

ROMANS

Chapter 6

Dead to Sin, Alive in Christ

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4 We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. 6 We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. 7 For one who has died has been set free from sin. 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9 We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. 10 For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. 11 So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. 13 Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. 14 For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

6:1-23 Luther: “In chapter 6 (Paul) takes up the special work of faith, the conflict of the spirit with the flesh for the complete slaying of the sin and lust that remain after we are justified. He teaches us that we are not by faith so freed from sin that we can be idle, slack, and careless, as though there were no longer any sin in us. Sin is present; but it is no longer reckoned for our condemnation, because of the faith that is struggling against it. Therefore we have enough to do all our life long in taming the body, slaying its lusts, and compelling its members to obey the spirit and not the lusts. Thus we become like the death, and resurrection of Christ, and complete our baptism – which signifies the death of sin and the new life of grace – until we are entirely purified of sin, and even our bodies rise again with Christ and live forever.” (AE 35:375-76) (TLSB)

“All this we can do, he says, because we are under grace and not under law. He himself explains what this means. To be without the law is not the same things as to have no laws and to be able to do what one pleases. Rather we are under the law when, without grace, we occupy ourselves with the works of the law. Then sin certainly rules (us) though the law, for no one loves the law by nature; and that is great sin. Grace, however, makes the law dear to us; then sin is no longer present, and the law is no longer against us but one with us.” (AE 35:375-76) (TLSB)

“This is the true freedom from sin and from the law. He writes about this down to the end of the chapter, saying that it is a freedom only to do good with pleasure and to live well without the compulsion of the law. Therefore this freedom is a spiritual freedom, which does not overthrow the law but presents what the law demands, namely, pleasure (in the law) and love (for it) whereby the law is quieted and no longer drives men or makes demands of them. It is just as if you owed a debt to your overlord and could not pay it. There are two ways in which you could rid yourself of the debt: either he would take nothing from you and would tear up the account, or

some good man would pay it for you and give you the means to satisfy the account. It is in this latter way that Christ has made us free from the law. Our freedom is, therefore, no carefree fleshly freedom which is not obligated to do anything, but a freedom that does many works of all kinds, and is free of the demands and obligations of the law.” (AE 35:375-76) (TLSB)

6:1-11 After the doctrinal section in Galatians (chapters 3-4) Paul, in chapter 5, deals with two sins which are the constant danger of every Christian. The first is the temptation to return to the Law as a means of justification before God. The second (verse 13) is the danger of using Christian freedom as license to sin. Jesus warns about this sin in John 5:14 and 8:11. Hebrews 10:26 is also applicable here. Once a person has become a Christian he must ever be on his guard against slipping back into that from which Christ redeemed him. (Buls)

6:1-2 Paul forcefully rejects the notion that we should ignore God’s will and deliberately sin, knowing that He will forgive. That is an abuse of grace. (TLSB)

we – Paul and fellow Christians. (TLSB)

6:1 *what shall we say then...continue to sin...grace may abound?* † This question arose out of what Paul had just said in 5:20: “Where sin increased, grace increased all the more.” Such a question expresses an antinomian (against law) viewpoint. Apparently some objected to Paul’s teaching of justification through faith alone because they thought it would lead to moral irresponsibility. (CSB)

Franzmann: There is a certain logic in the opening question: 'Since the increase of sin leads to the abounding of grace (5:20), shall we persist in sin in order that grace may abound?' But it is cool, Satanic logic; there is in it the Satanic suggestion that we should exploit God, make His grace serve our selfish will, use His gifts to support us in our rebellion against God. It is the logic which the Tempter used on Jesus (Matthew 4). (Buls)

The second question in verse 1 is a question which is asked by our sinful flesh: "Shall we continue in sin in order that grace may increase?" Our sinful flesh, our old Adam, is thoroughly wicked and evil. It is our greatest cross. We shall carry it about with us until we die. Christians are constantly being tempted by Satan's logic: "Won't a little sinning make God more gracious to you since grace is greater than sin?" (Buls)

“Are we to continue in sin so that grace may abound?” The question arose out of what Paul had said in 5:20, “Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more.” Luther reminds us that Paul did not say this to excuse sin but to glorify divine grace (Martin Luther, translated by J. Theodore Mueller, *Commentary on Romans* [Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1976], 99). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 1)

The question is not “Shall we continue to do sins?” but “shall we continue to pass our lifetime under the lordship of sin?” Another way to put it, with 5:20 in view, is this: Since Israel was given the Law code at Sinai so that trespass should increase until Good Friday in order that grace might super abound at Calvary, should we Christians continue to operate in daily life under Law in the kingdom of sin in order that – carrying the principle in 5:20 forward – grace might continue to abound more so? The answer is “No!” because the interlude of Sinai Law is over, its purpose having been served as of Good Friday. The reign of grace has now been established in all its super abundant fullness. It cannot “super abound” beyond its super abounding on Good Friday.

Now, more behavior under Law in the kingdom of Sin will not produce any more grace – nor is any more needed.

Philip Melancthon states, “There is in all men so great an infirmity of nature that when we hear the teaching about gratuitous imputation, we become less fruitful for doing good and carnal security is strengthened.

6:2 *by no means* – Paul's answer to which all true believers must agree. It is variously translated: "Perish the thought! Certainly not! By no means! No, no!" Koine Greek did not use exclamation points. In English, one should be placed here. (Buls)

“By no means!” The previous question is answered with an emphatic “no” and with a clear explanation: we have died to sin. If we are dead to sin, we cannot continue in it. The definite past tense, “we died,” points to a particular moment of conversion, Baptism, as we shall soon see. It is important to note that while the Christian is dead to sin, he still struggles against his flesh (Rom 7:14–20). There is both an eschatological reality and present ideal to Paul’s teaching. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 1)

died to sin. The reference is to an event in the past and is explained in v. 3. (CSB)

In Baptism, God applies Christ’s death to us so that we receive the benefits of Christ’s sacrifice. Belonging to Him, we reject the illogical question in verse 1. (TLSB)

