

XL. Romans in Biblical Perspective
The Gospel of God
“Paul’s Directional Response to Gospel Heresy”
Romans 6:1–14
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This is our third and last time in Romans 6:1-14. This is the Word of God, which is infallible, in errant and eternal. Romans 6:1-14 says [1] *What shall we (believers) say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?* [2] *By no means! (God forbid) How can we who died to sin still live in it (sin)?* [3] **Do you not know** *that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?* [4] *We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.*

[5] *For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His.* [6] **We know** *that our old self was crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.* [7] *For one who has died has been set free from sin.* [8] *Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him.* [9] **We know** *that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him.* [10] *For the death He died He died to sin, once for all, but the life He lives He lives to God.* [11] *So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

[12] *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions.* [13] *Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.* [14] *For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.*

The grass withers, the flower fades, the Word of our God abides forever and by His grace and mercy may His Word be preached for you.

I’m reminded of the words that I shared with you of Martin Lloyd-Jones. He wouldn’t even begin his series on Romans until he said he felt he had some grasp of Romans 6:1-14. He says this is foundational to understanding the book of Romans and I believe he’s right. He is not the only commentator that says that, but he’s a noteworthy one, perhaps one of the greatest expositors of God’s Word from the 20th century. So, it captures my attention.

It also captures my attention that he preached every Friday night and previously I said Sunday night but I stand corrected. The Westminster Chapel was packed every Friday night, for his one-hour sermons. It was amazing and because of him, we get this wonderful, multi volume text. He died while preaching in Romans and what a way to go. This is just a glorious text. Four months of that time, of those years he spent in Romans, he spent just in the verses that we’ve taken three weeks to look at – this essential and foundational text.

In this study of this text, we will see something that that Paul has not done in the first five chapters of Romans. This is the 40th sermon in our study of the book of Romans. We are in this text studying it. We will see it in Romans 6:12-14 which is where we will focus in this study. This is a text that is so important because Paul is not only presenting the Gospel, he is presenting the gospel life, and how we defend the Gospel. This is such a glorious text. It is a text in which what Paul wrote about the Scripture he tried to mirror in his preaching and teaching.

What did Paul write about the Scripture? We see it in II Timothy 3:16-17 which says *[16] All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching (doctrine) (you can't do until you know), for reproof (is negative), for correction (is positive), and for training in righteousness (discipleship), [17] that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.* How do you have Christians in maturation? It is by the Word, the whole Council of God, because everything is inspired and profitable that is taught and preached and then applied.

Now we get to application after five chapters in Romans of Gospel exposition and now Paul is saying, it's time for a life take away. Now is the time for application. So as I get to this application and anticipation of our life, take away matching up with what Paul is bringing us here. I want to try to set the nail for this so I'm going to give you three words that I hope you will remember – Know, Be, Do. This is the profile and the portrait of not only the Christian life, but how you live the Christian life.

How can I live a Christian life with continual bubbling up of joy even in the days of a fallen world and the incessant dealing with the old man within me? How can I live this life with the underpinnings of joy, with directives that are effective and knowing what I should do, how I should do it, why I should do it, how can a joyful obedience in the challenge of the spiritual warfare, continue in my life? How can I, knowing my inadequacies, still walk in confidence? I'm saying to you today, it's Paul's pattern to Know, Be, Do, and I'll get to it at the end. This is merely anticipating it and here he displays it for you as clearly as possible.

Now, what's the context whereby this chapter arrives? Paul has given us an exposition of the Gospel with the bad news that we're helpless, we're hopeless and we're unwilling and unable to come to salvation. But God, where there was no way, has made away through His Son Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. God has not only sent His Son, but His risen ascended Son has sent the Holy Spirit so that Christ did the work to save you. Now He has sent the Holy Spirit to do the saving work upon you so that you can work out what Jesus worked for you and what the Holy Spirit is working in you.

