***Why not Give Free Reign to the Old Sin Nature?
RO64-02***

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Please open your Bibles to Romans 6. Romans 3:21 through Romans 8:39 deal with the general subject of salvation. Paul has presented a detailed and conclusive explanation of how a person goes to heaven on the basis of justification by faith in Jesus Christ, apart from all human doings. He has demonstrated to us the great glory of the grace of God. That is the grace which provides eternal life apart from any personal participation in any way on the part of the sinner except for that sinner to accept what God has prepared.

**Guilt from Adam's Sin**

The first problem that the holiness of God faced in dealing with man's lost condition was the guilt that man had imputed to him because of Adam's sin. When God looked at you and me, and wanted to take us into His heaven, the first problem that He had to face is that guilt that rests upon us because of what has been imputed to us from Adam, our representative.

So, a divine solution was needed for preserving a condemned sinner from the lake of fire, who could in no way help to preserve himself on his own. He could bring nothing that was of merit to God. The divine solution for that was justification based on the death of Christ, who paid for all the evil in the world.

Therefore, we have learned, in our study of Romans 5 particularly, that God treats a believing sinner as absolute righteousness. That's because God so regards him. And the reason that God so regards a believer is because that believer has been placed positionally into Christ. When a lost sinner receives Jesus Christ as Savior, Paul has shown us, that sinner is placed by God the Father into the category of those who are credited with absolute righteousness. They were previously in the category of those who were credited with Adam's guilt, and under the condemnation of eternal death. Now God puts them in the category of those who have absolute righteousness credited to them, and they are therefore headed for eternal life.

**The Old Sin Nature**

The second problem that God faced in dealing with fallen man is that the old sin nature remains actively operational in the physical body of the justified believer. Just because a person receives Jesus Christ as Savior, and is born-again spiritually (he receives a living human spirit), and just because God says, "Now, I consider you in the category of those who are in Christ, possessing absolute righteousness," in no way affects the genetic structure of his body. And the old sin nature is part of the genetic structure of your physical body. Therefore, you go into the Christian life, and you take this evil thing right into the Christian life with you. You carry the disease of the old sin nature right into the Christian life with you. Even though you're born again, justification does not remove the old sin nature, nor does it make you perfect in your conduct. The old sin nature in a justified believer consequently, can do all of the evil that it was able to do before.

**God Makes the Believer Holy in his Conduct, Apart from your Doing**

Now, the divine solution for the power and the pollution of the old sin nature was a process of sanctification through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. God makes the believer holy in his conduct, again, apart from human doing. I'm going to say that again because I know you missed it. God is now going to make you, as a believer, holy (godly) in your conduct, apart from your doing. Now, that is even more startling than the fact that God is going to justify you and take you to heaven apart from your human doing. That was hard enough to be able to accept that – but to accept the idea that God's blessings upon me are not going to be dependent on what I do? That's right. It's not going to be depended upon your going around, and behaving yourself, and being a nice person, and helping the poor, and giving money to the church, and helping to sit in the nursery, and to do all the other things that need to be done, because you put your time into the Lord's work. Don't kid yourself. That's not going to make you a holy and a godly person.

What's going to make you holy and godly is something that God the Holy Spirit Himself performs when He's permitted to do His work. He will do it, and He will do it on the basis of the Word of God that you've taken into your soul, and that He will then apply, and He will guide as you permit Him to work. You can stand in the way, but if you step out of the way, you will become the most fantastic human being that you can imagine anybody could be. You can have the most fantastic effectiveness in personal living, and in your influence, and in the Lord's use of you that you can imagine – an effectiveness that you will not even really grasp until you stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ.

There are some of you who are going to stand up there, and you're going to shake your heads, because you're not going to be able to believe that you were that good. You're not going to be able to believe that God accomplished that much through you. But those of you who progressed toward sanctification, that's exactly what you're going to find out. And God has a system of doing it. Again, it's a system that isn't dependent on your hustling. So, right now, let's put that to rest. Let's set it aside. Let's clear all the idea that: "Well, if I don't do certain things, then I'm going to be a holy Christian." And I could name all the things, and you know them. There are certain major categories of sins that all churches tell their people: "These are the worst ones. Don't do these, and you will be a nice Christian person, and God will be pleased with you." Baloney!

