

## 62. The Book of Romans 6:14-17

*Paul's Epistle to the Romans*  
A message by Pastor Phil Ballmaier

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(9-4-24)

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We are currently in the section of our Romans study that deals with **sanctification**—a section that covers Chapters 6 through 8.

With that in mind, tonight, we find ourselves in chapter 6 where the theme is victory over sin—as in our ‘fallen sin nature’ that we inherited from Adam. And in this chapter, Paul builds his teaching on overcoming sin in our lives as Christians around 4 foundational principles or instructions—which are the keys to our victory:

I. **Know**—verses 3-10

II. **Reckon**—verses 11-12

III. **Present**—verses 13-19

IV. **Obey**—verses 16-17

We've already looked at the first 2, and tonight we're going continue looking at the third instruction for victory—**Present**.

III. **Present**—verses 13-19

**Romans 6:13 (NKJV)**

<sup>13</sup> **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.**

This is now the climax and application of everything Paul has been saying—not only in chapter 6 but also in the whole epistle up until this point.

The word **present** is the Greek word *paristemi*—which comes from 2 Greek words that together mean, “to stand alongside.”

In a very real sense, the Christian life is all about choosing what side you're going to live your life for—who or what will you stand alongside of as an ally, the world or the Lord!

**Romans 6:13 (NKJV)**

<sup>13</sup> **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.**

The Greek word translated ‘**instruments**’ is also translated, “*weapons*” in John 18:3 and 2 Corinthians 10:4.

One pastor said—

**“And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin”**—this is the first key to walking in the freedom Jesus won for us. We must *not* present the parts of our body to the service of sin.

The New Living Translation communicates the idea well: *Do not let any part of your body become a tool of wickedness, to be used for sinning.*”

**“But present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.”**

This is the second key to walking in the freedom Jesus won for us.

*“It isn’t enough to take the weapons away from the service of sin—  
they must then be enlisted in the service of righteousness.”*

**Romans 6:14 (NKJV)**

<sup>14</sup> For sin shall not have dominion over you...

Spurgeon said that these words give us a **test**, a **promise**, and an **encouragement**.

**1. It is a test** of our claim to be Christians. Does anger have dominion over you? Does murmuring and complaining? Does covetousness have dominion over you? Does pride? Does laziness have dominion over you? If sin has dominion over us, we should seriously ask if we are really converted.

**2. It is a promise** of victory. It doesn’t say that *“sin will not be present in us,”* because that will only be fulfilled when we are resurrected in glory. But it does promise that sin will not have dominion over us because of the great work Jesus did in us when we were born again.

**3. It is an encouragement** for hope and strength in the battle against sin. God hasn’t condemned you under the dominion of sin—He has set you free in Jesus. This is encouragement for the Christian struggling against sin, for the new Christian, and for the backslider.

**Romans 6:14 (NKJV)**

<sup>14</sup> For sin shall not have dominion over you, **for you are not under law but under grace.**

Now another reason is given why sin shall not have dominion over us as believers.

- The first reason was that our old man was crucified with Christ (6:6)—the second reason is that **we are not under law but under grace.**
- Sin does have the upper hand over a person who is under law. Why? Because the law tells him what to do but doesn’t give him the power to do it (all the Law can do is ‘command’ and ‘condemn’).
- But also, the law stirs up dormant desires in fallen human nature to do what is forbidden—it’s the old story that *“forbidden fruit is sweet.”*

**1 Corinthians 15:56 (NKJV)**

... the strength of sin is the law.

**Romans 7:5 (NKJV)**

<sup>5</sup> For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death.

You see, the law *stimulates* man's innate rebellion (rooted in our fallen nature)—because when we are told not to do something our flesh wants to do it all the more!

If you don't believe that, try putting a **"Don't walk on the grass"** sign on your lawn and see what happens!

**Romans 7:8 (NKJV)**

<sup>8</sup> But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all *manner of evil* desire. For apart from the law sin was dead. [laid dormant]

God gave the law in part to stimulate our rebellious nature so that our flesh would rise up and do the opposite of what God's laws commanded.

➤ I'm sure you're thinking—'Why would God want to stimulate our flesh to thwart our attempts to keep His commandments?'

