

Roman 6:6-14 - Know, Reckon, Yield - 25 Sept 2011

Turn with me in your Bibles, to Romans 6. I am excited again to share the Word of God with you. It is always exciting to be a preacher, you know because the preacher always gets the best. He gets the opportunity to study the Word of God, he hears from God, he learns from other writers, pastors, teachers of times past and he enjoys the blessings, the fullness of the teachings of God's Word and on Sunday, we are somewhat sad because we could only share with you, the overflow, the top of it. But there is so much in God's Word and I am excited for your life this morning just to once again preach and communicate the heart of God in His Word.

Romans 6:6-14 this morning. Quite a few verses we are going to take on, but rest assured, today would be a simple message. I think you can't miss the point that God is trying to give us in Romans 6. Versus 6-14.

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

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.

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

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

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.

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

Time stamp in audio 0:02:35.6.

Let's bow, for a word of prayer. Father, we are thankful for the joyous privilege of worship, we are thankful for Your revelation and we thank You that we from Your Word, we can know You and know what You want to accomplish in and through our lives. We pray for humility, for a heart that is teachable, that we may not only be listening, understanding, but we will be believing and living Your Word out in our lives. So, we pray, right now for Spirit empowered preaching and Spirit enabled listening, that Lord, You will be glorified through our lives. We surrender ourselves to You, we thank You for the inspired writings we possessed in our hands. We break down the bread of life to Your people so dear Lord, satisfy our souls in You, because we ask and pray in Jesus' name, amen.

Time stamp in audio 0:03:35.5.

Maybe you have heard about this man's name, Augustus Toplady. May not be familiar to a lot of us if I were to mention his name. He would be better known by the songs he has written and one of the great songs of our times or in the times gone by is that song "Rock of Ages" it refers to our Lord Jesus Christ and he says here

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure;
Save from wrath and make me pure.

Time stamp in audio 0:04:19.7.

The last phrase there,

Be of sin the double cure;
Save from wrath and make me pure.

The desire and intention of God in Jesus Christ, is not only to save us from the penalty of sin but also from the power of sin.

He says here, be of sin the double cure, the grace of God through Jesus Christ, is in a sense like a double cure, it saves us from wrath, the penalty of sin and it makes me pure, the power of sin.

Time stamp in audio 0:04:54.5.

You see, the grace of God in the Christian's life it's not just a transaction but a transformation. God is not here just to make us righteous in position but He is also to make us righteous in practice.

God's desire is not just salvation from the penalty of sins but sanctification in a Christian's life. Sanctification is that process by which the life of God is more and more manifested in the believer's life. It is a process by which we are less like the world and more like His Son and God's desire is indeed that double cure will be manifested in you, saved from wrath and that which makes me pure.

I like what John Newton has to say. He's the one who gave us that beautiful song, "Amazing Grace" and John Newton wrote this.

"I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I wish to be, I am not what I hope to be, but by the cross of Jesus Christ, I am not what I used to be."

You know, in a Christian's life, there must be a change, there must be a growth, there must be a transformation, because that is the grace of God in your life. And today, we are going to examine if the grace of God is intended to change my life, how am I to respond to the intention, to the grace of God in my life? Is there something I need to know, is there something I need to respond to, in order for the growth or the spiritual formation in me to be maximized? I think there is and in this passage that we have just read, there are three simple words that you need to understand and accept. There are three simple words that would unlock for you, what it means to grow in the Lord Jesus Christ. First of all, he says in verse 6 and verse 9, this word "knowing".

Christian growth, spiritual formation, maturity, begins with this word, "knowing".

1. Knowing

So, Paul tells us, word number one. "Knowing", word number two, the word in verse 11, the word "reckon", reckoning and thirdly, in verse 15, the word "yield".

So, today's sermon is very, straightforward, you can't forget the title, alright, the title of the message today is simply this, "Know, Reckon, Yield". At the end of the sermon, at the end of the service, I just want you to remember these three words, "know, reckon, yield", can you do that for me?

I mean, can you do that for me, can lah? (Laughter in the congregation). I didn't ask you to say yes, but at the end of the service, you guys can tell me, yes the message is about knowing, reckoning, yielding, alright, straightforward.