God is not pleased with you on the basis of things you do or things you don't do. Do you know what brings glory to God? You? Most Christians have got the gall to say that: "I'm going to bring glory to the Lord, I'm going to bring glory to God." You know, we fall into that phrase: "Do this to the Lord's glory." You do anything to the Lord's glory. You and I, with our grubby hands, and our sin nature contamination, couldn't do anything to the glory of God no matter how we tried. It is God Himself who brings glory to Himself. It is He who brings glory to Himself through what He does for you and me, that we are helpless to do for ourselves. If you can catch that principle, boy, you're on your way. If you can catch that principle, that it is not you who brings glory to God, but it is He who brings glory to Himself through what you permit Him to do through you.

The first stage with that permission is to take the Word of God into your soul. I'll guarantee you something right off the bat: that every time you're in this auditorium, the sanctifying power of God is functioning in your life, and it's moving you ahead. And every time you're not in here, you've denied yourself, and you've held yourself up, and maybe you've slipped backwards some.

Now, I'm talking about a church where the Word of God is explained on the authority of the languages of God. And when that's done, you're not just listening to a human being. You are now listening to the voice of God. You are hearing the mind of Christ. And that is the thing that God uses to bring glory to Himself. And that's the only thing that He uses to bring glory to himself. So, sanctification does not mean some attempt at sinlessness, or separated Christian living on our part, though we are very much desirable of those things, and we are all for that.

The first problem is what to do with the guilt that rested upon us. A second problem is now that you're born-again: what to do with the old sin nature that contaminates your lifestyle? God has solved both of those without our help.

**The Grace of God Super-Abounded**

Romans 5:20 declared that whenever sin abounded in human experience, the grace of God super-abounded to neutralize the effects of sin. That was a great revelation. Wherever sin abounded, the grace of God super-abounded and neutralize whatever sin did. It just completely reversed its condemnation.

**The Mosaic Law Caused Evil to Abound**

Paul said that the Mosaic Law was brought in on the stage as a minor actor of the human experience alongside of the old sin nature that already exists there, in order to cause evil to abound. The Mosaic Law defined evil. The Mosaic Law brought evil out of man, and it just made evil abound all the more. It just flooded the world with a consciousness of the evil that was there. No matter how great human sinning is, and no matter how great it becomes, the grace of God far outstripped it. It engulfed in as a flood tide. And the more the Mosaic Law caused sin abound, the greater the grace of God super-abounded. The more sin was expanded, the more brilliantly was displayed the grace of God in removing the guilt of sin.

**Grace is Greater than all our Sin**

Paul said that grace is greater than all our sin, no matter how great the evil may be. That's what we learned in Romans 5:20. In Romans 5:21, Paul went on to compare sin and grace in the form of two ruling absolute monarchs, and he pointed out that sin once reigned supreme over mankind, producing eternal death. But now grace has expelled the monarchy of sin unto death, and rules supreme, providing eternal life through the absolute righteousness provided by means of the death of Christ on the cross. The absolute reign of grace has replaced the absolute reign of sin. The absolute reign of grace unto eternal life, on the basis of absolute righteousness provided by Christ, has replaced the absolute reign of sin unto eternal death, based upon the guilt of Adam.

**Grace cannot be Frustrated by Human Sinning**

The absolute rule today of the grace of God in salvation means that a believer, therefore, can never lose his justification. And Paul has been stressing, in everything he said here (particularly in Romans 5) that once: always saved. You cannot again lose your salvation. Therefore, the reign of grace is presented as being absolute supreme. If you could lose your salvation, then the reign of grace is not supreme, because if you ever lost your salvation, then who is reigning again? Sin is again reigning. Grace cannot be frustrated by human sinning.

Paul's teaching of free grace salvation (one that can never be overwhelmed by sin, so that you are lost again) is strongly rejected by human viewpoint thinking. Immediate objections are raised by lost sinners to Paul's teaching about how to go to heaven on the basis of what God alone does.

