

# **Bold Questions that Demand Solid Answers**

## ***Questions that Lead to Life***

Romans Series  
PBC 2026

### **Text: Romans 6-11**

*What then shall we say?*

### **Introduction:**

We are in a section of Romans that the Holy Spirit inspired as an important part of fulfilling His promise to give us everything we need for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3).

In this section (chapters 6-11), Paul explains how believers who have been justified by faith can also be freed from the ongoing power that some sins still hold over us, even after justification.

Put simply, these chapters are a crucial way for people declared righteous by God to begin living righteously in His eyes and before others by developing righteous character that they demonstrate through righteous conduct! ***This is why we are organizing the messages in this section into a small series called “Breaking the Power of Cancelled Sin.”***

We have experienced different approaches to learning. There is great value in various teaching styles—line-upon-line instruction, illustration, hands-on activities where students do it themselves, show-me versus tell-me, and so on. ***One of the most impactful and effective learning strategies is to raise questions that your audience may or may not be thinking about—but should be—and let them wrestle with the question as you guide them toward an answer.*** This method has very

ancient roots in a teaching style made famous by a Greek philosopher named Socrates, who lived about 450 years before Paul wrote Romans.

Socrates was well-known for persistently using questions to encourage his students to think clearly about life, virtue, and truth. His teaching methods were innovative and effective—and had a great impact on his students, including Plato. However, not everyone appreciated his approach, and the troublesome questions he wasn't afraid to ask got him into trouble—in fact, they landed him in court, where he was accused of corrupting the youth with his questions, sentenced to death, and executed by being forced to drink poison. So sometimes questions can land us in a boatload of trouble!

450 years later, Paul used that same approach to raise important questions about eternal life, moral virtue, and truth in his letter to the Romans – and those questions have been preserved for us in chapters 6-11 of the book we are studying together. ***Socrates asked questions that led to his death; Paul asks questions that lead to our life!***

In this section of Romans, Paul raises and answers six major questions to reshape and renew our thinking (Rom 12:2) so that we will present our bodies to God willingly, joyfully, and unreservedly for His exclusive use as instruments of righteousness (Rom 12:1).

***Paul uses questions to change how we think and what we believe so that we live the Christian life in ways that please God and fulfill His purposes for our lives!***

I mentioned the importance of renewed thinking in our last message, but I want to make sure you don't miss the significance of why I am pointing it out as being so essential to our walk before God:

- *You will never successfully present your body as a living sacrifice that is holy and acceptable to God without making a complete break with your old way of life (6:1-14).*

- *You will never dedicate (yield) your body for God to use as an instrument for righteousness to do His good, acceptable, and complete will until you stop using your body to fulfill the sinful desires of the flesh! (6:15-23).*
- This new way of life (your reasonable service to God) demands that you stop shaping your life by the world's wisdom (its thinking, values, and responses)! (Rom 12:2a)
- This radically new way of living comes from a renewed mind (a new and very different way of thinking). (Rom 12:2b)
- Something has to change about the way you think – and that change can only come one way – for the truth, the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write **in these chapters** to radically reorient how you think about life and how you view the world.
- So, how does Paul go about changing our mind (at the thought and belief level) in these chapters? ***By asking and answering six questions that guide us through these chapters.***
- *Note: We can identify each question because Paul introduces them with the phrase, “What shall we say?” which is Paul’s way of asking, “Are we to conclude that...”*

This morning, before we move on with the rest of chapter seven, I want us to examine the questions the Holy Spirit guided Paul to use to reshape how we think and what we believe. ***Here are the six main questions.***

### ***1. Shall we continue to live under Sin’s Rule? (6:1)***

Answer: No, you have been delivered from the dominion of sin and removed from the realm over which it rules – and this occurred when you were united with Christ (*baptized into Christ, 6:3*) in such a way that you participated in His death to sin and in His resurrection to a completely new kind of life, which you are now to live in radically new ways toward God. And you publicly declared this through your baptism!

By the way, this is why our Baptism is such an important step of obedience and spiritual growth in grace! It is how we announce to the world (not just our family and church) that we have changed sides and have intentionally and permanently aligned ourselves under a new King – Jesus! It is a naming ceremony that identifies us with Jesus and by which we declare our loyalty and allegiance to Him before all!

Illustration: Like the ring at a wedding ceremony, it is part of the larger act of openly displaying a reality that the ring itself cannot create; but when worn, it clearly communicates that you belong to each other.

## ***2. Can we continue to practice certain sins that still enslave us? (6:15)***

Answer: No, being freed from the condemnation of the Law does not mean that you are no longer required to keep its righteous commands. Being released from the Law's jurisdiction over you does not grant permission to worship other gods, bow down to idols of your choosing and making, or to disobey or dishonor your parents, or to commit murder, adultery, theft, lying, bearing false witness, etc. Being released from the jurisdiction of the Law does not mean you can covet or let your sinful desires run wild now that you are no longer under condemnation, because the penalty for all that sinning has been paid in full by Christ!

