

**THE MEANING OF THE EXPRESSION  
'HAVING DIED TO SIN' IN ROMANS 6:1-14**

by

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## PREFACE

This dissertation is a product resulting from input and a concerted effort from various people without whom it would not have been possible to have it today as it stands.

I therefore find it imperative that I should express my sincere gratitude to the following people for their undying support and advice during my study: First I'll like to thank the Subject Librarians (UNISA) E. Burger and C. Zeelie for their services which enabled me to reach out to relevant study material with ease, my employer (SABC) for financing my studies and encouraging me to achieve my degree which is being regarded as an investment for the Corporation, my family (Florence my wife and kids Sara, Bungu and Nthabi) for their understanding when they spent several evenings without my company. Lastly and most importantly, I'll like to express my deepest appreciation to my study leader, Prof. J.H. Roberts, who paid so much interest in my study as if I was doing research for his own thesis. Very important to me is when he decided to take me along with him (as his burden) when he retired. His (personal) interest in my work to this extend has encouraged and enabled me in spite of very difficult moments to keep up the courage of completing this dissertation.



SUMMARY:

The letter to the Romans conveys a message of God's love and how through his grace, he has prepared a way to liberate mankind from a life of sin to a life of righteousness. But the way the message is presented, this grace may easily be misunderstood as an encouragement for people to live in sin. In Chapter 6:1-14, a concise but detailed outline of the message of the epistle unfolds into two main sections, namely, the Indicative and the Imperative. Key statements in these sections are: 'How can we who have died to sin, continue to live in it?' (6:2), and 'Consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God' (6:11). Failure to distinguish the separate meanings of these statements may lead to the conclusion that the pericope encourages libertinism.

In outlining the meaning of this expression, 'We have died to sin...', I hope to make a contribution for a better understanding of the message of this pericope, namely: The grace of God that enables believers to live a righteous life.

Key Terms:

1. Macro Structure
2. Micro Structure
3. Grace
4. Died to sin
5. Baptism
6. Union with Christ
7. Resurrection
8. Living to God
9. Slaves of righteousness
10. Morals

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION.

It happens sometimes that as we read the scriptures, we come across a verse that we perceive to be of fundamental importance to our understanding of the Bible. This happened to me when I read Romans 6:2. The wording of this verse, 'We, who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?', captured my understanding of what it means to be a Christian. Henceforth, I started regarding this verse, in the words of Boice (1992:649), as a classic statement of basic Bible doctrines. This verse forms part of a pericope that stretches from Romans 6:1-14 as will be seen later in this dissertation. This has attracted my attention and therefore the need to investigate more on the meaning of being a Christian as elaborated by Paul in this section of the epistle.

#### 1.1. Method of research.

The approach in this dissertation in investigating the meaning of this pericope, will be based on four main divisions outlined as follows:

- i. In this introductory section, 'The purpose of the Epistle', which has a direct bearing on the message contained in it (as will be seen later in 4.1), will be investigated. This will be of help in placing the pericope within its proper context.

- ii. In chapter 2, the macro-structure of the epistle itself, with special emphasis on the semantic division of the letter, will be looked at with a view to understanding the total message of the epistle and how chapter 6 fits in with the rest of the epistle.
- iii. Having a global view on the message of the epistle as a whole, an intensive survey of the theme itself, with an exegesis based on a semantic discourse analysis of 6:1-14, will follow in chapter 3.
- iv. Based on the research from all these three divisions, I will make a short analysis and draw my own conclusion on the meaning of 'We who have died to sin' in chapter 4.

## 1.2. The obscurity of the purpose of Romans.

As I indicated already, the purpose of this dissertation is an attempt to understand the message of Romans 6:2, namely, 'We who have died to sin' within the context of 6:1-14. This also makes it imperative that before handling this text, I should briefly look into the purpose of the epistle itself. Unfortunately, from as early as the Middle Ages, the Reformation, until today, scholars have not as yet come up with a clear consensus on the answer to this question (Jervis 1991:13-15). Nevertheless, three main streams of opinion on the purpose of Romans can be outlined as follows:

- i. The view that Romans originated as a theological treatise,
- ii. The view that Romans originated as a missionary letter,
- iii. The view that Romans originated as a reactionary letter.

#### 1.2.1. The view that Romans was a Theological treatise.

This view was dominant from the late Middle Ages until challenged for the first time by F.C.Baur. According to this view, Romans was a particularly well organized, complete and an effective doctrinal statement, i.e. one of Paul's most powerful theological discourses (Jervis 1991:14). The epistle was seen among others, by Luther, Melanchthon, Calvin, etc, as a systematic theological argument, expounding justification by faith in a methodical fashion (Jervis 1991:14-15). Two reasons are cited to support this view:

- i. The view that Romans was a circular letter.

According to this view, the letter is simultaneously addressed to the Christians at Rome, Ephesus, Thessalonica and an unknown congregation. From the 'Ephesians Hypothesis' and 'P46', there is an indication of the letter as emanating not from the Roman situation, but as a theological statement from the Galatian situation regarding the relations of the law and the gospel as well as the Gentile and the Jewish Christians. In other words, according to this view, Paul uses the real historical background of what happened in Galatia to formulate a theological statement for the Roman

congregation. It is against this background that Romans is regarded as a theological dogma emanating from a historical background in Galatia (Jervis 1991:17).

ii. The view that Romans was a polemical letter.

In this view, Paul is seen to be defending his gospel against his opponents especially, those in Jerusalem since he was about to leave for that city soon after writing this letter. According to this view, Romans is a comprehensive account of Paul's missionary work, his life and trials, his teachings, the history of his theological thinking, as a defence in anticipation of the persecution he would have to endure in Jerusalem at the hands of the Jews. In this way Romans is seen as a theological dogma or treatise (Jervis 1991:17-18).

1.2.2 The view that Romans was a missionary letter.

Another proposal as to the purpose of Romans is that Paul wrote this epistle to fulfil his missionary needs. Those needs could have been either, to introduce himself there, so that he could use this congregation as his missionary base for his work in Spain, or exonerate himself from certain false perceptions that they may have about his ministry in Rome (Jervis 1991:19).

### 1.2.3 The view that Romans was a reactionary letter.

Over against the theory that views Romans as a theological treatise, is the view that Romans is a letter reacting to real circumstances that were existing then in the city of Rome. Paul, in his reaction, introduces himself so as to secure a new base for his mission and at the same time he deals with issues arising in that particular church (Jervis 1991:17). However, other scholars like Wedderburn (1988:140-142) suggest a combination of various needs perceived by Paul both in his mission and in the congregation as can be seen in the following paragraphs.

#### i. Paul is addressing the relationship of the Jewish and the Gentile believers.

According to this view, Paul's goals in writing this epistle was to address the relationship of the two groups of believers (Jews and Gentiles) who co-existed in the Roman congregation. Stendahl (1976:1-38) regards these groups as the major reason why Paul wrote the epistle. Against this background then, he claims that Paul's purpose for writing the epistle was the need to make his readers understand 'how his mission fits into God's total plan and scheme' (Stendahl 1976:3).

As support for this view, Stendahl refers to the relationship of the Gentile and Jewish believers in chapters nine to eleven. Against this background, the theme of the epistle, namely, the relationship of the two communities and their coexistence in the mysterious plan of God (Stendahl 1976:4), should be found in these chapters, and not in chapters five to eight as claimed by other scholars on justification.

Vorster (1991:1-16), while acknowledging the historical nature of the letter emanating from the relationship between the Jews and the Gentile Christians, subscribes to a fresh approach, namely, the rhetorical nature of the letter. With this approach, Vorster identifies the problem in the interactions between the Jews and the Gentiles in the Roman congregation with regard to the law and faith, the majority and the minority, the strong and the weak, etc. This, Vorster claims, can lead us, even as he shows in his thesis (1991), to the reconstruction of the original purpose as to why Romans was written. Vorster identifies Paul's interest (based on the exigency) in the Roman congregation as the reason why Romans was written. In other words, he differs from scholars (eg. Jervis 1991::19, Stendahl 1976:1-38), who regard a purely historical setting in the congregation as the reason for Paul to have written the letter.



ii. A combination of reasons including the pastoral need.

I turn to agree with scholars who find more than one reason why Paul wrote this letter. My argument is based on views expressed in Wedderburn's (1988) work.

- In Romans we see Paul clarifying the gospel message to the Jewish Christians who may confuse it with the Jewish law.
  
- He also wanted to encourage the Gentile believers, the law free group, to appreciate the Jewishness of the gospel, something which Stendahl would call a rebuke against the Western tendency to interpret God's salvation. These Western scholars, claims Stendahl, display this tendency basing their arguments on Romans 7:1-25 and in that way overlooking the plan of God for all men to be saved, first the Jews, and then the Gentiles (Stendahl 1976:26-38).
  
- Paul's own needs, both for his trip to Jerusalem and especially, for the mission journey to Spain, were part of the reason as well for the epistle's coming into being.
  
- The last reason Wedderburn (1988) is Paul's defence for his teachings as mentioned earlier on.

#### 1.2.4 Conclusion.

Obviously, we are faced here with a great variance of ideas among scholars regarding the purpose for which Romans was written. I will not claim to come up with any solution to this old problem except to make my own conclusions based on these various opinions. As Jervis (1991:27) points out, every scholar has been influenced by the text such a scholar regards as a significant part of the epistle. This obviously makes it difficult for any consensus to be reached regarding the purpose for which Romans was written. Nevertheless, for my purpose, as indicated above, I see more than one reason why Paul wrote this epistle to the Romans.

In this dissertation, the view that Paul was reacting to a situation, thereby imparting a relevant message and taking the opportunity of this correspondence, preparing for his journey to Spain as well, is preferred. These very views, as expressed by scholars (1.2.1 - 1.2.3), find a sound support from the epistle itself:

- i. According to Romans 1:16, it is clear that Paul, having heard of the existence of these believers in Rome, had a burden to share with them the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. To achieve this goal, he set out an elaborate account of the message of God's love and grace and how through this grace God plans to save mankind from the wrath that awaits all sinful men.

ii. In Romans 15:22-29, Paul makes it clear that he is to undertake a journey to Spain. It is during this trip that he hopes to do more pastoral, evangelistic and counselling work among the Roman believers, before passing to this final destination, Spain. One may ask the question as to why would Paul write them a letter if he was going to see them anyway. The following could be the reason:

- In chapter 15:30-31, Paul himself doubts if he will survive the anticipated persecution in Jerusalem. This suggests that he saw a need to respond to these believers' needs since he was not certain that he would see them.

iii. Paul's teaching on the relationship of the law and grace in 2:17-5:21, including 9:1-11:32, justifies Stendahl and Vorster's views that he was addressing the situation of the two groups, Jewish and Christian believers. The difference of approach in these scholars, is that while Vorster regards the cause as both Paul's interest to put across a specific message, as well as the exigency that existed there, Stendahl regards the necessity to explain the purpose of the letter as an exposition to explain the salvation of Israel.

Without going further into details, (since this is not the objective of this dissertation), the undisputable point is that the co-existence of the two groups in this congregation, with a potential of conflict in terms of the right approach to understanding God's plan of salvation- from the grace or law point of view- was Paul's point of concern. Hence a great consensus (as will be seen later in the exegesis of 6:1 in 3.2.1. below) on the purpose for chapter six. This strengthens my view (as will be seen later) that chapter six strongly reflects the total message of the epistle. In conclusion, the need that Paul saw to clarify the meaning and implication of God's salvation to sinners through this epistle (triggered by the possibility of confusion raised by the co-existence of the Jewish and the Gentile Christians) is strongly reflected in the sixth chapter. This will have an impact on how one understands the meaning of Paul's argument: We have died to sin, how can we can live in it any longer.

## CHAPTER 2.

## THE MACRO STRUCTURE OF ROMANS.

This dissertation focuses on the message of the sixth chapter of the letter to the Romans. Nevertheless, it is essential at this point to analyse the structure of the whole epistle so that the complete message of the epistle can be helpful in outlining the meaning of the expression, 'We have died to sin' in Romans 6:1-14. In other words, the interpretation of 6:1-14, especially colon 4, will be done within the correct context, thereby rendering a better understanding of the meaning of this expression.

## 2.1. Paul and the Greek letter-pattern.

Romans is one of Paul's writings which is the closest to an organized and carefully constructed treatise (Ziesler 1989:33). It is however a genuine letter which, though long, follows the epistolary conventions of the time. The Greek papyrus letters that were discovered, give enough evidence of the existence of the stereotyped pattern of letter-writing that was popularly used in the times of St. Paul. Paul's letters are not literary, but are real letters after the pattern of a Greek letter. The difference between a literary piece of work and a letter is that while a literary work is meant for the public, a letter is meant for the addressee, it is confidential, it is not meant for the public (Deissmann 1910:218-34).

Romans too, though very long by virtue of circumstances surrounding its birth, is a letter which got the epistolary status when the church combined and copied these letters for use in the world-wide Christendom (Deissmann 1910).

Having said that, it is important to note that Paul modifies this letter-pattern by extending some of the elements within the pattern and adds some formal features such as the parenesis, the apostolic parousia, prayer and personal greetings.