**Why not Give Free Reign to the Old Sin Nature?**

There are two specific objections that you're going to find are raised in Romans 6, just to give you an overall preview. The first objection is stated in Romans 6:1. This one says, "If the more we sin, the greater God's grace is displayed, well, then let us give free reign to the old sin nature in order that we'll enjoy receiving more grace." And there were people who said this to Paul. They said, "Well, if the grace of God is displayed more brilliantly, and we enjoy more grace the more the sin nature works, well, then let's let the old sin nature just have its way, and we'll just enjoy God's grace to the limit, Paul."

That was the challenge that was thrown against him. The issue here is to continue under the control of the old sin nature. The claim here is that this idea of justification by faith, apart from all human doing, will produce a people who are enslaved to the old sin nature. And they said, "That's a dangerous doctrine, Paul." And immediately, the legalists and all the unbelievers jumped on Paul for what he was teaching.

**Shall We Sin?**

Paul gives an answer to that objection in verse 2-14, which we shall look at in detail. Then when you get to verse 15, you'll notice there's another question: "What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the Law, but under grace?" Again, we have a second challenge which is identified: "If we're not under the Mosaic Law system, let us not worry about sinning, but do as we please."

How many times have you heard that, when somebody says, "The Law is dead? Well, then you're saying that you can just go out and do all those terrible things that the Ten Commandments say not to do." Anytime you say that the Law is dead. People think that the opposite of that is lawlessness. But you know better, don't you? We say that the Mosaic Law is abrogated, terminated, neutralized, and finished, and that the opposite of that is the control of the indwelling Holy Spirit – not lawlessness. It's the greatest display of doctrinal ignorance when a person says that the Mosaic Law no longer is effective, and therefore, people are going to be lawless. That's the greatest display of doctrinal ignorance you can imagine.

You can spot a lot about a person like that. You can say, "Uh oh. That poor soul does not know much about doctrine, because for those who are trained in doctrine, when you say the law is dead immediately, the opposite that flicks to their mind is that God the Holy Spirit is now running the show. He is the one that is controlling the sin influences – not this external law, which never controlled it anyhow, and it was never meant to do it. It was only meant to bring condemnation.

However, this is the objection here that is raised in verse 15. It's the issue of committing personal acts of sin. In verse 1, it's the issue of continuing under the control of the old sin nature. In first 15, it's the issue of continuing under personal acts of sin. And the Mosaic Law is viewed as some kind of a means to holy living instead of causing sin to a bound, which is what Paul says its purpose was.

So, people are going to sin because they're going to be lawless. What good was it for God to give this Mosaic Law if it has no place in salvation?

Well, all of this is answered in Romans 6:16-23, and in due time we shall get to that. I do want to tell you ahead of time what Paul did when he was struck by these two attacks: "Well, then let's let the old sin nature comptrollers. Well, let's do all the personal sins we want to. Paul does not say, "Well, now wait a minute. I did say that salvation is by faith and justification is by the grace of God, but you do have to behave yourself; otherwise, you won't go to heaven. I didn't mean to say that if you don't behave yourself, then you can still go to heaven." He didn't say that at all. Paul doesn't hedge on the doctrine of salvation without human doing in one respect; not one iota; and, not one bit of compromise. He doesn't hedge for one moment.

Paul backs off, and he looks them straight in the eye, eyeball-to-eyeball, and he says, "Yes, that's exactly what I'm saying, because that's exactly what God taught me out in the Arabian Desert. I know what I'm talking about. I got this communication from the Lord Himself. I know the doctrine of salvation backwards and forwards. I know how a person gets into heaven. And I know what Satan can interject to keep you out of heaven, and send you to hell, even when you think you're going to heaven." Nobody was going to out-talk the apostle Paul, or intimidated in any way – not when he has sat in class, and God was his teacher. I mean, that's pretty heavy stuff. Most of us, if we could sit in class and have God as our teacher, would be pretty bold and we would be very uncompromising, and we wouldn't play footsie with anybody on any question that the Word of God has spoken. Would you, if God was up here teaching you?

Well, who do you think is teaching you? I'm not making this stuff up. Exactly what's happening to you now? Do you realize that? You're getting the same kind of treatment that Paul got, as long as you're getting it out of the original language, and not some goofy preacher's interpretation of the English Bible? You're getting exactly the treatment that Paul had. So, you should have the same confidence. You should have the same aggressiveness. You should have the same no nonsense approach to eternal issues that the apostle Paul had. He didn't hedge on this when he was struck by these objections. He doesn't compromise on the doctrine of justification by agreeing that you do have to behave yourself in order to have this salvation.