But, you know, this would help you tremendously in your Christian walk. It would help you tremendously as you seek sanctification in your life.

Now, let's go through this, one by one. First of all, let's understand the word know.

1. Know

Hosea 4:6

My people perish because of their ignorance.

It is sad, when the people of God do not know God nor His ways and Christian growth begins by this word, knowing. It's important that you know.

Last Saturday, I was with my son in the Botanic Gardens. Yesterday, I was at the East Coast Park, I met with some of our brethren here early and on Saturday, I was at the Botanic Gardens and we were walking by the pond and I saw this amazing plant and this is the picture of that, this is a water lily, beautiful!

A closer look at the water lily leaf, there is no lilies, no flowers yet, just the leaf and I said to Shaun, Shaun, let's try something new today. Let's step on the leaf and cross over to the other side. (Laughter in the congregation).

He didn't say anything and he began to walk down the slope and he was about to step on the leaf when I said "Wait, Shaun, it's a leaf, it's not a rock, you can't stand on it." He looked at me and was wondering if I am speaking the truth. He was doubting his father and so I said, "Shaun, let me show you." I reached forward to the leaf and I wanted to flip it over, so that he could see that there is nothing that supports this leaf, it's only floating on water and it is unstable. But when I reached out and I grabbed that leaf, something sharp poked my thumb when I lifted it up, Shaun said "Daddy, why are you bleeding, why is there blood?"

Time stamp in audio 0:10:07.6.

And I realized, I immediately dropped the leaf of course and I realized, this is no ordinary leaf. If you look at it carefully and if the lights were to be dimmed (lights

dimmed almost immediately leading to loud laughter in the congregation); we are a church that believes, ask and it shall be given, alright. (Laughter in the congregation).

If you look at the leaf carefully, there is something unusual about it, can't see, right, don't worry, I know you can't see it, so a closer look. Wow, I did not put the whole thing for you to see because I couldn't, it was that painful. But you could see that right underneath the leaves are all these spikes and thorns, amazing, God made this leaf to protect itself or God gave it as a form of protection from predators and fish and whatever you have in the water.

And I thought to myself, this is a dangerous leaf, how can it be so near the land and where little children like myself (Laughter in the congregation) can easily go and grab it and hurt ourselves, it's painful, how can they do this? Well, just to prove that I really pricked myself, I took a photo of my thumb. Pardon me, for my bad photography skills, I couldn't get the focus on the foreground, but it is always on the background, but it really hurts and I said, it's dangerous, how could this be so. And while I finished taking the photo, I was about to leave the place, then I turned around and I saw something, I saw this. I saw the sign that says "The giant water lilies is one of the biggest water lilies on earth and it has thorns on the underside of my leaf." Why didn't I see, why didn't I read and why didn't I know?

I was talking to a lady right after the first service and she was saying, she felt so discouraged in her Christian life. She felt so disappointed and so disillusioned with herself because she has been trying so hard, but she can't see authentic growth in her life. She is in pain. Now, it might be, you are in a similar situation. You have been discouraged, you have been hurt in your Christian walk and you say, why is there no change. Number one, maybe you are not saved in the first place. But if you should be saved, the other reason why you're not growing is maybe because you didn't know and you have been taught, you have believed all kinds of false teachings, or wrong teachings of what it means to grow as a child of God.

You are all confused, you have all kinds of misunderstandings, you are thrown into all kinds of extreme teachings and today you are hurt, you are disappointed and you are disillusioned at your stagnation in Christian life. Paul says, you need to begin here, you need to begin by knowing truths that will help you in your Christian walk. So, it is important for us to know, so what are you to know? The Bible says in verse 6,

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him (Added by Pastor : It begins here, you've got to know something about sanctification)

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Sanctification is not a renovation of the old life. It's not. It's not improving your old life, is not a betterment of the old man. No, it is a killing of the old man, it's a slaying of the old man, it is a crucifying of the old man, it is the doing away totally of the old man.

