us of God’s love for us?
3. What frightening phrase does Paul use to describe human beings in this passage (v. 10)?
4. How would you paraphrase this passage so that someone unfamiliar with Christianity could better understand the ministry of Christ?

LIVING
out the Word

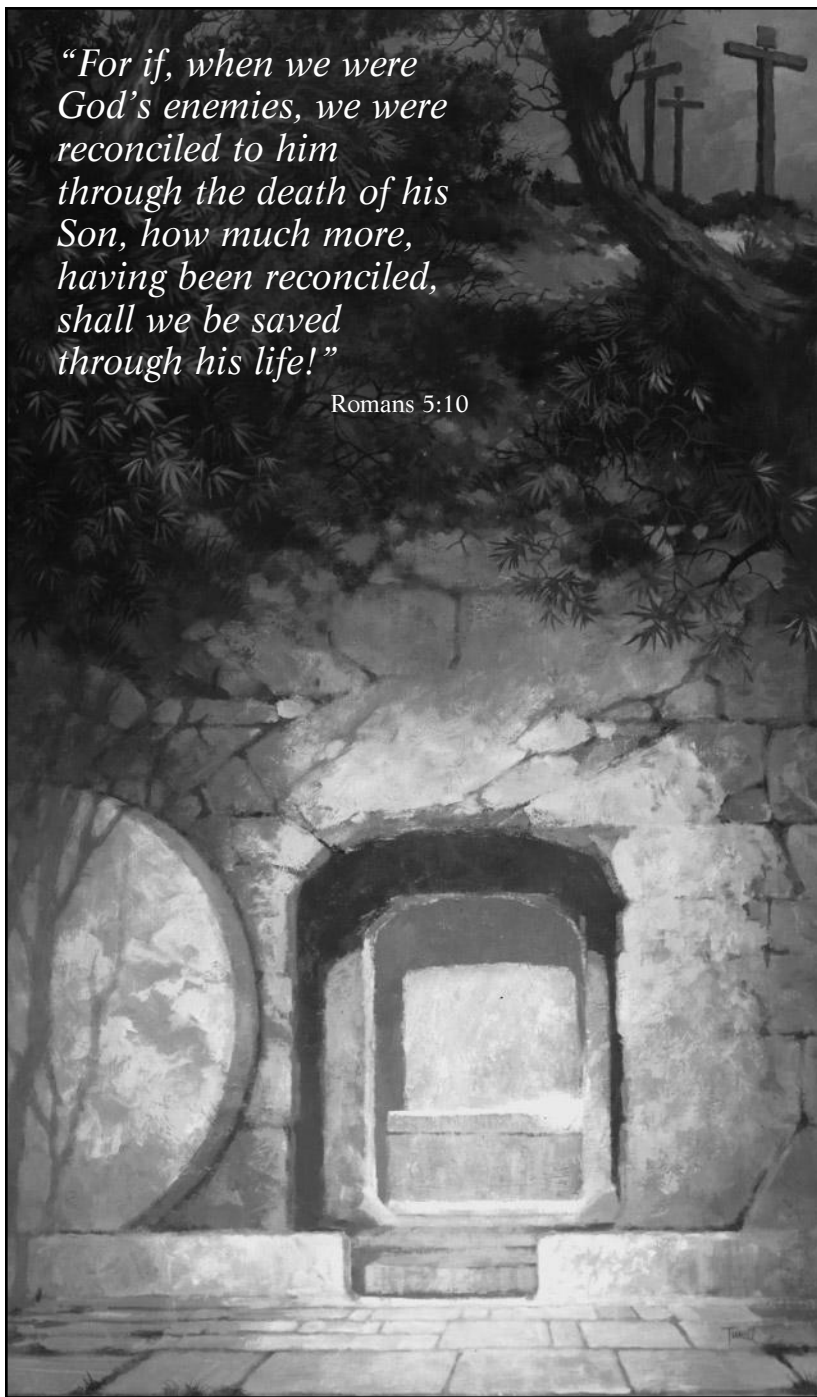
1. Think of one or more people who love you. How do they demonstrate their love toward you?
2. Think about the word *saved* (v. 10). From what or whom have you been saved or spared recently?
3. Look up the term *reconciled* (v. 10) in a dictionary or in our glossary after Day 20. Describe a time when you were at odds with someone but later became reconciled. What elements made the reconciliation possible?
4. “Christ has turned all our sunsets into dawns,” wrote Clement of Alexandria (150-215). Is this the way you feel? What sunsets of yours have been turned into dawns?