So, the first question begins in verse 1: "What shall we say then?" The word "what" looks like this in Greek: "tis." It's a questioning pronoun (an interrogative pronoun), and it's used here to introduce the first objection to Paul's doctrine of justification by faith alone without human effort.

"What shall we say?" The word "shall we say" is "lego." The word "lego" means to declare something, but it is a word which looks at the content of what you're saying. It looks at the meaning of what you're saying rather than the statement per se.

We have another Greek word for "say," which is "laleo." "Laleo is the word that you use when you want to just emphasize the statement. You know: "A penny saved is a penny earned." That's just a statement. And when you just look at the statement, and you just want to talk about the axiom, you speak about "laleo." But if you want to say now, "What does it mean – a penny saved is a penny earned?" When you look at the meaning of that statement, then you have to use this word "lego" to describe it.

So, the fact that Paul uses "lego" is directing our attention such that he wants us to look back and say, "Now, what's the meaning of everything I just got through saying (particularly in Romans 5:20-21, which we just reviewed? What is the real meaning of what I'm saying?" He is not just talking about the declaration, and not just the fact that he stated certain propositions: "What am I actually saying? What are the implications?" That is what we would say. "Lego" says, "Well, what are the implications of that kind of an idea: salvation without any human effort; and, salvation on the part of God's provision?

Paul had met these human viewpoint objections in his preaching, and he knew where the issues were going to be raised. This is probably just a rhetorical question here. He's just raising questions, but he's raising them on the basis of the fact that people in his audiences raised these questions and these objections when he taught them.

It's in the future tense, which means anytime that this objection is raised in the future, what are we going to say at anytime that we consider what Romans 5:20-21 have said. It's active. We have here a complaint being voiced by the objector. And it's a statement of fact. It's indicative mood in the form of a question:

"What shall we say then?" The word "then" looks like this: "oun." It means "therefore." And it is pointing back for us. When we see "oun," we know it's pointing back to something. And what it's pointing back to is Romans 5:20-21. He's saying, "Now what is the implication of the meaning of what we have just said back in Romans 5:20-21, where we concluded the discussion about justification by faith through super-abounding grace in the face of sin?"

This is a formal type question. You'll find it throughout the book of Romans – this particular combination of "lego" and "oun." Paul has this kind of a formalized question to indicate that now he is going to present something: "tis lego oun." And he puts this together as a formal presentation to formally introduce a significant statement (a significant issue).

You find this in Romans 3:5. There we don't have the word "oun," but we do have it in many other places: Romans 4:1, Romans 6:1, Romans 7:7, Romans 8:31, Romans 9:14, and Romans 9:30 – all in this book. And it gives us a little signpost that Paul is bringing up a major topic to discuss.

Actually, this is an idiomatic expression. Every time Paul uses it, he is saying something like this: "In the light of these facts about sin and grace, what conclusion shall we draw?" And that's what he means by this opening remark" What shall we say then?" In the light of these facts that we have presented in Romans 5:20-21, about sin and grace, what conclusion shall we draw? Then he proceeds to take up these two human viewpoint objections to salvation by grace alone: "What then, shall we say?"

"Shall we continue?" Here's the question: "epimeno." The first part of this word is a preposition. It means "upon." The second part is a verb "meno." It means "to abide." So, we put it together, and the idea is "to abide upon" or that has come to mean "to continue." You stay with it.

The word connotes a cordial relationship. It connotes a kind of fellowship, like when somebody is a house guest. You have a certain cordial fellowship with him. You have a certain friendly relationship. That's what this word "epimeno" means. "To abide upon" is to continue in a certain kind of friendly relationship. And it almost implies a subjection to something. It is in the present tense, which means: "Shall this be our continual relationship?" It's active: "Should we as Christians choose to have this kind of a relationship to the old sin nature?" And it is subjunctive mood, which in the Greek means it's possible: you may not do it, but here's something that's possible to do.