Paul then realizes that this glorious gospel truth whenever preached has two possible primary Gospel errors that attack it from Satan and the world. Number one is, legalism which is the notion that God saves us, but God can't save us unless we quote 'do our part.' Our part is the problem, not the solution. Perhaps you're thinking 'Well, what about when I do good things?' Praise God. That's either common grace or redeeming grace. You didn't do it. God did it in you and you did it working out what He worked in. And no matter what you do, it will always be polluted by sin. We are born as sinners with a sin nature. We are dead in our sins. Now we're not as depraved as we could be because God's common grace restrains us. But everyone that's born in this world, united to Adam, is born dead in their sins, unable, willing and we're not only sinfully indicted under the court of God, we are spiritually unable to do anything about it. Therefore, we can't work our way to heaven. We don't bring works that allow God to save us.

Legalism is the notion that our obedient to God's law is necessary for our salvation. Some say we have to obey the law to be saved. Some say we have to obey the law to allow God to save us. Some say we have to obey the law to enable God to save us. Legalism says we have to obey the law to be saved, to allow God to save us, to enable God to save us, and to enable God to keep us saved. That's pure legalism. Our works are never in the foundation of our salvation. They are in the superstructure as the evidence of salvation.

Ephesians 2:8-10 says *[8] For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, [9] not a result of works, so that no one may boast. [10] For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God*

prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. I want to make this clear. I am saved by works. It's just not my works. It is by the work of Jesus and then the Holy Spirit works on me. How do I get Jesus' work for me and the Holy Spirit upon me? It's unmerited. It is God's grace. Even the faith was a gift to you for by grace, or you saved through faith. Workmanship here means the word masterpiece. We are masterpieces of God's grace, written with the ink of God's Son's blood to save us. We are in union with Christ. Notice our works are the evidence of His work, not added to His work.

We're not saved because of our works. We're saved because of His work for us and His work on us. But we work. Now, why do we work? We work because of His work. We don't work to add to His work. It is His work in us that causes our work to come out of us for Him to God as an offer of praise. We present ourselves as a living sacrifice, acceptable unto God, as an act of worship (Romans 12:1). We're not working for our salvation. We're working for our Savior whose work is what saves us. I've said this as clear as I can, but people will still pervert it. So, we say 'no' to nomianism and 'no' to legalism.

Paul said 'no' to legalism in Romans 4 and 5 when he said we're saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone for the glory of God alone. Then Paul says, because it's of grace, we've got five blessings bestowed on us through what Christ has done for us according to Romans 5:1-5. One because we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God. Two, we have access to God. Three, we can suffer for God. Four, we can give glory to God in our sufferings and five, we are sealed by the Spirit of God. So, Paul destroys legalism, and then puts the cap on it when he says, 'where sin abounds, grace does much more abound' (Romans 5:20). I cannot out sin God's grace.

Paul knows that as soon as he says that there's a whole other group of people who have their heresy which is the second Gospel error. They say 'Oh, we're saved by Jesus' work, not our work and when we sin God's grace abounds, so, then it doesn't matter what I do at all with God's law if it's not necessary for salvation. If grace abounds all the more then I can sin more.' This is the song of those who believe in licentiousness and antinomianism. Paul documents in Romans 3:8 that he was charged with this. If you preach the Gospel of grace, there's not only those who will reject it because of the arrogance of legalism, there will also be those who reject it because of the absorption which self and antinomianism. So, you'll be vulnerable to the charge, but Paul answers it clearly and powerfully. That's what brings us to Romans 6.

In Romans 6 Paul answers antinomianism in three ways. First of all, he answers it emotionally. Romans 6:1-2 says [1] *What shall we (believers) say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? [2] By no means! (God forbid) How can we who died to sin still live in it (sin)?* Paul pronounces an anathema on this when he says 'God forbid' for how can we do this? So there is an emotional response for when Paul defends and preaches the Gospel, this is an emotional day. Paul says "I'm eager to preach the Gospel and unashamed to preach it" (Romans 1:15-16). This is emotional because there are two things at stake in the Gospel ministry. One, God's glory is declared and number two, is man's eternity. Where are you going to spend eternity? So, it's no wonder that Paul is emotional.

