

Grace Has Spoken (Romans 6)

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Music: Josh Sparkman

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***"Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus."
(Romans 6:11)***

"What do you think about writing a song together on Romans 6?" (Josh Sparkman)

I had no idea how massive the undertaking that question would become! Josh invited me to teach at the Further Conference, a beautiful event for young adults his church hosts in West Hartford, CT. As one of the elders there, Josh oversees the conference. We agreed that I would teach from Romans 6.

Then Josh asked me that big question. Would I be willing to write a theme song with him for the conference? My initial thought: *How could anyone write a song on Romans 6?* It's about being dead to sin, alive to God, baptized into Jesus, and yielding the members of our bodies to Christ. The chapter honestly feels "heavy" in dealing with the ongoing warfare we fight against sin. I wasn't too interested in trying to compose lyrics from this chapter. Love to teach it; hard to sing it.

So I tried to back out of it by telling Josh that I would write lyrics only if he would first compose a melody I could hear. Of course...he did.

The next 4 months was some of the most challenging writing I've ever attempted. There were many days I gave up in frustration. I just couldn't seem to capture what I believe Romans 6 teaches. Josh was immensely helpful in shaping the hymn. He pointed out several places in his tune where certain ideas could flourish and where he believed the biggest part of the song should be. It is no mistake that the title of the song is exactly at that high point in his melody.

The first stanza covers Romans 6:1-2.

The second restates Romans 6:3-11.

The third explains Romans 6:12-14.

The fourth summarizes Romans 6:15-23.

The chorus comes directly from Romans 6:11 and many elements of 6:15-23. It provides the theme of the chapter and song.

Fun story: I originally had a different lyric for the final line of the chorus, but neither Josh nor I felt it was sufficiently strong enough to carry the weight of the entire song. The song builds to this final thought...and we didn't know how to end it. Then Josh's wife came to our rescue. She asked, "What do you guys think about 'we belong to Him'?" She nailed it. Thank you, Bekah.