"To abide in friendly relations" with what? With a thing he calls sin, which in the Greek is "hamartia." "Hamartia" in the Greek has "*the* sin." When we have the word "the" added (that definite article), that is a pointing word, and it is pointing to a certain kind of sin situation which was indicated in the context. And what it is pointing back to is specifically Romans 5, where sin is viewed as reigning unto death.

Now what did he mean by the word "sin"? We've already seen that it's the nature inherited from Adam – the old sin nature. So, when he says here: "Shall we continue in fellowship in the sin?" he's talking about the old sin nature: "Shall we continue on a cordial relationship with the old sin nature, meaning in subjection to the old sin nature – under its control? This is *not* . . . a reference to personal sins. This is a reference to the old sin nature and everything that flows from it – and the old sin nature to dominate your life.

This is the second problem that God had a face. After He saved us, He still had the problem of the fact that the old sin nature is within us, and when it controls, God's grace comes forth to handle what it does, and just overflows it. And the objector didn't like that. So, he raises this question: "Well, shall we let the old sin nature control us? This old sin nature has missed the mark of God's standard of absolute righteousness. Should a Christian continue living under the control of the sin nature, letting it express itself freely in the evils of sins and human good?

Shall we continue under the old sin nature, for what reason? That ("hina") is a conjunction which indicates that he's going to mention the purpose now – the purpose of: "Why should we continue living under the control of the old sin nature now that we're born again in order that grace ('charis')." Again, it is "*the* grace. Aha! You didn't see that from English? This is very important because this little word again tells us: "I'm pointing back to a grace that I talked about in the context." And where did he talk about grace in the context? It is the same place he talked about sin – Romans 5:21.

Should we stay under the control of sin so that *the* grace that you've just been talking to us about (the grace of God), would be able to flow in superabundance. He has in view the grace which now reigns in place of sin. And anytime that the sin nature expresses itself, this grace just over-floods it with its counterattack – the grace which rests on the provision of Jesus Christ on the cross, providing eternal life through the death of Christ.

So, shall we have this grace? "Shall we permit the old sin nature to continue so that this grace may abound?" And the word is "pleonazo." "Pleonazo" means "to multiply greatly" or "to augment." The objector is suggesting that by yielding control of yourself as a Christian to the old sin nature, then you will require more grace to be poured forth, and thus God will be glorified, and you will enjoy more of the grace of God. The more you let the sin nature run your life, the more of that grace you'll enjoy: "Is that what saying, Paul?" You see the form of the objection.

It's in the aorist tense which views the abounding of grace as a whole. It's active. Grace itself does the expanding to meet the attack of the old sin nature. But its subjunctive again – that mood that says that its potential. The expansion of grace is there, providing the sin nature controls. The more the sin nature expresses itself, the more the grace of God there is to control it.

So, the idea is this: If salvation is all grace, and no human doing, so let the old sin nature have full expression, and it doesn't make any difference because grace is just going to be magnified.

Now, notice this: I want to call your attention to the fact that the very fact that this objection is raised (that this question is put to Paul) shows that the objector understood that Paul was saying that a person goes to heaven without human doing that: that he goes to heaven without your good works; and, that you go to heaven without your religious ritual, whether it's circumcision; the Lord's Supper; water baptism; or, whatever. It shows that the object understood clearly that that's what Paul was saying. He got the drift. Otherwise, he never would have asked this question. Do you understand that? The very fact that he said, "Well, let's let the old sin nature have its reign" shows that this man understood Paul to say that God does it all apart from what your old sin nature does. This is apart from all the expressions of evil that come from the old sin nature. That isn't involved in salvation. And the man caught it. So, he asked the question that showed that he understood what Paul was saying. It's not dependent on anything that man does.

This confirms the interpretation that we have given you, of all the Paul has said in Romans 5:12-21. And I'll tell you something else. A person may say, "Well, if we don't have to do anything to be saved, just let the old sin nature have its course. If our personal acts of doing are not involved in salvation (which comes down in verse 16), then let's just go ahead and sin all we want to sin. Anytime a person brings up that objection, you can automatically mark over that person "lost – doomed to the lake of fire." No born-again believer raises that objection.

Now, a born again believer may raise that question for academic study of explanation and research. But one who raises it as a point of objection says, "I don't agree with you." Anytime anybody raises the question, you know that that person is headed for hell. There is no question about it. That is because that question reflects what? That question reflects that that person believes that human doing is involved in going to heaven, and that he is counting on his human doing, and he's looking to his human doing. Otherwise, he wouldn't ask that question. He thinks his human doing is involved, and that's why he raised the question.