In fact, if you genuinely believe that, a much bigger question arises: do you truly understand why God freed you from the authority of the Law? He didn't deliver you from Moses and the Law's condemnation so you could do whatever you want. God freed you so He could unite you with a better Lord and betroth you to someone far greater than Moses—Jesus, the Crown Prince of the Universe!

And during this betrothal period, we are in the same position that any bride would be in during Jesus' day – we are sanctified (set apart) to our groom, Jesus Christ.

*Note: During the betrothal period, a bride was legally married to her future groom, but the marriage was not yet fully consummated until the marriage feast occurred later when the groom came to receive his bride, and that waiting time was called “Kiddushin,” which means “sanctification.”*

*This custom underlies Paul’s statement in 7:4, where he tells us we have been “joined” or “married” to another. We are sanctified... and that is why we are to dedicate our bodies to God and strive to make them pure and holy by our conduct in preparation for the coming marriage supper (Revelation 19:7-8).*

This is why Paul is so adamant in Romans 6:15-23 that we don’t make a quiet peace with ongoing sin; but instead, wage persistent, relentless war against it! ***Why? Because we are betrothed to Christ and are in the waiting or “sanctification” period! This is why we must wage battle against our flesh to kill sin in us!***

And because we desperately need help in this battle, Paul warns us not to rely on Moses for help in the fight for our sanctification any more than we relied on him for our salvation.

In fact, if you try to turn to Moses for help, you’ll see that the Law is not only unable to sanctify you, but it actually stirs up sinful passions within you and provokes your flesh to use your body to satisfy those sinful desires! (Romans 7:5)

### ***3. Is there something sinfully wrong with the Law? (7:7)***

Paul’s answer is stunning – NO! There is nothing wrong with the Law God gave you! It is His holy voice and righteous representative to everyone living in the old realm under Adam! *It is holy, righteous, and good (7:12). And it served at least three important functions:*

**a. To define sin for you! (7:7-11)**

**b. To make that sin exceedingly sinful in your eyes! (7:13)**

- To arouse a holy hatred for the sin that has killed you and done so much damage to you, in you, around you, and even through you!

**c. To make you look to someone other than Moses for deliverance!**

*(7:24-25) Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord!*

- Moses can't deliver you from the penalty of sin. He is powerless to deliver you from the power of sin that is alive in your flesh. All Moses can do is define sin, prescribe a penalty, and insist on punishment being executed against you.
- But there is someone greater than Moses who can deliver you, wants to deliver you, and has delivered you! And you have been espoused to him – Jesus Christ our Lord!
- He delivered you from the powerlessness of the Law by fulfilling the Law's righteous demands for you through His own obedience and by giving you the power of the Holy Spirit's enablement (8:4).
- This is why Paul breaks out in praise at the end of chapter 7 –  
*"Thanks be to God – He has done this! Through Jesus Christ our Lord!"*

**4. How should we respond to God's gracious activity and loving mercy toward us? (8:31)**

*"For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God, in Christ Jesus our Lord!" (8:38-39)*

- *Wow! Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but now I'm found; I was blind, but now I see!*
- And while the refrain still echoes in our ears, a hand is raised in the back, and a troubling question is asked – *"Didn't God make these kinds of promises and give these same assurances to another group of people He chose for Himself?" What happened to Israel, and more importantly, what does this say about the grace of God?*

- In other words, the question Paul asks concerns a nation that sinned more than all of the other nations—Israel. And the question being asked might unfold like this:
- *Paul, you said that where sin abounds, grace abounds even more! So, why isn't that grace abounding in this nation that has sinned so flagrantly, for so long? These people had light from God that no other nation had! God gave them grace that no other nation enjoyed to the same extent! When they sinned, He was patient – for hundreds of years! When He sent them prophets, they resisted and persecuted them. When He finally sent them His Son, they blasphemed against Him and eventually killed Him!*
- *So, my question is this: if grace truly super-abounds where there is an abundance of sin, then why hasn't it worked for Israel?*
- *And that question is important to me because if grace doesn't work for Israel, then sooner or later it might not work for me!*
- *So what about grace and your people, Israel?*
- Paul addresses this question (and another that arises from it) in chapters 9-11 by demonstrating that God's grace is greater than all of our sins – even sins as numerous and horrific as Israel's!
- Paul states that ultimately, *“All Israel will be saved, as it is written, ‘The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob’; and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins.” (11:26-27).*
- Ultimately, grace prevails, and mercy reigns—even over a nation as rebellious and hardened as Israel! His future mercy to them will triumph over His current judgment of them.

