



TALKS FOR GROWING CHRISTIANS TRANSCRIPT

Further Exhortation about Our Sanctification Romans 6:12-14

"Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³ And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. ¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace."

Background Notes

The subject of Romans 5-8 is "the great privileges of the justified believer." Romans 1-4 presented God's way of salvation. The whole world is guilty before God -- but God has provided salvation as a gift. Jesus died for the sins of the world and we can have this gift of salvation by faith. That's all we have to do! We just believe in Christ by faith. This is what it means to be justified by faith: God declares you righteous when you believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior.

Now notice the way Romans 5 begins, *"Therefore, having been justified by faith..."* It doesn't say you will be justified when you become a good Christian, or you will be justified when you die and go to heaven. No, you have **already** been justified! That's where you **start** as a believer – you're declared righteous.

And now follows the great privileges of the justified believer in Romans 5-8. In chapter 5 we've seen some of the great blessings and benefits that are ours in the "package of salvation" that God has given to us. We not only have forgiveness of sins and a ticket to heaven, we have many other blessings and benefits as well, including assurance of salvation. Have you ever doubted your salvation? If you really have trusted Christ as your Savior, you have eternal security; you can't lose what God has given you! Look back at Romans 5:9-10, once again, *"Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. ¹⁰ For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."* How much more assurance could you ever want? Your justification didn't depend on you, and neither does your eternal security.

Now in Romans 6 we learn that believers not only have freedom from the **penalty** of sin, but from the **power** of sin as well. Because of our union with Christ (that's our spiritual position before God –we're in Christ), we are **free from the power of sin**. And here in Romans 6:12-14 we see what we must therefore do in practice, in our everyday lives.

Doctrinal / Teaching Points

1. As to practice, a believer should not yield to sin.

Verses 12-13, "Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³ And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God." Do you know what the word sanctification means? Sanctification means to be "made holy." The process of sanctification is going on all the time in the believer's life. Philippians 1:6 says, "being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ..."

Remember -- sanctification is only for Christians. If you're not a Christian, you must first be justified before you can be sanctified. You must come to Christ and receive Him as Savior and be justified, declared righteous. Then the process of sanctification begins.

What's our part in sanctification? What do we do? Well, in our last lesson we saw that we must first realize our spiritual position in Christ and reckon it to be true, right? Remember, God sees us in Christ, that's our spiritual position – we have died to sin and been made alive to live for God. Look back, once again, at Romans 6:8-11, "Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹ knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. ¹⁰ For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹ Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord." So that's our first and foremost responsibility in the process of sanctification. We must practice R&R – we must **realize** and **reckon**, or act on, our position or standing in Christ.

In addition, we must not yield to sin (v12-13). Verse 12 again, "Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts." **Reign** is the key word here. Do you follow it? -- **reign** is the key word here. It doesn't mean that a Christian will not sin; we do sin. We still have a sinful nature, and we will have it until we get our resurrected bodies. In fact, 1 John 1:8 says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." But we are not to let sin **reign** in our mortal bodies!

How do we keep sin from reigning in our lives? Well, we not only realize and reckon our position in Christ, but we also don't "present our members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin" (v13). You may say, "That's impossible!" No, it's not impossible. It's impossible to keep sinful thoughts from flitting through your head from time to time, but you can stop yourself from dwelling on these thoughts. You can stop your eyes from reading material or looking at things that excite sinful thoughts and actions. You can stop your feet and hands from getting involved in sinful activities.

Verse 14 says that we **can do it!** Verse 14: "For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace." Before we became Christians, we couldn't do it because we were under the dominion and power of sin. But now that we are in Christ and under grace, we have new life that's empowered by the Holy Spirit – **we don't have to sin.** We will sin, but we don't **have** to commit any sin. We are able not to sin. Christians are not sinless, but they should sin less. As a practice, in our day-to-day lives, a believer should not yield to sin.

2. In practice, a believer should yield to righteousness.

Verse 13: *"And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."* Notice that it does not just say "present yourselves to God **as if** you were alive from the dead." If you're a believer, you **are** alive from the dead, so now "present yourselves" to God as people who are alive from the dead. There's more here than just our spiritual position. We really do have new life, and in the power of that life we are to yield our bodies as instruments of righteousness to God.

Here's an illustration. Are you a structured person? I tend to be a structured person, and if I depart from my structure, I don't function well. (Ask Margie -- she'll tell you!) In any case, for most nights of the week I am in my office at Emmaus or my desk at home, all evening, for at least seven hours straight. Then in the daytime when I'm not in class I'm at my desk for 7-8 hours a day. That's my normal structure: I'm involved in solid study of the Scripture, reading commentaries, preparing sermons, writing devotions, etc. Well, there's not a lot of sin taking place in my life during these hours. Why not? It's because I'm not "yielding the members of my body" to sin, whether it be my eyes or mind, as "instruments of unrighteousness"! In fact, I am yielding my members as instruments of righteousness to God. There is a desire to do this because of the new life I have in Christ. There's the desire to do so and there's joy in doing so.

We have the ability to do so because the power of sin is broken for the Christian -- it no longer has "dominion over us." We are free from the law of sin and death; we are free to serve the Lord. If you're not a Christian you don't have that freedom. The law of sin is unbroken, and it works in you, and of course you don't have joy in serving the Lord. But once you become a Christian, it's there. For Christians, the power of sin is broken -- sin will not have dominion over you! You are not under the principle of law, but under grace. In practice, in our everyday lives, a believer should yield to righteousness.

Practical Application

Let's make Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday personal!

On Good Friday we remember the Lord's death on the cross, and on Resurrection (Easter) Sunday we remember the His resurrection. The Lord's death and resurrection are foundational truths of the Christian faith. But we must do more than just acknowledge the foundational truths as the basis of the Christian faith -- we must make them personal.

How do we do that? Well if you're still not a Christian, you must believe that when Jesus died, He died for your sins -- that way we make Good Friday personal. When Jesus rose, He arose for your justification -- that's making Resurrection Sunday personal. And when you make Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday personal in that way, by trusting Christ as your personal Savior, you're saved. You're a true Christian!

If you're already a Christian, you too need to make Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday more personal. All of us need to do this! How? We must practice the truth of Romans 6. We must realize our position in Christ. God see us as identified with Christ in His death, His burial and His resurrection. We are raised with Christ and now have new spiritual life in Christ. So now let's act on that truth! Let's yield our bodies as instruments of righteousness to God. Let's not yield our bodies to sin, as instruments of unrighteousness. Let's not let sin reign in our mortal bodies. Let's make Good Friday and Resurrection Sunday personal!