And now Paul answers the two questions of verse 1 with another question in verse 2. There is a sense in which all true Christians, like their Lord, are dead, dead with respect to sin. One cannot become a Christian until he dies, dies to sin. How does that happen? Christ frees from sin. Christian life is a state of freedom from sin, its guilt and its power. (Buls)

Arndt: Just as a person who dies is separated from his friends and relatives, so the Christian is separated from sin. (Buls)

Even marriage comes to an end when death takes place. (Buls)

Lenski: The moment a man is dead he ceases to respond to stimuli. (Buls)

Pinch a corpse as hard as you can. It will not respond. Paul is assuming, of course, that his reader believes what he had said in Romans 5:12-21. Bengel reminds us of that when he comments (concerning "we have died to sin") "In baptism and justification." The answer, of course, to the question: "How can we live any longer in it (sin)?" is "We simply cannot." But let's be honest about ourselves. Our flesh is constantly tempting us to change liberty into license. That happens in thousands of ways. The reader of these notes needs no examples of this because he finds so many in his life. But Christian faith fights these temptations. (Buls)

It should be obvious that the verb in this verse is not eschatological but refers now to everyday living. We mention this because in verse 8 a future indicative is also used of everyday living now, not in heaven. (Buls)

BLESSED Augustine says regarding this passage: “With this passage the apostle is giving a complete description of the man who has been placed under grace, where with his mind he is already serving God’s law, although with his flesh he is still serving the law of sin.” And he

continues in his description of these two kinds of servitude of the Law and of sin, saying: “For this man does not obey the desire of sin, no matter how his lusts still continue to trouble him and call him to consent to them, until the time that his body is raised to life and ‘death is swallowed up in victory’ (1 Cor. 15:54). Thus because we do not surrender to these low desires, we are under grace, and ‘sin does not reign in our body’ (v. 12). But he over whom sin reigns, no matter how he resists sin, is still under the Law and not under grace.” (Luther)

From this quotation the meaning of the apostle’s words is clear. For all these propositions: (1) to be dead to sin; (2) but to live unto God; (3) to serve with the mind the law of God and with the flesh the law of sin, mean nothing else than this, that we do not yield to our evil lusts and to sin, even though sin still remains in us. This is the same as saying: (4) Sin does not have dominion, does not rule; but (5) righteousness does rule, etc. Hence later on, in chapter 13:14, he says: “And make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires,” as if he were saying: “The desires of the flesh are themselves sin, that is, original sin and the rest of the paternal inheritance from Adam remain, but you must not obey them.” Likewise he says, “That the body of sin might be destroyed” (v. 6), which takes place when our spirit resists sin and refuses to give in to it. (Luther)

We are in sin until the end of our life. For this reason blessed Augustine says: “Until our body is raised to life and death is swallowed up in victory, our evil desires will afflict us.”² Likewise, we read in Gal. 5:17: “The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would.” And below, in Rom. 7:19 Paul says: “For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do, etc.” Again, in James 4:1: “What causes wars, and what causes fightings among you? Is it not your passions that are at war in your members?” And in 1 Peter 2:11: “Abstain from the passions of the flesh that wage war against your soul.” And in this way all the apostles and saints confess that sin and concupiscence remain in us, until the body returns to ashes and a new one is raised up without concupiscence and sin, as 2 Peter 3:13 puts it, “According to His promise we wait for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells,” as if to say that sin dwells in this present world. Just so in Jer. 18:4 ff. in regard to the potter who repairs the broken vase by making another, the Lord says that He will do likewise. For the Lord hates this body of sin and is preparing to remake it into another; therefore He commands us to hate it also, to destroy and put it to death and to seek an escape from it and “the coming of His kingdom” (Matt. 6:10). (Luther)

6:3–4† The when and how of the Christian’s death to sin. Baptism is a means by which we enter into a vital faith relationship with Jesus Christ. It is a means of receiving God’s grace, and it depicts graphically what happens as a result of the Christian’s union with Christ. Through faith we are united with Christ, just as through our natural birth we are united with Adam. As we fell into sin and became subject to death in father Adam, so we now have died and been raised again with Christ—which baptism effects. (CSB)

The power of the new and sanctified life flows forth from our connectedness to Christ in Baptism. In Baptism, we join Christ in his death to sin (justification) and are, as Paul says, buried with him. The imagery here is that of drowning. Immersion has better imagery than our present-day sprinkling and pouring, as Luther writes: “The significance of Baptism [is] that the old man and the sinful . . . flesh and blood are to be wholly drowned by the grace of God” (WLS § 156). Whether one immerses or not, it should be taught and understood that nothing of the former life or person remains. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 1)

Hina, “in order that,” just as Christ was raised from the dead . . . we, too, should *peri patēsōmen*, “walk,” in a newness of life. Describing the one who is crucified with Christ, Luther writes, “The spiritual person . . . must be totally separated from and dead in his heart to all (*temporal*) things. This he does when with all his spiritual strength he despises what belongs to this earthly life” (Luther, *Commentary on Romans*, p 101). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 1)

6:3 baptized into Christ Jesus – Baptism connects us with Christ’s work, clothing us in His righteousness. (TLSB)

were baptized into his death – Christ paid the penalty of our sin. Christ’s work is applied to us in Baptism. (TLSB)

Kretzmann: They should remember what they knew with regard to their Baptism, whose meaning had been explained to them. (Buls)

In keeping with this idea Lenski calls this question a *litotes* for: "But I am sure that you know the fact etc." Paul is simply reminding the Romans of something which they had learned before they were baptized. Paul had a very diplomatic but firm way of dealing with his hearers. (Buls)

Baptism into Christ Jesus equals baptism into Christ's death. That is a tremendous thought. How can anyone call baptism a mere symbol? (Buls)

Stoeckhardt: Through baptism we partake of Christ and the fruit of His death. The one does not exclude the other. . . . Faith is nothing else than personal contact with Christ. (Buls)

Arndt: When we were baptized we became partakers of the death of Christ. It was just as though we had died ourselves. The apostle here appeals to baptism, because it is the beginning of our Christianity. . . . Christ died to the sin of others which he bore; we die to sin that we have in ourselves and whose yoke we cast off. (Buls)