WINDOW
on the Word

While we were still sinners (v. 8) are powerful and affirming words. We were once **God’s enemies** (v. 10), but it is the nature of God to love even his enemies, as Jesus instructs us to do in Matthew 5:44. God accepts us as we are; he places infinite value on us as we are; he will go to extraordinary lengths to reach us, to help us and, ultimately, to save us. If you get discouraged in your Christian journey, try to recall that God, through Christ, loves you and that God loved you even before you were a Christian.

*“For if, when we were
God’s enemies, we were
reconciled to him
through the death of his
Son, how much more,
having been reconciled,
shall we be saved
through his life!”*

Romans 5:10



Death Through Adam, Life Through Christ

Romans 5:12-17

OPENING
up to the Word

“A child of God should be a visible beatitude for joy and happiness, and a living doxology (declaration of praise to God) for gratitude and adoration,” said the British preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon. Does this describe you?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. Divide a page into two sections. Make a list of similarities and contrasts between Adam and Christ.
2. What does Paul say about sin in this passage? How did it start? What does it lead to?
3. Doesn't verse 17 make the contrast between Adam and Jesus Christ abundantly clear?

LIVING
out the Word

1. In 25 words or less, describe your life before you were a Christ-follower. Do the same exercise to describe your life as a Christian.

WINDOW
on the Word

*Why does Paul emphasize **reconciliation and grace** in this book? Historical sources tell us that the **church in Rome** was an extremely diverse group, split into competing factions. Some were Jewish Christians who insisted on continuing old covenant customs. They continued to keep kosher, celebrate Jewish holidays and live under the law of the old covenant. On the other side of the coin there were Christians in the early Roman church who knew that obeying the laws of the old covenant did not bring salvation. But this group apparently had a difficult time being patient and sensitive. They may have flaunted their freedom from Jewish laws and customs, and delighted in gossiping about how legalistic some of their friends in the other faction were.*

Action and Reaction

DAY 17

Romans 5:18-21

Can you think of a time when a single decision or act on your part had a negative effect on many other people? Was there a time when a decision of yours had a positive effect on many others?

1. Paul says that “the law was added so that the trespass might increase” (v. 20). Explain this statement, using Romans 3:19-20.

2. Where did death come from (5:12)? How did Jesus solve the problem (v. 21)?

Divide a sheet of paper into two parts and make a list contrasting Adam’s *sin* with Christ’s *gift*. Consider their individual action and the results of their work.

Jesus is God! *This is the cornerstone of the Christian faith. Several times in these chapters, the apostle Paul links Jesus and God. Here are some examples: “We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (5:1). “God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (5:8). “We...rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation” (5:11). “The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus” (6:23). “Count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus” (6:11).*