A man wanted to sell his factory, his building, a complex, it is big, but it is rather rundown, window panes are broken, the pipes are leaking, the floor is all torned up, it is not a beautiful sight, but a potential buyer comes, he views the place, quick survey and the seller says, "Sir, don't you worry when you buy this place, I am going to reinstall the windows, I am going to repair the pipes and I am going to re-tile the floors, I am going to do it spanking new for you. It's going to be beautiful. But the buyer says, no, you don't have to do that. When I buy his property, I want to tear the entire thing down because I wanted to do a new work.

That's what God wants to do in your life, is not to renovate your old man, He says he wants to crucify the old man. In fact, when you believe in Jesus Christ, the old man is done away. You've got to know that. I like what Jeremiah says in Chapter 13 I think in verse 23.

Can an Ethiopian change his skin and can a leopard change its spots.

The old man is totally defiled by sin. It's corrupt and God is not going to better this corrupt life. The way you're going to be sanctified is, first of all, the old man is put aside, is crucified, it's gone, it's slain, is killed. Why? Because he says, that the body of sin might be destroyed. The body of sin is that corrupted, depraved nature of the old man. The word destroyed here is to be rendered inoperative, or to be rendered inactive. Strip it of its power, strip it of its authority and God does it by crucifying of the old man and not renovating the old man.

Christian sanctification is recognizing, knowing that God is starting afresh in your life. It's not renovating, improving, your old man. You are now no more a slave to sin because that's what God has done for you. You're no more under the bondage and slavery of sin, you are free, you are set free from the power, authority, dominion of sin.

I hope you remember my dear Sgt. Yong. And again, I say, I love him, alright, still I love him today. I have been set free, I don't have to listen to him today. I hope you

remember Harry Houdini. He thought he was trapped in the prison, when he was actually free. God is saying to you, you've got to know this, you are dead to sin. You need not follow and obey sin's commands anymore.

But there's something else you need to know, not only are you dead to sin but you are alive in Christ. Verse 8

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

God has done a new work in your life. He has made you a new creation, a new creature, a new man. Christian sanctification begins by knowing it is no more the old man, but a new life that lives unto God. The new life, the word new really is not new in terms of chronology, it's not just new in terms of time, is new in terms of quality, it's a totally new nature, a nature that seeks God, a nature that seeks to obey Him. That's where Christian growth begins. He has done that for you, you've got to know it.

You may be familiar with this man called Augustine, Augustine of Hippo, a man who lived in the third and fourth century A.D., a theologian, a man who thought deeply about the things of God.

It was said that before he was saved, before he came to Christ, he had a mistress. And after he was saved, the mistress whom he separated from, avoided, met him at a marketplace and the mistress went after Augustine and said, “, Augustine, Augustine.” Augustine just walked on, pretended that he didn't listen or didn't hear. She went after him and said “Augustine, Augustine, it is I, don't you know me?” Augustine turned around and said “Yes, I know you, but the problem is now that it is no more I, it is no more me.” In fact, he said to her, I cannot carry on and I need not carry on in the sin of immorality or extramarital affair because I am a new man in Jesus Christ, the old life that was under the bondage of sin is no more. I am a new creature. I am a new man in Christ.

Christian sanctification begins with knowledge, begins with knowing, what God has already done in your life, what has he already done? Crucified the old man and given you a new life. You see, that's where I think we go wrong in Christian discipleship. That's where we go wrong in helping new believers in Christ. When a man comes to know Christ, you know what the typical thing that would happen to him? He would be told that in order for you to be a Christian, you've got to read how many pages of the Bible, you have got to pray how many minutes a day, you've got to come to church, you've got to give, you've got to serve, you've got to come for worship services

and you've got to do all these things and at the end of the day, a new believer sits down and thinks to himself, Christian living is about a set of dos and don'ts. Christian living is about doing, doing, doing, doing, doing, doing. It's about D.O. , do. But he fails to recognize, Christian living begins the recognizing, it is not D O. It is DONE. It is done. Christian living begins by recognizing, you are not the one to crucify your old man, God has already crucified the old man. That's why we pierce ourselves with many sorrows. Our eyes are off the grace of God; you think it is about us changing our lives, what I must do and forgetting what God has already done.

Friends, this is what you need to know, step number one, in our response to the sanctifying grace in a Christian's life, you've got to know, know, that you are dead to sin and alive to Christ. It's all about what God has already done. But let me move on. A second keyword we need to recognize is the word to "Reckon."