Paul's second response to antinomianism is instructional as he goes to theology and doctrine and that's what gives emotion. It's not emotion that's our foundation of the Christian life. Emotional passion comes out because we know the truth that's been taught to us about who God is and what God has done to us, for us, in us and through us. Paul begins to instruct us as he tells us when we're born, we're united to Adam. That means we have a sin record and a sin nature. When we're born again, we're united to Christ. That means we have a new record and a new

heart. When Christ went to the cross, you were in Him. He is in you. Now, you're united to the Second Adam. When you're in Christ, Christ died for your sins. Christ died because of your sins.

We see this in Romans 6:3-4 which says [3] ***Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?*** [4] *We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.* Here Paul is giving us the theology of baptism – union with Christ. He who died for our sins because of our sins died to sins. So when He died, we died with Him to sin. Now sin has not died to us, but we have died to sin in Christ if we are in Christ and then, as He is raised, then we are raised.

Romans 6:5 says [5] *For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His.* What was His death? He died for sins because of our sins to our sins and we are united with Him.

Romans 6:6 say [6] ***We know that our old self was crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.*** Paul is not saying in his instruction that we don't sin with individual practices of sin. He's not saying that sin is not present. He is saying that if you're in Christ, the power of sin has been broken. You're no longer enslaved to it. You're no longer to be ruled by it. Paul is using the display of the Gospel in the theology of baptism to tell us that the Holy Spirit is at work in our life. The reason we're passionate is because of what we know.

In this Romans 6 passage Paul said three times 'we know...' Now he says, 'Remember your baptism.' Now he moves from 'remember the truth of the gospel displayed in the sign and seal of the New Covenant baptism that replaces the Old Covenant sign of circumcision because that has been fulfilled in Christ.' Now that we know that, how are we to respond? Romans 6:11 says [11] *So you also must consider (reckon) yourselves dead to sin and alive to God **in Christ Jesus.*** You are united to Christ.

I said in the last study to remember covenant signs and seals have to do with naming ceremonies. When there is a covenant of marriage made in a ceremony and the sign and seal are applied, what's the next thing? The name is changed. It's not like what Alexander the Great's father said to him when he said 'Change your behavior or change your name.' No, Jesus changes your name. In that baptismal ceremony, you're baptized in the name of Christ into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Your name is changed. My names of creation and Providence are that I'm a man, I'm an American, I'm a husband, I'm a father but they are now all modified by Jesus. I'm now a Christian husband, Christian man, a Christian America and that is now the supremacy. I am named by Him. You are named by Him.

I love the praise song titled I Am the Lord (Do Not Fear) from Isaiah 43:1-3 for it says "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; **I have called you by name, you are Mine.** When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior."

When He called you by name, He did it by giving you His name – in the name of Christ. We are baptized into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. So now our lives present to God, not to be saved, but because He has named us, He has saved us. We are His – we belong to Him and He belongs to us.

Now here is this glorious moment where Paul now does something he has not done. For five chapters in Romans, he has been expounding the gospel and the verb he has used we call it the indicative. He has been stating Gospel fact after fact after fact of who you are. Now as we

come to Romans 6:12-14, now he finally tells you what to do. Now come the imperatives. He doesn't give the imperatives earlier, lest we think what we do makes us who we are. It is not the way we live that makes us a Christian. Our works do not make us a Christian. Our works reveal whether we are a Christian. It is Christ's work that makes us a Christian.

