

## Relationship to the Sin Nature

You are no longer “you.” When you believed in Jesus as your savior, dramatic changes occurred spiritually. The Old Man died. The bond to your sin nature was broken. You are “in Christ” (Romans chapter 6). You are a new creature (2 Corinthians 5:17) in Christ. You are now a citizen of heaven (Philippians 3:20-21). The list of changes goes on and on. Sometimes these changes are embedded in the text such that we gloss right over them. There is perhaps an analogy between legal immigrants and new citizens of heaven.

Legal immigrants to the United States must learn English (a new language). They must study the Constitution and be able to answer questions concerning the government. They must obey the laws of the United States. They become citizens of the United States.

A new believer in Jesus Christ must learn the language of grace. He or she should study the Bible (both New Testament and Old Testament) to learn the answers to life’s questions and be able to apply them to life situations. He/she becomes a citizen of heaven. The believer becomes a citizen of heaven the instant of faith in Jesus. It is incumbent on the believer to learn about this new relationship through Bible study.

Paul sets the foundation for the Christian life by expounding on the changes that occurred at the point of faith in Jesus. We are to no longer be slaves to the Sin Nature. We are to become slaves of righteousness. As citizens of heaven we are allegiance is now to heaven and not the so called “cosmos diabolicus.”

Let us begin our journey through Romans chapter 6.

## **Relationship to the Sin Nature**

### **Romans 5:20- 6:4**

The chapter breaks in the Bible are not “inspired.” For the most part, they facilitate the Western mind’s need for organization. In the original languages, there were no chapter breaks.

Here is some insight into chapter breaks by GotQuestions.org:

“When the books of the Bible were originally written, they did not contain chapter or verse references. The Bible was divided into chapters and verses to help us find Scriptures more quickly and easily. It is much easier to find "John chapter 3, verse 16" than it is to find "for God so loved the world..." In a few places, chapter breaks are poorly placed and as a result divide content that should flow together. Overall, though, the chapter and verse divisions are very helpful.”

“The chapter divisions commonly used today were developed by Stephen Langton, an Archbishop of Canterbury. Langton put the modern chapter divisions into place in around A.D. 1227. The Wycliffe English Bible of 1382 was the first Bible to use this chapter pattern. Since the Wycliffe Bible, nearly all Bible translations have followed Langton’s chapter divisions.”

“The Hebrew Old Testament was divided into verses by a Jewish rabbi by the name of Nathan in A.D. 1448. Robert Estienne, who was also known as Stephanus, was the first to divide the New Testament into standard numbered verses, in 1555. Stephanus essentially used Nathan’s verse divisions for the Old Testament. Since that time, beginning with the Geneva Bible, the chapter and verse divisions employed by Stephanus have been accepted into nearly all the Bible versions.<sup>1</sup>”

Let us take a few minutes and read Romans chapter 6.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gotquestions.org/divided-Bible-chapters-verses.html>

**Relationship to the Sin Nature**  
**Romans 5:20- 6:4**

When we get to chapter 6, we need to drop back to chapter 5 to pick up the start of the argument, the context. It has to do with sin and grace. Because of Jesus' work on the cross, His being judged for sin, God is free to provide salvation and blessings in response to faith.

**Romans 5:20 The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin (literally: the sin/singular) increased, grace abounded all the more,**