Bengel: He who is baptized puts on Christ, the second Adam; he is baptized, I say, into the whole Christ, and so also into his death, and it is just as if, at that moment, Christ suffered, died, and were buried for such a man, and as if such a man suffered, died, and was buried with Christ. (Buls)

The Baptism of our Lord himself gives us some clues to this connection between Baptism and death and new life. The Father spoke, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased” (Mt. 3:17). These words quote from Is. 42:1, the first Suffering Servant Song, and Ps 2:7, which speaks of the enthronement of God’s anointed Son as King. Christ was baptized into his role of suffering and death in order to redeem us from sin (cf. the last Suffering Servant Song, Isaiah 53, and Luke 12:50). But his Baptism also was the prelude to his enthronement in glory after his victorious resurrection (Ps. 2). (Concordia Pulpit Resources Volume 3, Part 3)

Blessed Augustine in Book 4, chapter 3, of *On the Trinity* says: “For our twofold death the Savior pays with His single death, and in order to achieve a twofold resurrection for us, He has set before us and offered us His own single resurrection in His sacrament and example. For having put on our mortal flesh and dying only in it and rising only in it, now only in it He joins these things together for us, for in this flesh He became a sacrament for the inner man and an example for the outward man. With regard to the sacrament for the inner man we have this word: ‘We know that our old self was crucified with Him, so that the body of sin might be destroyed’ (v. 6). But to the example for the outward man this statement is pertinent: ‘And do not fear those who kill the

body' (Matt. 10:28). He most strongly encouraged His followers to this course through His own death, which was of this kind." The resurrection of the body of the Lord is shown to pertain to the sacrament of the inner man through this statement of the apostle in Col. 3:1: "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above." But to the example for the outward man this statement applies: "Not a hair of your head will perish" (Luke 21:18), along with the fact that He showed His body to His disciples after His resurrection. Thus in this passage the apostle is speaking of the death and resurrection of Christ insofar as they refer to the sacrament, but not to the example. (Luther)

Hence we must note that death is of two kinds: natural, or better, temporal death and eternal death. Temporal death is the separation of the body and the soul. But this death is only a figure, a symbol, and like death painted on a wall when compared with eternal death, which is also spiritual. Hence in the Scripture it is very often called a sleep, a rest, a slumber. Eternal death is also twofold. The one kind is good, very good. It is the death of sin and the death of death, by which the soul is released and separated from sin and the body is separated from corruption and through grace and glory is joined to the living God. This is death in the most proper sense of the word, for in all other forms of death something remains that is mixed with life, but not in this kind of death, where there is the purest life alone, because it is eternal life. For to this kind of death alone belong in an absolute and perfect way the conditions of death, and in this death alone whatever dies perishes totally and into eternal nothingness, and nothing will ever return from this death, because it truly dies an eternal death. This is the way sin dies; and likewise the sinner, when he is justified, because sin will not return again for all eternity, as the apostle says here, "Christ will never die again," etc. (v. 9). This is the principal theme in Scripture. For God has arranged to remove through Christ whatever the devil brought in through Adam. And it was the devil who brought in sin and death. Therefore God brought about the death of death and the sin of sin, the poison of poison, the captivity of captivity. As He says through Hosea (Hos. 13:14): "O Death, I will be your death; O Hell, I will be your bite." This is prefigured in all the wars of the children of Israel in the Old Testament, when they killed the Gentiles. The other kind of death is eternal and very terrible. It is the death of the damned, where sin and the sinner are not the ones to die, while man is saved, but man dies, while sin lives on and continues forever. This is "the very evil death of the wicked." And when the apostle speaks of the death of Christ in a sacramental manner, he is speaking of the second spiritual death, and thus the meaning of his words is very plain. (Luther)

I used the term "sin of sin." What does this mean? The sin of sin is to act against the law of sin and to transgress the law of the members (Rom. 7:23) and to sin against the lusts of the flesh. This kind of sin is very good. Just as the death of death means to act against death, which is the same thing as life, so the sin of sin is righteousness. Hence Ecclesiasticus (Ecclus. 42:14): "Far better is the iniquity of a man than a woman doing a good turn," that is, it is better that the spirit transgress the law of the flesh and act contrary to the flesh than that the flesh act according to its own law. These are the works of the Lord in which He delights and causes us to delight, as it is written: "The Lord shall rejoice in His works" (Ps. 104:31). And later on, in Rom. 8:3, he says: "For sin He condemned sin." The Spirit uses these negative expressions which are sweeter than the affirmative ones to describe the eternal nature of the things about which He is speaking. Because for death to be killed means that death will not return, and "to take captivity captive" means that captivity will never return, a concept which cannot be expressed through an affirmative assertion. For a person can think of life without eternity. Thus it also says in the same psalm: "Our God is the God of salvation; and to God the Lord belongs escape from death" (Ps. 68:20), rather than the entrance of life. For the entering into life can, and necessarily must, become a departure from life, but the "escape from death" means to enter into a life which is without death. These are "the delights of Christ" of which it says in Ps. 16:3: "As for the saints in

the land, they are the noble, in whom is all my delight,” and in Ps. 111:2, “Great are the works of the Lord, sought out according to all His desires.” (Luther)

6:4 *buried with him through baptism into death.* Amplified in vv. 5–7. (CSB)

As Jesus was covered by the earth in His burial, we are buried in baptismal water. Early Christian baptismal practices reflected the Jewish *tebilah* rite of purification, which was by immersion. However, there were other ways to wash or baptize. (TLSB)

In the spiritual man all things ought to appear to men and to himself in the same way that Christ appeared to the Jews in death and burial. For He is our Precentor that we may address our responses to Him in all things. (Luther)

