

**April 10, 2019**  
**Pastor Bill Seaman**  
**Lord, I'm Tempted Series**  
**Hope Lutheran Church, Wake Forest, NC**

Romans 6:1-4

6:1 What then are we to say? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? 6:2 By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? 6:3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 6:4 Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

“Cheap Grace?”

- I. Introduction
  - a. “Oh, Adam”
  - b. We struggle with temptation
  - c. When we give in how do we respond?
    - i. Denial
    - ii. Man on a diet
    - iii. Rationalization
    - iv. Confession
  - d. We know we live in a state of grace, but...
- II. Romans
  - a. The more we sin, the more grace we receive. Really?
  - b. Paul quickly puts the cabosh on that
  - c. Who we are
    - i. Original sin
    - ii. Actual sin
    - iii. Guilty as charged
  - d. Jesus
    - i. Fulfilled the law
    - ii. Took the punishment
    - iii. We are declared righteous
    - iv. What does that mean?
  - e. New life
    - i. Baptism – what is it?
      - 1. Faith, life, salvation
      - 2. Union with Jesus
    - ii. Results of baptism
      - 1. Awareness of sin - confession
      - 2. Contrition
      - 3. Repentance

- iii. Reality – simul Justus et peccator
  - 1. It would be nice if we no longer sinned – were really dead to sin
  - 2. But we know temptations keep coming
    - a. The Devil
    - b. The world
    - c. Our flesh
  - 3. Because we are still in the world, we do give in – Paul in Romans 7 – the good that I would I do not; the evil that I would not, that I do
- iv. What are we to do?
  - 1. One thing we must not do is give up
  - 2. Another thing we must not do is use grace as an excuse to cover our sins – that is a denial of confession and a refusal to repent

### III. Conclusion

- a. The enormity of our sin – because of my sin Jesus....
  - i. Left His heavenly home – became man
  - ii. Fulfilled God's perfect laws perfectly for me
  - iii. Was rejected and betrayed
  - iv. Suffered torment and was crucified
  - v. Died and was buried
- b. How can I go on willingly sinning, knowing His love for me?
- c. Forbid it Lord, that I should claim Your grace as a justification to go on sinning
- d. But may I see Your grace as a defense when temptation comes.
- e. We are raised that we may walk n newness of life.

## “Cheap Grace?”

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Anthony Evans in *Preaching Today* tells a story of a forester named Sam. Old Sam would be out chopping down a tree and you could hear him say one phrase, “O, Adam, O, Adam, O, Adam”. Every time he hit the tree he would say, “O, Adam.”

One day the foreman came by and asked him, “why do you say, “O, Adam” every time you hit the tree?” Sam said because Adam, my forefather, sinned against God. God cursed him and said that he would have to work from that time on. So every time I hit this ax against the tree, it reminds me that if Adam had not sinned, I wouldn’t have to work.”

One day his supervisor came and said, “Come here, Sam.” He took him to his big, plush, palatial 10,000 square foot mansion. He said, “It’s all yours. You can live in it; you can do whatever you want. You’ve got a swimming pool, a tennis court, Servants – everything. Everything in this house is yours. I’m giving it to you because I don’t want you to struggle with that Adam mentality. I ask only one thing: don’t lift up the box on the dining room table. Enjoy everything else in the house. Be what you want to be. Do your own thing, but that box on the dining room table, do not touch.”

Sam said, “No problem. I can handle it.” So Sam played tennis every day, when swimming, ate three meals a day. But after about five months he saw the box. That bothered him. He wanted to know why if he could have everything, that box was so important. He said, “No, I’m not going to touch it; I’m not going to jeopardize my time here.”

After a year he had tried everything. He had gotten used to everything. There was nothing new anymore. There was only one thing new in that house and that was that box. And so one day when nobody was looking he lifted up the box just a little bit. Out of the box ran a little, teeny mouse that hid. Sam couldn’t catch it and couldn’t find it. The supervisor came and noted that the box of been lifted.

He went to Sam and said; “now Sam, I warned you. Go back out into the forest and pick up your acts and chop again. The next time the supervisor came by he heard Sam up saying, “Oh, Sam, Oh, Sam.”

