

I. COOPERATING WITH GOD’S GRACE: WALKING IN VICTORY (ROM. 6)

- A. Romans 3-8 is the most complete presentation of the gospel of grace. Paul describes who we are in Christ in our new **legal position** and how we are to respond in our **living condition**.
- B. Romans 6 tells us how to access, or experience, the power of our legal position. This is the main chapter in Scripture that teaches on personal transformation. Paul gives us three main principles.
 - 1. Romans 6:1-10: Our **legal position**—what we received by being united to Jesus.
 - 2. Romans 6:11-13: How to **cooperate with grace**—the three primary principles
 - 3. Romans 6:14-23: Our **living condition**—what we experience as we cooperate with grace

II. PAUL’S TWO CRITICAL QUESTIONS –

- A. Paul asks two critical questions in Romans 6 that are natural responses that arise from his teaching in Rom. 3-5.
- B. Question #1 – Rom. 6:1-2

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ² Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

 - 1. Rom. 6: 3-10 – Paul reviews the purpose of water baptism and describes the **legal position** we now have before God. Baptism is an outward sign that we have agreed that we are willing to break with our life of sin and self-service.
 - 2. Paul tells us there are several things we should know.
 - a. Vs. 4-6 – in baptism we identified with the death and burial of Christ, therefore our old man died on the cross in Christ.
 - b. Vs. 7-8 – we have been freed from sin and may also identify with the resurrection of Christ if we have identified with the death and burial of Christ.
- C. Question #2 – Rom. 6: 15

What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!

 - 1. Rom. 6: 16-23 – Paul reviews the nature of slavery and shows us that we are no longer slaves to sin and should no longer live by the dictates of our fleshly desires because we are now slaves to righteousness. Paul is describing our new **living condition**.

- D. For both questions Paul answers with a resounding “NO, heaven forbid.” Paul’s argument in Romans 6 is a challenge to the false grace message that allows believers to remain in compromise or slaves to sin presuming that God no longer has anything to say about unrighteousness. It was a similar issue with Israel as they exited Egypt. They no longer lived in Egypt but now they needed Egypt (a type of the world) out of them.

III. THREE PRIMARY PRINCIPLES TO COOPERATE WITH GOD’S GRACE

- A. **Knowing Principle (Rom. 6:11):** We must know who we are in Christ. To “*reckon ourselves*” is to see ourselves in the way that God sees us and according to what the Word says about us.
1. We must see ourselves as those who have died to the reign of sin and are alive to God.
 2. We are to see ourselves as enjoyed, indwelt, empowered, and commissioned by God, with a relevant purpose.

¹¹Reckon [see] yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ. (Rom. 6:11)

- B. **Resisting Principle (Rom. 6:12-13a):** We resist sin, Satan, and sin-provoking circumstances. We must choose righteousness. It is our responsibility, by the grace of God, to deny ungodly lusts. God cannot do this for us; though He helps and empowers us when we choose to obey Him. It is an essential part of grace for us to deny lust, but it is in no way “earning His love”; rather, we are positioning ourselves to “experience more” from Him.
1. By resisting through the grace of God, strength is built in our lives. The more we are able to resist by grace the stronger we get. The more we do not resist the weaker we get. It is like a body builder who wants to develop muscles and strength puts himself through vigorous training.

¹²Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin. (Rom. 6:12-13a)

- C. **Pursuing Principle (Rom. 6:13b):** We pursue *relating to* and *servicing God and people* with love. This speaks of loving and serving people (family, church, neighbors, and the nations, etc.) in righteousness. Our first call is to love God and seek to grow in knowledge of Him. We pursue loving God by taking time to cultivate intimacy with Him and by actively obeying Him.
1. In this way, we declare our relationship with God to be the most valuable of all our relationships and begin to “put in effort” into our relationship. Again, we are not trying to earn anything, we are just demonstrating value for the relationship by the effort we put into cultivating that relationship.
 2. Loving God is not just demonstrated by resisting sin, but mostly in our intimate pursuit of God. God responds to those who draw near him.

¹³But present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members [your body,

time, money, abilities, etc.] as instruments of righteousness to God. (Rom. 6:13b)