Du Toit (1985:5-9) agrees on Paul's letters displaying a similarity with the Greek letter but has gone further to indicate that Paul's letters 'display signs of having been influenced by the Semitic letter-style and by the synagogue/Christian worship' (1985:7). Du Toit's viewpoint, which is generally acceptable on the division of Pauline letters, (Roberts 1986:187-188), can be summarized as follows:

- Letter opening,
- Formula valetudinis,
- Body-opening
- Body
- Body-closing
- Closing

The detailed structure as it has a bearing on my dissertation will be dealt with in paragraph 2.3 below. Nevertheless, Roberts (1986:187-188) cautions that this analysis and some of the assumptions behind it can be criticized at various points. As examples of such areas, where questions must still be answered, he cites the equitability of the Greek charein-greeting with the Pauline thanksgiving: whether thanksgiving and prayer should not be distinguished and, the need to pay attention to the Aramaic letters found in biblical literature wherein examples of Pauline letter conventions can be found. He further points to the transitional material which, as will be seen later in 2.2, has a bearing on the macro-structure of this epistle.

## 2.2. The approach in structuring Romans.

The work of Louw (1979a; 1979b) will form the basis of my approach in the macro-structuring of the epistle. He has divided the epistle into themes and sub-themes following a semantic discourse analysis method. This approach differs from that by other scholars, (Steel & Thomas 1963; Morris 1988; Cranfield 1985; etc,) who also divided the epistle into themes and sub-themes, but their works are not based on a semantic discourse analysis. However, Louw himself did not complete the analysis of the epistle in that after dividing it, he did not show how the whole epistle links together. It was therefore necessary in this dissertation to link the different themes and sub-themes, with the hope of bringing the clarity and meaning of this epistle to the fore.

As a guide to the macro structure that follows, a few remarks regarding the method used in this work to analyse the epistle are essential. Several scholars have identified Romans 1:16-17 as the introductory material into the letter body of the epistle (Ziesler 1989:33; Steele & Thomas 1963:7-11; Morris 1988:33). However, a move towards acknowledging transitional material can be traced as early as 1:8. Black (1973:25), referring to Paul's Thanksgiving in 1:8, says, 'as early in his epistle as this point, St. Paul introduces its central theme'. Cranfield (1985:18) also claims that vv 16-17 in chapter one, properly belong to the paragraph which began with v.8.

However, a more elaborate and detailed study on transitional techniques by Roberts (1986:187-199) illuminates the situation even better. He maintains that transitional material may occur within any of the following: a Thanksgiving, an eulogy, a combined Thanksgiving/prayer period, a prayer period and in the body itself. He then points out the yet unexplored group of transitional techniques occurring immediately after the prayer period and just before the body opening in, amongst others, Romans. In Romans, these transitional materials represent two types of techniques, namely: expressions of a personal nature (1:11-12 and 1:13-15) and a credal statement (1:16-17). These techniques and their place within the structure of the epistle, can be seen in the macro structure below.



Roberts (1986) has conclusively shown that clusters of transitional material occur in the Pauline corpus wedged in between the letter opening and the letter-body. His study results in the semantic analysis of the epistle in this dissertation being different from that by Ziesler (1989:35), and Steel & Thomas (1963:7-11).

2.3.The macro structure of Romans

Pericope	Theme	Reference
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===== A. LETTER OPENING.

1	Letter opening.....1:1-7
---	--------------------------

┌ B. TRANSITIONAL MATERIAL LEADING TO THE LETTER BODY.

	2	Transitional periods...1:8-17	
	2.1	Thanksgiving.....1:8	
		└──────────┘	
	2.2	Prayer.....1:9-10	
	2.3	Discrete periods.....1:11-17	
	2.3.1	A desire to visit.....1:11-12	
		└──┘	
	2.3.2	His plans to visit.....1:13-15	
	2.3.3	A credal statement of	
		└──────────┘	
		faith leading to	
		the letter body.....1:16-17	

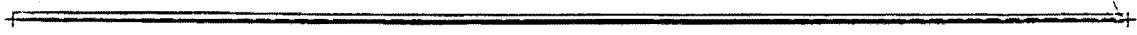
|| >C. SIN AND JUDGEMENT.

- |  |  |   |                              |    |  |  |
|--|--|---|------------------------------|----|--|--|
|  |  | 3 | Man turned away from God     |    |  |  |
|  |  |   | to worship idols.....1:18-23 | └─ |  |  |
|  |  | 4 | Man became totally           |    |  |  |
|  |  |   | corrupt because God          |    |  |  |
|  |  |   | left him to do as he         |    |  |  |
|  |  |   | pleases.....1:24-32          | └─ |  |  |
|  |  | 5 | God's judgement is fair      |    |  |  |
|  |  |   | and just.....2:1-6           | └─ |  |  |
|  |  | 6 | Personal state of            |    |  |  |
|  |  |   | affairs is in vain...2:17-29 | └─ |  |  |
|  |  | 7 | Being a Jew is not           |    |  |  |
|  |  |   | an excuse for God's          |    |  |  |
|  |  |   | fair judgement.....3:1-18    | └─ |  |  |

|| >D. FAITH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS.

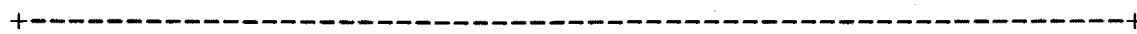
- |  |  |    |                            |    |  |  |
|--|--|----|----------------------------|----|--|--|
|  |  | 8  | Faith, and not the law,    |    |  |  |
|  |  |    | brings about               |    |  |  |
|  |  |    | righteousness.....3:19-31  | └─ |  |  |
|  |  | 9  | Abraham is our example     |    |  |  |
|  |  |    | of righteousness           |    |  |  |
|  |  |    | through faith.....4:1-12   | └─ |  |  |
|  |  | 10 | The promise to him was     |    |  |  |
|  |  |    | based on faith.....4:13-25 | └─ |  |  |

			11	Only righteousness	
				brings about peace.....5:1-11	---+
			12	Sin results in death,	+-----+
				righteousness in life...5:12-21	---+



|| +->E. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE GRACE OF GOD.

			13	Believers are dead to		
				sin and alive to God...6:1-14	---+	
			14	No more servants of sin	+-----+	
				but of righteousness...6:15-23	---+	
			15	The law is effective		
				to the living.....7:1-6	---+ +-----+	
			16	Sin (not the law), is	+---+	
				the cause of evil.....7:7-25	---+	
			17	Believers are no longer	+---+	
				under the law of		
				sinful nature.....8:1-17	<-----+	
			18	The future glory is a		
				consolation to believers		
				in their war against		
				sinful nature which		
				causes suffering.....8:18-30	---+	
			19	In these sufferings,	+-----+	
				believers have God on		
				their side.....8:31-39	---+	



||.||

|| ||

|| . || → F. ISRAEL'S POSITION IN THIS GRACE.

|| . ||

.	20	Paul is concerned over			
.		the position of Israel			
.		in this doctrine.....9:1-5	┌──────────┐		
.	21	God's sovereignty to			
.		choose whom he is to			
.		justify.....9:6-18	└──┘		
.	22	This prerogative of			
.		God is reflected in			
.		prophets.....9:19-29	└──┘		
.	23	The Jews seek the			
.		righteousness of God			
.		from the law instead			
.		of faith in Christ.....9:30-10:4	└──┘		
	24	Faith is the only			
		method to put people			
		right with			
		God.....10:5-13	└──┘		
	25	Israel did hear the			
		Gospel but turned it			
↳		down.....10:14-21	└──┘		
	26	God chose a few.....11:1-10	└──┘		
	27	Jews have rejected the			
		Gospel so that Gentiles,			
		and in the end, Jews also,			
		may be saved.....11:11-24	└──┘		

- || 28 God's secret truth to  
 || save Jews and  
 || Gentiles.....11:25-32—  
 || 29 He deserves praise.....11:33-36—

↳G. THE FRUIT OF THE GRACE OF GOD IN A DAILY LIFE.

- || 30 The commitment to serve  
 || God, is the commitment  
 || to serve each other.....12:1-8—  
 || 31 The Christian's behaviour  
 || towards fellowman.....12:9-12—  
 || 32 His attitude towards  
 || civil authorities.....13:1-7—  
 || 33 His love for his  
 || fellowman.....13:8-10—  
 || 34 Christ must find us  
 || ready when he comes back 13:11-14—  
 || 35 No one should make  
 || himself a judge over  
 || his brother because God  
 || alone will judge.....14:1-12—  
 || 36 Your behaviour should  
 || not be a stumbling  
 || block to a brother.....14:13-23—  
 || 37 There must be a healthy  
 || relationship among the  
 || people of God.....15:1-13—

↳ H. LETTER CLOSING: FUTURE PLANS AND GREETINGS.

38	The nature of Paul's calling.....15:14-21---+	
39	Plans to visit the readers.....15:22-33---+	
40	His final greetings to specific people.....16:1-16---+	
41	He reiterates his message to the Romans.....16:17-20<---+	
42	Greetings from his companions.....16:21-23---+	
43	Doxology: May the God of salvation help to keep their faith.....16:24-27---+	

On a simplified structure, Romans can be outlined in eight main sections as follows:

Section	Pericope	Theme	Reference
A	1	Letter opening.....	1:1-7
B	2	Transitions to letter body.....	1:8-17
C	3-7	Sin and Judgement.....	1:18-3:18
D	8-12	Faith and righteousness...	3:19-5:21
E	13-19	Practical implications of the grace of God.....	6:1-8:39
F	20-29	Israel's position in this grace.....	9:1-11:36
G	30-37	The fruit of the grace of God in a believer's daily life.....	12:1-15:13
H	38-43	Letter closing; plans and greetings.....	15:14-16:27



#### 2.4. How the different parts of Romans fit together.

To get a clear understanding of the message of the epistle, which in turn will help me interpret pericope 13, it is imperative to indicate how the different parts as shown in 2.3. fit together.

##### 2.4.1. Letter opening and ending (Section A 1:1-7).

In pericope 1, Paul introduces himself and his ministry, while sending greetings to the Roman congregation. This pericope links up with pericopes 38-43, which is the conclusion of the epistle. In this conclusion he mentions his future plans and he passes greetings and blessings to his readers.

##### 2.4.2. The Body of the letter.

The Body of the letter consists of six sections as can be seen below:

###### 2.4.2.1. Transition: Themes leading to the letter-body (Section B - 1:8-17)

Pericope 2 consists of transitional material as outlined in 2.2 above. Louw (1979b, :143), regards this pericope as part of the letter body. However, recent studies (Roberts 1986:187-197) have shown that the transitional material form the introduction to the letter-body. This will include the whole of pericope 2 as indicated in 2.2 and 2.3.

According to this latest understanding, pericope 2, which is a theme of the teaching to follow in pericope 3ff (on justification by faith in Jesus Christ), relates more to the letter body than it does to the letter-opening (pericope 1). Hence in the macro structure, it is linked to pericopes 3-37.

#### 2.4.2.2. Sin and Judgement (Section C - 1:18-3:18).

In pericopes 3-7 Paul expands the teaching on the doctrine of Sin and Judgement. According to the structural analysis in this study, this whole section can be summarized as follows:

In pericopes 3-4 (1:18-1:32) he explains the guilt of man.

In pericopes 5-6 (2:1-3:18) he tells of God's righteous judgement in the face of man's guilt.

In pericope 7 (3:1-18), he summarizes the message of pericopes 3-6 by pointing to the fairness of God's judgement which disregards man's status.

Summary: Section C spells out God's righteous judgement over against man's guilt.

#### 2.4.2.3. Faith and righteousness (Section D - 3:19-5:21).

In pericope 8 (3:19-31), faith, and not the law, is given as a basis for righteousness. This pericope is further explained in, and linked to pericopes 9-10.

Pericopes 9-10 (4:1-25) is an elaboration of pericope 8 by citing Abraham's righteousness as an example.

Pericopes 11-12 (5:1-5:21) link from pericopes 8-10 and present the results and implications of the righteousness of God through justification by faith which is peace, right standing with God and life, whereas lack of it (which means man is still in his guilt of sin: pericope 3-4), results in death because God's judgement is just, it won't leave this guilt of man go unpunished.

Summary: Section D links back to back with section C above. In C Paul speaks of 'Sin and Judgement' which closely relate to Faith and righteousness in D. Here in D, Paul tells of God's love for man in that he (God) does not expect man to work out his own righteousness through the law, but by faith. This is God's grace.

#### 2.4.2.4. Practical Implications of the grace of God

(Section E - 6:1-8:39)

The practical implications of sections C and D, namely; the failure of man to achieve his righteousness through his own effort (section C) and the affordability of righteousness made available through faith in Christ (section D), is outlined in this section, E.

**Pericopes 13-14: (6:1-6:23).** Believers have died to sin and must live their lives to God as the new Master, no longer slaves to sin. In the course of outlining the principle of justification by grace, Paul realizes that his statement in 5:20 (that where sin abounds, grace increases all the more), might have provoked a possible misconception on exactly how this grace of God must be understood by his hearers. He therefore pauses from the flow of his argument on the indicative act of God in justifying mankind, and pays his attention to concisely clarifying the implication of this grace, which is: not to lead believers to sin but to help them serve God in stead. In clarifying this concept of grace, and placing it within its proper context, he ultimately presents what turns out to be the summary of the whole epistle: *God has acted out of his own will and love to justify man* (the indicative part of the epistle) *so that man can in turn, as a free person no longer under the rule of sin, serve God* (the imperative part of the epistle).