Temptation has been part of life ever since the Garden of Eden. We face temptation every day and often we struggle with overcoming temptation. It is an undeniable fact that all of us give in to temptation, despite our best efforts. So how do we respond when we fail to overcome temptation in our lives? It is possible that from time to time we may actually deny that we have sinned – which is the result of giving in to temptation. We may joke about what we have done, making light of it to minimize our sin.

I'm reminded of a businessman who decided he needed to shed some excess pounds. He took his diet seriously, even changing his driving route to avoid his favorite bakery. One morning however, he arrived at work carrying a large coffeecake. Everyone in the office scolded him, but his smile remained cherubic. "This is very special coffeecake" he explained. "I accidentally drove by the bakery this morning and there in the window were a host of goodies. I felt this was no accident, so I prayed, "Lord, if you want me to have one of these delicious coffeecakes, let there be a parking space directly in front of the bakery. And sure enough", he continued, "the eighth time around the block there it was."

We also rationalize our failures in a variety of ways. One of the more common ways is to maintain, "Everyone else does it." When we drive, how many of us strictly adhere to the speed limit? It's common to drive at least five miles over the limit because law enforcement will give you that much. A man I know who drove many miles maintained that he always went ten miles over because you would not get stopped at that that speed. We also insist that you have to drive at the speed of traffic flow otherwise it is unsafe. Sounds like rationalization to me.

However, the best way to handle our giving in to temptation is to confess our sin. Yet, there is a danger here too. While we know the importance of confession, we fall into the trap of remembering God's promise in 1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us [our] sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." We figure that as long as we confess our sin, we will be forgiven and this leads us unto a false sense of security. We need to hear the words from our text for this evening from Romans 6 again, "What then are we to say? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it?"

We know that we live in a state of grace, but this is not a license to sin. Paul was responding to a false idea that the more we sin, the more grace we receive. Really? Could someone seriously believe that? But it seems that sometimes we act that way by the way we just take temptation and sin, its results, for granted. Paul quickly disabuses us of the idea that we can go on sinning freely with no consequences. In the short verses that we have before us, there are great truths imbedded with which we must reacquaint ourselves.

First who are we? We are children of Adam. That means that we are sinners first because of original sin. We are by nature sinful and enemies of God. We are unable to love God and obey Him. We are guilty of actual sin, both those things we do which are in direct disobedience of God's holy Law and because of omission – not doing those things which we are commanded to do. We are guilty as charged.

Second, whose are we? We were created by God and we are redeemed by Jesus. Jesus fulfilled God's righteous Law for us. He took our punishment for breaking the law on Himself. By faith in Him we are declared righteous and holy. We are justified by His blood. But what does this mean?

Paul tells us about that in our baptism. Baptism is God's action. In it He works by the power of the Holy Spirit to create saving faith in Jesus. Luther tells us that this faith grants forgiveness of sin, life and salvation. By baptism we are united with Jesus, something we often forget. Because

of this we have a greater awareness of sin which leads us to confession. Awareness and confession leads us to contrition and subsequently by the working of the Holy Spirit to repentance.

But the reality is that we are still in this world, which means that even though we are forgiven and declared justified, we still have our old nature hanging about us. Luther says that we are “Justus et peccator” – saint, yet sinner. It would be nice if we no longer sinned – were really dead to sin, but we know temptations keep coming from The Devil, the world, and our flesh.

Because we are still in the world, we do give in. Paul admits this in Romans 7 – “the good that I would I do not; the evil that I would not, that I do.” What are we to do? One thing we must not do is give up. Another thing we must not do is use grace as an excuse to cover our sins – that is a denial of confession and a refusal to repent

We must face the enormity of our sin – because of my sin Jesus took a tremendous gamble. He left His heavenly home – became man. He fulfilled God’s perfect laws perfectly for me. He was rejected and betrayed. He suffered torment and was crucified. He died and was buried.

How can I go on willingly sinning, knowing His love for me? Forbid it Lord, that I should claim Your grace as a justification to go on sinning, but may I see Your grace as a defense when temptation comes.

We are raised that we may walk n newness of life.