I preach sermons but that doesn't make me a Christian. I prayed with people who came to Christ this week but that doesn't make me a Christian. I get the privilege to pastor people on to glory in Christ and that doesn't make me a Christian. I tithe but that doesn't make me a Christian. These things display the work of Christ who makes us a Christian. Then not only remember and know but consider what you are. Be what you know. Consider what you are in Christ – a sinner saved by grace, a sinner by grace a saint, a saint by grace still battling sin for the glory of God yet the victory is assured in Christ. Let's continue in Romans 6.

Paul's third response is directional. Romans 6:11-14 says *[11] So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.* (You are united to Christ, make life worship for you live it to God not under this sin, but by grace. Now Paul tell us it's time to do so here comes the imperative.)

[12] Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. [13] Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. [14] For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

As we see in Romans 6:12 that old man wants to get the seat and throne of preeminence in your life every single day and you are not greater than that old man, but your Savior is. So, you go to Christ. I'm in Christ. Therefore, let not the principle of rebellion against God have the position of power and enthronement in your mortal body to make you obey its passions. Then he gets particular in Romans 6:13. Don't let your tongue be used for gossip and slander. Do not let your hand be used for ungodliness. Let your feet not walk in the way of rebellion. Do not walk into counsel of the ungodly, do not stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scorner (Psalm 1:1). Do not take the organs of communication that He has given you with mouth and lips or mobilization that He has given you with your legs or the power that He has given you with your arms, or thinking that He has given you with the brain and present your mind or instruments of your body to the world, the flesh and the devil. Our feet, eyes, arms, legs and hands don't make us sin. They are instruments of sin.

Jesus said in Matthew 5:29-30, *[29] If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. [30] And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.* Jesus isn't saying this because eyes and hands make you sin. He's telling you that your love for Christ in Him, your intentionality and intensity in dealing with sin is you're willing to part with eyes and hands to make war against it. But here He's telling you the issues, not the hand or the eye. The issue is what's filling your heart. Do not let sin reign.

You and I are not to be on the throne. It's not about us. It's about Him. Know who you are, now be who you are. Not only remember, know. Not only consider be now and present your body mind, heart, mind, legs, feet, brain, and everything to God. This is really interesting.

There are two things I want you to see. Number one, note that Paul does the negative first – do not – and then he says to. Why does he do that? You can't put on until you put off. We're not in neutral, we're sinners. So, we have to go to the negative first – put off. First, do not

then you're ready to do. Then you can put on the new man. The second thing I want you to see is, this is both worship language and this is war language. Your life is now presented to God. I love the hymn *Take My Life and Let It Be*. It says;

*Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord to thee.
Take my moments and my days;
Let them flow in endless praise.*

*Take my hands and let them move
At the impulse of thy love.
Take my feet and let them be
Swift and beautiful for thee.*

*Take my voice and let me sing
Always, only, for my King.
Take my lips and let them be
Filled with messages from thee.*

Life for the Christian is worship. I Corinthians 10:31 says [31] *So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.* In Romans 6:13 we see the word 'present' and that's military language. Present yourself in battalion. You present yourself clothed in the armor of God ready to serve Him. Here you make your presentation – I'm ready to go to war against sin. I **know** what Christ is done. I am at peace with God and I am at war with sin – the sin within me and the sin outside of me. Now, consider who I am in Christ and be that. Now, I'm ready to present myself in worship and for war, against sin, to lift up Christ. Paul has called us to that at one and the same time.

Here is the takeaway. Remember your baptism. Remember the Gospel. Remember who you are in Christ and that is what you **know**. Now consider who you are in Christ and that's what you are to **be**. Now you're ready to **do**. Two months after Cindy and I were married, my number came up for the draft during the Vietnam conflict and I said to her, I said, "Honey, I'd rather instead of get drafted, I'd rather just go and volunteer. My dad had been a marine, I'd been to PFC meetings, so I'm going to volunteer." She said, 'okay.' So I went down to the induction center, took my physical test, my regular test, and all of the tests to go into the Marines. As I walked away and he said, "You will be getting a letter and I want you to go to Parris Island. We call that boot camp." Actually, my dad and mom just lived a couple of blocks from where the induction center was so I stopped by and said, "Okay, dad, you were there at Parris Island, you were in the Marines. Can you tell me about Parris Island?" He said, "Oh, yeah, I love to tell you about Parris Island."