Because He loves us and wants to show us we were not 'good' people on our way to heaven but guilty fallen sinners on our way to hell. You see He knew we could never keep His laws perfectly to get into heaven and He didn't want us to be fooled by the devil into thinking we were good enough to get to heaven by keeping God's laws. (Elaborate)

**Romans 6:15 (NKJV)**

<sup>15</sup> **What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!**

Once again, Paul anticipates that the teaching of salvation by grace would cause some to conclude that if we are saved by grace then it doesn't matter if we sin or not. If that's the case then let's '*sin up a storm*' because we're no longer under the law we're under grace!

Paul's response—**Certainly not!**

The idea is, **"No, no, a thousand times no!"**

The very purpose of God's grace is to *free* man from sin (through the gospel of grace)—how, then, could grace possibly justify *continuing* in sin? (Galatians 5:1)

Grace not only *justifies*—but also *transforms* (sanctifies) the life that is saved. (Colossians 2:6)

Once we get saved God doesn't remove our free will so that we can only now do right—no in fact this is where the battle comes in—the battle between the new nature and the old.

One author—

*"Christian—you are under new management, but the old manager keeps hanging around trying to get us to let him run the show like he did in the "good old days" just like the children of Israel talked about the good old days in Egypt."*

#### IV. Obey—verses 16-17

##### **Romans 6:16–17 (NKJV)**

**<sup>16</sup> Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading* to death, or of obedience *leading* to righteousness? <sup>17</sup> But God be thanked that *though* you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.**

You can present yourself to your commanding officer reporting for duty—but that doesn't mean you will obey the orders he gives to you.

Likewise, you can present yourself to God by coming to church to hear God's Word proclaimed—and yet not obey what God has said.

That's why Paul doesn't leave it there, he finishes by admonishing us to obey the Lord in all He has ordered us to do. Now to illustrate his point, Paul uses *slavery*, something they were very familiar with and which, no doubt, got their attention. It is estimated that the population of Rome in the first century was about one-third slaves.

In fact, so numerous was the slave population that a suggestion that slaves be made to wear a distinctive style of clothing was abandoned because—it would reveal their numerical strength! Moreover, many free men had been slaves—so it is likely that more than one-half of the church in Rome was at that time or had once been enslaved.

So, this illustration would have been only too clear to them even though to us it doesn't carry the same impact.

One thing everyone back then understood about slavery was that obedience to one's master was—undisputed and absolute (Talk about 'salad-bar' spirituality—'selective obedience').

Some have wondered how so many Christians, who have been set free from certain behaviors and bad habits have, once again, become entangled in them?

Well, verse 16 tells us how:

##### **Romans 6:16 (NLT)**

**<sup>16</sup> Don't you realize that you become the slave of whatever you choose to obey? You can be a slave to sin, which leads to death, or you can choose to obey God, which leads to righteous living.**

One author illustrated this with a story—

*"In the fourteenth century two brothers fought for the right to rule over a dukedom in what is now Belgium. The elder brother's name was Raynald, but he was commonly called "Crassus," a Latin nickname meaning "fat," for he was horribly obese. After a heated battle, Raynald's younger brother Edward led a successful revolt against him and assumed the title of Duke over his lands. But instead of killing Raynald, Edward devised a curious imprisonment. He had a room in the castle built around "Crassus," a room with only one door. The door was not locked, the windows were not barred, and Edward promised Raynald that he could regain his land and his title any time that he wanted to. All he would have to do is leave the room of his imprisonment. The obstacle to freedom was not in the doors or the windows, but with Raynald himself. Being grossly overweight, he could not fit through the door, even though it was of near-normal size. All Raynald needed to do was diet down to a smaller size, then walk out a free man, with all he had before his fall. However, his younger brother kept sending him an assortment of tasty foods, and Raynald's desire to be free never won out over his desire to eat.*

*Some would accuse Duke Edward of being cruel to his older brother, but he would simply reply "My brother is not a prisoner. He may leave when he so wills." But Raynald stayed in that room for ten years, until Edward himself was killed in battle.*

*What an accurate picture showing the experience of many Christians! Christ has set them forever free legally, and they may walk in that freedom from sin whenever they choose. But since they keep yielding their bodily appetites to the service of sin, they live a life of defeat, discouragement and imprisonment."*

We'll call this *the principle of enslavement*—which says, 'Whatever master we present ourselves to obey, we become the slaves of that master.'

Paul said, "All things are lawful for me—but I won't do anything that robs me of my freedom and brings me under its control."

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If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower—please reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

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