2. Reckon

The word reckon here, refers to something that is in the heart and not just in the mind. You see, knowing it's with regards to the intellectual knowledge in the mind. But there is more to it, it's not just what you know in your mind but what you really believe in your heart. The word reckon, is to regard, to count on, to act upon, to have that settled confidence. The word reckon is really to believe, not just knowing something vaguely but to believe it and to regard it personally for your own life, for yourself.

Let me illustrate this. I used to work as a doctor and I used to work in the polyclinic and in a polyclinic, one very common diagnosis or disease you see is, diabetes. I am not going to ask how many of you have diabetes but I'm sure you know what diabetes is and I'm sure you know people who have been stricken with diabetes. Now, when a patient with diabetes comes to see us, generally, they will do a blood test for us and with a blood test, we have some objective measurement of how the control of diabetes has been.

A typical scenario would be this. An auntie walks into my clinic and I look at her blood test results and I look at auntie and say "Tsk, tsk, tsk, tsk, auntie, Bo Ho, no good, you see, the level is so high. It says, the upper limit is 6.4 but yours is 10.6. Too high, auntie Bo Ho." And I tell her about how she may lose her eye, I show her a picture, of blindness, I tell her, kidneys can pack up, a picture of dialysis. I show her how a leg may be chopped and I show her the pictures and I try to scare. Although I don't do this all the time but just an exaggerated scenario. I scare her with all the

complications of diabetes. I say, auntie you must watch your diet, you must control your blood sugar level, you must take your medicine and auntie says “I know, I know, yes doctor, yes, yes, yes.”

And after that, she goes down to the clinic pharmacy, she gets the medicine and when I am done with the patients, it's about lunchtime, I go down, I go to the hawker center nearby, you know what's going to happen already, right. And I see cool, I see auntie, I see auntie happily sitting in a coffee shop, shaking her legs and eating her ice kacang, rojak, ang ku kueh and all kinds of things I just told her not to eat. Now, you might choose to sit beside auntie and say to auntie, “What did the doctor say to you, what did the doctor say to you?” The doctor says my diabetes is no good. Is it true, she says yah, yah, my blood sugar level is very high. Then auntie, you know what would happen? I know, my eyes will go blind, my kidneys will pack up, my legs might be chopped off. Then, what you need to do? I know, I know I need to control my diet, I need to eat the medicine. Then, auntie, why are you eating all these things. She says “It's all right, it would'nt happen to me.” (Laughter in the congregation) Is true, you know, I am not joking, it's true, things like this happens. You know what auntie has? Auntie has knowledge, I have given her knowledge. But auntie doesn't have reckoning, she doesn't believe that the fact that scientists and doctors have proven will come true for her life. There is a disconnect between knowledge and faith. I think it's the same when you go to coffee shops and you see people buying cigarettes. Marlboro, one pack. And on the pack of the Marlboro, you have all the cancer things, the tumor coming out, the brain hemorrhaging, blood all over the place. Scary pictures, but people would still say Marlboro, 10 packets. No problem, they will still buy it. Don't they know that this will cause cancer, don't they know that this is hurting their health, don't they know that every cigarette you smoke, is going to cut short your life? They know but they don't believe. It's not going to happen to me.

Reckoning is different from knowing and Paul is saying in a Christian life, you got to move beyond knowing to reckoning, to counting it to be true, to regarding it to be reality for you. Paul says, you have got to reckon something, you've got to believe, you have got to reckon, you yourself to be dead indeed unto sin but alive unto God through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Time stamp in audio 0:25:47.2.

Friends, you can walk out of this hall, thinking, knowing that you are dead unto sin, alive unto Christ without really believing in it and that is the danger because this is

the connection between the truth of God to change in your life. You have got to reckon it to be true.

Some of you say, pastor, this is what Scripture says, but frankly, I don't feel like I was dead to sin and alive to Christ, I don't feel like it. My friends, can I say this, most of our Christian living has very little to do with feelings. I don't think you like that statement but it is a true statement. A lot of Christian living has very little to do with feelings.

I don't think Abraham felt like it, when he offered his son on Mount Moriah, I don't think he felt it. Wah, shiok I kill my son. I think he felt terrible, but he did not live this life based on feelings but by faith. He accounted God faithful, powerful, loving enough to resurrect his son. They did not live by feelings, but by faith.

