

Are We Having Fun Yet?

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. Romans 6:1-14

Justification – An instantaneous legal act of God in which he thinks of our sins as forgiven and Christ’s righteousness as belonging to us, and declares us to be righteous in his sight.

Sanctification – A progressive work of God and man that makes us more and more free from sin and more like Christ in our actual lives. Wayne Grudem, “Systematic Theology”

Justification

Received through union with Jesus

Jesus’ righteousness attributed to us

Legal verdict declared on us

Sanctification

Received through union with Jesus

Ability given to conform to his likeness

The Spirit’s work within us

It is important that we do not confuse or separate justification and sanctification.

If separated justification may be seen as grace and sanctification as human effort.

The Bible teaches that they are both the result of God's grace. (Acts 20:32, 26:18, 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30, 6:11, 1 Thessalonians 5:23)

Legalism – an effort to earn God's favor through good works

A.W. Pink – “The great mistake made by many people is hoping to discover in themselves that which is to be found in Christ alone.”

Antinomianism - Christians are not bound by established moral laws

As believers in Jesus Christ we have denounced our sin and embraced God's law. Our desire is to keep His law, not out of fear of punishment or hope of reward, but because we are His. We belong to Jesus. Jesus loved both us and the law so much that he died on the cross in our place.

The Biblical response to both legalism and antinomianism is the Gospel.

As believers in Jesus we no longer live in sin (vs 2)

We have been given a new life (vs 3-4)

We have been buried and resurrected in Jesus (vs 5-6)

We have been set free from sin for all eternity and our debt has been paid (vs 7-11)

Sin no longer has dominion over the believer (vs 12-14)

DO NOT CONFUSE Spiritual Discipline with Legalism

Train yourself in godliness (1 Timothy 4:7)

Take up your cross daily (Luke 9:23)

Strive together with me in prayer (Romans 15:30)

Take every thought captive to obey Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5)

I love your law and meditate on it all day (Psalm 119:97)

Sanctification is not void of our involvement. Sanctification can be described as our activity as empowered through the grace of God. (John 15:2, 8, 16, Romans 8:12-13, 12:9, 16-17, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 2 Corinthians 7:1, Galatians 5:16-23, 6:7-8, Colossians 3:5-14, 1 Peter 1:22)

Sanctification is a daily act of turning from sin and turning to Jesus rather than turning to our own capability or goodness.

The world describes Christianity as a life of do's and don'ts; of rule following, trying to live up to a standard of perfection, of legalism, but a relationship with Jesus Christ is none of those things. It is Amazing Grace!