

Romans Session 79

Alive to God 3

Romans 6:11-13 (NASB)

¹¹ *Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

¹² *Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts,*

¹³ *and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.*

Last time we were together, we talked about the fact that we have died with Christ, and therefore we also have been raised with Christ to a new life. His Resurrection life. And now we are to live to God!!!

But in the living, I find that there is a pull in me that would take me in the wrong direction even though I would desire to live for the Lord. I end up at times doing the wrong thing, not the think I wished to do.

So, the question is If I am truly freed from sin by Christ, why does it still give us so much trouble?

If we are now holy before God, why are our lives so often unholy?

If we are truly righteous, how can our lives better manifest that righteousness?

Well Paul gives us three words, that summarize the answers as presented in Verses 11-14

They are:

1. Know
2. Consider
3. Yield

We have already considered the first two Know and consider. We had not quite finished number 2 but will do that tonight.

Until a believer accepts the truth that Christ has broken the power of sin over his life, he cannot live victoriously, because in his innermost being he does not think it is possible.

Commentator Donald Grey Barnhouse said:

Years ago, in the midst of a Latin-American revolution, an American citizen was captured and sentenced to death. But an American officer rushed before the firing squad and draped a large American flag entirely around the victim. If you shoot this man, he cried, you will fire through the American flag and incur the wrath of the whole nation! The revolutionary in charge released the prisoner at once. (Romans: God's Freedom [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961], p, 118)

In a similar way, Christ's righteousness is draped over every believer, protecting him from sin's deadly attacks.

If we believe the word of God, then we believe we are in God's eternal purpose, plan, presence, and power.

Paul assured the Ephesian believer that God chose us;

Ephesians 1:4 (NASB77)

⁴ *just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love*

He also wrote to the Philippian Church;

Philippians 1:6 (NASB77)

⁶ ***For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.***

Philippians 2:12-13 (NASB77)

¹² ***So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling;***

¹³ ***for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.***

There are many important and practical results of our considering **ourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.**

The first is that we have confidence in the midst of temptation, knowing that with sin's tyranny broken we can successfully resist it in God's power.

That is why we have these words;

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NASB)

¹³ ***No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.***

Secondly, we have confidence that we cannot sin our way out of God's grace.

Just as we have been saved by God's power alone, we are kept by His power alone.

John 10:27-29 (NASB)

²⁷ ***"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;***

²⁸ ***and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.***

²⁹ ***"My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.***

Thirdly, when we truly consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to Christ, we have confidence in the face of death.

John 11:25-26 (NASB)

²⁵ ***Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies,***

²⁶ ***and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"***

Hebrews 2:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ ***Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,***

Fourth, we know that, regardless of what happens to us in this life, no matter how disastrous it may be, God will use it not only for His glory but also for our blessing.

Romans 8:28 (NASB)

²⁸ And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

All of those things, and many more, are true because we are **alive to God in Christ Jesus**.

No religion in the world can or does make such a claim.

Even the most ardent Muslim does not claim to be in Mohammed or in Allah.

Buddhists do not claim to be in Buddha or Hindus to be in any of their multitude of gods.

As Christians, however, we know that God;

Ephesians 1:3b (NASB)

³ has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

So, we have confidence.

Now we look at the third of the three words that help us understand how we are free and how we are holy before the Lord.

YIELD

This is the word, Yield,

Romans 6:12-14 (NASB)

¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts,

¹³ and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

¹⁴ For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

This is another key word. *Yield*, or present, which obviously, has to do with the will.

Because of the incomprehensible truth about his relationship to God that the believer knows with his mind and feels deeply committed to in his heart, he is **therefore** able to exercise his will successfully against **sin** and, by God power, prevent its **reign** in his **mortal body**.

In this present life, **sin** will always be a powerful force for the Christian to reckon with.

But it is no longer master, no longer lord, and it can and must be resisted.

Sin is personified by Paul as a dethroned but still powerful monarch who is determined to **reign** in the believer's life just as he did before salvation.

The Apostles admonition to believers, therefore, is for them to **not let sin reign**, because it now has no right to reign. It has no power to control a believer unless the believer chooses to **obey its lusts**.

Peter makes a similar appeal. Because;

1 Peter 2:9 (NASB)

⁹ But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

1 Peter 2:11 (NASB)

¹¹ Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.

The moment they are saved, Christians become citizens of God's kingdom of righteousness, and thereby aliens and strangers to Satan's realm of sin and death.

Because a believer is a new creature in Christ, his immortal soul is forever beyond sin's reach.

The only remaining beachhead where sin can attack a Christian is in his **mortal body**.

One day that body will be glorified and forever be out of sin's reach, but in the meanwhile it is still **mortal**, that is, subject to corruption and death.

It still has sinful **lusts** because the brain and the thinking processes are part of the **mortal body** and Satan uses those **lusts** to lure God's people back into sin in whatever ways he can.

Paul later declares in this letter;

Romans 8:22-23 (NASB)

²² For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

²³ And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

Teaching the same truth, he wrote the Philippian believers;

Philippians 3:20-21 (NASB)

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

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

And to the Corinthians he wrote;

1 Corinthians 15:53 (NASB)

⁵³ For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.

It is because our mortal bodies are still subject to sin that Paul says,

¹³ and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness,

He does not warn about sin reigning in our souls or our spirits, but only about its reigning in our bodies, because that is the only place in a Christian where sin can operate.

That is why later in this epistle he laments,

Romans 7:18 (NASB)

¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.

Romans 7:22-23 (NASB)

²² For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man,

²³ but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.

Then he concludes,

Romans 7:24-25 (NASB)

²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?

²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

It is because the Christian's warfare with sin is waged in the body that the apostle also declared,

Romans 12:1 (NASB)

¹ Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

And;

1 Corinthians 9:27 (NASB)

²⁷ but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

It is obvious that sin can reign in our bodies, else Paul's admonition would be pointless.

But it is also obvious that sin does not have to reign there, or the warning would be equally pointless.

So, he goes on to say;

and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

By definition, a command presupposes a will in the one being commanded.

The commands in God's Word are no exceptions. It is therefore the Christians will that Paul is speaking about here.

For sin to have power over a child of God, that sin, must first pass through his will.

And it is for that reason that Paul exhorts believers;

Philippians 2:12-13 (NASB)

¹² *So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling;*

¹³ *for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.*

God's will can be active in our lives only as our wills are submissive to His.

When a believer yields the **members of his body to sin**, those members become **instruments of unrighteousness**. On the other hand, when in obedience to his heavenly Father he yields himself as one who is **alive from the dead** ways of sin and death, those same **members** become holy **instruments of righteousness to God**.

In verse 14, Paul changes from admonition to declaration, offering the assuring words:

Romans 6:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ *For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.*

God's Law;

Romans 7:12b (NASB)

¹² *is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.*

But the Law cannot break either sin's penalty or its power. It can only rebuke, restrain, and condemn.

The Christian is no longer **under** the condemnation of God's **law** but is now **under** the redeeming power of His **grace**. It is in the power of that grace that the Lord calls him to live.

Next week we will talk about being free from sin.