In this way chapter 6 (which is divided into two pericopes, 13 and 14), can be divided into two major sections: the indicative part, 6:1-10, and the imperative part, 6:11-23. This division reflects the overlay of the whole epistle, which divides into these two major parts: the indicative and the imperative, although the indicative has this chapter (pericopes 13-14) interrupting with an imperative section already in 6:11-23. In this way, this sub-section (pericopes 13-14) is a reflection of the whole letter-body in both its structure and message. This argument is based on the fact that although the indicative pericopes (of the whole epistle) are interrupted by imperatives already occurring in pericopes 13-14, nevertheless the greater part of the first 29 pericopes largely represent the indicative part of the message of the epistle while pericopes 30-37, the practical implications of that indicative act of God (pericopes 3-29), forms the imperative part of Romans. This similar pattern is observable in pericope 13 as indicated above. Hence the dotted line which links these pericopes (13-14) with the rest of the letter-body of the epistle. A detailed analysis of pericope 13 itself will be dealt with later in this study.

Pericopes 15-17 (7:1-8:17) is a further analysis of the fruit of the grace of God and thereby is linked to 13-14 above. Here Paul illustrates the function of the law, its failure and the liberation of those justified from the law of sin and death. The justified cannot be accused by anyone since they have been justified by the righteous judge himself.

Pericopes 18-19 (8:18-38) confirm the reality of the result of God's grace expressed in 13-17: Those who depend on this means of righteousness and accept it, are guaranteed a right and joyful relationship with God beyond all kinds of suffering. In this sense, section E is a continuation and elaboration of the previous sections, C and D.

2.4.2.5. Israel's position in relation to this grace (Section F -9:1-11:36).

In pericope 20, Paul introduces his concern over Israel, after which he continues to show how God's sovereignty (pericopes 21-22) over against Israel's stubbornness (pericopes 23-26) works out the salvation of all people, both Jews and Gentiles (pericopes 25-26). The whole section is an application of the previous sections, C, D and E to the position of Israel which must also be saved through the same pattern, faith in Jesus (Stendahl 1976:26-38) and not the law.

2.4.2.6. The Fruit of the grace of God in a believer's daily life (Section G -12:1-15:13).

In pericopes 30-37 (12:1-15:13) which (together with 6:11-23 as indicated above), forms the imperative part of the epistle, Paul applies the teaching of justification by faith to the daily lives of believers.

In pericope 30, he cites the implications of being justified by faith in Jesus, viz: The basis for a Christian behaviour. This he elaborates (in pericopes 31-33) by examples of behaviour towards fellow-man, attitudes to authorities, love for fellow-man, etc. In pericope 34, he gives the motivation of these pericopes and further points out the need for a harmonious relationship amongst brethren in pericopes 35-37.

**Summary:** Section G, as a practical application of the doctrine of salvation as outlined in sections C, D, E and F, links directly with these sections as a climax of the development of Paul's line of argument in this epistle.

#### 2.4.2.7. Letter closing (Section H - 15:14-16:27).

Just as Paul opened the epistle with greetings (Section A), so does he conclude his message with personal greetings to the congregation.

#### 2.4.3. Conclusion.

In short the whole epistle to the Romans can be summarized as follows: After an introductory section, Paul explains the doctrine of justification by faith in Jesus. In the course of his explanation, he pauses to rectify any possible misconception that may develop from his teaching on justification (5:20). That rectification, in chapter 6, sums up the whole epistle.

That is the part where this dissertation focuses on, especially the first fourteen verses (pericope 13). This chapter (6), is actually forming part of what Polhill (1976:425-434) refers to as the 'content of a relationship that emanates from man's justification expounded in previous chapters'.

According to my analysis in this study, this is section E. Having gone through all the explanation of God's act to justify man, and briefly having indicated some positive results of this justification, Paul goes further to point out the position of Israel in spite of their rejection of the message. The climax of this argument is the parenthesis, the practical implications on a daily life and behaviour of a believer. This is being done in section G (12:-15:13). Just as he started by greetings, he closes his letter by greetings as well.



## CHAPTER 3:

## A SEMANTIC DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF ROMANS 6:1-14.

In the previous chapter, an attempt was made to summarize the basic message of this epistle as follows: God has acted in love and grace through the death of Jesus, an act which places believers under the obligation to live their lives to him. This is outlined in Paul's teachings (Rom 1:8-15:13) on the necessity, the nature, the effects and the practical application of the righteousness of God. In Romans 6:1-14 the focus is on the description of the effects of gratuitous justification (Shedd 1967:145). The central theme of the pericope is: Believers, by virtue of their union with Christ in his death, have also died to sin. It is therefore illogical for them to continue living in it; instead, they should live their lives to God. The meaning of this pericope is dependent on understanding the question stated at the beginning of the pericope (in colon 4): 'We, who have died to sin, how can we live in it any longer?'. The meaning of this statement is the focus of my research in this dissertation.

In order to determine this meaning, a detailed investigation on 6:1-14 is to be undertaken. The first step will be to deal with the overall structural analysis and a brief overview of the clusters and their relationships. Secondly, an exegesis of problem areas related to the theme, 'We who have died to sin', approached from a semantic discourse analysis, will follow on each cluster.

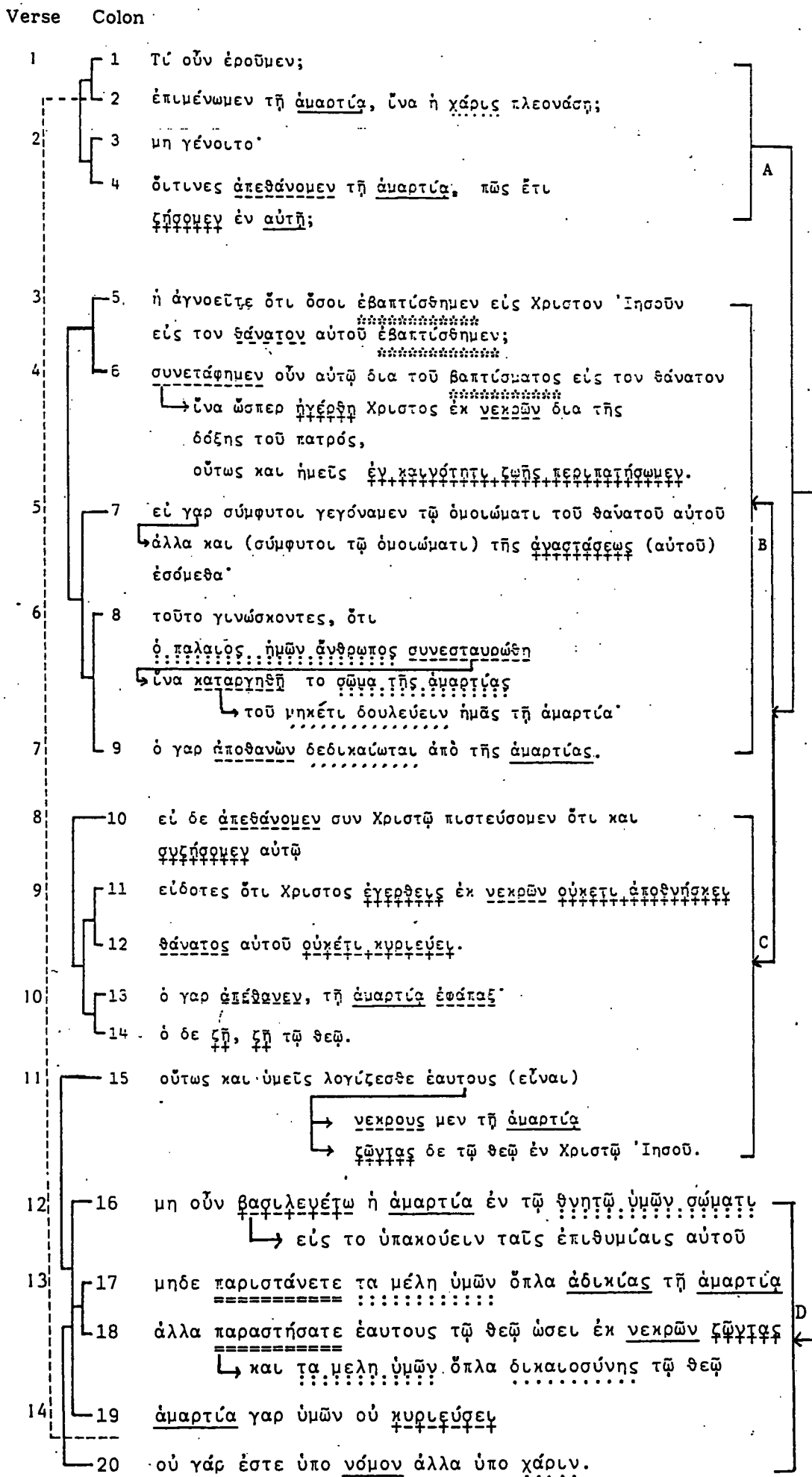
### 3.1 The Scheme of Romans 6:1-14

The meaning of the theme of this dissertation can best be outlined within the context of the whole pericope which stretches from verses 1 to 14. As a basis for our analysis of the pericope's structure, the work of Pelser (1981) was found to be better suited to our purpose than that of Louw (1979a,b), Fryer (1979) and Kruger (1983) for the following reasons:

Fryer and Kruger do discuss the discourse analysis of some parts of Romans but excluded chapter 6. Secondly, their works do not reflect on the whole of the epistle, making it difficult to determine the semantic view of the epistle and how pericope 13 fits within the whole epistle. While Louw (1979a,b) did a good and extensive work on the discourse analysis of the whole epistle, he too failed in that he did not go a step further to show how the different pericopes semantically link together to present a complete picture of the epistle. Unlike the afore-mentioned works, in this study, as can be seen in 2.4 above, the semantic relationship of the different pericopes including how pericope 13 fits within the whole of the epistle, is investigated and dealt with.

The following diagram outlines the structure of the pericope containing the divergences outlined above:

## DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF ROMANS 6:1-14



As indicated in the opening of this paragraph (3.1), the work of Pelser was found to be better suited to our purpose than that of Louw. Besides the differences mentioned above, the following reasons are applicable in terms of Pelser and Louw's works on pericope 13:

- Pelser deals specifically with this pericope whereas Louw deals with the whole of the epistle and therefore, does not necessarily pay special attention to the passage.
- While Louw did identify clusters and marked them, he however did not reflect their semantic relationship in his schematic presentation.
- Pelser on the other hand, links clusters he identifies with coherent themes running through colons 1-20, thereby presenting a better perspective of the pericope.
- Pelser makes it easier for the reader to identify concepts, ideas, words with similarities by marking them with symbols, something Louw does not do.
- Much of the detailed sub-division of colons (necessary for Louw's colon analysis) is eliminated in Pelser's work, resulting in an overview better suited to the purpose of this study, which is: to determine the semantic relations of colons and clusters of the pericope, thereby enabling us to determine the meaning of 'We who have died to sin'.

- Pelser's division of the pericope into clusters is clearly demarcated. The relationship of these clusters (as analysed in 3.1.1 below) is clearly demarcated by the semantic relationship to one another.

I must mention however, that even Pelser's schema has a few areas where I saw a need for modification. Thus the schema set out above, (see page 33), differs from that by Pelser in two respects: Firstly, the semantic relations of colons 5-9 are understood differently from how Pelser linked them. Following Boice's (1992:666) view, namely, that verse 5 (colon 7) states a thesis that is further elaborated in verses 6-7 (colons 8-9), I find colon 7 to be more closely linked semantically to colons 8 and 9 than to colons 5-6. Secondly, colon 15, which is already part of the appeal for a new life, links better semantically with the colons grouped in cluster D rather than those in cluster C. The substantiation for these divergences will become clear in the following paragraphs.

### 3.1.1. An overview of the pericope's cluster division.

The pericope (as reflected in the structure above), can be subdivided into four clusters, namely:

- Cluster A, colons 1-4: The question about the relation of sin and grace: Grace does not lead to sin and believers can no longer live in it.

- Cluster B, colons 5-9: Union with Christ results in union with both his death and resurrection,
- Cluster C, colons 10-14: Crucifixion with Christ implies resurrection to a new life.
- Cluster D, colons 15-20: An appeal and a motivation for a new life unto God.