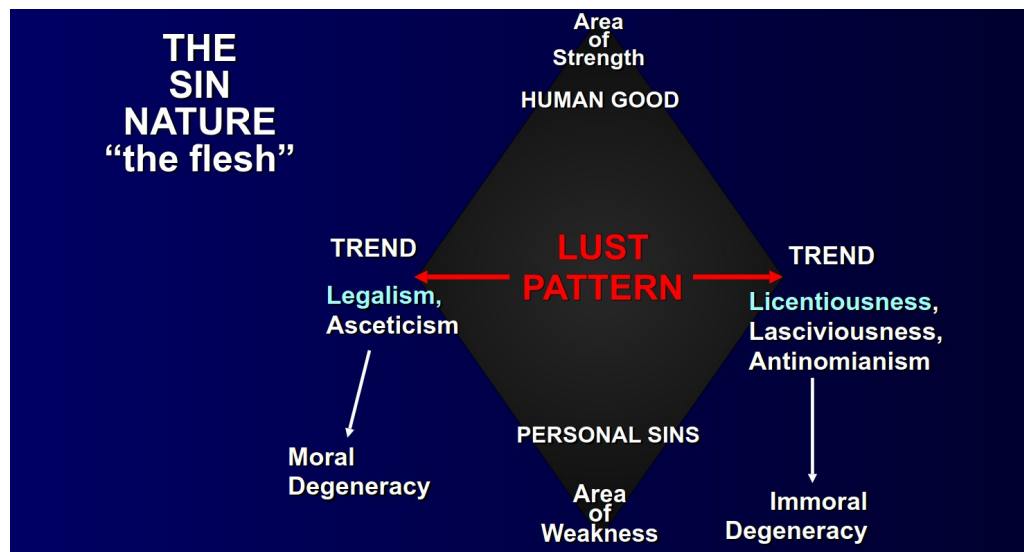
The Law is perfect. But it was never the purpose of the Law to save. It does amplify our awareness of sin. As a result of the Law, we know we cannot keep the Law. It should lead us to the understanding that spiritually we are bankrupt. Salvation, or as Paul puts it, justification, is the result of faith in Jesus and His work on the cross. But salvation goes beyond the moment of saving faith. It extends to our life as a Christian. But since we continue to have an active sin nature, we can also sin and be out of fellowship. God can support us even when we sin because of grace. Thieme calls it "logistical grace." Our sins were paid for. It is possible to continue in sin as a believer. God provides for our needs. However, sin does have consequences. God will discipline the believer until he acknowledges his sin and returns to walking by faith. That discipline becomes a need. While in status quo sinfulness, being out of fellowship continuously, we are not glorifying God. Divine Discipline is needed to "encourage" the believer to return to walking by faith. There is of course the sin unto death which results from a believer rejecting God's discipline and continuing in sin.

**Sin.** Literally, "the sin." The definite article was missed by the translation. The text does not say "sin" or "sins" plural. This whole section of Romans is focused on the sin nature. Chapter 6 is about our

## Relationship to the Sin Nature Romans 5:20- 6:4

relationship to the sin nature. It has been broken. The Old Man may be dead, but the sin nature is still active. We should not be following it.

In some verses Paul uses “the sin” as a “disposition” to sin. In others he has “personified” the sin nature. It exists through our DNA. So, it is in every cell of our body. Yet it acts like a person at times when we “yield” to the temptations from it. Below is an illustration of the sin nature.<sup>2</sup>



**Increased.** So how does the sin nature “increase?”

Have you ever told a child don’t do this? For instance, “Don’t touch the stove, it is hot.” For some children, touching the hot stove, all of a sudden, becomes the goal in life. Because there was a prohibition, the child wants to “push the envelope.” The Mosaic Law prohibited certain things. Now that we know the prohibitions against some specific sins, we are tempted to do those sins. Our sin natures whisper in our ears, “Try it. You’ll like it...”

“The sin” is the sin nature. “Increase” refers to the operation of the sin nature. When the Law came in, the sin nature was supercharged. An unbeliever is dominated by the sin nature. The question becomes which

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.deanbible.org/dbmfiles/slides/2022-Philippians-081b.pdf>

**Relationship to the Sin Nature**  
**Romans 5:20- 6:4**

part of the sin nature will dominate: the weak part resulting in sin or the strong part resulting in human good? But nothing that is spiritually good comes out of the sin nature. Nothing.

**Romans 5:21 so that, as sin reigned in death,  
even so grace would reign through  
righteousness to eternal life through Jesus  
Christ our Lord.**

**Sin.** Again it is “the sin.” The sin nature is personified here as “reigning.” We went over sin previously. For two different weeks. We learned that sin produced death. So here, the sin nature reigns in death. It is personified.

