

Romans 6:11-14

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Date: 01 October 2023

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[0:00] Well, good morning. Let me invite you to take your copy of God's Word and join me in Romans chapter 6. Our text for today is Romans chapter 6, verses 11 through 14.

And this morning's text is the application of the previous 10 verses, which we will review and consider to help us understand verses 11 through 14.

But this morning, I would like to begin with a reading of our text and a presentation of the outline for our study. And then we'll back up and get to the text itself.

So Romans chapter 6, this is 11 through 14. Let me remind you before I read it, beloved, that this is God's Word to us. It was written for His glory and for our good.

And so we would all do well to listen to it in order to believe its promises and to obey its commands.

Paul writes, Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body to make you obey its passions.

[1:12] 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.

For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law, but under grace. This text presents to us four exhortations toward holy living.

These four exhortations or urges to do something will serve as our outline for today. So the outline is as follows.

Four points. Number one, no. Number two, consider. Number three, do not present your members to sin.

And number four, present yourself to God and your members to God. So if you want to shorten that, you can say, no, consider, do not present, and present.

[2:13] So number one, no. The very beginning of verse 11, Paul says, so you also. So the first exhortation is implied.

You can find the words, consider, and present for the other three exhortations. But you will not note the word no. But I assure you that it is there.

As Paul begins verse 11 with the phrase, so you also. This phrase is similar to a therefore.

Therefore, in light of what I have just said, you should.

So we must begin with what we ought to know if we are to live holy lives. What is it that Paul would have us know? Let's spend a bit of time looking at the previous ten verses of chapter 6 to find out.

And this will be very brief because last week we addressed it at greater length. Throughout the letter thus far, Paul has been making the case that we are justified or declared righteous.

[3:23] Morally perfect is what that word means. I hope that phrase is not growing tired for you.

It is the gospel justified by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. In the previous chapter, Paul explains how the first Adam, as a representative of all humanity, brought sin into the world.

And humanity inherits his sin nature. And then he goes on to talk about how the second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ, if we are in him, serves as our representative before God, as our federal head.

At every step of Paul's writing, he is anticipating objections. He asks questions and he gives answers, which is what we find him doing at the beginning of chapter 6.

So let's read those first ten verses. What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means.

[4:35] How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his

death? 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.

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. 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.

For one who has died has been set free from sin. Now, if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again. Death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died, he died to sin once for all. But the life he lives, he lives to God.

So at the beginning of chapter 6, Paul anticipates a question that may be reworded something like this. If Christ has paid the penalty for my sin and given to me his perfection, then can't I live any way I want to?

[5:53] And he responds emphatically, absolutely not. Then he proceeds to tell us why. Having been justified before God by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, we have been baptized into Jesus' death and resurrection, which means that we identify with him and have been set free from the power of sin.

So this is what Paul would have us know for the sake of holy living. If you are in Christ, have believed in his person and his work for the salvation of his soul, you have been fundamentally changed.

This is the doctrine of regeneration. You went from dark to light. You were dead and now you are alive. You have changed in kind.

You are a new creation. Your old nature has been replaced with a new nature. Before the fall, Adam and Eve were both able not to sin and able to sin.

The Latin phrase for this, which I just really like, I don't share Latin to sound smart. It helps us remember things, I think. And I want you to read people who use Latin, so maybe it won't be strange to you if I introduce it to you.

[7:20] But the Latin phrase for Adam and Eve's state before the fall was *passé non peccare*, able to sin, and *passé peccare*, able to sin.

Passé non peccare, able not to sin, and *passé peccare*, able to sin. After the fall, the nature of humanity changed fundamentally, and mankind became *passé peccare*, able to sin, only able to sin, apart from the intervening work of God.

But now, having been given a new nature, by grace alone, through faith alone, in the personal work of Jesus Christ alone, right? This is not a new nature that we have earned. It's a new nature that's been granted to us.

Christians are now *passé non peccare*, able not to sin, and still *passé peccare*, able to sin. And this is the state in which we live until one day we'll be entirely liberated from sin, and then we will be, at that point, only *passé non peccare*.

This is a thing to look forward to, a glorious future for us. But now, living in that in-between, sin no longer has power over us.

[8:44] We are able not to sin. Until our terrestrial lives are concluded, however, we're going to find that our old nature still tugs at us from the past.

Temptation begins with forgetful unbelief. And if this temptation is not met with the truth, it will give way to sin.

So, we can't emphasize this enough. Knowing who you are in Christ is the very first step in living a holy life.

If you have sinned, when you find yourself wrestling with sin, it's because you've forgotten who you are. You're in the midst of an identity crisis.

You have suddenly begun to think that sin now has power over you when it does, in fact, have no power over you. You've been buried with Christ, and your old nature is dead, and you now have a new nature.

[9:50] This is the thing we're supposed to know, and it brings us to our second exhortation, is that we are to consider this knowledge. Paul says,

continuing in verse 11, must consider.

So, you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. There is a distinct difference between knowing something to be true, giving some measure of mental assent to it, just saying, yeah, I believe that that's true, and actually understanding that thing to be true.

