

“Out with the Old,  
In with the New”

Nazarene Bible College

Colorado Springs, CO

May 1, 2007

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**Thesis Statement:**

Through Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, we no longer have live as though we are captive to sin. Through God's grace, we are new creatures.

Outline

A. Introduction

1. Burning Fields
2. New Vegetation

B. Passage: Romans 6:1-14

1. Old Creature
2. New Creation

D. Conclusion

## Out with the Old, In with the New

### INTRODUCTION

I love fire. I always have. When I go camping, my favorite time is sitting around the fire, staring into the flames. There is something beautiful about fire. Not to mention the fact that it can be so powerful. Don't worry; I'm not a pyromaniac or an arsonist. Many people enjoy sitting around a fireplace and watching the fire. One of my favorite childhood memories was when my father would have some of his buddies over, and they would burn a field of old, dead, dry grass and weeds. To have such a large area burning was quite a sight to behold. After the field had been burnt, my father would either spread grass seed to expand our lawn, or spread fertilizer or compost to prepare the ground for gardening the following spring. I was always amazed to see the new grass come in. One year the field was full of weeds and briars, and within a year or two, it would be thick, lush, green grass. It's like something had to be destroyed in order to make way for something new, something better.

Paul talks about this kind of dynamic in our passage for tonight. Please stand while we read from Romans chapter 6, verses 1-14.

1What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? 3Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

5If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. 6For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— 7because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

8Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.

9For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die

again; death no longer has mastery over him. 10The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

11 In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. 1 2Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. 13Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. 1 4For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.

Let's pray.

You may be seated.

In looking at this passage tonight, I'd like us to consider two aspects of it. First, the old creature. Second, the new creation. Let's begin with the old creature.

### OLD CREATURE

When we read the first few words of this passage, what do we immediately see? We see a continuation of Paul's train of thought from the previous chapter. Chapter 5 ends with Paul saying, "The law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Which leads us to chapter 6, where Paul writes,

"What shall we say then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?" This seems like such a strange comment, doesn't it?

But Paul did say, "Where sin increased, grace increased all the more." For some of us, with the lives we used to lead, we needed a whole lot of God's grace, and that wealth of grace was extended to us. I know that I needed a whole lot of God's grace. I won't go into all the sordid details, but boy, I thought I was living for the moment. But really I was dead all along.

That was the old creature. When I think of that time in my life, I'm reminded of what I once heard a pastor say on the radio. He said that even if there were not a heaven or a hell, he would still want to live the life of a Christian and to be free from the bondage of sin. Perhaps some of you do not have an awful past, and I say praise God for that. But there was a time in all of our lives when something major needed to take place. And God had to be the one to do it.

When Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, all of mankind that would come after them was cursed with what we call "original sin" or "sin from the beginning." At that time, God provided for the Jews a system of atonement for their sins, but there came a point where the Jews were simply going through the motions, and it meant nothing to them. Do we ever see that in our churches today?

But God was so gracious and loving that He sent His Son to die for all the sins of mankind. Sin was defeated through Jesus' death and resurrection. Because of His death, our "old creature" could be put to death. I once heard Stephen Manly point out that to be crucified with Christ is not a matter of will. For we would not be physically able to crucify ourselves. It isn't humanly possible. It took the love and mercy of God, through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, for our old creatures to be put to death. And when the old creature dies, we have new life, we are new creations.

### NEW CREATION

Remember the story of the burning field, and the new life that followed that destruction? God's own Son, Jesus Christ, had to die in order to make way for new life (Dunn 1988, 330). Verse 8 of Romans 6 says: "Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will

also live with Him.”

I’m reminded of what Paul writes in Romans chapter 8. He writes, beginning with verse 22:

22We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.”

When Adam and Eve fell, all of creation fell, and even creation suffers pain and destruction while awaiting restoration. Our old selves had to die in order for our relationship with God to be restored.

Paul goes on in Romans 6 verse 12 to tell his listeners to not let sin reign in their lives. After all, the victory over sin has already been won! They do not have to give in to their evil desires! They do not have to offer parts of their bodies as instruments of wickedness!

Let’s look at that phrase, “parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness.” There is a great deal being said in that short excerpt, so I’ll try to bring out a few points from it.

Matthew 5:28 says, “But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Our eyes can easily be used as instruments of wickedness, focusing upon images we ought not to focus on. Addiction to pornography is a huge problem, not only for those who do not attend church, but also for those who do.

Also, dare I ask, do we occasionally watch a TV show or movie we know we wouldn’t watch if Jesus Christ were sitting right next to us? Well, guess what? We don’t see Him, but He is in the room.

What about our ears? Do we sometimes we listen to things we shouldn't? I remember a youth event at my former church where a teenager was playing Green Day up on stage with his electric guitar. I knew the lyrics to that song from before God drastically changed my life, and I told him that he couldn't play it. The next morning I went outside to find that one of my back tires had been slashed.

I may be getting myself in trouble here, but parents of teens (or teens-to-be), it is OK not to allow music in your home who's lyrics are directly contradictory to what the Word of God teaches. There are worse things in life than having our children think that we are squares.

James writes in depth about the destructive power of the tongue. My brothers and sisters, we ought not underestimate the damage that can result from what we say to another. Proverbs tells us to be slow to speak, and there is a very good reason for that. Times of anger and frustration will come and go, but damaging reactions can cause wounds that may last for a while. We must be quick to ask for forgiveness at those times. But even more importantly, we must be slow to speak and slow to respond.

Paul says that, because we are new creations, we do not have to be captive to these kinds of things. We have been freed from sin. I like what one commentator wrote: "What Paul does present here is not the impossibility of committing a single sin, but the impossibility of continuing in a life dominated by sin" (Harrison 1976, 68).

Paul then tells his readers to "offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. 14For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace." To "offer" means to surrender the body and all its parts to God for His purposes. When this happens, sin shall no longer be the master, because we are under the

grace of God.

This being said, is it possible to turn our backs on God and live for ourselves? Yes, it is possible. And in that case, our lives would be dominated by sin. But if we are living for God and if we are followers of Jesus Christ, we are not dominated by sin. Do we still mess up? Yes. Do we still have weaknesses? Absolutely. But we don't have to be ruled by those failures or weaknesses. We have a heavenly ruler. We have a heavenly hope. We are new creations.

Should we sin all the more so God's grace can increase? Silly question, isn't it? Because we have experienced God's forgiveness and mercy, we have already seen the abundance of God's grace in our lives. Our old creature would not be dead were it not for God's grace. We would not be a new creation were it not for God's grace.

## CONCLUSION

The question for us tonight is this. Will we live as if we know the grace of God? Or will we live as if ruled by worldly desires? Will we live as if dominated by the old-creature? Or will we live in the fullness of forgiveness and the promise of eternal life? Is there anything left of the old man that must be put to death? Is there anything left that is an obstacle between us and God? This is the time to come to God and repent! Is there sinful lust in our hearts? Now is the time to come to Him and ask for forgiveness. Is there a desire to control and manipulate our own lives, even though that is not what God ever intended for us? Now is the time to surrender to Him. Is there a lack of a heavy burden for those who are right now, at this moment, bound for hell? Come down and pray for God to light a fire in our hearts, a fire that leads us to love on those who need Him. Let use this time for His refining fire to burn away anything in our lives that shouldn't be

there. Let this be a time when we come and pray for those who do not yet know that they can have an eternal, glorious life!

## WORKS CITED

- Harrison, Everett F. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary. Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976.
- Dunn, James D. *Word Biblical Commentary. Romans 1-8*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1988.