First, when Christ had died He no longer felt any of those things which happen in the outside world, even though He was still in that world. Thus the spiritual man, although he is present in all things with his senses, yet in his heart he is entirely withdrawn from these things and dead to all of them. This comes about when a man comes to hate all the things of this life from the very marrow of his bones, indeed, when he detests all the things which go on in this life and yet endures them with patience and even with joy and glories in the fact that he is like a dead body and “the refuse of the world, the off-scouring of all things” (1 Cor. 4:13), as the apostle puts it. But we must note that it is not necessary for all men to be found immediately in this state of perfection, as soon as they have been baptized into a death of this kind. For they are baptized “into death,” that is, toward death, which is to say, they have begun to live in such a way that they are pursuing this kind of death and reach out toward this their goal. For although they are baptized unto eternal life and the kingdom of heaven, yet they do not all at once possess this goal fully, but they have begun to act in such a way that they may attain to it—for Baptism was established to direct us toward death and through this death to life—therefore it is necessary that we come to it in the order which has been prescribed. (Luther)

There are thus three kinds of people in this order. First there are those who are impatient with a cross and a dying of this kind, and they are unwilling to die. These people are like the robber on the left, for they blaspheme Christ, at least in their heart and also in their work. The second class, however, are those who endure it, but with great feeling, difficulty, and groaning; yet they finally overcome, so that at least they die with patience. It is very hard for them that they are despised and detested by all. They are like the robber on the right, indeed, a grieving and sympathetic Christ carried them in His body. But the third class are those who, as I have said, enter upon this death with joy, whom Christ Himself prefigured when He died with a loud shout like the most courageous giant. (Luther)

Luther in his large catechism says: “Imagine there was a doctor somewhere who understood the art of saving people from death. Oh, how the world would pour in money like snow and rain. No one could find access to him because of the throng of the rich! But here in Baptism there is freely brought to everyone’s door such a treasure and medicine that is utterly destroys death and preserves all people alive.” (TLSB)

just as Christ was raised – We are united to Christ’s death and burial so that we will be united to His resurrection and life. (TLSB)

through the glory of the Father. By the power of God. God’s glory is his divine excellence, his perfection. Any one of his attributes is a manifestation of his excellence. Thus his power is a manifestation of his glory, as is his righteousness (see 3:23). Glory and power are often closely

related in the Bible (see Ps 145:11; Col 1:11; 1Pe 4:11; Rev 1:6; 4:11; 5:12–13; 7:12; 19:1). (CSB)

God's power was gloriously reveal in the resurrection. (TLSB)

walk in newness of life. Amplified in vv. 8–10. (CSB)

Christ's work gives us a new life, free from the guilt of sin. Luther: "Imagine there was a doctor somewhere who understood the art of saving people from death or, even though they died, could restore them quickly to life so they would afterward live forever. Oh, how the world would pour in money life snow and rain. No one could find access to him because of the throng of the rich! But here in Baptism there is freely brought to everyone's door such a treasure and medicine that it utterly destroys death and preserves all people alive" (LC IV 43). (TLSB)

In all three Synoptists, whenever Christ predicted His death, He also predicted His resurrection. For example, Matthew 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:18-19. Note how closely death and resurrection are bound to each other in Romans 4:25. And here, in Romans 6:4, Paul draws a conclusion about what happens to the Christian in baptism. Through baptism he is buried with Christ (Christ literally, the Christian spiritually). Burial proves that death has taken place. Why? Note the correlative. Just as Christ was raised (by the Father) from the dead (literally) through the glory (glorious power) of the Father, likewise also we (who have been baptized) walk in newness of life. (Buls)

Rienecker: In a new state, which is life. (Buls)

Bengel: This newness consists in life. (Buls)

That comes close to genitive of content. This newness of life takes place now, immediately after the person comes to faith or is baptized, whichever comes first. Furthermore, if baptism gives us newness of life, prior to that we had oldness of death. (Buls)

Franzmann: Paul's first concern here, however, is not our future resurrection; he is intent on bringing home to us that fact that through our baptism we share in Christ's resurrection now. . . . The new life, the life of the world to come is a present reality, present and at work in the Word and sacrament of the Gospel. (Buls)

Kretzmann: In Baptism the believer dies with Christ, in a spiritual sense. He passes through a death, dies unto sin, is really, totally, dead unto sin. (Buls)

Lenski: Life itself, both physical and spiritual, is invisible, intangible, but it shows its presence by a thousand activities, all of which are absent in death. (Buls)

"To walk" is a Scriptural metaphor for living. (Buls)

It should say "so also we were raised" to become kings with Him (cf. 5:18, where, however, the thought is also carefully expressed in a future tense verb). But instead, the completing verb is "we should walk," a subjunctive form which refers to the Christian journey through a span of life stretching from his baptism to his death (or Christ's return). He should traverse that pilgrimage "in newness of life," under the reality of that life which is the gift of the new (eschatological) aeon in Christ. Thus the phrase refers to a gift and an outlook, one has while journeying (cf.

6:11), not primarily to “behaving in a new and better way,” or “being morally improved.” The outlook, of course does influence behavior.

6:5-7 Paul expounds on what he has previously set forth in vv 3–4. Baptism is not, as Luther reminds us, a simple washing with water only. Baptism is connected to God’s Word and at his command. In the same way that the Word of God brought forth light in a world dark and void (Gen 1:1–5), God’s Word brings forth life where we are otherwise dead in sin (Eph 2:1–4). In Baptism, God’s people are united with Christ in his death (by drowning) and in his resurrection. Here, the old self is crucified with Christ *hina*, so that, the body of sin might be done away with and that we would no longer be *douleuein*, slaves, to sin. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 1)

6:5 *united with him in a resurrection* –Christ identifies Himself with us; His death pays for our sins, and His righteousness is credited to us. His death was on the cross; ours is in Baptism, which gives the benefits the benefits of His work on the cross. (TLSB)

The commentators point out that verses 3-5 have a theme in common: buried with Christ through baptism. But the thought grows from verse to verse 3 is limited to baptism into death. Verse 4 adds the promise that we shall walk in newness of life. And verse 5 states that those who have experienced a death like that of Christ will experience a resurrection like that of Christ. Therefore, from verse 3 to verse 5 we traverse the whole territory from conversion to everlasting life. (Buls)