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

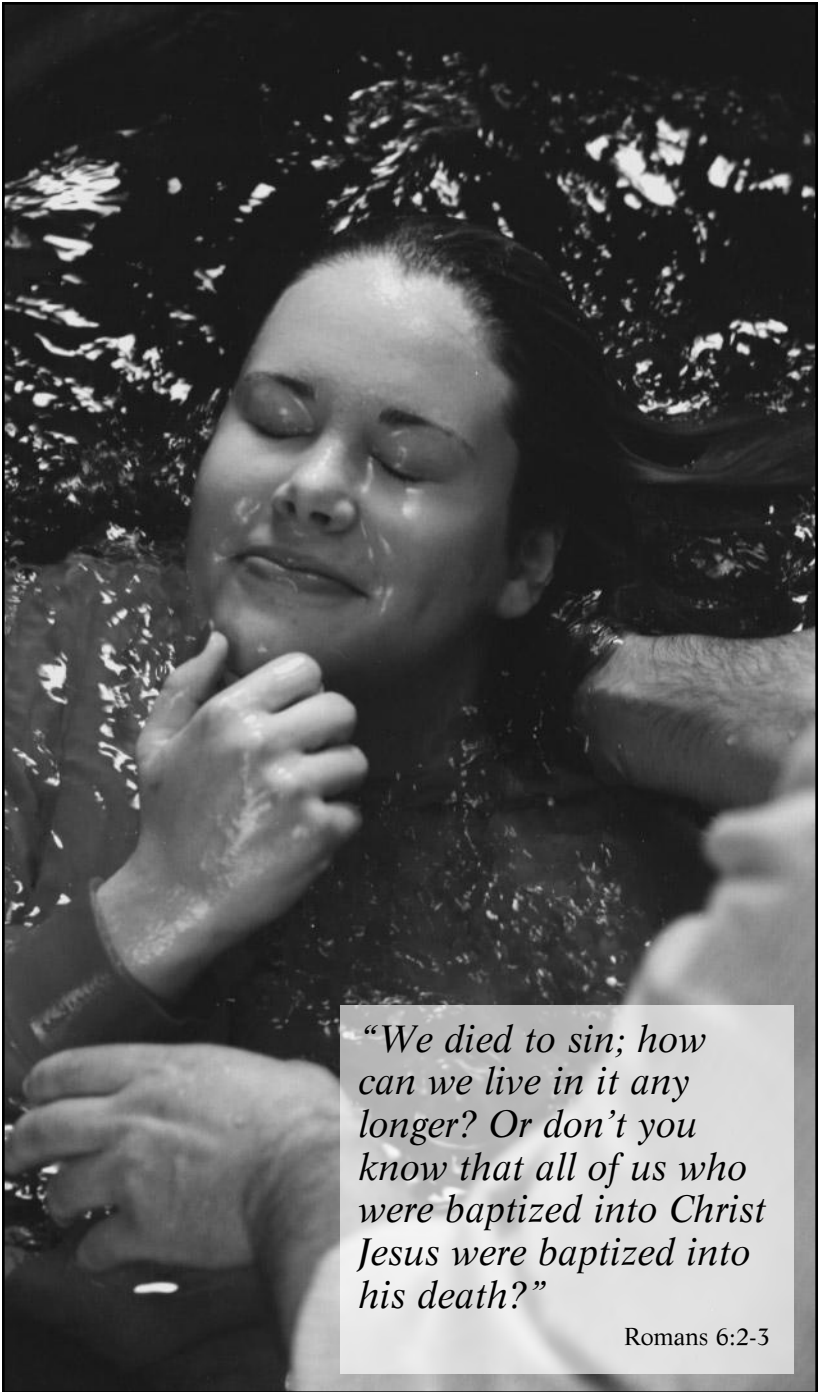
into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word



“We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?”

Romans 6:2-3

All the Difference in the World

DAY 18

Romans 6:1-11

Paul argues that becoming a Christian makes all the difference in the world—we die to one way of life and are raised to another way. How does being a Christian make a difference in your life and in the lives of those around you?

1. When people hear about grace, what question often arises (v. 1)? Have you ever heard anyone ask a similar question? Was it a genuine question, or an objection to grace? Do you think people really want the answer to Paul's question to be *yes* or *no*?

2. List the ways mentioned in this passage in which we, as Christ-followers, are linked to Christ.

3. While baptism is a uniquely Christian ceremony, it has its roots in Old Testament washings and purification rites. What does baptism symbolize for the Christian (vs. 3-4)?

1. What does it mean to have “died to sin” (v. 2). In what ways is this true for you?

2. Describe some ways that you are “alive to God in Christ Jesus” (v. 11).

3. Among all the denominations, what are the various modes and methods by which people are baptized?

Count yourselves dead to sin is the apostle's exhortation. While it is true that even the most mature and committed of Christians can be tempted to sin, Paul reminds us that in a relationship with Christ, sin loses its power over us. It may still seek us out but God's grace empowers us to refuse it. The closer we are to Christ, the less attractive sin will be.

OPENING

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Using, Not Abusing

Romans 6:12-14

OPENING
up to the Word

Your body can be a tool for good or a weapon for evil. How do people around you use their bodies for good purposes and how do others abuse their bodies?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. What two choices do we have regarding who or what we will serve with our bodies?
2. What are the “do not” statements in this passage? How are our bodies to be used?
3. Think about verse 14. If you are still *under law*, what is your master? If you are *under grace*, Who is your Master?

LIVING
out the Word

1. Identify ways that people “let sin reign” in their mortal bodies (v. 12). Do any of these affect you?
2. How can the parts of your body be “instruments of wickedness”? What about “instruments of righteousness” (v. 13)?
3. How has God brought you “from death to life” (v. 13)? Where do you still need this kind of grace to work in your life?

