

Easter Sunday: Romans 6:1-14

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NOT UNDER LAW:

You, no doubt, have at some point in your Christian life heard the last verse from this passage quoted at you completely out of context. "You are not under law, but under grace." This is usually extracted from the text, without regard to what went before, in order to free you from legalism. But I'd like to argue that it is intended to do something far better. It's intended to free you from sin.

SIN THAT GRACE MAY ABOUND? 6:1-5

First, we should note the question that Paul is trying to answer. Does God's grace free us to live in sin? Paul's answer to this has to do with the nature of our salvation. We were saved by being united with Christ (v. 5). This union was declared in our baptism.

DEAD TO DEATH, ALIVE TO LIFE 6:6-10

Paul describes here what our pre-Christ self was like. He was an old man, a slave to death itself. When death spoke, the old man jumped. The power of death is sin, via the law (1 Cor. 15:56). But God's great victory came when he took that old man's strength and used it against him, conquering the old man with the death of Christ. And when Christ conquered death, he brought all who were united to him to new life.

NOT UNDER SIN, BUT UNDER GRACE 6:11-14

With death dead, the power of the old man is gone. The power of the law, which once drove us to sin, is gone. We now live a new life, in the new man. And this new man has no business returning to the grave of the dead man for orders. Because of the conquest of death, on that first Easter morning, you now have the right to walk out of this church as a living man, a free man, free of the chains of sin, free of the fear of death.



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