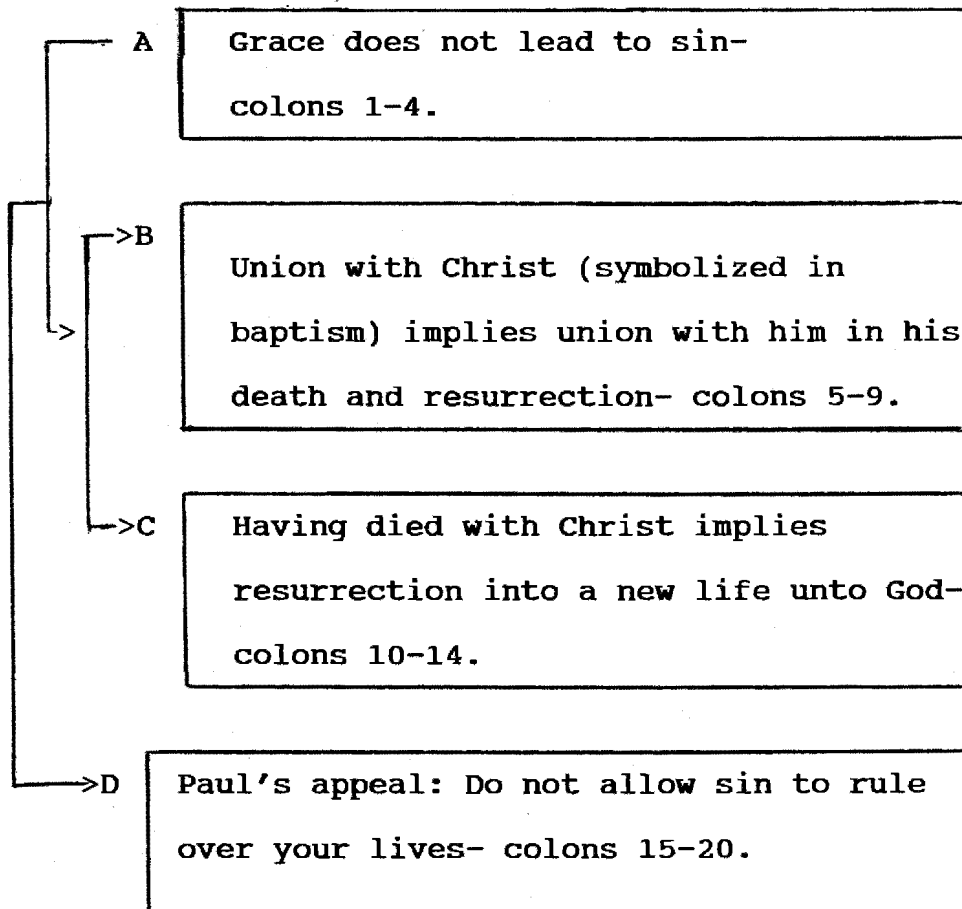
An overview of these clusters and how they semantically relate to one another, can summarily be outlined as follows:

In cluster A a question is raised regarding the relation of sin and grace. An initial answer is given in a vigorous statement, 'By no means' because those who have died to sin can no longer live in it. Two elaborating sections (set in parallel), in clusters B and C, follow immediately after cluster A.

The pericope closes (in cluster D) with imperatives which are based on the whole argument developed in clusters A, B and C. This cluster, D, is restating the initial answer (previously stated in the form of a question in colon 4), and in the form of an appeal and motivation, states that believers should no longer live in sin but in stead, live for God (Dunn 1988:305-306).

## 3.1.2 Summary.

On a simplified structure, the pericope may be represented as follows:



In conclusion, colons 1-4 constitute cluster A.

The reason for this demarcation is because these four colons semantically deal with the same theme, namely, a rhetoric question which is raised in colons 1-2 and answered in the form of another question in colons 3-4.

The question is whether grace leads to sin, and the answer, stated in the form of a question, is 'By no means', because those who have died to sin can no longer live in it.

**Cluster B:** Colons 5-9 constitute an explanation (Pelser, 1981:102, Louw 1979b:76) for the answer in the second part of cluster A. This is done through the application of the sacrament of baptism and its implications.

**Cluster C:** Colons 11-14 constitute a theme which is a parallel definition of 'died to sin' (as in cluster B) but from another perspective, namely, the nature of Christ's death, resurrection and subsequent implications which is: that he now lives a new glorified life in which sin rules no more.

**Cluster D:** Colons 15-20 are imperatives based on the whole argument developed in clusters A, B and C. Louw (1979b:76) differs with both Pelsers' and my structure in that he regards colons 10-20 as belonging semantically to the same cluster (C). His argument is that in this unit (colons 10-20), Paul continues his argument in a twofold manner, the conditional (sub-cluster a) and the imperative (sub-cluster b). The conditional in this case is the fact that dying with Christ also implies living with him, while the imperative is the fact that believers cannot continue to live in sin but instead, to live for God. Louw's argument is correct in as far as identifying the conditional and imperative parts of this passage is concerned.



But what his argument fails to acknowledge is the fact that not only colons 10-15 (marked 'a' in his schematic presentation) are conditional statements, but the rest of the first part of this pericope (colons 1-14) is indeed the indicative part of the message. Colons 10-14 are actually a further elaboration of the nature of the act of God through the death of Christ. This is the indicative part of the Gospel, whereas the colons that follow, 15-20, imperatively address the believer's behaviour on a daily basis. These colons (15-20), form a totally separate cluster which relates semantically with the rest of the pericope.

My argument is substantiated by Pelsler in his analysis of these two clusters (C and D). He points out (1981:102-104) that Jesus' death (colons 11-14), which he died once and for all and now lives a new life unto God, forms one unit, cluster C, where as colons 15-20 address the believers on the morals of their lives and actually, make an appeal and motivation for a new life (cluster D). For these reasons, colons 11-14 and 15-20 reflect two clusters clearly distinct from each other, namely, cluster C and D.

With the overview of the clusters set out above in mind, this study will now concentrate on the exegesis of specific problem areas on a semantic discourse analysis approach.

### 3.2 Exegesis of Romans 6:1-14 based on the semantic discourse analysis of the four clusters.

The exegesis will be approached as follows:

Each cluster will be discussed on the basis of the semantic relations of the colons within it, and the relation of the cluster to the rest of the other clusters within the pericope. The result should be a better explanation of the meaning of Paul's statement in colon 2: 'We, who have died to sin, how can we live in it any longer?'

#### 3.2.1 Does grace lead to sin? Cluster A (colons 1-4).

##### 3.2.1.1 The semantic analysis of cluster A.

Cluster A consists of four colons (1-4). The cluster can further be subdivided into two sub-sections, namely: colons 1-2 and 3-4. In the first sub-section Paul rhetorically asks a question (Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν; ἐπιμένωμεν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ, ἵνα ἡ χάρις πλεονάσῃ;). What shall we say then, shall we remain in sin that grace may abound?) and again in the form of a question in the second sub-section, he answers that question as indicated above.

He presents his rhetorical question as a logical follow up on the statement he made in 5:20, 'But where sin increased, grace increased all the more,'. It is also noteworthy to realize that already in 3:5ff, he had to defend himself against the accusation that he was inviting libertinism (Sanday & Headlam 1895:155; Kaesemann 1980:165).

In summary, colons 1 and 2 comprise of questions which are raised by the climactic conclusion of 5:20-21 (Dunn 1988:305). In other words, Paul, in a diatribe style, a question and answer style of presentation which he must have acquired during training (Sawyer 1987:51), asks a question which he knows could be in the minds of his opponents because of what he said earlier on, namely, that grace abounds where sin increases.

These questions (in colons 1 and 2) are answered in colons 3-4. Here, Paul answers the question he referred to above with a very strong negative  $\mu\eta\ \gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\iota\tau\omicron$  (By no means) (6:2). This is a familiar formula in Paul's contemporary diatribe. It conveys a strong repudiation or denial of what has just been stated (Black 1973:54,86), namely, the possible conclusion by Paul's hearers that the increase of grace where sin abounds, implies that one could therefore continue to live in sin to invite more grace. This denial is followed by an explanation in the form of a question, 'We who have died to sin, how can we live in it any longer?' (6:2b).

The emphasis on the pronoun, <sup>“</sup>οἱ <sup>”</sup>τινες, will be dealt with later (3.2.1.2.i). Nevertheless, this question, ('We, who have died to sin, how can we live in it any longer?'), is of fundamental importance since it forms the central question being addressed in this dissertation, namely, what did Paul mean when stating that believers have died to sin.

In conclusion, cluster A (colons 1-4), explains the position of a believer in the form of a question and an answer: A person who has died to sin, is freed from continuing to serve it. There is therefore no justification to continue living in sin (Pelser 1981:104). The statement in colon 4 needs further explanation and this is provided for in clusters B and C in colons 5-9 and 10-14 respectively (Low 1979b:75; Pelser 1981:103). These clusters will be dealt with in 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 below.

### 3.2.1.2 The meaning of 'We who have died to sin'

After the semantic analysis of this cluster has been outlined above, it is proper at this stage to engage in an exegesis of some concepts related to the theme of this study. According to Sanday & Headlam (1895:155) and Kaesemaan (1980:165), Paul was prompted to state this rhetorical question by the possible false conclusion that the contention about the increase of grace where sin abounds, leads to libertinism.

According to Vorster (1991:7), the people who could easily make such a conclusion would be the Jewish believers in this congregation. This, he argues, can be traced in the conflict that existed between the Jewish and the Christian believers as displayed throughout the epistle.

Voster argues that in chapters 1-4 Paul addresses the Jewish Christians while in 5-8 he addresses the Gentile Christians. This Jewish group forms part of Paul's enemies because they regarded him as someone who destroys the teaching of the law, thereby encouraging immorality. Hence Paul now warns those who might take advantage of what they regarded in his teaching as the encouragement of liberalism (Rom 3:8 & 5:20). According to these scholars then (Sanday & Headlam, Kaesemann and Vorster), Paul is defending himself against antinomianism.

It is within this context that Paul's question, 'We who have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it?', should be read and understood. Those who thought he is encouraging liberalism are confronted by a decisive message carried in the emphatic statement, 'We who have died to sin...'. It is in this question that the effects of the death of Christ in the life of believers are made distinct, making it impossible for anyone to continue making the kind of false conclusion indicated above.

The addition of the pronoun *ἐαυτοῖς*, is a deliberate emphasis to strengthen the identity and the character of believers (Boice 1992:650). They are people who have died to sin, an act that cannot be thought of as encouraging them to continue living a life of sin. In Boice's (1992:644-645) view, the question is so logical and natural that, after understanding the true gospel in the previous chapters, especially 5, there is no believer who can still lead a sinful life as a habit and actually make an attempt to justify such a life. It is also a natural question because man, by his very nature, in accordance with the old man, finds righteousness, (which is the fruit of justification taught in chapter 5), a strange phenomenon in that it demands the unnatural path of self-denial from mankind. The Gospel, as set out in chapters 1-5, shows how God has delivered man from the reign of sin to the reign of grace.

Therefore if anyone thinks this should lead Christians to sin all the more, he is simply expressing a view that cannot be supported from this scripture.

#### **i. A death that affects our life.**

On several occasions, the Bible speaks of death in a variety of meanings. The word *ἀπεθάνομεν*, we have died, basically means a loss of life (Kittel & Friedrich 1985:313-314).

According to Louw and Nida (1988a:679) the word ἀπεθάνομεν is used here in a figurative sense implying to be unable to respond or react to any impulse or desire. The context of each text will determine the precisely intended meaning. Against this background, they (Louw and Nida 1988b:679) hold the view that, ἀπεθάνομεν within the context of Romans 6:2 should be translated as 'to be dead to, to not respond to', or even 'to have no part in', and in this case, to have no part in *sin*. They (Louw & Nida 1988b:679) further admit that it is extremely difficult in some languages to speak of dying to sin and that it may be helpful to translate the whole expression as follows: 'to be like dead as far as desiring to sin'. On the other hand, Barrosse (1953:439) and Black (1984:414-418), approach this expression differently. They cite four senses of death identified in different parts of the Bible:

- A Metaphorical sense of death, as found in 1 Corinthians 15:31, 'I die daily'.
- Physical death without any theological implications as in Romans 8:38ff.
- Mystical death as found in Romans 6:3ff '...united with him in a death like his...'
- Death as a sequel to sin as in 1 Corinthians 15:56, 'The sting of death is sin'.

This view is mistaken in that it does not distinguish on the one hand, the usage of the concept of death as a way to denote a specific condition, and the meaning of death itself on the other hand. Nevertheless, of these various references of death, the mystical death, which Black (1984:421) refers to as a death with ethical implications for a christian life seems appropriate to the death Paul is talking about in this cluster. An analysis of the expression Paul uses to present his idea of death in colon 4, will shed more light on the precise meaning and context within which he applies this concept of death in the life of believers. To this extend, the deliberate addition of the pronoun οἱτινες must be taken into consideration.

οἱτινες ἀπεθάνομεν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ. 'We who died to sin'.

Normally, in Greek, pronoun subjects are included at the verb endings. In this case, the pronoun is deliberately added to emphasize the identity of the people in question (Boice 1992:651). The question can therefore be translated as follows: 'We, being what we are, men who have died to sin', (Sanday & Headlam 1895:156). Murray (1959:213) calls it an appropriate relative that points to a particular kind of relationship or character; those who are such that they have died to sin.



οἵτινες is therefore very important and emphasizes the believers' position and their uniqueness because of their relationship with Christ in his death. Because of the emphasis on the character of the people described by the addition of this pronoun, believers are placed in a position which makes it inconceivable for them to return to a life where sin reigns. (Boice 1992:650-651).

In view of the above, the emphasis is on the unique position in which believers are placed, thereby strengthening Paul's argument: how can anyone even think of people such as these to live in a life of sin? No wonder his strong negation to the idea ( *μη γένοιτο* ). A spiritual death takes place in the lives of Christians as they believe in Jesus and what he did for them, namely, delivering them from the reign of sin and bringing them into the reign of grace.

ii. Various attempts to interpret this expression:

*ἀπεθάνομεν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ.*

There has been a number of attempts to interpret this expression, unfortunately some of these attempts were actually misinterpretations of what Paul intended to communicate to the Roman believers.

As will be seen in the next paragraphs, mostly the starting point in these interpretations was wrong: they (scholars maintaining this view) allege that man ought to work out his own salvation, while the truth is that God, through the death of his Son Jesus, worked out the salvation and forgiveness of sins for mankind (Boice 1992:651-653). It is necessary therefore, that before going to details in an attempt to analyse the meaning of this expression, I briefly present and discuss some of these interpretations. This exercise will be helpful for my investigation to focus better on the intended meaning of the expression: οἵτινες ἀπεθάνομεν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ.