You and I can test the value of our own witnessing to the gospel by the reaction that people have to what we say. Every legalist and every unsaved person will readily agree with you and me if we tell him that he gets to heaven by behaving himself and by being good. Every legalists and every unsaved person will say, "Yeah, that's right." You can go to an unsaved person, and you say, "If you keep the golden rule, then you're going to get to heaven." He'll say, "Yeah, that's right." You go to an unsaved person, and so, "Do you keep the Ten Commandments as part of going to heaven?" He'll say, "Yeah, I agree. That makes sense. That's what you have to do."

But if the New Testament plan of salvation by grace, apart from human doing is proclaimed, there will be strong reaction to it on the part of those who are lost. The lost will agree with you that human works are involved, but they will strongly disagree with you that human works are not involved. They'll raise this same objection. They'll say, "Well, let the old sin nature have its way."

**Roman Catholicism**

Did you ever hear anybody bring the charge against the Roman Catholic Church that they're telling people they can get to heaven by doing evil? No, because Roman Catholic says, "Work, work, work, work." Everybody knows what they say. Did you ever hear anybody accuse the Mormons of saying you can get the heaven by doing evil? Nobody ever accuses a Mormon of saying, "Well, you're just saying I can get to heaven no matter what I do," because the Mormons have a clear works salvation. The Mormon says, "If you don't have water baptism, you're going to hell. If you don't have the laying on of the hands of the official priesthood to give you the Holy Spirit, you're going to hell." It's a works / ritualistic system all the way down the line. And if you don't maintain good works, you're going to hell.

**Martin Luther**

Martin Luther was accused by the Roman Catholic Church of teaching justification by faith alone in order to justify his own lusts. Martin Luther got to thinking about this celibacy business. The Roman Church is such a vicious system that it imposed celibacy upon its priests. Martin Luther, when he came into the understanding of the grace of God, said to the pope, "Hang it on your nose, pope. I'm going to marry one of these nice nuns," and he did. So, the Roman Catholic Church said, "Luther is teaching justification by faith, apart from works, so that he can satisfy his lusts. That's why he married that nun. I'm glad Martin told him to hang it there.

**Mormonism**

When I was in Salt Lake City, I turned in a question to the Mormon Church. I had asked a couple of the guides, and after I presented the question, they couldn't answer, and they said, "Listen, would you write those down? We have a department where we can turn that in, and they'll write you an answer, because I'd like to know the answer to that myself." What I had asked them was: "The Mormon church teaches, for one thing, that God is a human being in human form." I said, "I find that difficult when I see that the Bible says that God is a spirit, and that's how we must worship Him. Furthermore, the Book of Mormon teaches that God is a spirit. But Joseph Smith comes along with revelation that God is a human being in human form." They were puzzled. They couldn't answer that.

I said, "Furthermore, the Mormon Church teaches that you can have celestial marriage – that you're married to somebody forever. If you're married in the Mormon Church, you'll be married to that person, and enjoy sex with them forever in eternity, or for any number of women that you happen to marry, whether they want to marry you or not. As long as you get "by proxy" married in the temple, you've got them for all eternity. That's a wonderful system. It's very attractive to certain quarters.

I said, "But the Bible says that in heaven they neither to marry nor are given in marriage; that is, the words mean that there's no marital relationship – you're no longer husband and wife." I said, "I find that to be puzzling."

I haven't received any answer to date. But yesterday morning I pulled into my driveway and I saw the two bicycles and the well-dressed, clean-cut young Americans. And I knew that the Mormons had come to visit me. At first, I considered running over their bicycle with my car, but I changed my mind about that. Instead, I pulled in. They came up and introduced themselves as a couple of elders. They looked awful wet behind years to me to be elders, but it was raining, and I guess that's what I saw. Anyhow, I thought they were there because I turned the card in. Whether it was or not, I don't know. They didn't indicate that to me. They just brought up the fact they were there teaching about the new revelation that God had given through Mormonism, and wondering if I might be interested in it.