"Planted together" here denotes very close association. The RSV translates the whole verse thus: "For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his." That says it very well. My death and resurrection are not the same as Christ's. God made Him to be sin in my stead. He bore my sin and all others. He is the Savior. But, His death cut me off from the guilt and power of sin. He was the first to rise from the dead. Because of His resurrection I will rise. The point is that in all respects He is my benefactor. He cut me off from sin, He gives me newness of life, He will raise my body on the last day. (Buls)

Bengel: All spiritual quickening power is in Christ, and that power centers in baptism. (Buls)

resurrection like his – New life has already begun for the child of God; at Christ’s return, our bodies will be raised to life again. (TLSB)

6:6 *our old self*. Our unregenerate self; what we once were. (CSB)

The term “old man” describes what kind of person is born of Adam, not according to his nature but according to the defect of his nature. For his nature is good, but the defect is evil. However, the term “old man” is used not only because he performs the works of the flesh but more especially when he acts righteously and practices wisdom and exercises himself in all spiritual good works, even to the point of loving and worshiping God Himself. The reason for this is that in all these things he “enjoys” the gifts of God and “uses” God. Nor can he be freed of his perversity (which in the Scriptures is called curvedness, iniquity, and crookedness) except by the grace of God. Eccl. 1:15: “The perverse are hard to be corrected.” This is said not only because of the stubbornness of perverse people but particularly because of the extremely deep infection of this inherited weakness and original poison, by which a man seeks his own advantage even in God Himself because of his love of concupiscence. Ps. 72:14: “From usuries and iniquities He redeems their life.” Furthermore, this iniquity is so bottomless that no one can ever understand its depth, and in Scripture, by the grace of God, not the iniquity itself but only the love of it is

rebuked. Ps. 11:5: "His soul hates him that loves iniquity." And Ps. 32:6: "Therefore," that is, because of iniquity, "let everyone who is godly offer prayer to Thee," because He hates iniquity. This is symbolized in the curvedness of that woman in the Gospel whom Satan had held captive for 18 years, as the Savior said (Luke 13:11). (Luther)

body of sin. The self in its pre-Christian state, dominated by sin. This is a figurative expression in which the old self is personified. It is a "body" that can be put to death. For the believer, this old self has been "rendered powerless" so that it can no longer enslave us to sin—whatever lingering vitality it may yet exert in its death throes. (CSB)

Therefore the term "body of sin" ought not be understood as something mystical, as many people do who imagine that "body of sin" refers to a whole mountain of evil works, but rather it refers to this very body which we are carrying around. It is called the "body of sin" because it inclines against the spirit and toward sin. And the seed of the devil dwells in it; hence the Lord in Gen. 3:15 says: "I will put enmity between your seed and her seed." The seed of the woman is the Word of God in the church, because it inclines toward righteousness and good works. The seed of the devil is sin itself, the tinder and evil lust in our flesh. And this enmity is active all the time, as the apostle says in Gal. 5:17: "The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh." The flesh has the seed of the devil in it and is seeking to bring forth sin and bear sinful fruit. But the Spirit possesses the seed of God and seeks to bring forth righteousness and the fruits of righteousness. And thus these two "are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would" (Gal. 5:17). (Luther)

brought to nothing – Paul does not pronounce the old man dead or the body of sin (sinful self) destroyed. They are nailed to the cross and rendered powerless, but yet crying out to be released and have their way. The fact that crucifixion was a slow death – taking hours or even day – fits in with this image of the old man nailed to the cross but not yet having died, as the Christian continues to pass a lifetime in the overlapping aeons.

Note that a new sentence began at verse 5. The punctuation at the end of verse 5 is a semicolon. Verse 6, which cannot stand alone, is subordinate to verse 5. Lenski thinks that "for we know" denotes cause: "since we realize that etc." Arndt rightly remarks: "Christians are aware of it." (Buls)

What is our "old man?" It is the same as the flesh. It is not an essential part of human nature for, if that were so, Christ would have been born a sinner. But since the fall of man, all who are born in the ordinary manner are spiritually blind, dead and enemies of God. It speaks of women as well as of men. What has happened to it? It has been crucified with Christ. What has been crucified has died. My old sinful nature has been killed. (Buls)

Lenski: Our old man was literally murdered in our Baptism, he did not die willingly, but was slain as one cursed of God. . . . 'old man' denotes our entire being as it existed before regeneration, 'old' pointing back to that former existence. (Buls)

Why was our old man slain? In order that our sinful body might be made inactive, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin. (Buls)

Stoekhardt: It is called the body of sin, the sinful body, not as though the body were the essential seat or source of sin but its organ and tool. Sin or the old Adam endeavors to perform the evil lusts through the medium of the body and its members and does perform them in natural man. In

baptized Christians, on the other hand, the body of sin is put out of commission. . . . It is God's will that we no longer serve sin. (Buls)

The body is not sinful of itself but sin constantly wants to use it for sinful purposes. (Buls)

Franzmann: This manner of speaking about the body is strange to us. . . . The 'sinful body' is, then, the body as expressive of our old self and its will. . . . This body has been put out of action. (Buls)

The term “to destroy” is understood in a spiritual sense in this context. For if he were intending to speak of a destruction of the body, it would not be necessary that the “old man” be crucified for this. Because he actually will be destroyed anyway, whether we wish it or not, even in the case of those people whose old man is not crucified. Thus what is necessary cannot be command or counsel. Hence, also according to blessed Augustine, the apostle in explaining this destruction goes on to say, “That we might no longer be enslaved to sin” (v. 6). This is an interpretation (says blessed Augustine) of the expression “that the body of sin might be destroyed.”¹³ Thus to destroy the body of sin is to break the lusts of the flesh and of the old man by works of penitence and the cross and thus to diminish them day by day and to put them to death, as Col. 3:5 tells us: “Put to death therefore what is earthly in you.” In fact, in this same passage he most clearly describes both the new and the old man. (Luther)

enslaved to sin – Once again, the focus is primarily on the realm in which and the lordship under which one is living, not on how one is behaving.