WINDOW
on the Word

*Missionary and writer E. Stanley Jones offers this insight into **grace**: “Grace binds you with far stronger cords than the cords of duty or obligation can bind you. Grace is free, but when once you take it, you are bound forever to the Giver and bound to catch the spirit of the Giver. Like produces like. Grace makes you gracious, the Giver makes you give.”*

Slave Driver

DAY 20

Romans 6:15-18

Have you had a boss or parent or even a spouse whom you would describe as a *slave driver*? Describe his or her behavior and its effect on you.

1. Compare Paul's statement in verse 1 to that in verse 15. What is the difference in emphasis?
 2. In this passage, Paul compares both our old life and our new life to slavery. How would you define each of these phrases used by Paul in this passage: (a) slave to sin, (b) slave to righteousness, (c) slaves to God.
 3. Paul has just stated in verse 14 that "you are not under law." But rather than merely being freed from bondage to law and sin, salvation actually means a *change* of bondage. We are now "slaves to _____" (v. 18).
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1. Identify ways in which slavery to Christ results in freedom from sin.
 2. Paul offers only two alternatives: slavery to sin and slavery to righteousness. Do you think a third alternative is possible?
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For a more complete understanding of **spiritual liberty or freedom from sin**, read these passages: Luke 4:18; John 8:32; Romans 8:21; 2 Corinthians 3:17.

OPENING
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A Brief Glossary of

ROMANS

A partial list of theological terms used by Paul in the book of Romans.

Abba (8:15). The Hebrew equivalent of “daddy,” still used by Hebrew-speaking children.

Barbarians or *non-Greeks* (1:14). Anyone who was not Greek or had not been Hellenized (adopting Greek language and culture). Greeks considered barbarians to be uncivilized.

Body of death (7:24). Human nature, subject to the laws of sin and death.

Body of sin (6:6). Not the physical human body, but the sinful self.

Called (8:30). Invited by God to partake of the blessings of redemption.

Circumcision (2:25). The removal of the male foreskin. God commanded this ritual for Abraham and his descendants (Ge 17), and also for the Israelites under Moses (Ex 12:48; Lev 12:3). Physical circumcision came to be symbolic of the keeping of the Mosaic law. Paul maintains that God now requires “circumcision of the heart” for believers.

Glorified (8:30). Honored, magnified, extolled, praised. God is worthy of being glorified, but in 8:30 God glorifies or honors us by bringing us into the likeness of Christ.

Grace (5:2). The entirely undeserved favor of God, by which he reconciles and redeems us, crediting us with the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Justification (4:25). The act of pronouncing righteous, or acquittal. Our justification was brought about by Christ's death and confirmed by his resurrection.

Law See the article on this subject after day 10.

Saints (1:7). All who belong to Christ. Not merely those who have died and gone to their final reward of eternal life in Christ.

Sanctified (15:16). Having imparted the righteousness and holiness of Jesus Christ to the believer. Sanctification is experienced through faith in Christ and accomplished through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Sin (3:9). As used in Romans, sin denotes more than the committing of a specific act. It is an evil principle or source of action, or a power which acts through the body. Paul frequently personifies sin, as in 5:21.

Sinful nature (7:5). Translated "flesh" in the KJV—the sinful self, as opposed to the Spirit.

Reconciled (5:10). Changed from enmity to friendship. Humans in their sinful condition and hostile attitude are invited to be reconciled—to change their attitude and accept God's offer of forgiveness and justification.

Redemption (3:24). Release from bondage.

Righteousness (3:5) The character or quality of being right or just. An attribute of God—his faithfulness and truthfulness, and the sum total of his requirements for humans. Human beings, however, cannot be righteous, except as God's righteousness is imputed to them. Paul also uses this word to describe right actions, as it is used in chapter 6.

No Man Can Serve Two Masters

Romans 6:18-23

OPENING
up to the Word

Have you ever been in the position of answering to two bosses? Did the situation work, or did you run into conflicts?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. Why does Paul use the metaphor of slavery to illustrate his point (v. 19)? What type of weakness do you suppose the Roman believers had?

2. How does slavery to God and righteousness compare with slavery to sin? Where does sin lead (v. 19, 21)? What does God give us (v. 22)?

3. If being a slave of sin frees one from the “control of righteousness” (v. 20), does that mean those who are slaves to sin have no obligation to be righteous?

4. Look at verse 23. If we decide to stop sinning and start behaving righteously (without accepting Christ as Savior), is God under an obligation to reward us? See **Window on the Word** below.