This exhortation to consider means that we will continually think on this truth and affirm it to be true, regardless of whether or not we experience it to be true.

We could be such fickle people pushed around by our emotions, and the response to that is not to ignore emotions altogether. They can be helpful, but to see if those emotions line up with the truth and to let the truth reign in our lives.

John MacArthur does a really good job at this point, and I often read things, and I think, I need to say that in other words and just go, I should just say it in their words. So, I'm going to read to you something brief from MacArthur's commentary on this passage, where he says, to help us consider, it is advantageous to note that there are a number of reasons believers often find it difficult to comprehend that they are now free from sin's bondage.

[11:26] Many of them do not realize that marvelous truth simply because they have never heard of it. They assume, or perhaps they've been wrongly taught, that salvation brings only transactional holiness.

That because of their trust in Christ, God now regards them as holy, but that their basic relationship to sin is the same as it always was, and that it will not be changed until they go to be with Christ.

That view of salvation often includes the idea that, although trust in Christ brings the believer a new nature, the old nature remains fully operative, and that the Christian life is essentially a battle between his two resident natures.

This makes salvation addition rather than transformation. A second reason Christians often find it hard to believe they are actually free from the tyranny of sin is that Satan does not want them to believe it.

If the enemy of our souls and the accuser of the brethren can make us think he still dominates our earthly lives, he weakens our resolve to live righteously by making it appear hopeless.

[12:35] A third reason Christians often find it difficult to believe they are free from sin's compulsion is that the reality of the new birth in Christ is not experiential. It is not physically observable or verifiable.

Redemption is a divine spiritual transaction that may or not be accompanied by physical or emotional experiences. A believer cannot perceive or experience in any humanly verifiable way the moment of his dying and resurrection with Christ.

A fourth and perhaps the most common reason why Christians find it hard to believe they are freed from sin's tyranny while they are still on earth is that their continued battle with sin seems almost constantly to contradict that truth.

If they have a new holy disposition and sin's control has been truly broken, they wonder why are they still so strongly tempted and why do they so often succumb?

But all of that doesn't negate the truth that if you are in Christ then you have been set free from sin.

[13:48] It's an accomplished reality, a once for all thing that Jesus has done for all those who believe in him. And so we not only need to know it to be true but we need to be considering it to be true and considering it to be true again and again and again and again because we are slow learners and we are quick to forget.

The Christian life is a mindful life. You do not have to be educated to be a follower of Jesus. Praise God. But you will find that being a follower of Jesus will require your mental faculty.

He asks of us to engage our brains that we might live holy. Let me give you a couple of other examples from this from the book of Romans which we will look at in greater detail in the future.

Paul writes in Romans chapter 8 verse 5 and 6 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh.

There is this mental activity on the things of the flesh. But those who live according to the spirit set their minds on the things of the spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death but to set the mind on the spirit is life and peace.

[15:13] And without robbing a bunch of attention from that text when we get to it if we think about the types of things we should be setting our minds on the things of the spirit I just want to draw your attention to John 16 13 where the spirit is called the spirit of truth.

So this text these 66 books that we have canonized these are the things of the spirit and in Philippians 1 19 and many other places the spirit is called the spirit of Jesus Christ.

So as this text illuminates for us the person and work of Jesus these are the things we are meant to be occupying our minds with considering who we are in Jesus dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

One other place in the book of Romans chapter 12 and verse 2 here Paul says do not be conformed to this world don't be looking like this world but be transformed and he doesn't insert there by your emotions by experience he says by the renewal of your mind the engagement of your mind considering the truths of God so we are to consider and consider and consider to continually apply these gospel truths in our life that we might give ourselves to God and Paul summarizes the first ten verses of chapter 6 by saying this we are to consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ

Jesus dead to sin alive to God if you are not in Christ then you are alive to sin it is the only thing you can do and you are dead to God but if you are in Christ Jesus then you are dead to sin and alive to God fundamentally changed an entirely different nature all together so having known and having considered he goes on to exhort us so thirdly do not present your members to sin verse 12 and 13 he says let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body to make you obey its passions do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness now the word present can also be translated yield or offer think don't offer your members to sin in verses 12 and 13

[18:07] Paul seems to personify sin as a ruler on a throne that desires to control you but cannot unless you offer yourself to its service you notice that let not sin that was a name there reign in your body do not present your members to sin do not offer yourself to sin as an instrument as a tool to be wielded for unrighteousness!

for the believer sin is a dethroned ruler but it is a ruler that still has power if and only if power is granted to it you see that distinction?

sin no longer sits on that figurative throne it has been dethroned in the life we've been set free from the tyranny of sin but we at times and quite too often grant power back to this personified sin to reign over us Peter makes a similar exhortation in 1st Peter chapter 2 verse 9 and following there he says you hear the fundamental difference set apart difference are a chosen race a royal priesthood a holy nation a people for his own possession that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light then verse 10 once you were not a people but now you are God's people different fundamentally changed once you had not received mercy but now you have received mercy fundamentally changed different and then verse 11 he starts with beloved those loved by God beloved