Even as sin increases, God’s grace is sufficient to guarantee eternal security. I have told stories of believers who knew they had eternal security and decided to continue in sin. The sin unto death is the result of ignoring God’s discipline over an extended period of time. Staying in fellowship, walking by faith is blessing in time and rewards in eternity.

**Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? Are we  
to continue in sin so that grace may increase?**

Paul asks this rhetorical question because there are those who think they can “cheat.” I can sin and get away with it. God will forgive me. I will always have eternal security. But there is divine discipline. There is also a loss of rewards and perhaps loss of fantastic blessings in time.

In Romans 6, Paul says we are changed. We are different. Something happened at the point of salvation. This change is very important for the believer to understand. That is why Paul is spending so much time carefully following the trail of events. Soon we will get to the Baptism of the Holy Spirit which places us into Christ.

## Relationship to the Sin Nature Romans 5:20- 6:4

**Continue.** This is a word from the Greek *meno*. We encountered this in the Gospel of John, especially in the Upper Room Discourse. It means to abide, to reside. The word here is *epimeno*. Yes, the dictionary meaning is to continue or persist. But having used a derivative of *meno*, this is more intimate. Perhaps even more intense. Wuest has a useful comment. He starts with a very literal translation of Romans 6:1.

“Shall we continue habitually to sustain the same relationship to the sinful nature that we sustain before we were saved, a relationship which was most cordial, a relationship in which we were fully yielded to and dependent upon that sinful nature, and all this as a habit of life?” The idea of habitual action comes from the use of the present subjunctive which speaks of habitual action. The fundamental question therefore is not with regard to acts of sin but with respect to the believer's relationship to the sinful nature. This is after all basic, acts of sin in his life being the result of the degree of his yieldedness to the sinful nature.<sup>3</sup>”

**Sin.** Literally, “the sin.” There is no preposition. There is no “in.” Literally, “...are we to continue the sin...” Or perhaps to indicate the source of the verb “to continue” as “reside” we could translate as “...are we to continue residing (in) the sin nature...”

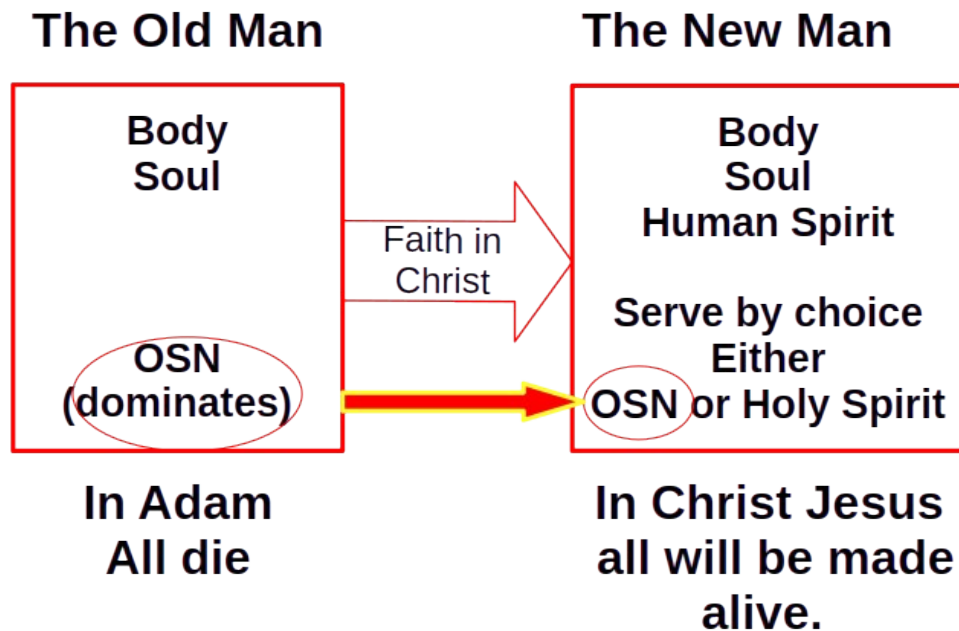
I will continue to repeat that chapter 6 is about the believer's relationship to the sin nature. Just looking at the usage of the noun *amartia*, there are 25 usages of the word sin in chapters 6-8. Sixteen are in chapter 6. Of those sixteen, all but two have the definite article as in “the sin (nature).” The verb is used once. Also note how many time references to death are found in this chapter. Remember, sin caused death, so they are intertwined. Death is used seven times. Dead and the verb are also used.