Completely controlled by the sinful nature. “The Law of the Lord is also necessary so that the old Adam...may not use his own will, but may be subdued against his will” (FC Ep VI 4). (TLSB)

6:7 has died. The believer’s death with Christ to sin’s ruling power. (CSB)

free from sin. Set free from its shackles and power. (CSB)

Those crucified with Christ in Baptism have been freed from sin’s effects. (TLSB)

At the end of verse 6 we have another semicolon but only to introduce an independent clause, it is again explanatory. "You see, the one who has died and has been freed from sin." This verse refers both to Christ and to us, but in different ways. Christ bore the sins of the world. God made Him to be sin in our stead. He took the curse of the Law upon Himself. The Lord laid upon Him the iniquity of us all. But when He said "It is finished" and died, Christ had no more to do with sin. Ever since He was revived He had nothing to do with bearing sin or atoning for it. We, through baptism, have died to sin. We receive the fruits of Christ's death. But it can be said of both Christ and us: "The one who died has been freed from sin." (Buls)

Rienecker: 'To be declared to be free from sin' or 'to be acquitted from sin.'

Arndt: 'Justified,' that is, released from sin. . . . If we died with respect to it then it has no authority over us any longer. (Buls)

Bengel: As respects the past, he is justified from guilt; as respects the future, from its dominion, verse 14:1. (Buls)

Kretzmann: As Paul declares in the next sentence (verse 7), in the form of a general axiom, he that is dead is free from sin, is pronounced just and free from sin in every respect, from its dominion as well as its curse, with the emphasis upon the deliverance from its jurisdiction. (Buls)

Note carefully that verse 7 is still speaking about our status in this life. (Buls)

6:8-9 In the same way that resurrection followed the death of Christ, so also resurrection follows the drowning and death of the old man. The believer who dies with Christ to his sin now rises with Christ to a new way of life and living. As death has no power over Christ, neither does it have any power over those who are in Christ (Gal 2:20; Rom 8:37–39). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 1)

6:8† As resurrection followed death in the experience of Christ, so the believer who dies with Christ is raised to a new quality of life here and now. Resurrection in the sense of a new birth is already a fact, and it increasingly exerts itself in the believer's life. (CSB)

we will also with him – Here's another one of those fact conditions. It does not generate doubt but conviction for the believer. Jesus died literally. I die to sin because of Jesus, in baptism. All the benefits of His death are mine in baptism. "We believe that we shall also live with Him," not just in heaven but now already. "If any man is in Christ, he is anew creature." (Buls)

Franzmann: The reality of Christ's death and resurrection determines our whole existence. . . . Our present life gets its character, direction, and purpose from the fact that we shall live with Him who lives a life beyond death. (Buls)

That is so true. The people of this world are constantly mourning about their wages, their illnesses, thermo-nuclear war, etc., etc., whereas the Christian firmly believes that he will never die. "He that liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." (Buls)

6:9 *death no longer has dominion over him* – Christ lives eternally. He is not subject to death; He conquered it. (TLSB)

A number of translations begin a new sentence here with the words: "For we know that etc." Why do we believe that we shall live with Him? Because we know that Christ, risen from the dead, dies no more, death is not ruler over Him. (Buls)

Lenski: Paul expands Christ's part in this our joint death and subsequent living. Our part depends wholly on his part. . . . The great fact, however, is that after being thus raised up 'Christ dies no more', the emphatic asyndeton restating this from death's side: 'death is no more lord over him.' (Buls)

The power and threat of the cruel master, death, is conquered, gone forever. For the believer death is not dying. It means everlasting life! Hallelujah! (Buls)

6:10 *he died to sin once for all*. In his death Christ (for the sake of sinners) submitted to the "reign" of sin (5:21); but his death broke the judicial link between sin and death, and he passed forever from the sphere of sin's "reign." Having been raised from the dead, he now lives forever to glorify God. (CSB)

John Chrysostom: "He was not subject even to (sin), but for our sin, that He might destroy it, and cut away its sinews and all its power, therefore He died" (NPNF1 11:410). (TLSB)

Christ died, once for all. This is the completed action of Jn 19:31, when Christ declared, "It is finished." Now the baptized in Christ are set free to be the people God declares us to be—joyful and having hope; thankful in all circumstances; bearing witness to him; loving our neighbor and even our enemy as ourselves; and certain that this good work he has begun he is daily bringing to completion in the day of Christ Jesus. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 1)

The meaning is that we must undergo this spiritual death only once. For whoever dies thus lives for all eternity. Therefore we must not return to our sin in order to die to sin again. This interpretation is in opposition to the Novatians, for in regard to the necessity and nature of the spiritual life it is to be laid hold on once, because it is eternal. For death does not put an end to this kind of life against its will, as it does with physical life, but this is the beginning of eternal life. Hence we read in John 11:26: "Whoever believes in Me shall never die," that is, as long as he does not willingly turn away from this spiritual life, he cannot die. This spiritual life will be strengthened in the future in such a way that a person cannot be turned away, for no one would want to be turned away who has been given the complete perfection of an eternal will. (Luther)

For just as the ray of the sun is eternal because the sun is eternal, so the spiritual life is eternal because Christ is eternal; for He is our life, and through faith He flows into us and remains in us by the rays of His grace. Therefore, just as Christ is eternal, so also the grace which flows out of Him is from His eternal nature. Furthermore, just because a man sins again his spiritual life does not die, but he turns his back on this life and dies, while this life remains eternal in Christ. This is what he means when he says: "If we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him" (v. 8). How shall we live with Him, "for we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again" (v. 9)? So also: "the death He died He died to sin, once for all" (v. 10). He has Christ, who dies no more; therefore he himself dies no more, but rather he lives with Christ forever. Hence also we are baptized only once, by which we gain the life of Christ, even though we often fall and rise again. For the life of Christ can be recovered again and again, but a person can enter upon it only once, just as a man who has never been rich can begin to get rich only once, although he can again and again lose and regain his wealth. (Luther)

to God. For the glory of God. (CSB)

Five of our versions similarly translate: "The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God." Look at Hebrews 7:27; 9:12,26,28; 10:10. Sin caused His death, but only once. It's over with. Now His life to God goes on and on. (Buls)

Stoekhardt: Christ's life was determined and ruled by sin, namely, by the alien sin of men, which he took upon Himself. What He did, experienced, suffering in the days of His flesh, served to atone for and to destroy men's sin. This purpose was realized when He died. Sin atoned once and for all. (Buls)