It is my observation that in most cases, the figurative expression in this cluster (A), which aims at presenting a doctrinal statement on the justification of believers in Christ- *which is the act of God of remitting the sins of guilty men, and accounting them righteous, freely, by his grace, through faith in Christ, on the ground, not of their own works, but of the representative law-keeping and redemptive blood-shedding of the Lord Jesus Christ on their behalf* (Douglas 1962:683), is confused with its practical implications, sanctification, *which implies deliverance from the pollutions, privations and potency of sin by God with man's willingness and effort*. However, here are some of these interpretations followed by an applicable comment or criticism on each of them:

**Viewpoint one: a Christian is unresponsive to sin's stimuli.**

The term unresponsive is also used by Louw and Nida (1988a:679) in defining the figurative expression of 6:2, οἵτινες ἀπεθάνομεν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ. While they regard this expression as figurative, and therefore its real meaning to be established within the context of the text where it occurs, some scholars have, on the contrary, interpreted this expression literally. as its figurative meaning stands. Two of the popular views in this regard are quoted by Stott (1966:38-39): 'J.B. Philips seems to hold to it (this view). He says that "a dead man can safely be said to be immune to the power of sin" and that we are to look upon ourselves as "dead to the appeal and power of sin", unresponsive to it. The second one is from C.J. Vaughan who claims: "A dead man cannot sin. And you are dead... Be in relation to all sin as impassive, insensible, as immovable as is he who has already died" '.

The English Oxford dictionary defines the word 'respond' and 'react' as follows:

- \* React- a response to a stimulus, a show of behaviour due to some influence.
- \* Respond- show sensitiveness to by behaviour or change.

According to this view then, the literal meaning of these words must be maintained when interpreting this figurative expression, 'We who have died to sin', would imply that believers have become immune to the influence of sin. Briefly what this kind of analysis suggests is that believers are perfect and sinless- nothing but a dream far fetched by those who entertain such a view. This is not what Paul implies in Romans 6:2. What Paul means is that Christians must not submit to the desires of sin. While they are still subject to its temptation, Paul sees the necessity to appeal for their resistance against this sin. Together with his message of appeal, he assures them of a victory that is certain through the power found in their new relationship with Christ in his death and resurrection.

In supporting my disagreement with the view expressed above, namely that Christians are unresponsive to the influence of sin, Paul is appealing to Christians to resist and never to give in to its influence (because it does have an influence even to those who believe in Christ) 6:11-13. The difference is in their attitude to it. They may choose to surrender to it, or resist it. But that they are still exposed to its temptations and desires, is still a reality. People who practised their faith on the basis of this view (the idea of believers being unresponsive to sin in a literal sense), found themselves not only unable to live in these promises of a life free from the influence of sin, but were disappointed and frustrated (Stott 1966:41) when they found out the relevancy of Paul's appeal in 6:11-13 being still necessary in their own lives.

**Viewpoint two: Christians are to die to sin.**

This view is right in as far as it identifies with Paul's appeal (v 12) for Christians never to allow sin to rule in their mortal bodies. But, as Boice (1992:652) puts it, 'The starting point of argument is wrong; one thing nobody can do is crucify himself'.

While Boice wrongfully uses a word not used in the text here, crucify, his intended meaning in the next sentence: ... 'to crucify ourselves (or die)', makes it clear that the view represented above is wrong. God is not telling believers to do something (die) but he informs them that as they believed in Christ, they have died to sin. The tense of the verb ἀπεθάνομεν should not be forced to render the conclusion that Paul here works with an 'ethic of sinlessness' (Dunn 1988:307). It points to a decisive event in the past, not to what they must do now. It is a state of affairs rather than a condition they themselves are being expected to work out.

**Viewpoint three: A Christian dying to sin day by day.**

This view is nothing but a desire for holiness in a believer's daily life. But holiness, which is associated with spiritual growth, must not be confused with the concept, 'We have died to sin'.

If indeed the expression 'We who have died to sin' were to be equated to holiness, this would imply the following with regard to the salvation of mankind:

- That the work done by Christ (his death and resurrection) was not complete, instead, it must be accomplished by believers on a daily basis as they strive for perfection or holiness in their lives.
- Secondly it would imply that believers are actually expected by God to work out their salvation through their works of righteousness daily, nullifying the complete work of Christ on the cross and the resultant resurrection.

The tense of the main verb here, ἀπεθάνομεν has been ignored and interpreted as if it is an imperfect present tense. Godet maintains that while 'We have died to sin' is a gradual process in its realization, it is absolute in its principle (1956: 238). There is no way that the completed task (ἀπεθάνομεν an aorist of ἀποθνήσκω) can be said to be a task which believers are to continue to work out. Their death to sin is identified in the death of Christ which in cluster C as will be seen later, took place once and for all. Hence the aorist tense of the main verb. It is a specific event in time and history, a completed job.

To suggest that believers are to die daily, is therefore to confuse the desire and indeed the calling for holiness with the principle of justification which is the work of God and not man.

**Viewpoint four:** A Christian cannot continue in sin because he has renounced it.

Scholars holding to this view, maintain that when a believer accepts Christ for his salvation, he is completely separated and subsequently freed from the power and influence of sin.

This means that he has already broken away from the possibility of any temptations by sin. One of such scholars (who share in this view), is Hodge (1835:192). He correctly identifies the tense of the verb as aorist and rightly points out that 'it refers to a specific act in a believer's past history.' But what was that act? Hodge answers that it was a believer's '... accepting of Christ as his Saviour.' That act involved his renunciation of sin. While this view is correct in as far as the interpretation of the main verb as an aorist and the renunciation of sin is concerned, it nevertheless implies that it is man's act of renouncing sin, it is man's act of at one point in history accepting the gift of salvation that he is said to have died to sin. The act of mankind to receive Christ or to renounce sin, is his (mankind) response to God's act which is the death and resurrection of Christ.

It is not man's act (such as his reaction to God's act) that presents him as having died to sin, but God's own act. Actually, Hodge himself does acknowledge that 'died to sin' is not the cessation of sin, but the absolute breaking of the will and aspirations of sin through faith in Christ's own death to it (Godet 1956:238).

**Viewpoint five: A Christian has died to the guilt of sin.**

This view is expressed especially by Haldane (1963:239). According to him, 'We have died to sin', exclusively means the justification of believers, their freedom from the guilt of sin without any reference to their sanctification.

While it is true that as far as the guilt of sin is concerned believers have become untouchable, Haldane has missed something else in this chapter. Paul's problem here is to show that Christians can no longer live in sin. If all Paul is saying is that Christians are free from the guilt of sin, then his question at the beginning of this pericope (cluster A) is invalid and unnecessary (Boice 1992:653). Lloyd-Jones (1972:19) is very clear in his criticism of Haldane. He asserts that if died to sin should be regarded only as the liberation of a believer from the guilt of sin and nothing more, then his (Haldane's) exposition is inadequate and hopeless because the real reason why Paul argues this issue of having died to sin, is to be found in 5:21 where he asserted that '... just as sin reigned in death, so also



grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.' This implies that a Christian is put under the reign of grace by his faith in Christ. In other words, sin's power to reign in a believer's life has been rendered ineffective by this new position they now occupy in Christ. Hence the question in colons 1-2: 'Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?'. Therefore the correct exposition of having died to sin must not stop at the removal of the guilt of sin, but proceed to the challenge for a life under the reign of grace. Actually, even Haldane himself, later in his exposition (1958:239), by way of self contradiction, admits that believers are not only dead to sin, but also, 'by necessary consequence, risen with Him to walk in newness of life'. This he claims, provides a security against any misleading conclusion that might lead to a life of sin.

Believers are not only freed from the guilt of sin, but are also liberated into a new life, a life to overcome sin and live to God.

### 3.2.1.3 A death that transfers a believer from the reign of sin to that of grace.

The translation of this expression, οἵτινες ἀπεθάνομεν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ, is reflected as follows by different scholars. Louw & Nida (1988b :679) render it as 'to be like dead as far as desiring to sin' or 'to be like a corpse as far as temptations to sin are concerned.'

As already discussed above (3.2.1.2.i) they do admit that it is difficult in certain languages to speak of dying to sin as the expression states. In this same analysis, they make reference to 1 Peter 2:24 where the word, ἀπογενόμενοι is given the similar meaning ('having died', 'might die') as ἀπεθάνομεν in Romans 6:2 (Douglas 1990:813; Louw & Nida 1988b:679). According to Kelly (1969:123), the translation of ἀπογενόμενοι (adopted by versions like the RSV, NIV, KJV, etc), is unfairly compromised due to the influence of the Pauline theology. Its literal meaning, Kelly continues his argument, would be: be away from, have no part in. He would rather translate the phrase as follows: 'having broken' with our sins. Davids however, argues that such a translation will be ignoring the use of 'live to righteousness' within the context of ἀπογενόμενοι (1990:112-113). Although these scholars, Kelly (1969) and Davids (1990), differ on the translation of this verb, their common ground is that since Christ has borne the sins of those who believe in him, such people (believers), are to live their lives to him in righteousness (a challenge for Christian morals to those who believe in him). They both see in the expression, a call for righteousness or morality based on the fact that God has liberated believers from the bondage of sin.

If this sense of died to sin is also the meaning in Romans 6:2, then the idea of died to sin as separation from a life of sin becomes enriched in Paul's statement:

'We died to sin, how can we live in it any longer?'. It emphasizes the end of an era and the introduction of a new one, a life under the grace of God which yields righteousness.

At this point one may rephrase Paul's question in colon 4: Who, after grasping these facts (relating to the expression 'died to sin)', may still argue that the grace of God could lead people to more sins? God forbids that such a thought be entertained at all. No wonder Paul negated such a possible misconception of the grace of God and its implications by the strongest possible expression, μή γένοιτο.

The next cluster, illustrates just how Christians have died to sin.

### 3.2.2. Baptism in Christ represents union with him in both his death and resurrection- Cluster B (colons 5-9)

#### 3.2.2.1 The Semantic analysis of cluster B.

Cluster B consists of five colons, namely, 5-9. In 2.1.2 above, Paul's refutation against the possible wrong conclusion by his opponents was discussed. In this cluster, B, Paul uses baptism to show how a believer is united to Christ in his death and resurrection.

He starts in colon 5 by stating the essential fact on which the refutation in colons 1-4 is based (Pelser 1981:103; Louw 1979b, 2:75), namely, baptism into Christ which must be understood to be baptism into his death. This statement, though assumed well-known amongst Paul's readers needs an explanation. This is done in colons 6 and 7 with colon 7 as an elucidatory repetition of the content of colon 6 (Pelser 1981:103-104): Believers, by virtue of their baptism into Christ, which is a baptism into his death and burial, have been united with him with all the implications of this experience.

Colons 8 and 9 is a variation from the thought expressed in 6 and 7. In colon 8 (through the idea of the crucifixion of the old man), Paul outlines the basis on which a believer cannot continue serving sin since he is no longer a slave to it.

Colon 9 climaxes the argument (Pelser 1981:104): a believer has been freed from slavery to sin, hence the argument in cluster A above, namely, that believers have died to sin and therefore cannot continue to live in it (sin).

In summary, cluster B, explains the facts on which the death of a believer to sin, (outlined in cluster A), are based, namely: the believer's baptism in Christ's death, burial and resurrection.

### 3.2.2.2 The type of baptism and its implications (colons 5-7).

The problem to be addressed in this section relates to the kind of baptism Paul is referring to, and the implications of such a baptism within the theme of this dissertation, namely: We who have died to sin. Two main streams of thought have been identified with regard to the type of baptism Paul refers to here: One school of thought interprets it as water baptism and the other, as the spiritual unification with Christ Jesus without the sacramental baptism being involved. While this study does not necessarily focus on the type of baptism itself, the meaning of baptism in both these schools of thought will have a bearing on the interpretation of this cluster in relation to the theme of my research study. In the next two paragraphs two views from different scholars will be presented before I make my own conclusion on the meaning of baptism in this text as it relates to the theme.

i. A Water Baptism signifying union with Christ.

In this school of thought, water baptism is understood to be in the mind of Paul when he says, ὅσοι ἐβαπτίσθημεν εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν, εἰς τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ ἐβαπτίσθημεν; This view is supported by the definition of βαπτίζω as given by Louw & Nida (1988a:537). They present it as the use of "water in a religious ceremony designed to symbolize purification and initiation on the basis of repentance". Louw (1979b:75) says the concept conveys the idea of burial which is symbolised by going down under the water. It symbolises the union of the Christian with Christ, and it must be experienced personally. Haldane (1958:244) calls it the emblematic symbol that represents the oneness of a believer with Christ Jesus. Hobbs (1977:78) refers to it as an event that symbolizes both what Jesus did for their (Romans) salvation (his death, burial, resurrection) and what he does in the life of a believer (who dies to his old life, is buried and is raised to a new life in Christ). According to Sanday and Headlam (1895:156), the sacrament of baptism is an act of incorporation into Christ. The implication of the views expressed in these quotations for our understanding of Baptism will be dealt with in the third paragraph below (iii).

For the time being, and before presenting the other view which negates this idea of the literal water baptism, it is important to point out here that all the scholars referred to above, do point to the implication of baptism, namely, a symbol of unity between the believer and Christ.