**5. *Wait, now that you've mentioned Israel, isn't God unjust to withhold grace and mercy from His covenant people in the Old Testament, whom He said He loved and made promises to? (9:14)***

Answer: No. God's mercy is never based on His justice. It flows from His love. It is never earned through works; it is given according to His

sovereign will. ***And it is available to anyone who chooses to seek the One God sent to offer His mercy – Jesus Christ!***

Because He is sovereign, God can show mercy to whoever He chooses — regardless of who they are (Jew or Gentile) or what they have done (self-righteous sinners or immoral idolaters). God’s mercy is not limited by ethnic background, social status, or religious identity!

And that mercy is available to anyone who will not stumble or be offended by the Deliverer He sent to save them – Jesus Christ! (9:24-33)!

**6. How and why did God grant Gentiles the righteousness He promised and is presently withholding from His original chosen nation? (9:30)**

*What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith;<sup>31</sup> but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law.<sup>32</sup> Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone,<sup>33</sup> as it is written, “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.” (9:30-33)*

- God granted the Gentiles the same righteousness He offered to His own chosen nation on the same basis – faith!
- Gentiles (including you and me) obtained that righteousness because they obeyed the Gospel and believed!
- The Nation of Israel did not obtain that righteousness because they refused to believe in the One to whom the Law pointed!

**Paul follows these six questions with four follow-up questions of his own, all marked in this way: “I ask”.**

a. If faith comes by hearing the word of God, why didn’t this chosen nation hear the word of God repeatedly? (10:18)

*Answer: They did, I sent my voice throughout the earth and my words to the ends of the world! (Psalm 19:4).*

- b. If they heard and understood, why didn't this nation respond like the Gentiles often responded? (10:19)

*Answer: Both Moses and Isaiah told you why they didn't respond: All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people (nation). (10:31)*

- c. Has God fully rejected everyone in this nation to whom He made eternal covenants and everlasting promises? (11:1)

*Answer: No, God has always and continues to save individual Israelites, starting with Abraham, going on to David, and including me!*

- d. Why would a sovereign, loving God do something like this to His chosen nation? Why didn't He open their national eyes then, and why doesn't He open their national eyes now? (11:11)

*Answer: Their stumbling was due to their rebellion against God and His righteous Law – but it actually led to God sending salvation to the Gentiles, just like it has come to you! And He did this to provoke them to righteousness – if our salvation is going to Gentiles, we want it too!*

*NOW, if their sinning caused God to bring salvation and its immense blessings to you as a means of provoking them to jealousy, think of the unimaginable blessing to all of creation when that jealousy works, and this nation is fully and nationally restored to God by the gospel of the very One they crucified and continue to reject!!*

**Conclusion: These questions lead to more than faith – they lead to joyful worship and exuberant life-transforming praise!**

When we get the answer to these questions, there is a response that wells up in our souls and pours out of our mouths!

*Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments (decisions) and how inscrutable his ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor? Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid? For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever! Amen. (8:33-36)*

- At the end of chapter 8, we were stunned by the depth of God's love for us in Christ Jesus our Lord!
- At the end of chapter 11, we are stunned at the wisdom that orchestrated the design, expression, fulfillment, and personal application of that love to us, both Jew and Gentile, through Christ and His work to reconcile all of us to God!

And this response to God (generated by Paul's questions) produces two important responses in us:

- **First**, when we experience mercy like this from a God who loves like this, it moves us to present our bodies to Him as a living sacrifice, fully acceptable in our spiritual character (no idols), our moral conduct (no immorality or sensuality), and in our ethical behavior (committed to truth, love, equity, and mercy)!
- **Second**, when we observe a wisdom like this from a God who is so stunningly wise, we trust Him with our lives, and that trust leads us to strive to discern His will and use our bodies in ways that please him and advance His larger purposes for the gospel and in the Church so that He gets glory forever!

Which brings us back to Chapter 7 with a question of our own:

*"Paul, if this is the goal you are after – why can't the Law of Moses get us there?"*

***And the answer is that it does – just not the way you thought it would.*** The Law gets you there by taking you past Moses and delivering your right to the feet and into the hands of the One who fulfilled this Law for you, took its penalty upon Himself, and now enables you by His Spirit to actually fulfill its righteous demands!

And so I want to end with two questions found in an old hymn:

***Have you come to Jesus for his cleansing power?  
Are you fully trusting in His grace this hour?***

***Are you walking daily by the Savior's side?  
Do you rest each moment in the Crucified?***

***Are you washed in the blood?  
In the soul-cleansing blood of the lamb?  
Are your garments spotless, are they white as snow?  
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?***