Nothing lives to God, however, except that which lives eternally and spiritually, because God is eternal and a spirit, before whom nothing counts except what is spiritual and eternal; but the flesh and temporal things are nothing with Him. Therefore since this life is eternal, it is necessary that the man who dies to sin should die only once, since only an eternal life can follow this kind of death, and in this life there can be no death, for otherwise it would not be eternal. Nor can a person who died once to sin die to sin again, because eternal righteousness follows this death and this righteousness never sins again. (Luther)

A corollary follows: The Novatian heresy interpreted this text in a false way, as if those who fell had no hope of rising again, because a person must die to sin once and for all. But this expression “once for all” (*semel*) does not determine the number of acts of repentance, but rather it is a commendation of the eternal nature of grace, and it denies the possibility of some other kind of righteousness, so that the meaning is that whoever has been baptized or has repented has already so escaped sin and acquired righteousness that never again for eternity is it necessary to escape sin or to acquire another righteousness. But this single and only righteousness is sufficient forever. This is not the case at all with the righteousness of men, where according to moral philosophy, as soon as one virtue has been acquired, there are still others which must be acquired. But the meaning here is not that if a person should lose what he has once possessed, he cannot acquire it again. For the Scripture opposes this error in Prov. 24:16: “A righteous man falls seven times and rises again.” And the Lord said to Peter: “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven” (Matt. 18:22). Therefore, as I have said, this term “once for all” does not set forth or deny the number of the exchange, but it emphasizes the number of the diversity, or rather the eternal nature of righteousness, which in this life can often be lost and regained without conflicting with its eternal nature. For even blessed Peter after the sending of the Holy Spirit sinned in his dissimulation, for example, in Gal. 2:11 ff., which surely was a mortal sin, because it was contrary to the Gospel and the salvation of the soul, since the apostle Paul expressly says that Peter did not act according to the truth of the Gospel. (Luther)

6:11 *so you also* – “Likewise also you.” These words denote the point of comparison. Christians, like Christ, are both dead and living, dead to sin but alive to God. But here we have an addition not found in verse 10. Only because we are united to Christ Jesus by faith can we be sure that we shall remain dead to sin but alive to God. This prepositional phrase assures me that I am a true heir of everything that He did as my Substitute in life and in death. (Buls)

consider yourselves.† The first aspect of the believer’s life (for the succeeding aspects. He is dead to sin and alive to God, and through faith he is to live in the light of this truth. (CSB)

Because Christ has united Himself to us, we do not use forgiveness as an excuse to sin (v. 1); instead we joyfully live in service to Him. (TLSB)

Logizesthe, “reckon; consider deeply; ponder; think intently.” As the resurrected in Christ, we are to ponder deeply what Christ’s death and resurrection mean, and what it means to live our lives resurrected with him. Obedience to God is the fruit of faith for those who are connected to Christ, as Jesus says in Jn 15:5: “Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 22, Part 1)

in Christ. The first occurrence in Romans of this phrase, which is found often in Paul’s writings. True believers are “in Christ” because they have died with Christ and have been raised to new life with him. (CSB)

6:12 *let not sin reign in your mortal body* – To make this body the expressive instrument of our new life therefore calls for a continual exercise of the liberated will, a constant, resolute denial of the passions of the body. (Franzmann)

Christians are called to struggle against sin. The impulse to sin remains in us even after we receive God’s forgiveness. (TLSB)

6:13 Having been redeemed, we should not waste our lives pursuing opportunities to sin; we are called to follow and serve Christ. (TLSB)

not present your members. Put yourselves in the service of, perhaps also echoing the language of sacrifice. (CSB)

The imperative is therefore not merely the negative command to cease from wickedness; it is the positive command to serve God in the newness of our resurrection-life. (Franzmann)

parts of your body. All the separate capacities of your being (also in v. 19). – “Do you remember that wondrous word in Romans 6:13, where the Spirit exhorts us to yield our members to God as instruments? The marginal meaning of that word ‘instruments’ is ‘weapons.’ . . . God wants you to be a spear He can fit to His hand and hurl into the heart of the enemy’s country. God want you to be a keen, glittering blade with which He may cut His way through the very hosts of sin. God wants you to be a mighty battering ram, that He might break down the battlements of sin. (CSB)

6:14 *sin shall have dominion over you.* Paul conceived of sin as a power that enslaves, and so personified it. (CSB)

Sin does not control our lives (cf v 9). “The Holy Spirit does not permit sin to have dominion, to gain the upper hand so it can be carried out, but represses and restrains it from doing what it wants. If sin does what it wants, the Holy Spirit and faith are not present” (SA III III 44). (TLSB)

not under law. The meaning is not that the Christian has been freed from all moral authority. He has, however, been freed from the law in the manner in which God’s people were under law in the OT era. Law provides no enablement to resist the power of sin; it only condemns the sinner. But grace enables. (CSB)

For true good works, we are motivated by the Gospel, not the Law. God’s grace changes our lives. (TLSB)

under grace. For the disciplinary aspect of grace see Tit 2:11–12. (CSB)

The inward and renewing power of grace, not the external compulsion of the Law, is the power that enables us to live to God. (Franzmann)

6:1–14 We may be tempted to make grace an invitation to sin. Because God will forgive me, why not do what I want? This immature attitude misses this point: Christ unites Himself to us. In His death and resurrection, we receive forgiveness and life. He calls us to live in His life, not to turn back to a life dominated by sin. He enables us to live in the freedom of His grace. • Risen Savior, You died my death and gave me Your life. Abide with me that I may walk with You. Amen. (TLSB)

Slaves to Righteousness

15 What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! **16** Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, [c] you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? **17** But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, **18** and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. **19** I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations.

