

# Lesson 1 --- Super-Abounding Grace

1. What has been a highlight for you in the Roman's study up 'til now?
  
2. The following questions concern The Law ---
  - a. Define The Law.
  
  - b. Explain why The Law was given.
  
  - c. Are believers under The Law?
  
  - d. Share what standard for life God gives believers and its impact on you.
  
3. Review super-abounding grace ---
  - a. Describe the imagery used in *but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more*.
  
  - b. What is the significance of the conjunction “but” at the beginning of the phrase?
  
  - c. Reflect on the examples given where super-abounding grace was applied:  
Adam and Eve -  
  
Peter -  
  
Paul -  
  
Yourself -



I have mentioned before that it has always been wrong in every culture and in every time to murder another human. It has always been wrong to take another man's wife. God has given all of mankind for all of time a conscience that convicts them concerning what is right and wrong.

The reason why God gave the Law is so that mankind may have a clear definition of sin, so that man may know the dark nature of sin and know the power of sin. It is not just that we all sinned in Adam. Along with that, our lives are filled with proactive choices to sin against God. The Law reveals the true nature of sin and the overwhelming magnitude of sin. It shows sin for what it truly is. So the Law was given in order to reveal sin, to define sin, and to show how very wicked sin is. The Law magnifies and exalts the grace of God manifested in Christ Jesus.

We ended last week by considering the question: are believers under the Law? Are we expected to live by the Law of Moses?

I remind you that to be under the law in the Biblical sense is to be under the Law of Moses—the entire Mosaic legal system not just part of it—subject to its commands and accountable to its penalties.

But we saw that the Bible makes clear that we are not under the Law of Moses. Romans 6:14-15 *“For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace. 15What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!”* In 1 Cor. 9:20, Paul says, *“And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law, though not being myself under the Law, that I might win those who are under the Law.”*

So Paul makes clear that the Christian is not under the Law of Moses. Even though we are not under the Law of Moses, the New Testament makes clear that we are under the Law of Christ. We are not without a standard for life. The Law of Christ is our standard for holiness.

The “Law of Christ” is referred to by name in two passages in the New Testament---

1 Corinthians 9:20–21 *To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law though not being myself under the Law, so that I might win those who are under the Law; to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, so that I might win those who are without law.*

Galatians 6:1–2 *Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.*

We saw that the Law of Christ is articulated in a variety of ways in a number of texts. There are two primary thrusts of the Law of Christ: first, love God with all of your heart, soul, mind and strength; and second, love others as Christ has loved us. Concerning love for one another, Christ specifically commands believers to love one another as Christ has loved us.

John 13:34-35 *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*

John 15:12-13 *This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.*

1 John 4:9,11 *By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*

These are clear commandments that Jesus has given to believers. I must mention in passing that we do not strive to obey the Law of Christ in order to gain favor with God or that He would accept us. We strive for obedience and holiness in order to be pleasing to God and because we love Him.

In sum, we are not under the Law of Moses which was given in the Old Testament, rather we are under the Law of Christ as believers. The Law of Christ is not in contradiction to the Law of Moses. The Law of Christ actually provides a higher standard than the Law of Moses. Believers are more compelled by love rather than by penalty of breaking the Law. The New Testament makes clear that we are to love God and love one another as Christ has loved us. The Law of Christ under grace is not a more lax standard than the Law of Moses but a higher one. It affects not only our actions, but also our motives.

### **Question 3** (*"Super-Abounding Grace" 5/27/18*)

*. . .but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more. . . .* These verses are central to all of Scripture. This phrase is the fulcrum, the pivot point. The contrast is between sin that "increased" and grace that "abounded all the more." The Greek word πλενάζω translated "increased" carries the idea of numerical increase, to grow or to multiply. Sin multiplies where there is God's Law.

The second word "abounded" which refers to grace is different. It is the word περισσευω. It carries the meaning "to abound", "to overflow" and "to have more than enough." This verb does not have to do with numbers so much as with "excess, surplus and an abundance." But Paul goes a step further and adds the prefix, "ὑπερ" from which we get "hyper" so Paul writes "ὑπερπερισσεύω" hyper, or super-abundance, abounding, excessive grace.

It carries the thought of a river bed with the water hitting the high-water mark. Sin is pictured as increasing to the high-water mark, but grace is like a roaring flood that overflows the riverbed and the whole valley sweeping everything with it. Grace has the super-abounding, excessive ability to overwhelmingly wash away sin.

An important thought here is that God's grace is such that He does not withhold grace because of sin. Here is what I mean. In our normal daily living, if we are offended by someone, we tend to withdraw from that person and withhold normal kindness or favor that we would naturally give. If someone offends us in a major way, we may find it hard even to be polite and cordial. But God is not like this, in fact, the exact opposite is true. Where sin increases, grace superabounds.

Consider Adam and Eve. When they sinned against God, they hid themselves from God. God had been nothing but good to them. They rebelled against God's one command and then hid themselves thinking that they would die. But instead, they found grace.

