

***“Will We Be Slaves to Sin or to Obedience,
to Death or to Righteousness and Life?”***

Review: “The Reckoning That Counts”

- ***The Reckoning That Counts — In Christ, We Died and Were Risen Again***
- ***The Reckoning That Counts — An Exhortation to Liberty Abides Always***
- ***The Reckoning That Counts — Living as Alive from the Dead, Our Privilege***
- ***The Reckoning That Counts — Grace Frees Us From the Bondage to Sin***

- ***The Reckoning That Counts — In Christ, We Died and Were Risen Again***

Romans 6:11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- ***“Likewise ...”: Lit. “In this way” or “in reference to” what was just written in verses 6 -10. What was that? It was all about what we must know before we can go on to his next exhortations. And that was all about how God sees us as “in Christ Jesus”, where the connection to Adam’s sin has been broken completely and now we have only a real and living connection to our Lord himself and his perfect righteousness in its place!***
- ***Verses 9 & 10 summarize his teaching in those verses:***

Romans 6:9-10

9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

- ***The point here is that Christ now lives above and beyond the issue of our sins! He has already paid the full penalty for them and his payment has been accepted by Almighty God — witness the glorious resurrection as proof of that, for if his death and burial were not sufficient, he would still be in the grave since our sins had become his and death would be the consequence. BUT HE IS RISEN, PRAISE GOD ALMIGHTY. HE IS RISEN. And consequently his righteousness has become ours. And so the Lord God sees us as “in Him”. But how do we see ourselves, that is the question Paul is now addressing here in the Romans.***

So our response is intended to be like his, to live unto God and not

as a slave to sin. It is that simple. These truths written so simply and so boldly here should indeed lift all believers into the heavenlies. May it be for us all today and forever! Amen.

- *The teaching is clear: This is spiritual fact revealed through truth that we must know in order to proceed to the exhortations hereafter which are directly based upon it. This is so very important and yet there is so little understanding about Paul's doctrine where which is expressed here so clearly. So what does he say should now follow our learning moments here?*
- *"... reckon ye also yourselves ...": So now he writes about our responsibility which is the take God at his word! Will we, by faith do just that? This is the pivotal verse here in this chapter. Many have been transformed in their spiritual lives by gaining a better understanding of what this means.*

Reckoning is taking God at his word in its most basic meaning. An analogy would be in the discipline of financial accounting where balancing debts and credits is most essential for business health.

- *"... to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.": It is as simple (but profound) as to be translated from one realm of living where death and its shadows are enslaving us over to another realm of living where death has no relevance at all except the glory that shall then come to us. Indeed, that other side has to do with being alive unto God through Jesus Christ. That relationship is for us to be just as vivid and compelling and undeniable as the former was, or, Paul believed, even more so!*

We must quickly in our review go on to the next verses:

- *The Reckoning That Counts — An Exhortation to Liberty Abides Always*

Romans 6:12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

- *The apostle now cries out extolling our shared liberty in Christ Jesus:*

"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body": Here the verb "to reign" is a present active imperative with a negative particle so the meaning is "stop allowing sin (Adam's with its past dominating

influence over us) to reign or rule” in your mortal bodies (which are liable to die).

The stain of sin is still upon us as he writes here, in our mortal bodies, so damaged from how God originally created them. For they were subjected to death and that enemy is always close by waiting to destroy all that we have loved and held dear whether for ourselves or for our dearest ones. BUT WE NOW DWELL IN LIBERTY, he writes. And as such we are called to stop allowing sin to dominate us as it always did when we knew not the Lord and were in bondage to trespasses and sins:

- ***So the teaching is simple and clear and therefore so powerful: We have been translated out of the realm of sin and death and into another place altogether, a spiritual reality created just for us, a realm of life and peace in Christ Jesus. And that means we have the power to live above and beyond the passions of our flesh with the liberty God has entrusted us with, and it is a privilege indeed to have this freedom to refuse the lusts of the flesh of which we all are so prone. The opportunity is ours. But will we avail ourselves of it?***

He now repeats his gracious exhortation with some additional detail:

