

PHANTOM FAITH

This weekend Pastor J.D. continued his Phantom Faith series (3rd of 5) by taking us through the sixth chapter of Romans. He explained to us how the justification we received through our faith in Jesus now offers us transformation in how we live as well. During the small group time we will primarily be looking at the relationship of the believer to the power of sin.

The Main Point:

Immediately when one becomes a Christian, they are no longer under the ruling power of sin.

We've seen in chapters four and five what God has accomplished for us in the gospel. Over the next three weeks we will see what God will accomplish in us through the gospel. If we have received salvation, Jesus is now our representative before God and along with this our very nature is radically changed.

Paul begins Romans six with a very important question. He asks, "Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?" Someone today might ask this question by saying, "If Jesus has already paid for my sin, and I have his standing of perfection then why does it matter how I live?" Paul gives a short and long answer; the short version goes like this, "By no means!"

The long answer requires understanding two aspects of our new nature in Christ that we will discuss in the guide below. The first is that we have "died to" something and the second is that we are now "slaves to" something. What each of those "things" is makes all the difference.

Pastor J.D. made it very clear to us this weekend that our faith in Christ isn't simply a "Get out of hell free card," but the beginning of life lived in relationship with God. Justification by faith, through grace makes possible reconnection with God to live the life that he always intended for us to live.

Sermon Response Questions:

1. Pastor J.D. said that there is *something* on the throne of your heart; there are no empty thrones. Even after salvation, people will be tempted to present themselves as a slave to a number of idols. What were the 4 idols mentioned in the sermon and how do each vie for the throne of your heart?

Bible Study Questions: Read Romans 6:1-23

2. What does it mean – and not mean – according to v. 1-14 that Christians have "died to sin"?

3. Paul mentions baptism several times in this passage. How is baptism a picture of our union with Christ?

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4. Because Christians “died with Christ,” what do we now know?
5. What point is Paul making in v. 15-23 about human freedom?
6. Compare and contrast these two masters: God and sin.

Small Group Discussion Questions:

7. Can someone truly be saved and experience no desire for his or her life to be changed?
8. Break up into 4 groups. Each group will use Romans 6 to respond to one of the following statements:
 - A. “I find myself envying the freedom of my non-Christian friends.”
 - B. “God is working in me to change me, so I just let him get on with it.”
 - C. “I just couldn’t help sinning in that way.”
 - D. “I’m determined not to sin. I think to myself, ‘just say no!’”

Prayer Guide:

In your four groups use these prayer points:

- Pray that we would walk in newness of life together and not desire to gratify the old self. (v. 4)
- Thank God that we have been set free from sin and that we will live with Christ one day. (v. 7-8)
- Ask God to help us be submissive, slaves and servants, to God and see this week the fruit of righteousness that God desires for us. (v. 16)
- Praise God that even though we don’t deserve it, he gives the free gift of eternal life in Jesus Christ to everyone who believes. (v. 23)

Works Cited:

Boa, Kenneth and William Kruidenier. *Holman New Testament Commentary: Romans*. Holman, Nashville: 2000.

Keller, Timothy. *Romans 1-7 For You*. The Good Book Company, USA: 2014

Keller, Timothy. *Romans 1-7: The Gift of God*. The Good Book Company, USA: 2014

Sailhamer, John H. *NIV Compact Bible Commentary*. Zondervan, Grand Rapids: 1994.