I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh which wage war against your soul similar exhortation rooted in who we are we then are to resist abstain from the passion of the flesh we are no longer subjects of this cruel ruler so we should not present our members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness if we rightly recognize to whom we belong and we have been set free from sin then it follows that we will not offer up our feet our hands our eyes our mouths our minds or hearts as tools or weapons for unrighteousness and this is going to be an activity in your life in the negative do not offer it up but in the positive we're to do something else number four present yourself rather than instead present yourself to God and your members to God notice verse 13 and 14 the last half of verse 13 and 14 but rather present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life and your members to God as instruments for righteousness for sin will have no dominion over you since you are not under law but under grace so adversely we are to yield or offer ourselves all of us to God as tools or weapons in his hand for righteousness presenting yourself and your members to God for righteous purposes takes work and hear that it takes some effort on our part but I want to be clear it is a rested work

I had a helpful conversation with my father about this yesterday it is a rested work it's a work that comes from and is fueled by the rest that we have in the gospel accomplished truth on our behalf let's be absolutely sure to get this order right we do not present ourselves to God and our members

to God as instruments for righteousness hoping that God will accept our sacrifice this is not what Paul is talking about here but we do this activity as those who have been brought from death to life he roots it in that very identity Paul is so careful here he's already said it at the beginning of chapter 6 but he does not want us to forget the order in which this happens right we present ourselves we present our members as those who have been already brought from death to life already have been made new by

[23:24] God our natures changed by God we already belong to him because when we were dead he made us alive so because we belong to him because this is true we should willingly gratefully present ourselves to him and our lives to his service we see this as a great good and it's when we don't realize who we are when we start to flip the order around that we are given to sin on this side of glory we will not arrive at sinlessness but we are by the power that God provides to strive for it and we will find that incrementally from one degree of glory to another 2 Corinthians 3.18 we will look more like Jesus Christ we're being conformed into his image bit by bit by bit and this will find its full completion in glory

Paul says in Philippians I'm confident of this he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Christ who's at labor in that text God himself is at labor he will bring it to pass beloved this work ought not be laborious it ought to be fueled by joy because of the status that we have because of the completed work of Christ on our behalf let's remember Jesus' words from Matthew chapter 11 verse 28 and following come to me all who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and lowly in heart and you will find rest for your souls for my yoke is easy and my burden is light the Bible has lots of language for those who are wicked never finding rest but those who are in Christ are at rest and the work we do comes from it proceeds from that settled position in him no longer working for our salvation but rather working because we are saved this is an incredibly important thing to have clear and right in your mind for verse 14 sin will have no dominion over you since you are not under law but under grace look again that the re-emphasis of this right sin has no dominion over you it does not reign over you if you are in Christ because you're not under law but under grace and I think

I think that we could see under the reign of law or under the reign of grace you see this the submissive position being under law and contextually I think this is a fair assumption to make that what he's trying to communicate to us is that we're not under the reign of the law that exists to point out our sin but we're rather under the reign of grace right this accomplished work having been done for us who did not deserve it but it has been done nonetheless right because God is gracious toward us we're under the reign of grace and so we willingly gratefully with joy seek to obey his commands now I want to take a brief glimpse at Paul's struggle against sin to get some idea of how our rested work should be characterized so turn with me just slightly to

Romans chapter 7 it'll take us some weeks to get to this text but remember it really comes on the heels of what he's saying here in verses 11 through 14 of chapter 6 Romans 7 beginning in verse 21 he says so I find it to be a law that when I want to do right evil lies close at hand for I delight in the law of God in my inner being but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members wretched man that I am who will deliver me from this body of death now there are varied views on what this text means and I just want to in brief we'll get to it later but I want to say to you I think this is his post conversion experience walking in this life and still committing sin having been set free from it

I think it's in that state that he says wretched man that I am who will deliver me from this body of death who will finally and fully set me free where sin is no longer an encumbrance on my life anymore and he says verse 25 thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord so then I myself serve the law of God with my mind but with my flesh I serve the law of sin and then these uninspired chapter breaks don't help us at this point I don't think into chapter 8 he says verse 1 there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus right so so even when we sin we recognize that we've been set free from the penalty of that sin and the power of it and so we keep on with joy and gratitude and levity because we can keep on because there is no eternal condemnation because of our sin verse 2 of chapter 8 for the law of the spirit of life has set you free in

[29:57] Christ Jesus from the law of so grateful motivation overflowing joy because of who we are in Jesus we identify with him if we have been buried with him and raised with him we have been set free from the power of sin and we are now liberated to live lives that are pleasing to our God and so we press on so we press on we work out our salvation with fear and trembling for it's God who works in us both to work for his good pleasure we seek to honor him with our lives but not to earn his favor because it is ours in Jesus so let me read the text to you one more time and I'll close in prayer so you also must!

consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body to make you obey its passions 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 for sin will have no dominion over you since you are not under law but under grace let's pray together