- ***The Reckoning That Counts — Living as Alive from the Dead, Our Privilege***

Romans 6:13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

- ***First the negative, an imperative linguistically, to stop what is already occurring, and then the positive, yield, in both cases, he writes, our living under grace is all about “yielding” or “presenting”, more positively, our members, NOT as instruments of unrighteousness and sin, but rather “as those that are alive from the dead, and [our] members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”***
- ***We have the liberty for this way of living, he writes, for the truth is clear and our reckoning has liberated us to be living in this way. And this all is graciously granted to us on the basis of our reckoning!!! To reflect back to our Lord what he had accomplished on our behalf in this way should be now our highest honor.***

- ***The Reckoning That Counts — Grace Frees Us From the Bondage to Sin***

Romans 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

- ***This puts the focus here on his main point overall and it is glorious indeed: For sin shall not [under the teaching before us concerning the reckoning, but not otherwise ...] have dominion over you! THIS IS THE PLAN OF GOD FOR US REDEEMED ONES AND WE HAVE THE ABILITY TO LIVE IN THIS FREEDOM — BUT ONLY IF, ONLY IF, WE KNOW — RECKON — AND YIELD, OR PRESENT OURSELVES TO GOD, AS ALIVE FROM THE DEAD!***
- ***“For ye are not under any law ... [always condemning, of course]”, with no definite articles here. He is not speaking specifically about the Law of Moses, but any law at all. For all condemn and none can give life. BEING FREE FROM LAW WITH GRACE TAKING ITS PLACE IS PAUL’S CONCLUDING STATEMENT JUST AHEAD:***

Romans 6:20-23

20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- ***SO THERE ARE NO LEGALISMS HERE. FOR WE NOW LIVE UNDER GRACE: Praise God, we are under grace and that has changed our entire walk before Almighty God. IT IS GRACE THEREFORE THAT IS AT THE HEART OF THIS DISPENSATION AND ONLY THAT GRACE HAS THE POWER TO DELIVER US FROM THE BONDAGE TO SIN.***

So we live with a new empowering, a new dynamic,. Otherwise there would be never any possibility of living on this higher plane. But with it we have been set free to enjoy the Lord of glory into whose resurrection and heavenly glory we have been translated.

We are no longer under any law with its system of work requirements for God’s blessing, but under grace with its blessing known and unknown freely poured out upon us. Amen.

Our Outline Today: “Will We Be Slaves to Sin and Death or to Obedience and Righteousness?”

- ***The Logic of Grace Is Foundational In Practical Living As Well As Salvation***
- ***Though We Are Blessed By Grace, the Weakness of the Flesh Remains***
- ***Freedom From Righteousness Was Once Our Constant Condition***
- ***Freedom From Sin Is Now Our Constant Blessing!***

I. The Logic of Grace Is Foundational In Practical Living As Well As Salvation:

[READ] Romans 6:14-15

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

- ***Paul continues the same teaching as in the earlier section but will repeat it with a somewhat different emphasis to further strengthen his argument. Apparently he expected many opponents then and in future times. Therefore he begins again with the word “for”. This is divine logic indeed.***
- ***Is Paul simply repeating himself here from verse 1? No. Verse 1 says we must not abide with sin (to settle down with it as a part of life and not to be concerned further with its presence) and that if we do then even more grace may abound. God forbid is a proper response!***

But the emphasis in verse 14 is that since we are not under law why not just commit acts of sin when the opportunity arises and it seems “convenient”? The difference is actually somewhat significant. In the first case one might choose to live just as before one was saved and leave it at that with no further consideration — since our sin will magnify the depth of God’s abundant grace toward believers.

That is a theological failure indeed made real in ones life. In the second case, while we have been set free from the bondage of sin through Christ, we now live under grace and sin therefore is passed over by our always gracious Lord. Therefore we might conclude that we may sin as opportunity allows, even though we know that is not the best course for us. This second of the two circumstances seem to me to be far more common than the first. And, I believe it is all too common in our lives.

