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True Freedom

CAPITOL BIBLE STUDY

monthly (interim) schedule

*** 1st Tuesday of the month ***

TUESDAY, 7TH OF JULY

12 NOON in 123 CAP

Capitol Commission (interim) Bible Studies are held the *first* Tuesday of each month at 12 Noon, in accord with the Public Service Commission devotional at 9:55am. The *monthly* Bible study is nonpartisan and non-denominational. We are currently studying the book of Romans, chapter-by-chapter, and verse-by-verse.

I pray that this study will be edifying to you. I am here to serve you and to be a resource for prayer and counsel. Please accept my study in the Word of God, as an evidence of my desire to be serving you. – Dr. Ron J. Bigalke, Georgia State Minister, Capitol Commission

Capitol Commission (interim) Bible Study

is
Tuesday, 7 July 2015

Romans 6 – “True Freedom”

Justification is a legal (forensic) term; it concerns the notion of acquittal. The Bible refers to justification as God’s action whereby He makes human beings – who are sinners and worthy of condemnation – to be made acceptable before Him. Justification is necessary to appear before God because He is holy and righteous. More appropriately and understandable, justification is by grace through faith, which means that fallen human beings are justified (pardoned from the condemnation and punishment of sin) and are reconciled to God (brought into a relationship with the Lord through faith in the grace of God).

Of course, the biblical revelation with regard to justification by faith can be easily distorted. Three distortions have arisen “from the biblical teaching on justification—cheap grace, legalism, and moralism—[and] still dominate the church today” (Richard F. Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979] 100). Moralism is the false belief that the gospel (good news of God’s redemption) can be reduced to behavioral improvements. The reason that moralism is unbiblical is that it seduces individuals into believing that one can actually gain the approval of God by his or her behavior.

Conversely, the attitude of legalism is one that identifies morality with rigorous adherence of laws or moral codes that define the confines of a particular community. The religious legalist emphasizes obedience to moral codes or laws based upon the misguided assumption that such conformity is a means for gaining the favor of God. The danger of legalism is an emphasis upon rules as opposed to Christ Jesus, and thus it harms the enjoyment of life in the Lord and replaces it with a debilitating experience of bearing the burden (“yoke,” Matt 11:30) of auxiliary matters.

“Cheap grace” is a term coined by German Lutheran pastor and theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, in reference to the entirely unbiblical teaching of justification without sanctification. The doctrine of sanctification is the act of God whereby He “sets apart” from common use, as his own people “to be made holy” and thus produce holiness in their lives. Romans 6—8 address the principles of moral Christian behavior, and in particular the type of thinking that because one is forgiven, he or she can live however they desire.

NECESSARY KNOWLEDGE

(Rom 6:1-10) The question of Romans 6:1 (“Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?”) is logically subsequent to the biblical teaching of Romans 3—5: a Christian is one who is saved solely by God’s grace. The wrong deduction to formulate is that since God’s grace abounds all the more when sin increases (5:21) that one should continue to sin so that God’s grace will be even more evident (6:1). Such a response demonstrates that one does not understand the relationship with Christ Jesus.

1 Corinthians 12:13 – *For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.*

There are many theological errors that believers might adopt, thus Scripture asserts “may it never be” that one affirm error regarding crucial aspects of truth, such as grace and sin. Romans 6:2-10 explains the meaning of being “in Christ.” The believer must understand certain facts (vv. 2-10), and then incorporate that knowledge into daily living (vv. 11-14).

We should note that the explanation of the believer’s union with Christ is based upon biblical principles. If the believer is to discuss his or her spiritual experience intelligently, they must know certain truths (cf. the use of “know” in vv. 3, 6, 9). Some people share their spiritual experience in a manner contrary to Scripture, often without realization. For instance, it is never good practice to begin with one’s experience and then manipulate the Bible to correspond to it. Scripture demonstrates plainly that to be accurate and objective, one’s evaluation of his or her experience must be based upon three principles, which are developed in verses 1-10 of Romans 6.



Capitol Commission (interim) Bible Study

1st Tuesdays (monthly) @ 12 Noon - 12:45 pm, 123 CAP
lunch provided from sponsorship by Coastal Bible Fellowship (BMW), Rincon



Enhancing Trust

The *first* principle is that the believer is united to Christ through the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Rom 6:3-5; cf. 1 Cor 12:13). Union with Christ has two aspects: believers are joined to the Lord Jesus in his death and his resurrection, which is accomplished when the Holy Spirit baptizes the believer. Spirit baptism is the work of God whereby He grants believers the Holy Spirit, and thereby incorporates them into the body of Christ, and identifies (i.e. baptizes) them with Jesus' death and resurrection.