---

3 Wuest, K.S. (1966). Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament for the English reader : v.1. Romans in the Greek New Testament. p92

**Relationship to the Sin Nature**  
**Romans 5:20- 6:4**

Sin causes death. But the domination of the sin nature over us is broken. The Old Man is dead. Yet, we can go back to the sin nature voluntarily. Paul says, “Don’t do it!!!”



Old Man versus New Man  
OSN = Old Sin Nature

In Romans chapters 1-4, individual sins were mentioned resulting in Paul's declaration:

**Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**

But Paul opens chapter five with:

**Romans 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,**

**Relationship to the Sin Nature**  
**Romans 5:20- 6:4**

**Romans 5:2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.**

So we went from “all have sinned” to having been declared righteous (justified). The rhetorical question is “So can I continue in sin?” Paul’s response is an emphatic “May it never be!”

**Romans 6:2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?**

Now Paul starts to take us on a journey of death to sin. The unbeliever is dominated by the sin nature. The believer has “died to sin” through what is sometimes called “retroactive positional truth.” We know of position in Christ in time. But at the point of salvation we are baptized into “in Christ.” Part of that baptism is to be identified with Christ in His death. Sin was judged on the cross. Our sins were judged on the cross. And the domination of the sin nature is broken. We do not have to yield to temptation and return to serving the sin nature. We can walk by faith and can be empowered to do good works, works of righteousness.

I am reminded of some mp3 files containing recordings of L. S. Chafer’s lectures on spirituality. The topic of some of them are “the power to overcome evil.” Another, following topic, is “the power to do good.” So walking by faith dependence upon the Holy Spirit allows us to not sin and then to do (divine) good. The Holy Spirit works in us to accomplish this when we walk by faith.

**Died to sin.** The Old Man is dead. But the sin nature is alive and well in each of us. Often, I think of death as meaning that something stopped working. When we die physically, we stop breathing and our hearts stop beating. Non-rational. But it can also mean “separation.” Listen to Wuest



**Relationship to the Sin Nature**  
**Romans 5:20- 6:4**

again. “Death means separation. Physical death is the separation of a person from his body, spiritual death, the separation of the person from God.<sup>4</sup>” We have been taught that our physical death is the result of the separation of the soul from the body. Separation. The soul goes bye bye.

As the illustration shows, the bond to the sin nature has been broken. It has not been removed from our bodies. But we now have a choice. Slave to sin or slave to righteousness.

**Romans 6:3 Or do you not know that all of us  
who have been baptized into Christ Jesus  
have been baptized into His death?**

**Or do you not know.** Here is one of Paul’s “Know ye not (KJV).” Knowing who you are and knowing what assets we have “in Christ” to deal with any situation. The Bible contains principles to guide us through life. The Bible has answers.

Sometimes I cringe when I hear a believer say, “What would Jesus do?” Too often the person does not really understand what the Bible answers are. Instead the use some platitude like “Jesus loves everyone.” Tell that to the money changers in the temple (John 2:13-16). More aptly, “What does the Bible say.”

**Being baptized into His death.** This is an aspect of the Baptism by means of the Holy Spirit that we don’t normally talk about. We normally talk about position in Christ in time. But at the point of faith in Jesus, we are baptized (i.e. identified with Jesus) in His death on the cross.