#### ii. The Spiritual Unification with Christ.

Another view opts for the interpretation of this concept of baptism as a spiritual event, having nothing to do with the sacrament of water baptism itself. As an illustration of the meaning of ἐβαπτίσθημεν, Boice (1992:657-664) refers to some classical literature by Josephus and Nicander. He claims that the word ἐβαπτίσθημεν (an aorist passive of βαπτίζω) was used to indicate a permanent change in the state of any item. As an example, Boice cites the following illustration from Nicander: In a recipe for making pickles, Nicander advises that the pickles must first be dipped (βάπτω) in boiling water, thereafter it must be baptized (βαπτίζω) in a vinegar solution. Both words basically mean to 'dip' or to 'immerse', but the difference is that while the effect on the pickles, is a temporary one with the first action, βάπτω, it is a permanent one with the second action, βαπτίζω. The reason why Boice refers to this classical literature, is out of his hope to prove (beyond what is available in the New Testament itself), that the word Baptism as used in Romans 6, imply a permanent change (through the Spirit and not only the ceremonial act) in the lives of those who believe.

According to this view, baptism into Christ Jesus, as it stands in Romans 6, means that the Spirit of God baptizes a believer into Christ. He unites him to Christ in his death. Hence Paul's reminder to the Corinthians of their baptism by one spirit in 1 Corinthians 12:13 (Lloyd-Jones 1972:35). Boice (1992:661-664) concludes his argument by making reference to the burial of a believer with Christ Jesus. This, he continues, confirms the complete transfer of a believer from Adam to Christ. When a corpse lies around, there may still be a reason to say it is alive. But when it is buried, the idea of it being finally removed from one's eye sight is conveyed. This qualifies the idea of a complete transfer (of anyone who believes in Christ) from the reign of sin through God's own act (which is the sacrificial death of Christ and his subsequent resurrection), to the reign of grace that leads to righteousness. Paul, (the argument continues) is actually saying to the Roman believers: Through this baptism, you have been buried with Christ, so that just as he rose, you too may rise into a new life unto God. Achieving this new life, is not a matter of a ceremonial washing, but of a spiritual implanting into Christ.



### iii. Conclusion

The following remarks should be made regarding the two viewpoints represented above:

#### a. Water Baptism

Scholars maintaining this view do not appear to have concerned themselves much with the question on the type of baptism. They seem to have taken it for granted that Paul is talking about baptism as superficial as it appears in the text.

Therefore they have seen the need to explain the meaning or implication of this baptism as it fits Paul's purpose for talking about it here, namely, that Baptism brings about Union with Christ, and that is symbolized by the ceremonial baptism. This is what these scholars concentrated on Christ (Kaesemann 1980:163), but as Hobbs (1980:66) puts it, Paul exploited this common Christian tradition for a pedagogical purpose in his attempts to explain the unity of a believer with Christ. The pitfall in this approach (on the part of scholars who advocate it) could be an unnecessary emphasis on the act of ceremonial washing itself, while the real meaning, that of uniting the believer with Christ, is overlooked. This may result in a temptation for people to see their salvation in the act of baptism itself.

### b. Spiritual Unification.

The concern of scholars in this view seem to be the emphasis on the act by God to transfer a believer from Adam to Christ. Morris (1988:246-247) confirms this when after analysing the word, ἐβαπτίσθημεν concludes: 'When it (Baptize) is applied to Christian initiation we ought not to think in terms of gentleness and inspiration, it means death, death to a whole way of life. This is what Paul is stating here'. But Morris himself is not as convinced, as Boice, Lloyd-Jones, etc, are on this interpretation. He argues: 'it is quite another matter to say that the language of this verse is such that it does not mean baptism in water' (Morris 1988:246, footnote 12). This leads one to ask the question: Is it water or spiritual baptism that Paul talks about, and what has it to do with the theme, 'We who have died to sin'?

### c. Both water and spiritual baptism implied in the expression

ὅσοι ἐβαπτίσθημεν εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν, εἰς τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ  
ἐβαπτίσθημεν;

My viewpoint on the meaning of the Baptism referred to in this pericope is that the repetition of the concept (baptism) in colon 5, suggests two events to which Paul is making reference: Firstly, there is the original baptism in a believer, something performed by God himself through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ in a person who believes in Christ.

This action according to Boice is represented in the second ἐβαπτίσθημεν. This is what he (Boice 1992: 658-660) refers to as the spiritual baptism. Secondly, there is the ceremonial washing of the person who believes in Christ as an outward symbol of what God had already done in such an individual's life. This action, water baptism, symbolises what the Christian believes God has done in his life.

As I understand it, Paul seems to be saying: Don't you know that all of us who were baptized in the name of Jesus (in water/literal baptism), were actually confessing/ confirming the actual baptism performed by God (in believers) through the death of his Son Jesus? Actually, his repetition of the word ἐβαπτίσθημεν, remains unanswered if water baptism were to be ruled out here. That both water baptism and its implications (spiritual unification with Christ) is in Paul's mind as I indicated above, is confirmed in both 'i' and 'ii' above in the following manner: In both these viewpoints, the basic idea conveyed is that of Union with Christ. My conclusion is therefore that in colon 5 Paul is referring to the sacramental baptism (at least in the first ἐβαπτίσθημεν of colon 5), which was used for confessional purposes (symbolism) of that which has already taken place in a believer's life.

This confession confirms the spiritual baptism (union with Christ), which is the actual (spiritual) baptism in the death of Christ (expressed in the second ἐβαπτίσθημεν in colon 5 and the βαπτίσματος in colon 6).

The above view is confirmed by the way the scholars in both schools of thought, present their arguments:

Water Baptism: - Haldane (1958:244)- It is the emblematic symbol that presents the oneness of a believer with Christ.

- Sanday and Headlam (1895:156)- the sacrament of baptism is an act of incorporation into Christ.

Spiritual Baptism: - Boice (1992:663)- 'the sacrament of baptism is nevertheless a fit public testimony to what baptism into Christ by the Holy Spirit means: that we have been united to Christ...'

Pelser (1981) argued on the relevancy of questions raised on the type of baptism in this text. In the same way, I would also argue that the important issue here is not the type of baptism being referred to, but rather the implications, the meaning of baptism within the context of the text.

The fact of the matter is that Paul, employing the implications of a well-known tradition, baptism, proves his claim made above in cluster A: 'We who have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it any longer?' by stating: when you were baptized into Christ Jesus, you were baptized into his death also (Rm 6:2-3). The point he is making is essentially the union they (believers) have with Christ in his death and resurrection. It is a union which emphasizes the death of a believer to sin through the death of Christ. It reinforces the theme of this dissertation (the meaning of 'We who have died to sin' in colon 4), that it will be illogical for anyone to assume that grace leads people to sin.

### 3.2.2.3. Freed from being slaves of sin (colons 8-9).

In colons 3-6, the death of a believer to sin through the death of Christ was explained in detail. Now Paul sets out to illustrate how this is possible. He starts by pointing out the permanent removal (as discussed in colons 4-6 in baptism above) of the old man.

This act, (of the disempowerment of the old man), will subsequently render the body of sin ineffective, thereby liberating a believer from being a slave to sin so that he can serve God. Just how this happens, an analysis of the 'old man' below will indicate.

i. The Old Man.

Most scholars (as will be seen below) agree on the translation of ὁ παλαιὸς ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος, as referring to the old man or the Adam individualised and represented in us (Kaesemann 1980:169, Louw & Nida 1988b:594, Ziesler 1989:159). In an attempt to analyse the meaning of this phrase, two problem areas regarding its interpretation will be presented and argued.

The first one is found in Haldane's (1958:247) interpretation of the 'old man'. He seems to confuse the 'old man' and the 'old (sinful) nature'. This quote from his commentary will best illustrate his view on this issue: 'Their old man (Eph 4:22, Col 3:9) or their sinful nature, was crucified together with Christ...'. But by confusing the two, claiming they are referring to the same thing, he (Haldane), confuses a Christian who tends to find that his life is persistently inclined to sin and this forces all believers to struggle for victory over sin on a daily basis (Boice 1992:667). The old man, as Sanday and Headlam (1895:158) put it, is the 'old self'. The word denotes human nature such as it has been made by the sin of him in whom originally it was wholly concentrated, the fallen Adam (Godet 1956:244). While this sounds closer to the sin of Adam, Godet goes further with something that is confusing: He claims that the reason why Paul does not use the word kill, but crucify, is because it (the old man) may still exist, but like one paralysed.

This may confuse Paul's argument in colon 4, namely, that the old man has died to sin, and that he (the old man) must not be confused with the sinful inclinations by the sinful nature or the body of sin. The 'old man' must be understood to be the fallen being in Adam, and this, as shown above already, has been dealt with by the death of Christ. That is what Haldane referred to as the believer's state of being dead to the guilt of sin, it is a finished business. There cannot be any mention for it to be crucified afresh.

A clear differentiation of this 'old man' and the body of sin will be treated in the next subheading: 'The body of sin'.

The second problem (still with regard to the 'old man'), this study addresses is mentioned by Barrett (1991:117) on the comparison of Paul's statements about the 'old man' in Ephesians 4:22-24, Colossians 3:9-10 and Romans 6. In Colossians and Ephesians, Paul instructs the Christians (people in whom the 'old man' is crucified already), to put off their 'old man' while in Romans 6 he informs the Christians that their 'old man' has been crucified already. But if read carefully, claims Lloyd-Jones (1972:62-64), Ephesians and Colossians are a challenge to these Christians to get rid of the characteristics of the old man seeing that he has been crucified already. This view is supported by Louw and Nida (1988b:509) who argues that ὁ παλαιὸς ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος is an idiomatic expression which although literally meaning

'old person' or 'former person', it is the old or former pattern of behaviour which people should get rid off and conform to the new pattern of behaviour. They claim, 'In a number of languages one can best render this expression in Ephesians 4:22 as "don't live the way you used to"'. Therefore Lloyd-Jones concludes; The difference can best be understood in the sense that in Romans, the believers are informed of their position in the new life, the old man has died. But in both Ephesians and Colossians, the Christians are being cautioned not to allow the lust of the flesh to continue, i.e. do not live as if the old man is still alive. This can be understood better when one thinks of an adult who behaves like a child, something which does not make him a child.

Paul's concern in all these scriptures is: How can these Christians, in whom the old man has been crucified, continue to live as if he was at liberty in their lives just as he was when they were still in the old Adam?

#### ii. The body of sin.

Often the body of sin, as seen in Haldane above, is confused with 'the old man'. The body of sin, as interpreted by Louw and Nida (1988a:105), can be understood as the body which is prone to sin, inclined to a sinful life.



To analyse this phrase, the body of sin, two questions are presented and an answer sought: Firstly, is the human physical body in itself sinful, and secondly, to what extent does the 'body of sin' continue to be operative in a believer?

It is important to mention right here that this phrase does not merely refer to the physical body (Ziesler 1989:159-160), but the whole person, as the seat of evil inclinations.

In his presentation, Hobbs (1977:78-79), refers to the body of sin as connoting the body before justification, i.e. the body under the control of the sinful nature (Hobbs 1977:78-79). Hobbs' presentation however, is not completely clear because it sounds like he is saying that Paul is actually referring to the physical bodies of the believers as sinful. The problem would then be, how to define the position of this body after justification when sin still attempts and sometimes succeeds in operating in the same body. Moreover, Paul himself in colons 16-18 urges Christians to submit their bodies as instruments of righteousness to the glory of God. Although this concept refers to something having to do with their physical bodies, it is not the body, simply as such, which is to be killed, but the body as the seat of sin. This must be killed so that sin may lose its slave (Sanday & Headlam 1895:158). On the one hand Sanday and Headlam are correct in pointing out the body as the seat of sin, unfortunately they fall in the trap of referring to it (this body of sin) as something that must be killed.

In the next paragraph, I will deal with this second aspect, the killing of the body of sin. For now, Sanday and Headlam's view on what the body of sin is, a number of scholars (Boice 1992:667; Lloyd-Jones 1972:63-64; Morris 1988:251) agree that the body of sin is not the physical body as such although this physical body is dominated by sin because of the fall of Adam. The question arises then as to what is the effect of this 'body of sin' in a believer after it has been robbed of its power? Haldane (1958:247) is of the opinion that this 'body of sin' 'should finally perish and be annihilated' when the 'old man' is crucified. His exposition is also used by the Revised Standard Version and the New King James Version: 'so that the body of sin might be destroyed' (RSV), and 'that the body of sin might be done away with' (NKJV). These translations will obviously encounter problems when in practice Christians find themselves struggling with this body of sin. It is not destroyed, it is not done away with, but it is being rendered ineffective, while still in existence because even after salvation, Christians remain with their bodies (Hobbs 1977:79). The difference of a believer and a non-believer with regard to sin, is that while the non-christian is compelled and enslaved to sin, a Christian has the choice to sin or not sin. He is not a slave to sin any more. Augustine had the best phrase to explain this situation of change in man: Before the fall, man was able to sin, *posse peccare*. After the fall, man was unable not to sin, *non posse non peccare*.

Now after the death of Christ, anyone who accepts him as Saviour, is placed in a position to decide not to sin, *posse non peccare*.

But finally the stage every believer yearns for, is the final (eschatological) deliverance even from their (believers') present mortal bodies when they won't be able to sin, *non posse peccare*. This will be the glorified state, the state the Lord Jesus is already enjoying (Boice 1992:670). As for now, (while Christians are still in their mortal bodies), the body of sin will time and again attempt to revive its influence in their lives.