Secondly, "our old self" (which is our old nature that was inherited from Adam and which predetermines us to sin) is legally "done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin" (Rom 6:6-8). Even though the believer's old self is crucified (dead), yet (unfortunately) the Christian continues to sin. The reason is that the old self is crucified in a legal sense, yet experientially, it still continues to exert power over the believer. Nevertheless, the power of sin over the believer has been broken (cf. 1 Cor 15:55; 2 Tim 1:10), and thus there is no reason to serve sin because the believer is free.

WHAT IS TRUE AS REGARDS CHRIST IS ALSO TRUE FOR THE BELIEVER.

Thirdly, the believer's union with Christ is a permanent relationship (Rom 6:9-10). Christ "is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him" (v. 9). "He died to sin once for all" (v. 10). What is true as regards Christ is also true for the believer. When the Lord died, the believer also died to sin once for all, which means that we should no longer allow sin to master us. Nothing can alter the believer's union with Christ in his death and resurrection.

NECESSARY APPROPRIATION

(Rom 6:11-23) Merely knowing certain biblical truths is not sufficient because one must also appropriate that information. Two primary terms – "consider" and "present" (vv. 11-14) – emphasize the believer's responsibility. Believers are instructed to "consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus" and to "present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead."

THE SPIRITUAL REALITIES THAT THE BIBLE REVEALS ARE TO IMPACT THE MANNER IN WHICH WE LIVE.

The first term, "consider," indicates that the believer is to live with acceptance that the truths of verses 1-10 are genuine. One is not merely to affirm certain truths (i.e. a dead orthodoxy); rather, the biblical truths that one knows are to be incorporated into daily living. The spiritual realities that the Bible reveals are to impact the manner in which we live.

The second term, "present," exhorts the believer not to "go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead" so that sin will cease to reign (v. 12). Sin is similar to a

defeated monarch who has been removed from the throne, yet refuses to abdicate and demands to continue ruling. Sin no longer has any legitimate authority over the believer, which is why the Christian must decisively present themselves to God. To continue serving sin would be like a slave – who has been freed from a wicked master – to continue obeying the old master voluntarily.

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Scripture reveals that God's grace does not mean that believers continue to sin. For the believer to sin deliberately is to pervert God's grace. Although it is true that the believer abides by God's grace and is freed from the demands of the (Old Testament) Law, such truths should motivate one to live a life pleasing to the Lord, not encouraging us to deliberately grieve God.

Romans 6:1-14 demonstrates that a life of sin is inconsistent with the believer's new identity because the believer is united with Christ Jesus in his death and resurrection. Sin is also inconsistent with the believer's new status because the believer is freed from slavery to sin and is now "enslaved to God" (v. 22).

John 8:31-32 – So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

Absolute freedom is a myth! Often individuals object to faith in Christ Jesus based upon the belief that they will be surrendering their freedom. The notion is misguided since we are always enslaved to some authority. Christ is the only master who allows his servants to enjoy perfect freedom (John 8:30-34). True freedom is being a disciple of Jesus Christ! God designed humanity so that when we submit to his will, then we are doing the exact things we are created to accomplish and which grant us the greatest joy in life.

Thank you for allowing Capitol Commission the nobility to provide Bible studies to you. If you have any questions, please talk with us, or contact by email or phone.

About Capitol Commission

Capitol Commission state ministers are pastors-missionaries who teach weekly verse-by-verse Bible studies for legislators, lobbyists, and staff members. The Bible studies are hand-distributed to each legislative office, emailed, and made available throughout the Capitol community. Capitol Commission is a ministry of the church seeking to proclaim the gospel message, and to help believers mature through verse-by-verse Bible teaching. In the Bible, we see God's love for the world, especially those who have been placed in authority. This is the foundation for our ministry to you.

The church is instructed to submit and to honor government leaders (Rom 13:1-7), and to pray for their eternal salvation (1 Tim 2:1-4). The desire of Capitol Commission is to witness God transform the hearts and lives of elected officials, lobbyists, and staff members. We apply this mandate to four primary areas of discipleship: (1) *evangelize* those who have not known saving faith in Jesus Christ; (2) *establish* those who desire to grow in their faith and knowledge of Scripture; (3) *equip* those called to spiritual leadership; and, (4) *encourage* churches to participate with us in ministry.

Bible study luncheon sponsored by:



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NEXT CAPITOL COMMISSION (INTERIM) BIBLE STUDY:
Tuesday, 4th of August @ 12 Noon in 123 CAP
(always the 1st Tuesday of each month, during interim)