**Romans 6:4 Therefore we have been buried  
with Him through baptism into death, so that  
as Christ was raised from the dead through**

---

4 Wuest, K.S. (1966). Wuest’s word studies from the Greek New Testament for the English reader : v.1. Romans in the Greek New Testament. p93

**Relationship to the Sin Nature**  
**Romans 5:20- 6:4**

**the glory of the Father, so we too might walk  
in newness of life.**

Herman has talked about the events at the end of Jesus' life: Death, burial, resurrection, ascension and session (DBRAS). Paul, in Romans 6:4 talks of the believer has having followed a similar course: buried and raised from the dead. Later on Paul says our Old Man was crucified and that we were resurrected. That is something to ponder during your quiet time. These events are not something we endured physically. No, but being "in Christ" this explains how the bonds between our soul and the sin nature were broken at the point of faith in Jesus.

The baptism mentioned here by Paul is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. It is surprising the people who consider this to be water baptism. To review. Paul is referring to Baptism of the Holy Spirit. This was accomplished by Jesus through the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit, placing us into the body of Jesus which is an identification with Jesus. The end result is that we are "in Christ" or have "positional truth." Because of this position in Christ we have what Jesus had. Just a couple of the many things include an intimate relationship with God the Father, inheriting our royal priesthood, being higher than angels. This baptism is unique for this dispensation. Position in Christ was not available in the Old Testament.

**Relationship to the Sin Nature**  
**Romans 5:20- 6:4**

Here is documentation of our new creation:

**2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.**

Here is documentation of our citizenship:

**Philippians 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;**

**Philippians 3:21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.**

**Relationship to the Sin Nature**  
**Romans 5:20- 6:4**

Here are some articles on difficulties being a Christian or Christian convert in a Muslim country. The first article is from the Council on Foreign Affairs. The second article is from the Voice of the Martyrs.

“Conversion by Muslims to other faiths is forbidden under most interpretations of sharia and converts are considered apostates (non-Muslims, however, are allowed to convert into Islam). Some Muslim clerics equate this apostasy to treason, a crime punishable by death. The legal precedent stretches back to the seventh century when Prophet Mohammed ordered a Muslim man to death who joined the enemies of Islam at a time of war. However, because apostasy is not a crime under the criminal codes of Muslim states, generally the murtad (apostate) is not subject to any criminal sanction. “The Quran contains a provision that says ‘he who has embraced Islam and then abandons it will receive punishment in hell after Judgment Day,” says M. Cherif Bassiouni, an expert on Islamic law at DePaul University College of Law, and therefore there is no punishment on earth. But traditional scholars, in Bassiouni’s opinion, misinterpreted early practices of the Prophet Mohammed and consider apostasy a crime punishable by death. They give religious converts a grace period of up to ten days to reconsider their decision before the judgment is entered.<sup>5</sup>”

---

5 <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/religious-conversion-and-sharia-law>

**Relationship to the Sin Nature**  
**Romans 5:20- 6:4**

**WHAT IT MEANS TO FOLLOW CHRIST IN PAKISTAN**

Because of Pakistan's blasphemy laws, Christians are at constant risk of being falsely accused of blaspheming Islam, the Quran or Muhammad, and they receive harsh punishments when convicted. Street evangelism is legal under Pakistani law, and several bold evangelists take advantage of the opportunity to share the gospel publicly. Many Christians live together in closed neighborhoods known as colonies, which provide a measure of security amid the widespread oppression. Still, several large-scale attacks have occurred in these areas in recent years, including some during Christmas. Most Christians are trapped in a cycle of poor education and poverty. Often, the only jobs they can get amount to indentured servitude in brick kilns or as street sweepers or sewage workers. Christians have been imprisoned for years under the country's blasphemy laws, and many of those have been killed or forced to permanently flee the country upon release from prison.

---

6 [https://www.persecution.com/globalprayerguide/pakistan/?\\_source\\_code=WHPB20C](https://www.persecution.com/globalprayerguide/pakistan/?_source_code=WHPB20C)