The good news (to mankind) is that this body has been rendered ineffective, it has been robbed of its power base, i.e. its fallen nature in the lives of those who believe. This is the nature which has died (colons 3-7) or have been crucified (colon 8) and consequently, believers have been freed from the slavery to sin. They can now resist sin, they need not live in it any longer, instead, they must now live their lives to God.

### 3.2.3. Having died with Christ implies a new life unto God-Cluster C (colons 10-14).

#### 3.2.3.1 Discourse analysis of cluster C.

In cluster C, Paul continues the same argument of dying with Christ, but goes further by drawing a conclusion from the statements in the previous clusters (Pelser 1881:104). He does this by first restating the argument: Believers have died with Christ and the belief is that they will also rise with him (colon 10). Secondly, he reinforces this belief by referring to Christ's own death to sin and resurrection to a new life unto God (colons 11-14). His logical conclusion is to recall the implications of colon 10 by repeating and explicating them in colon 15 which is the introduction of the imperatives in cluster 'D'. In this way, colons 11-14 form the basis of colon 10 and in turn, the imperative section that follows (Pelser 1881:104): The basis and the authority of believers to reckon themselves as corpses in relation to sin, and alive to God, is the death and resurrection of Christ himself.

#### 3.2.3.2. Death and resurrection with Jesus Christ dictates a new life for Christians (colons 10-14)

The main question in this cluster is the time frame of  $\sigma\zeta\eta\sigma\theta\epsilon\mu\epsilon\nu$ . Is it to be understood as the repented life in the now or in the future resurrection. Scholars are divided on the interpretation of this new life.

There are those who interpret Paul as saying, in the eschatological resurrection, Christians will live the life Paul is speaking about, where as others understand Paul to be referring to the Christian life in the present time.

i. A future new life.

Most scholars who support the futuristic resurrection interpretation, (Haldane 1958:250; Sanday & Headlam 1895:159; Godet 1956:247), give as one of the major reasons for their view, Paul's use of two different words to express himself regarding the death of believers to sin and their resurrection to a new life. In colons 5 and 8, Paul uses two words, ἢ ἀγνοεῖτε 'Or are you ignorant', and γινώσκοντες 'knowing...' (Douglas 1990:546) both emphasizing the same point: That Christians have died to sin in their union with Christ, is a known factor. It is a known factor because it is something that has taken place already in their lives as people who believed in Christ.

But, (the argument by Haldane 1958, Sanday & Headlam 1895 and Godet 1956 continues) in colon 10, Paul shifts from his reference to their knowledge to that of their faith, (πιστεύομεν) when speaking of their resurrection with Christ.

This, the argument concludes, is an indication that the new life referred to, is not something Christians experience or possess already, but something that Paul believes they will experience in the future resurrection. Therefore, the argument concludes, the new life Paul refers to, is a matter of a belief that it will one day come, rather than experiencing it in the current life. It seems to be a general consensus that this passage on resurrection displays a shift in the discussion to an eschatological reference (Robinson 1979:70; Haldane 1963:246; Cranfield 1985:133). Kaesemann (1980:167), referring to the verb *συζήσομεν*, points out that Paul in this verse is drawing the Christians' attention to the fact that he only expects their resurrection to a new life in the future.

**ii. A new resurrected life now.**

While the stress in this passage on resurrection points to a shift of the Ages to eschatology, nevertheless the present is also implied, although the Apostle is not explicit on the time factor (Ziesler 1989:157-158). Criticism of the futuristic interpretation above includes among others, the over emphasis of the future tense of the verb *συζήσομεν* we shall live. Hence the need to read these verses together, i.e. from 8 to 10, so that the full meaning of this cluster can be better understood. In this way, the meaning will be as follows:

The lives of those who believe in Christ, though they'll be fully resurrected in the future and be glorified like his (Christ's life), they are nevertheless no longer under the rule of sin but under the Lordship of him who saved them from darkness through Christ. These are new lives realised in the now though their perfection will only be realised in the future resurrection.

The Apostle must not be understood to be talking of what they ought to be, but what they (believers) are in Christ. Paul's concern is not about the future, but about what is true of them in the now. Hence his emphasis in colon 6: οὕτως καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐν καινότητι ζωῆς περιπατήσωμεν, which Louw and Nida (1988a:598) render as 'so that we might walk in newness of life'. This is not something to be experienced in the future resurrection but here and now. If the new life was confined to the future resurrection only, there would be no point for Paul to raise his question and answer it in colons 1-4. A similar notion is expressed in colon 14: With the dative, ὁ δὲ ζῆ. ζῆ τῷ θεῷ, the clause is saying that in his death Christ ended the grip of sin on human beings generally (Ziesler 1989:162). It is in this kind of environment where believers are to exercise their liberation from sin to live for God, to live a new life.

### iii. Conclusion.

In concluding this section, I present a few critical remarks as outlined by scholars of the second viewpoint (Louw & Nida 1988a, Boice 1992, Ziesler 1989), regarding the futuristic resurrection (new life).

- a. How will scholars holding to the sacramental baptism explain the reason for Paul to ask his question in colons 1-2?
  
- b. By disputing the implication of a new life in the now in colons 6 and 7, while acknowledging such a meaning in colon 15, these scholars, (Haldane 1958; Sanday and Headlam 1895; and Godet 1956) are either inconsistent with their interpretation of this text, or they imply that Paul himself is inconsistent in his usage of words. As an example of their acknowledgement of the implied new life in a believer's day to day life experience, Haldane says 'when a believer's state of reconciliation with God..., is steadily kept in view, then he cultivates the spirit of adoption- then he strives to walk worthy of his calling, and, in the consideration of the mercies of God, presents his body as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God' (1958:252). How can Paul speak in colons 6, 10 and 15 of different new lives.



Obviously within the context of this text, Paul is concerned about the ethical implications (colons 15-20) of the death and resurrection of Christ in the lives of believers, not in the future resurrection but here in this life. Hence his question in colons 1-2.

- c. Those holding to this view, (the futuristic resurrection), would find it difficult to account for scriptures where believers are urged to live a different life than they did before. As examples, in the same chapter vv 12-13 and in Galatians 2:19-20, Paul puts it clearly that believers's lives (including his) are no longer under the reign of sinful nature but in submission to the rule of Christ.

This surely does not refer to a life still to come, but to the life a believer experiences after his death to sin and his resurrection with Christ, a new life in the here and now.

In colons 11-14, this death and resurrection of Christ is clearly spelt out so that the believer in colons 15-20 can identify with these events and thereby resist the reign of sin as will be seen in the next paragraph. Christ has been removed- through his own death and resurrection- from the domain of sin to live for God. In the same way believers are expected to live their lives to God not only in the future but here and now.

However, one does acknowledge the fact that while his (Christ's) removal from the domain of sin already took place on the final level, believers must still struggle against sin in their daily lives as long as they are still in their mortal bodies. This struggle against sin, is the new life which cannot continue in sin (an answer to the question in cluster A). But even as Christ was removed from sin's reign, and though his removal was more a permanent exercise than that of believers, believers too have been liberated from sin's guilt in that it (sin) has been robbed of its power. Therefore the struggle against the tendency of the body of sin to control their (believers') lives, should be intensified all the time, knowing that they are in Christ, in his grace, and are sanctified. This is the new life Paul is talking about.

In conclusion then, Paul is using resurrection here, with a reference to the moral sense of death (Cranfield 1985:133) implying a new life in terms of not only the final resurrection but also the behaviour (conduct) of a believer, here and now.

3.2.4. An appeal for a new life unto God,  
Cluster D (colons 15-20).

3.2.4.1. A Discourse analysis of cluster D.

As indicated in 3.1.1 above (the discussion on the reasons why Pelser's schema was chosen as a basis for this study and the overview of the whole pericope), this cluster stretches from colon 15 and not 16 as in Pelser's case. The statement in colon 15 is a conclusion drawn from the previous cluster. But semantically it links more closely with the appeals and motivation for a new life in cluster D. The verb itself (λογίζεσθε) is a strong imperative changing the line of argument from what God has done for believers through Christ (in cluster A, B and C) to what believers must do in return in cluster D: '... count yourself dead to sin'. This is an introduction of an imperative conclusion of Paul's question in cluster A. Hence the rest of the colons that follow, 16-19, form a series of practical implications of a new life in Christ. Paul's conclusion in colon 20 is a confirmation and an assurance of their victory, certainly based on the fact that Christ, as indicated in colons 5-6 and 10-14, has already achieved this victory on their behalf.

3.2.4.2 Count on God's act and refuse to be ruled by sin  
(colons 15-20).

i. Count on God's act.

Having outlined the principles of unification with Christ, Paul is now in a position to answer the rhetorical question raised in cluster A more directly. Hence the strong introduction: 'Therefore, ...'. As indicated in the section above (colons 11-14), the whole argument about the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, is to enable believers to know exactly what God did for them in Christ and, thereby, count on it and live in faith. The word used here, 'count or reckon', is the same as the one used in Romans 4:3 where God reckons Abraham as righteous on the basis of his faith in what God promised him (Barrett 1991:87). This emphasizes the need to apply faith in claiming one's standing with God. God told Abraham he will bless him with a son. Abraham believed, and on the basis of his belief, he was reckoned, he was considered a righteous man. He believed even beyond logic, because his age / logically was so advanced no one could think he would still be able (with his wife Sarah advanced in age as well) to have a child. In the same way Christians should believe and reckon that what Christ did on the cross and the subsequent resurrection are applicable in their lives. In this way, they would be able to live a new life unto God. This would be made possible by the fact that they now regard themselves as incorporated in Christ and everything that he was: having died and having been resurrected.

Through this unity, they would now know that they have an ego that has broken relations with sin (Godet 1956:249). What is important about colon 15 is that God has done everything for the transfer of a believer from the kingdom of darkness to the one of light. Now a believer must know, believe and rely on this act by God. This will in turn result in two realities as outlined in Boice (1992:676):

First, is the knowledge of the believers about the reality of their state of having died and secondly, the knowledge that they now live for God. A brief look at these two statements will help explain Paul's idea of Christians reckoning themselves as corpses in relation to sin.

**a. The reality of having died to sin.**

There are six points by means of which these believers should understand the real meaning of having died to sin, namely:

- \* To have died to sin, is not something that is in the power or accomplishment of the believer, but something achieved by God on the cross through Christ's death and his resurrection. But because of the very event ( of Christ's death and his resurrection), a believer can, since he believes in these events, reckon on this being true for himself also. In other words, he can consider it to have taken place in his own life too.

- \* It is not a command for believers to work it out, but an event in time and history in the past accomplished by God through his Son Jesus.
- \* Sin is not dead in a believer, but the believer must reckon that its power have been broken.
- \* Reckoning oneself as having died to sin does not suggest perfectionism, hence the imperatives which follow immediately after the statement in colon 15.
- \* Christians have not died to sin because they have considered it that way, i.e, it is not on the basis of their reckoning that their death to sin takes place, but they have died to sin because God has accomplished that task in the death and resurrection of his Son Jesus Christ.

**b. The reality of being alive to God.**

The second reality Paul says believers are to count on (Boice (1992), is that they are now alive to God in Christ Jesus. The meaning of verse 5 comes to light in this verse. The resurrection Paul is speaking about in that verse, which is an introduction to this cluster (D) on an appeal to live for God, is re-defined in this colon.

Being alive to God implies certain changes (implied especially in the imperatives in colon 15-20) in the lives of believers:

- \* While they were initially far from God and living in darkness, now they live in fellowship with him in their new lives.

- \* They are new creatures. They are regenerated and the old life, the old man and his habits, are now a thing of the past that cannot become their lifestyle.
- \* They are freed from sin's bondage. They are in a position to choose not to sin, in Augustine's words, they are in a state of *posse non peccare*.
- \* They are daily pressing forward for a sure destiny and new goals, they are being urged to refrain from sin.

Because of this new position, believers now can refuse to sin. Against this background, how can anyone still argue that God's grace for the justification of those who believe allows the believer to go on sinning? It is an unthinkable suggestion as reflected and dealt with in colons 1-4 above.

ii. 'Our bodies', God's instruments of righteousness (colons 16-19/ 6:12-13).

For the second time, (the first time was in colon 15 in 3.2.4.2.i above), Paul again introduces a statement of imperatives. Having clearly and in details elaborated on the meaning of the death and resurrection of Christ and their implications when applied to one's life in faith, Paul sets out a series of imperatives to urge Christians to live the new life he has been referring to as a resurrected life (colons 6, 10 and 15). This section is a practical application of the doctrine he just outlined from colons 1-14. This is necessary because in spite of these events being both sacramentally and eschatologically true, neither their efficacy nor anticipation respectively 'alters the fact

that men in this world have mortal bodies' (Barrett 1991:119). The imperatives are nothing else but a way to say to the believers: work out your ethical lives so that you can become and remain what you are in Christ, something explained in the preceding section (Dodd 1932:93)

a. Refuse to submit to sin.