- *Paul has asked the question and his answer follows:*

II. Though We Are Blessed By Grace, the Weakness of the Flesh Remains:

[READ] Romans 6:16-19

16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

- *The indwelling sin nature, the flesh, is a constant presence and source of passions tending towards sin in the believer. Of that all must agree. But there is an alternative and the apostle here strongly exhorts based again as before on the liberty theme highlighted earlier.*
- *He also highlights in verse 17 with much thanksgiving to the Lord God that the believers to whom he writes had willingly and from the heart received the true doctrine regarding their gifts under grace. As a result they had presented themselves to righteousness and away from sin.*
- *And so he exhorts them again (since apparently he knew there was now a need for that), to fully exercise their privilege under grace to present their members as instrument so righteousness, not as previously when they were indeed enslaved to sin. For now, he writes, we believers are no longer slaves to sin. Why therefore should we now freely offer ourselves as such? May it never be so.*

III. Freedom From Righteousness Was Once Our Constant Condition:

[READ] Romans 6:20-21

20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

- *The teaching of verse 19 is now restated in terms of “freedom” or “liberty”. LIBERTY is such a wonderful thought, isn’t it? Our founding fathers successfully exhorted many in the same way, didn’t they? Remember the call: “give me liberty or give me death” by Patrick Henry.*
- *Before we were NOT FREE regarding righteousness, but now we ARE. Why throw that away for nothing; so much has been gained through it. Indeed, the riches of God’s abundant grace are poured out upon us including also the new nature and the Holy Spirit. They are always with us as a result. So we have every advantage now compared to when we were in bondage as sin’s slaves. Why treat the great gift of God with such disrespect? Christ died for our liberty? Do we not remember that? This is a powerful argument indeed, isn’t it?*
- *That is a proper ending point and the apostle will now conclude by summarizing his teaching in the wonderful words that follow:*

IV. Freedom From Sin Is Now Our Constant Blessing!

[READ] Romans 6:22-23

22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- *Let’s not forget the structure of the passage: Verse 14 begins this section and verses 22-23 conclude it. Remember what the apostle wrote there:*

Romans 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

- *Here “Made free from sin” means “liberated from the power and bondage of sin” , and “become servants to God” means “have freely become bond slaves to God” as I might paraphrase it.*
- *And verse 22 is here stated to be true of all believers, carnal and spiritual, immature and mature, just as verse 23 does also. The implications are that Paul is teaching about the benefits of God’s abounding grace in each of us. All of the negatives, the sins, under grace, have been cast aside.*

- *So we find ourselves here firmly planted on the high plain of God's abundant grace surrounded by high peaks of grace just waiting to be known even more fully as we live here so surrounded and with these constant reminders the apostle cannot withhold. Amen and amen.*
- *What about rewards then? An interesting and important subject which we must save for another time.*

Conclusions / Exhortations:

- *Paul has continued his emphasis on what the Lord God has done and what the believer's response to God's work should be. It is simple indeed.*
- *But looking at the other side of this, what the believer's response should not be, is a large and multifaceted subject indeed. Here are several and they all can be defined as failures to take the teaching here to heart. For the most part the problem is the rejection of the earlier teaching (through misunderstanding or failure to receive this critical teaching). And then there is the matter of failing to respond to that teaching in the area of the reckoning itself. Either way the believer will fall short of the blessings promised here in Paul's letter.*
- *In this case, not even knowing what Christ has fully accomplished for us all, we shall surely fall under the spell as it were of fleshly religion and will not enjoy the glorious liberties of the sons of God! **FOR ONE CAN NEVER RECKON ON WHAT ONE HAS NO KNOWLEDGE OF AT ALL!***
- *Regarding the teaching concerning reckoning upon this truth:*
 - *Fleshly carnalities as chapter 7 indicate will surely overtake us as well if we fail to reckon upon the truth we have graciously come to know. This is the saddest option of all, of course. May it never be so. **RECKONING UPON THE DIVINELY REVEALED TRUTH IS A REQUIREMENT, INDEED, THE PREREQUISITE FOR LIVING ON THAT HIGHER, THAT HEAVENLY PLANE WITH CHRIST JESUS.***
- *Praise God for his wondrous grace and this truth that is so liberating. Amen.*