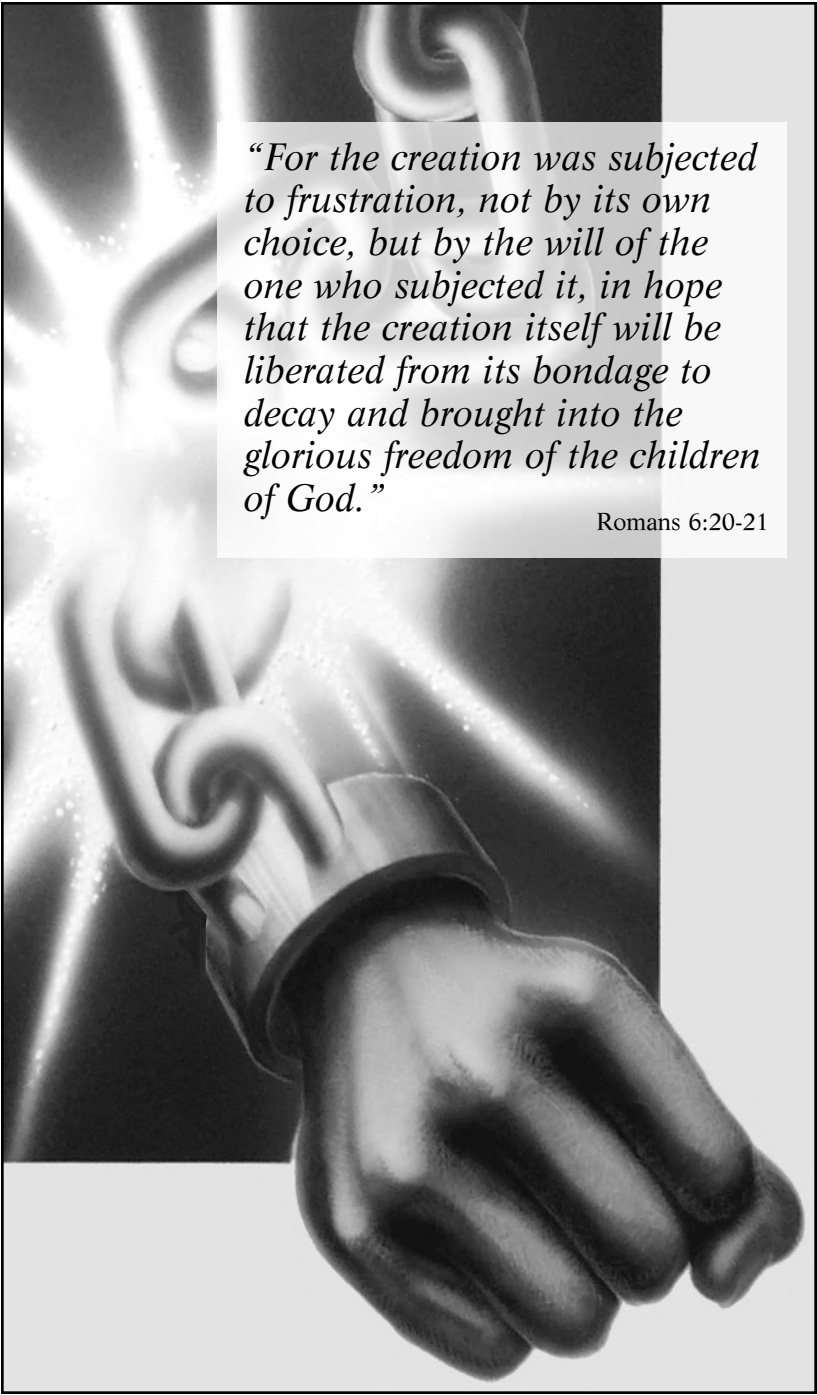
LIVING
out the Word

1. In your own words, explain how sin leads to death.

2. Use a dictionary to look up the words *holy* and *holiness*. Do the definitions apply to your life?

WINDOW
on the Word

*Notice in verse 23 how the two contrasting forms of slavery pay off. Sin pays **wages** of death, whereas God grants the **gift** of eternal life in Christ. While we may earn compensation for our sin, we cannot earn compensation for our good behavior. The benefit of serving God is always a gift, never a wage. It is God's righteousness that we serve, not our own.*



“For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.”

Romans 6:20-21