

Grace: Sanctification, the response to “Antinomianism”

Antinomianism holds that since Christ’s obedience and sufferings have satisfied the demands of the law, the believer is free from obligation to observe it. Anti-no-mian-ism. (Systematic Theology, Augustus Strong) Roman 6:14 (b) for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

Romans 5:20,21 – Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:1 – What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2) God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

Gal. 5:13 – For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

I Thess 4:7 – For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

The whole of the sixth and seventh chapters of Romans are the Apostle Paul’s response to this idea of not having any obligation to live our lives in accordance with God’s moral law, to live aspiring toward holiness, for God’s glory. We have been set free from the dominion of sin to live unto God and righteousness. God has justified us and is continuously, progressively sanctifying us, as we yield to His Holy Spirit.

According to the Parallel Bible Commentary, Note at Rom. 6:1-2: In every age there have been those who have denounced the doctrine of justification by faith on the incorrect supposition that this doctrine logically leads to sin. “If the believer is treated as righteous by God, and if good works will not save him, then evil works will not condemn him either. Why then should he be concerned about his sin or attempt to live a godly life?” Paul anticipated this very attitude in 6:1-2. Theologically, this belief is known as antinomianism. Paul’s answer is crystal clear. Just because where sin abounded grace superabounded, the believer is not automatically drawn to license in his life-style. On the contrary, a mature understanding of justification by faith leads the believer to appreciate God’s grace, so that the end result is obedience to God out of a heart filled with gratitude. Paul’s characteristic expression God forbid, shows how appalled he is at the mere suggestion of continuing in sin once we have experienced the grace of God. We cannot continue in sin because through our identification with Jesus Christ we are dead to sin. To die unto sin means that we are dead to the guilt of sin. Sin can no longer make any legal claim on the believer because we are viewed by God as if we ourselves had died that fateful day at Calvary.

Our Evangelist Finney spoke of “Covenantal Responsibility”. Once we have accepted the grace of the God, we, each one, has the responsibility to live a yielded and obedient life to the Lord. We shall not continue in sin, we shall not dabble in sin, we shall live a life that is pleasing to the Lord, bringing Him Glory and Honor. This is true gratefulness for His Grace.