For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification. 20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. 21 But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. 22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

6:15–23† The question raised here seems to come from those who are afraid that the doctrine of justification through faith alone will remove all moral restraint. Paul rejects such a suggestion and shows that a Christian does not throw morality to the winds. To the contrary, he exchanges sin for righteousness as his master. (CSB)

The second half of the chapter is a restatement of the basic idea of the first half. We should remember that the apostolic letters were intended for the ear, being read to the assembled churches in their worship services (Col. 4:16; 1 Thess. 5:27; cf. Rev 1:3); the ear needs more repetition than the eye, which can go back at will to refresh the memory. But the restatement is made with a difference. While the first statement is an unfolding of Jesus' command to make disciples of all nations by "baptizing them" (Matt 28:19) and speaks of the new life created in man in terms of death and resurrection, the restatement is an unfolding of Jesus' command to make disciples by "teaching them" (Matt 28:20) and speaks of the new life created in man in terms of a liberation from the slavery to sin and a re-enslavement to righteousness. The restatement also contains an enrichment of the theme, a warning reference to the uncanny enslaving power of sin, which still threatens the new life in man, and a portrayal of the eternal consequences of the choice which the liberated will of man must make between the dominion of sin and the reign of God. (VV 16,20-23) (Franzmann)

6:15 *are we to sin...by no means* – If we are no longer hedged in by the command and the threat of God's law, are we not set free for a career of sin? Paul rejects the implications of this question as vehemently as he had rejected those of the original questions; and he answers the question in much the same way as he had answered it in 6:1-14. (Franzmann)

Paul again asks if forgiveness provides an excuse to sin. (TLSB)

6:16 The contrast between sin and obedience suggests that sin is by nature disobedience to God. (CSB)

Whatever we choose to serve, whether God or sin, will control us and shape our lives. (TLSB)

do you not know – "No one can serve two masters." (Matt 6:24). Both Jesus and Paul had an ancient slave in mind, who was the servant wholly and exclusively of the one master who owned him. He was at his master's disposal seven days a week and 24 hours a day. (Franzmann)

6:17 *have become obedient*. Christian obedience is not forced or legalistic, but willing. (CSB)

Not forced obedience, but a willing commitment. (TLSB)

Heart in the language of the Bible means the whole inner life of man, his thinking, willing, and feeling. (Franzmann)

standard teaching. May refer to a summary of the moral and ethical teachings of Christ that was given to new converts in the early church. (CSB)

The content of faith—the Gospel. (TLSB)

The of God is here called “standard teaching,” for here the transforming and formative effect of the Word is to be emphasized, an effect as decisive as that of Baptism. (Franzmann)

committed. The Romans did not commit themselves; they were committed, by God’s power, in Baptism. (TLSB)

6:18 *set free from sin.* The guilt and dominion of sin have been removed by Christ. (TLSB)

slaves to righteousness. A Christian has changed masters. Whereas he was formerly a slave to sin, he becomes a slave (a willing servant) to righteousness. (CSB)

Every aspect of our lives is used in service to God. (TLSB)

The freedom of communion with God, the liberty to live in the free obedience of a son of God (Rom 8:14-16; Gal 4:6-7). (Franzmann)

6:19 *I am speaking in human terms.*† An analogy, which may seem imperfect, from human society. The word “slave” when applied to Christians, who are free in Christ, naturally presents problems. (CSB)

Image of slavery illustrates the fact that we will serve something or someone. However, the illustration needs to be understood properly, lest we think it burdensome to serve God. (TLSB)

It means that your action is caught up in God’s action. (Franzmann)

The Romans are prone to fall into sin and need to be encouraged to serve God. Cf 12:1. (TLSB)

sanctification. Gk *hagiasmos*, “holiness.” Lives lived in response to the Gospel seek to serve God and others. (TLSB)

6:20 *slaves to sin* –They can and do ignore the will of God. (Franzmann)

One who serves sin has no desire to serve God and pays little attention to His will. (TLSB)

6:21 *what fruit.* Rotten results of sinful actions. (TLSB)

now ashamed? Only after conversion did the Romans fully recognize the sinfulness of their past lives. (TLSB)

end ... death. Unforgiven sin results in death. (TLSB)

6:22 *set free from sin.* Set free from its shackles and power. (CSB)

sanctification. Slavery to God produces holiness, and the end of the process is eternal life (viewed not in its present sense but in its final, future sense). There is no eternal life without holiness (see Heb 12:14). Anyone who has been justified will surely give evidence of that fact by

the presence of holiness in his life. For other occurrences of the word “holiness” see v. 19; 1Co 1:30; 1Th 4:3–4, 7; 2Th 2:13; 1Ti 2:15; Heb 12:14; 1Pe 1:2. (CSB)

Lives devoted to sin yield sinful results (v 21); lives devoted to God yield holy results. The Holy Spirit sanctifies us. (TLSB)

its end, eternal life. Sanctification does not earn eternal life. Christ won salvation and eternal life; through faith, the Holy Spirit imparts them to us and sanctifies us. (TLSB)

6:23 Two kinds of servitude are contrasted here. One brings death as its wages; the other results in eternal life, not as wages earned or merited, but as a gift of God. For the contrast between wages and gift see 4:4. (CSB)

wages of sin is death...eternal life – Sin is a tyrant who pays the stipulated soldiers’ pay, no more, no less. The wages sin pays is death. But God is the giver of the free and unearned gift, the dealer-out of blessings to His undeserving own. (Franzmann)

Death is the just punishment for sin. “All preparation for condemnation is by the devil and a person, through sin. In no way does it come from God, who does not want any person to be damned” (SD XI 81). *free gift.* Nothing can earn God’s grace. He gives it to people who can never deserve it, for Christ’s sake (cf 5:17). John Chrysostom: “After speaking of the wages of sin ... he does not say, the wages of good deeds, ‘but the gift of God;’ to show, that it was not of themselves that they were freed, nor was it a due they received, neither yet a return, nor a recompense of labors, but by grace” (NPNF 1 11:417). (TLSB)

6:15–23 Although many people consider freedom to be the ultimate human right, no one is truly free spiritually. We were slaves to sin and bound to death. Knowing this, Jesus came to serve us by giving His life on the cross and rising for us. Freed from sin, we can now serve God. Only when we are “slaves” to God will we have freedom to be the people He created us to be. • My Savior, thank You for serving me. Lead me to serve You and others. Amen. (TLSB)