So, I said to him, "Well, I think you have a problem in your salvation." I said, "I'm pretty well acquainted with Mormon doctrine, and had a visit to Salt Lake City this summer." I was watching the pupils to see if they dilated to indicate that: "Yeah, we know," but I didn't see anything. I said, "You have a problem that Joseph Smith taught you a salvation via works – that you must receive water baptism, and that you must have the placing out of the hands of the priesthood for the position of the Holy Spirit. Then you must live a good life. And that is contradictory to Ephesians 2:8-9, that says, "For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is a gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast."

I said, "That is contrary to Romans 11:6, which says that God sees only on a grace basis. And Romans 11:6 says that if it's of works, it is not of grace; and if it's grace, it's not of works. They're mutually exclusive. Therefore," I said, "you really have a major problem that I don't know how you can cope with, of trying to be saved on God's faces of grace, and God says that if you interject one speck of human doing (one religious ritual), you're dead. And God saves only apart from our human doing.

They indicated that they understood what I said, because guess what one of them came back at me with? "Well, then what you're saying is that I can just go ahead and let myself do anything I want to do." I said, "That is a good question, and it deserves a real good answer, and I'm going to start that tomorrow morning at 11 o'clock out in that gymnasium. And if you really want to know about the answer to that question, I invite you to come. You might have come for several Sundays to get it all." I don't think they showed up here this morning, but it was interesting to me that they understood what I was saying about free grace salvation. They caught it – bingo. And right away, their old sin nature rose up and rejected it.

Furthermore, I pointed out to them that that being the case, their souls were in dire jeopardy. I said, as of this moment, you're headed for the lake of fire, trusting in that base of salvation. And I would go home and consult a little more on Romans 5, and check out the system of grace salvation in the Bible, because you have a great deal at stake forever. And you're leading a lot of people, along with you, into hell. That didn't set too popularly with them. I could see they were somewhat taken aback, but before they could open their mouths, I pressed my cause. I've been laying for them for some time, expecting them to come around. I figured they needed the testimony more than I need anything from them.

I pointed out to them that their real problem was their bases of authority. I'm not making these things up that I'm telling you. I'm taking it on the basis of a Bible that is inerrant, and has never been proven in error in any way. But the Book of Mormon has been proven to have hundreds of errors in it." I said, "Furthermore, you've based a great deal upon the authority of the Mormon priesthood." I said, "And you've lost your priesthood. You don't have it anymore."

Now they thought they had me. They smiled and they smirked: "Oh, we don't? Is that right?" I said, "Yes, your second prophet, Brigham Young, said that the day you allow Blacks to enter the priesthood, the priesthood will be removed by God from your church."

The smiles left, and one of them (that looked a little more intelligent than the other said, "Brigham Young said a lot of things." And I thought that was kind of badmouthing one of the prophets. This is their man that's their voice from God. I just heard ad infinitum. I heard ad infinitum up in Salt Lake City: "We have a man down there in our central office building who is our prophet from God. He gives us direct revelation from God of current things we need to know. Does your church have someone that tells you what God wants you to know right now?"

The voice of the prophet – that's the big thing. That's authority. And the whole structure is built on this Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthood. And bingo, it's all gone. I said, "You've got a problem there with your priesthood, which is the basis of your giving people salvation, because they can't get that water baptism that counts unless you get it through that priesthood, and now you don't have a priesthood to give it to them.

"Furthermore," I said, "Are you acquainted with the fraud of the book of Abraham? Joseph Smith purported to have found a writing by Abraham in the form of Egyptian hieroglyphics, on some papyri that he found in some mummies that he actually did have?" They said, "No." I was amazed that the church is sending these young guys out in the field, and had never alerted them to this problem. You and I have gone over that. I pointed out to them the fact that our leading American Egyptologists have now proven that Joseph Smith was lying when he gave them part of their Scriptures, which is called the Book of Abraham, which is in a book called The Pearl of Great Price. He was lying when he said he translated this from these hieroglyphics – these hieratic writings on these papyri. What he actually supposedly translated from was a book of breathings, which is an abbreviation of the Book of the Dead, which is a declaration by the dead person to the God that he's going to meet. It's part of the pagan funeral service of the Egyptians.