Read what Barnhouse writes, "Adam had not gone very far from the scene of his rebellion before the grace of God sought him, called him by name, pursued him in the obscurity of the grove where he was hiding. . . . God did not withhold his grace because of Adam's sin. Instead, he made great promises of grace, announcing that the Messiah would come, the Seed of the woman, who would destroy Satan and bring man back into fellowship with Himself. God intervened in grace and clothed the guilty pair with coats of skins. The first blood ever shed upon this planet was shed by God Almighty. Grace was not withheld because of sin; grace was given in spite of sin."

Reflect on Peter after he had denied Christ three times with cursing, swearing and taking oaths. Jesus did not condemn Peter; rather, following the Resurrection, Jesus appeared to him personally and restored Peter to service.

The same is true of the apostle Paul. Following is what Paul says about how God demonstrated grace to him. 1 Timothy 1:13–16 “...even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus. It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.”

We come to today. The vast majority of people are unaware of how desperate their condition is before God because of their sin. Consider how dangerous their plight is that they live in risk of eternal judgement and yet live their lives in purposed ignorance. Maybe you are here this morning and do not know Christ as your savior. You have become aware of your sin and you think that there is no hope for you. Maybe you think that you have committed the unpardonable sin; maybe some gross sexual sin or some perversion.

Maybe you have stolen something or even committed murder. Or maybe you have hated God in the past and cursed Him. Whatever the case, you are sure that you have gone beyond the reach of grace and hope. You think that you are destined to an eternal hell. If you are such a person, then our text this morning is for you--- . . . *but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more. . . .* Where sin multiplied, grace overflowed.

James Boice wrote this, “No dam erected by sin can hold back the abundant flood of God's grace. Regardless of what you have done you can repent and find full forgiveness in Jesus.”

#### **Question 4 (“We Have Died to Sin” 7/1/18)**

Two key words in Romans 6:1-2 are “continue” in sin and “live” in sin. A believer cannot continue in sin or live in sin as he did before he was born again. It is safe to say that if you continue in sin and live in sin as you did before you professed to be a believer, then you have not yet been born again. Paul's whole point is that it is impossible for the believer to continue in abject slavery to sin.

This sentiment is expressed in other portions of Scripture---

1 John 3:8-9 *The one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. 9No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.*

2 Corinthians 5:17 *Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.* [The old man has died; the new man is resurrected.]

As we are considering the spiritual reality that happens at the point of conversion, we are not referring to a legalistic approach to our relationship with God. We are not referring to a list of do's and don'ts that somehow make us acceptable to God.

We are focusing on what the Holy Spirit does as He baptizes or immerses a person into Christ at the point of salvation. The old man dies because the believer is immersed into Christ and is thus immersed into His death. Conversely, the new man is resurrected into a whole new way of living because Christ was raised from the dead.

Romans 6:4 *Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ*

*was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.*

What are some implications for you as a believer? We will spend the next few weeks and months unpacking the ramifications of this great truth. But there are some things we can glean right from the surface.

As I said before, the conclusion to Paul's teaching in this section concerning death to sin is found in Romans 6:10-11, *"For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus."*

The word here translated "consider" is λογίζομαι. *"Consider yourselves to be dead to sin"* does not carry the full impact of the word because, in some cases, we use "consider" as a request to give an idea some thought. For example, "Would you just take a moment and consider my idea?" But that is not the thought here. λογίζομαι would be like telling George Washington, "George, consider that the first shot of the Revolution has already been fired. There is no turning back." In other passages, λογίζομαι is translated, "take into account," "reckon," "regard," "reason in your mind."

We are to reckon or take into account that we are dead to sin. We cannot respond to sin as the old man did. The believer is miserable in sin. He cannot enjoy sin the way he used to. There may be a passing pleasure, but the conviction of the Holy Spirit takes away that pleasure.

Romans 6:12-13 *Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, 13and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness.*

These verses describe how the old man used to live. He would always allow sin to reign. He would always obey the lusts of the flesh. He would always present his members to sin as instruments of unrighteousness. We are no longer to do that.

There is a secondary implication that this teaching has concerning the security of the believer, or what is sometimes referred to as "once saved, always saved." Paul says here that the believer is unable to go back to the old man's way of living because he, the old man, is dead. The new man is resurrected, but there is no way for the old man to be resurrected. He is dead. When a person is truly saved, there is no turning back.

It is vital to keep one thing in mind as we consider this statement, and that is the tense of the verb "died." *"We who died to sin"* is an aorist tense in Greek, which is past tense in English, meaning that it refers to a single action that has taken place in the past and was completed in the past.

This is important because we tend to want it to say that this verse is teaching that we are "dying to sin." Some want to read it as "We died to sin and we are continuing to die to sin." Some want to read it as a future tense, "We will someday die to sin." But "died" here is in the past tense that refers to a finished past action.

John Jones has two volumes of his life: The old-man volume and the new-man volume. Some here today are still living in volume one. The good news that I bring to you this morning is that Christ came and died so that you can know all the amazing glories of volume two. It begins with a death and a resurrection.

Here is the exciting part: we only touched on half of what is taught in the first three verses of chapter 6. We have not yet thought about what it means to be baptized into Christ and to be resurrected with Him.