The first appeal Paul makes is in the words  $\mu\grave{\eta}$  οὖν βασιλευέτω. A combination of the present imperative, βασιλευέτω, and negative,  $\mu\grave{\eta}$ , can best be translated as 'do not always' or 'do not continue' (Rienecker 1980:16). Louw and Nida translate it as reigning or being in complete control (Louw & Nida 1988b:474-475). If this notion were to be followed, the sentence would be interpreted as 'do not let sin reign over ...' This appeal sounds similar to the one in Colossians 3:5 where Christians are being urged to mortify sin since their lives are hidden in Christ (Godet 1956:250). There could be a tendency among Paul's hearers to over emphasize one part of the gospel, neglecting the other. This could happen when one's understanding of the doctrine is over-emphasized at the expense of the practical implications of the gospel.

Οὖν, introduces Paul's conclusion drawn from the preceding



expositions they might have learned from his exposition in the preceding colons (in this pericope), all these will be of no value to them unless they put these teachings into practice.

**b. Offer yourselves to God as instruments of righteousness instead.**

In his second appeal, Paul urges these believers to rather offer the members of their bodies as instruments of righteousness to God, instead of offering them to sin. In colons 8-9, we have seen how he outlined the nature of the 'body of sin' and its sinful inclinations. Now, in this cluster of imperatives (D), he not only reminds these believers but urges them not only to refuse to sin but to offer their bodies, their lives to God. In other words, the knowledge they have gained in colons 8-9 about the body of sin, and the old man, should be applied practically in their daily lives. Paul makes a similar call in pericope 30 colon 1 (which is the introduction of the Parenesis section in the macro structure): "Therefore, I urge you brothers..., to offer your bodies as living sacrifices,..." . Paul is actually reminding believers to exert pressure for a maximum control on members of their bodies so that they may not serve the interest (the inclinations) of sin. In other words, Christians are called upon to 'cease from yielding' (Godet 1956:251) to the various lusts that work through the members of their bodies.

iii. You can do it (colon 20/ 6:14).

Having said all he had to say (what the death, burial and resurrection of Christ imply to the believers and practically what is expected of them), Paul concludes his argument by an assurance that all these will be possible for them to achieve. The reason for his guarantee is based on the fact that they are no longer under the burdensome law, but under God's grace (Godet 1956:252). The Roman Christians are being made aware in this section that they are in a warfare and a race against sin. This admonition can be compared to others in Paul's other epistles:

- \* Ephesians 6:10-18, believers are urged to put on the whole armour of God.
- \* 1 Timothy 6:12, an advice to fight the good fight.
- \* 2 Timothy 4:7 Paul himself has fought a good fight.
- \* 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 believers are urged to compete excellently.

Paul did not have any other choice but to appeal and assure these Christians on this new life because this was their new mode of existence - a new life unto God. A person in this disposition, is a slave to righteousness. He has been placed in a field of life where the grace of God and his righteousness reign. A believer in this environment breathes, drinks, eats and lives the God-filled atmosphere (Boice 1992:687-688).

## CHAPTER 4.

THE MEANING OF THE EXPRESSION 'HAVING DIED TO SIN' IN ROMANS  
6:1-14.

From the above investigation, one can now make a summary and conclusion of what Paul had in mind when he told the believers in Rome that they have died to sin. To do this, this study will now focus attention on three statements that express the meaning of Paul's statement in the expression: 'We have died to sin' as applied in this pericope, namely, died to sin versus laxity in it, the ability not to sin and lastly, living for God.

4.1 'We have died to sin': A challenge for morals over  
against laxity in sin.

In the introductory chapter, this study briefly focused on the purpose of Romans. Without going back into the details of the different theories on the purpose of this epistle, it is necessary to refer back to the combination of reasons as to why Paul wrote the epistle, as set out by Wedderburn (1988).

First in this list of reasons is the need for the clarification of the Gospel message to the Christian community in Rome. This is supported by Paul himself in different parts of the epistle (1:8-16; 15:14-15 and 15:22-29). An indication was also made (1.2.3.i. above) that this congregation was composed of both Jewish and Gentile

Christians, and that this had a bearing on the content of the epistle. One such reason was to remind the Gentile Christians of the need to live up to the expected Christian norms and values.

There seem to have been people (2.4.2.4. pericopes 13-14 above), most probably the Gentile Christians, who seem to have made a conclusion that since they had to practice their faith under grace and not under the law, they were therefore free from moral obligation (Stendahl 1976:26-38). The Jewish Christians also needed to be reminded not to confuse the Gospel with the Jewish law, and thereby misunderstand the grace of God. For this purpose, as indicated in 2.4.2.4, especially pericopes 13-14, Paul addresses the importance of living a life that is worthy of the calling into this faith. The emphasis in colon 4 (pericope 13), on the negation of any thought of living in sin when they have died to it, redirects the minds and understanding of these believers, both Jews and Gentiles, to live as God expects them to do. The Gospel of Jesus Christ, if accepted, brings about a radical change of life, producing a brand new life style. The Spirit and the Word effect a definite change in a truly regenerated person. This effect is brought about by the person's unification with Christ as indicated in cluster B above. When this indicative act of God has taken place in a person's life, it becomes completely illogical for such an individual to persist in his old way of life. Hence Paul's question to the Romans:

If they too have been regenerated by their union with Christ into a new life, how can they then continue to live the other life, the old life, when they are in the new one which is a life unto God.

Accordingly, a regenerated person has got the ability to put off old ways and put on new ones. He can even part ways with patterns that go back many generations as Peter 1:18 indicates. In other words, a believer is in a position where he is no longer a wretched, hopeless sinner in the same sense that an unregenerate non-believer is, but he is now in a position to refuse to sin (Adams 1986, 2:14). For this purpose a believer has got no excuse to remain and freely indulge in sin. The point here is, as Sawyer (1987:50-72) puts it: Death cannot co-exist with life, and therefore, a person cannot be dead and be alive with respect to the same thing (in this case, sin) at the same time.

It was important therefore that Paul should remind these believers of their status in God. They needed to be reminded because, being in their natural bodies, i.e, not yet perfected into God's glory, they were still exposed to (sinful) temptations. In other words, victory against sin, (the opposite of which would be to supinely indulge in it), is possible when a believer knows what he is in Christ and lives by that belief.

4.2. The ability not to sin (*posse non peccare*): a choice to refuse to sin by those united to Christ.

From 4.1. above, 'We who have died to sin' in the view of this investigation, practically means the possibility not to sin, the opposite of which would be, the impossibility to live without sinning, i.e, enslaved to sin. In other words a believer has the power, the ability and actually, can exercise his will and choose not to sin (Boice 1992:667-668). But since he is still exposed to the possibility to sin, it is not enough for him to just know his new status but more so, that he should strive to daily make a choice not to sin. It is something that comes through some effort on the part of a believer. This is because, as indicated in 3.2.1.2.ii and 3.2.2.3 above), he is not free from the influence and power of sin, but free from its servitude.

This is a direct call to some moral obligations on the part of those who have shared in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. A believer submits his life to Christ and Christ lives his life through him. There's no way Christ can live his life in a person if that person does not give himself over completely to Christ. God has achieved this plan by firstly offering his only Son for the justification of believers (indicative part of the Gospel) who in turn should live their lives to God (the imperative part of the Gospel). Further, this calling to moral obligation, is actually a challenge presented to Christians in most of the Pauline letters. To begin with, Paul himself in Galatians present his

personal testimony as follows: '... I no longer live, but Christ lives in me' (2:20). In other words, he has completely surrendered himself to Christ's lordship, no longer to sin's lordship. In Ephesians 4:1 and Colossians 1:10-12, he urges Christians to live 'a life worthy of their calling'. In 2 Corinthians 5:17 he speaks of a person who is in Jesus as a totally new creature, with the old things, old life, having passed away. In this pericope, colons 16 - 20, he urges and challenges the congregation to live a morally acceptable behaviour.

As Ziesler puts it, it is no longer an unusual exercise to encourage people not to be governed by sin, instead, it is necessary (1989:164). Calling Christians to living a victorious life as achieved by Christ, actually represents a measure of the degree to which such a victory in principle still has to be worked out and made specific in practical life.

What this study attempts to point out, can be formulated as follows: Christ's victory on the cross, which has become a victory for those who are united to him through his death and resurrection, places them under obligation to live their lives to God as believers, and never to indulge in, or befriend sin any more. Otherwise it would be futile for Paul to urge Christians to a holy living, to submit their lives to God (12:1) when that has not been made possible. The message of the epistle seems to mean nothing else than this calling:

God has loved these people (Roman believers) so much that he gave his Son to liberate them from sin and thereby leaving them under obligation but to live lives worthy of his calling. A person who claims to live this gospel life, but still indulges in sin, is a liar. One can safely summarise the above with Paul's own words in Ephesians 4:27 when he appeals to them never to give the evil one a foothold in their lives. All this evidence supports the point this study is attempting to make, namely, that 'We who have died to sin' in Romans 6:1-14, is a challenge and an appeal to believers to regard, accept and indeed live their lives as people who are no longer under the control of sin, but who must instead, control sin through the privileged victory which comes through the death of Christ. This is a direct answer to those who might have thought living in the grace of God invites and encourages a life of sin (cluster A). Believers must therefore refuse to be subject to sin and make themselves available to God for righteousness (Ziesler 1989:165). This is made possible by the fact that they have died, have been justified from the guilt of sin and are no longer under its lordship but under the lordship of God.

**4.3. Conclusion: Believers have been freed from sin so that they can live for God.**

In the Macro-structure above, (see 2.3 and 2.4), a brief discussion on how chapter 6 fits within the total structure of the epistle was presented. If it were not for this chapter, which interrupts the flow of argument in the epistle, Romans would simply be divided into two main



sections, namely: the indicative and the imperative sections. But chapter 6, which has within it both the indicative and the imperative parts, is placed within the indicative section of the epistle. In this way the pericope reflects the overall message of the epistle which can be traced as early as 1:5 where Paul regards as his ministry the calling of all Gentiles to the obedience of faith in Jesus Christ. This obedience is nothing but the obligation to a Christian moral life on the part of those who responded positively to the preaching of the Gospel. This calling therefore, should not be regarded as exclusively an eschatological appeal for a moral life but a challenge to those who believe in Christ, to live a life worthy of it (the calling from a life of sin to a life of obedience unto God), thus negating any view which maintains that the grace of God is actually an encouragement to continue living in sin.

It is my understanding (through this research) that Paul is urging the Roman Christians to serve God and live for him in his righteousness (12:1-15:13 in the macro structure and cluster D in Pericope 13). In order to help them to understand how possible this kind of service would be, he had to give an elaborate explanation, the indicative part of his gospel (1:8-11:36 in the macro structure and clusters A, B and C in pericope 13). No wonder his powerful introductory statement to the imperatives that follow in 12:1ff: 'Therefore, I urge you... to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God'. In other words, the grace of God, embraced in his justification, his grace and

not the law, his indwelling Spirit, help in their infirmities, his divine election and his faithfulness, form enough a reason to motivate and urge believers to be obedient to what God expects them to do, as outlined in the rest of the parenthesis section (Newell 1938:448). That is why Paul opens his imperatives with this strong statement: 'Therefore,...' indicating that God demands only that of which he knows he has provided a way for them to achieve.

A series of Christian attitudes follow from 12:1, giving guidelines of what among other things God expects from his children. This pattern of presentation (as discussed in the Macro-structure), is also displayed in this pericope (13). In the first part of the chapter, the indicative act of God through the death of his Son and what it means to a believer is outlined. This is followed by the imperatives on practical implications for a Christian life and its ethics. Paul was compelled as discussed earlier to summarily present his message in chapter 6 to refute those who wanted to abuse God's grace. Therefore, 'We who have died to sin', as found in 6:1-14, serve as a strong reminder to all believers that:

- Firstly, the grace of God (i.e. his salvation, forgiveness of sins), as outlined in clusters A,B and C, is not a licence to live in sin. This means that it is illogical to live a life that is no longer part of their being, a life of the 'old man', because they have been regenerated by the Spirit of God who raised Jesus from the dead.

For believers then, it means that they are no longer growing up on sin's roots, nor do they breathe its air or abide under its dominion, but rather, daily, they crucify the desires of the 'old man' until after their daily victories, their eternal victory can be perfected and realized (Cranfield 1985:134; Barth 1933:191; Haldane 1963:254). Being dead to sin therefore in Romans 6:1-14, means that by their faith in Jesus Christ, these believers are brought into union with him in his death and new life that he now lives, leaving them no excuse but to live that same life unto God. There is therefore no reason or basis on which anyone should ever think he can live and indulge in the old sinful life while he claims to belong to the new life in Jesus. This will be an abuse that will not only be unthinkable but impossible in this graceful new life.

It is against this background that Paul asks this question in colon 3 and 4: 'We who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?' The logical answer lies in his outline of the gracious act of God as fulfilled in the death and resurrection of his Son Jesus, an act which at the end should leave no excuse for those who associate themselves (through faith) with him to continue living a life of sin.

- Finally, 'We who have died to sin' as found in colon 4, must not be confused with the imperative message in colons 15-20 which is basically an instruction for believers to literally carry out in their Christian duties.

Such a notion may bring about false hopes of perfectionism which in practice will be impossible to achieve.

The meaning in the expression οἵτινες ἀπεθάνομεν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ, πῶς ἔτι ζήσομεν ἐν αὐτῇ; must be understood as a statement of faith pronouncing the exclusive gracious work of God for mankind. The implications of that in terms of man's involvement, is stated in the imperatives in cluster D. A complete separation of the two, will help any individual to correctly interpret Paul's expression when he claims that Believers have died to sin- so that they may in turn have God as their new Master and serve him and not be slaves of sin.

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E N D

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