Well, the interesting thing about it was that they looked at me questioning, even when I opened some documents where I have photographic pages where the Book of Mormon has been corrected, and where the Book of Doctrines and Covenants (the revelations of the prophet) have been corrected, because later situations needed adaptation. But when you read them today, they don't show that: "We have changed this, and we have adapted this. We have inserted words." And they said, "Oh, those are just punctuation things – right there before their eyes were words that changed the meaning completely.

I thought to myself, "Now, that is interesting. Even with the evidence before their eyes, they determined to be ignorant." I said, "Furthermore, concerning prophet Joseph Smith, if a prophet ever makes one mistake then he's not a prophet of God." The said, "That's right." I was glad they said that because I knew I had them then.

I said, "You know that the prophet Joseph Smith told his associates (when they couldn't raise the money for the original publication) to take the Book of Mormon to Canada, and that God would have a person buy the copyright there, and they'd have the money to publish the book. And they came back in total disaster. And Joseph Smith later admitted the prophecy was wrong." He never wanted to record that in the Doctrine and Covenants, which record all of his other prophecies.

I said, "Furthermore, Joseph Smith said that Independence, Missouri would be the new Jerusalem, and that the temple would be built there in his lifetime, and he died before it was done. How often does your prophet has to be wrong before he is not a prophet of God?" These guys were beginning to look like they had epilepsy or something.

The tragedy is that we had a couple of sharp, clean-cut-looking young men, the blind leading the blind to hell, and oblivious to New Testament doctrine. So, how did they handle it all? One of them finally gave me the same thing. They must all be trained to do this. I saw this many times in Salt Lake City: "I, sir, through prayer, have become convinced that the Book of Mormon is the Scriptures of God. It is true."

And, I, sir, am convinced that there are many people who, through some emotional basis, have come to a manipulation by Satan (to a conviction) that they think is truth rather than upon the authority of an objective testimony of the Word of God. So, they are going to find themselves (and you will find yourself) in this position: "Not everyone that says to Me, 'Lord, Lord' shall enter unto the kingdom of heaven, but he that does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord,' have we not prophesied in Your name, and in Your name have cast out demons, and in Your name have done many wonderful works?' And then will I profess unto them, 'I never knew you. Depart from Me, you that work iniquity.'"

These people in Matthew 7:21-23 have an emotional conviction that they had the truth, and that they were related to Jesus Christ, only to discover that they were not. There are millions of people under the influence of groups like Mormonism who ask this question of Paul: "Well, then we'll just go ahead and live like we please. We'' give vent to the old sin nature because it does not matter."

I hope you'll pray for these two young men. They are privileged, whether they know it or not. Someday they're going to wake up in hell, and they are going to remember that little conversation right there in the city of Irving that was their opportunity to reverse their direction from hell to heaven. Pray that the Spirit of God, through our prayers, comes and hits them with the enlightenment, and causes them to say, "I must be intellectually honest. I'm going to check into what he said about the Book of Abraham. I'm going to check into what he said about this grace doctrine. I'm going to check into what he said James really meant when he said, 'Works are included in salvation as being evidence externally,' and not a practice to prove anything to God. And I'm going to square this away in my mind." If they'll do that, they'll have the other experience. They'll end up in heaven, and they'll look back and breathe with relief and say, the grace of God led me on my bicycle to someone who knew enough about doctrine (not emotion – but doctrine) to point me in the direction of heaven.

It's going to be a compounded tragedy if they reject what they heard yesterday. You and I, before we were believers, cannot produce one iota of divine good. We can't do anything to save ourselves, and our old sin nature, in complete domination, can do nothing to help us.

So, anytime anybody asks this question, friends, about letting their old sin nature just have its way, if that's what salvation is – free grace salvation, you just button it down right away in your mind that you're dealing with an unbeliever, and see if you can help point him in the right direction. The very fact that they raised that question shows that they do not depend upon God's work, but they're looking for something that they can put in.

The grace of God is not given because our old sin nature is expressing itself. God's grace comes to you because His integrity was preserved by Jesus Christ on the cross. So, he's free to give it. So, the more you sin isn't going to get you more grace. The more you sin, the integrity of God is going to take care of it.

"What shall we then say? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" Next time, we'll start the exposition of the answer that Paul gives to that attack.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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