In God's providence, I never received orders to report. I just got a letter about six or seven months later that they weren't going to call me up until or if Vietnam War became a declared war, which it never was. I said all that to say this; I was looking at a YouTube trying to find another YouTube where an umpire was ejecting a manager. I love to look at those. I just think it's wonderful when an umpire ejects. Then there was one that came up labeled, 'Parris Island 1970.' That was the year I was supposed to go and so I watched it through. I'm not going to take you through the 30-minute video that I watched but here it is in a nutshell; They shaved you down, they stripped you down, and they went to work on you. So, whatever you were, from now

on, you're going to think of yourself as a marine. That's what you are. I don't care what you look like. I don't care what you were. I don't care what people said about you for right here you are a Marine and this is your first thought as a Marine. Now I'm going to teach you what to do as a marine for these next weeks.

I know you're probably thinking that is Marines and that's war but I'm telling you now, we are at war. Have you not noticed recently that you're a Christian. Consider yourself a Christian, not by your work, but by His work for you. Now do your work for Him. Let's go to war against sin. Let's go to worship in life for God. Know who you are. That's why preaching, teaching, discipleship, large groups, and small group are so crucial. Yes, you can know the Word of God and not know the God of the Word, but you can't know the God of the Word and who you are because of what that God has done unless you get in to that Word and that Word gets in to us. Then reflect – be who you are in Christ. Now we're ready to do what we do with hands, feet, mouth, lips, tongue, brain and arms. Now we're ready to do what we do for Christ.

I want to use another illustration from two years before my Marine Corps sign up. I was in high school at East Mecklenburg High School and at the end of every day, our principal would get on the loud speaker and he would tell us, 'You are an East Mecklenburger (my high school) so remember who you are and where you're from.' Who are you? God's Word says you're a trophy of grace under God's gracious work, and His grace is at work in you, on you and through you, as you present yourself to Him and to His glory.

Let me try to encapsulate this for you. What about our works, our obedience in life? The inevitable evidence of God's saving grace is a changed life, a life that is not perfect but presented intentionally to God and for God, out of love to God; a life that is at peace with God through Jesus and a life that is at war against sin because of a love to Jesus. We are imperfect, yet we are workmanships of His grace and a changed life comes from a new heart. Our life is a heart issue. The changed heart that is displayed in a changed and changing life for God's glory through His grace, has its point of origin in the mind. God has designed you to live for His glory, and that's why He's saved you, by changing your heart and changing your record, but the pathway of God's saving grace to the heart displayed in life is through the mind. It's in that mind that we realize that our God who didn't need us loved us, and He sent His Son to save us from our sins.

Listen carefully to what I'm about to say. We were under His righteous judgment. God saved us from our sins by saving us from Himself and He saved us from Himself, by and through Himself. He gave His Son that we might **know** we have everlasting life, that we might **be** His and He is ours, that we might **do** for the joy of giving Him glory. And in the midst of the battle against sin, we keep looking up through the Word of God by the Spirit of God. Hallelujah! What a great Savior! Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the moments we could be together in Your Word. Would You please take these thoughts and place them in our hearts and our souls? Take a moment and let the Holy Spirit speak to you. Paul has instructed us to remember and know. He says 'know' three times in this Romans 6 text. Know Who has saved you and His saving work. You're no longer united to Adam. You're united to Christ – the One who died for your sin. We died with Him to sin and we now live with Him to God. Consider, reflect, be what you know you are, because of Christ. Please make this prayer in your heart – Jesus, help us now do what we do together for Christ, loving You with all of our heart, soul and mind and loving one another and making disciples of

all the nations. We do so in worship and for Your glory, and we do so by grace in Jesus' Name.
Amen.