I don't think the apostle Paul felt shiok in a prison in Rome, I don't think he felt like, Wah this is a very nice hard bed, can break my back. I don't think he thinks the food he is offered is very nice. I don't think he felt that the handcuffs and chains are very comfortable. But Paul has great joys because he was not living by feelings but by faith.

We live in a world where churches feed on the feelings of people. Really, they are feeding the flesh and not necessarily feeding the faith of men and women. I think true Christian living, a lot of times, it's in the realm of reckoning, not reveling, not in the realm of feelings but in faith.

You need not feel like you are dead to sin and alive to Christ, but that's not the point. The point is you must know and believe it to be so. The auntie that was eating at the Hawker center, when she ate the ang ku keuh and the ice kacang I don't think she feels that her eyes are going blind. She doesn't feel that her kidneys are packing up. She doesn't feel that the blood vessels to the legs are being choked up by deposits. She doesn't feel it, but it doesn't mean it is not happening. It's happening.

This morning, you might have set your alarm clocks at 7 AM and when the alarm clock rings, you look at the alarm clock, 7 AM, but you feel like it is not 7 AM. It's still quite dark, you feel that you're still very tired and you say, No lah, let's live by feelings, let sleep longer. (Laughter in the congregation). It doesn't matter how you felt about the alarm clock saying 7 AM, what you view doesn't change the reality, it is 7 AM. If you reckon it to be true, it serves you well, if you reckon it to be not true, you are late for church.

Time stamp in audio 0:29:07.2.

Reckoning has nothing to do with feelings and Paul is saying, you might not have felt it but this is the reality, you have got to believe, count on, stand on and have a settled confidence in. Now, let's put this to practice. Let's see, how the rubber meets the road. Suppose if you are a new Christian and you have particular weaknesses, you have particular sins that you are grappling with. For example, you are grappling with pornography. You go to a computer, certain websites come out, certain images come out, and you say, wow, this is too tempting. The urge is too strong. I don't think I can overcome this problem and I think, it is okay to indulge for a while. After all, I don't think I am able to overcome this strong urges. You felt like committing, or indulging in that sin. But that's where reckoning needs to come in. It felt so strong, but that's where you need to tell it yourself, based on God's Word, that I am dead to sin, I am no more under its bondage, I need not succumb to it.

Maybe there's someone who has really irritated you in your life, maybe your neighbor and you feel so bitter against that person. You say, even even if you become ashes, I will remember you. (Laughter in the congregation). The Chinese have that saying and you've told yourself, I will never be able to forgive him or her, I would never be able to. You know something, that is saying, I have not reckon myself to be dead to sin and alive unto Christ. In effect, that's what happens when we say we have no choice but to sin. No, you have been set free and you have got to reckon it to be true.

Time stamp in audio 0:31:09.7.

Deep down in our hearts, deep down in the inner man, we've got to say, we've got to believe, we have got to count on the reality, that I am dead to sin and alive to Christ, not just the theoretical knowledge but a belief in the heart.

I like to share with you again what John MacArthur said last week,

“Until a believer accepts the truth that Christ has broken the power of sin over his life, he cannot live victoriously, because in his innermost being he does not think it is possible.”

Problem? He does not reckoned it to be true for his life.

John Owen

Again he said “One of the hardest things is to convince Christians, that they are freed from the bondage and slavery of sins.

You are set free! This is an amazing thought isn't it, that we are to reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin.

You know something about Romans, we have been going through the book of Romans, 5 1/2 chapters. We began this journey in February this year. For 5 1/2 chapters, do you realize that Paul has not given a command to anyone, do you realize that? Paul has not given an imperative, that the Greek, in a sense a command to anyone. The very first imperative that occurs in the book of Romans, is right here, in Romans 6:11, "Reckon", it is written in the imperative voice, in other words, this is what is commanded of you to do, you are to reckon.

What I learned is this, before we try to do things for God, we've got to start with recognizing what God has already done. For five chapters, he's telling you what God has done, and then he says, this is the response I want you to have, reckon, believe, know that this is what I have done for you.

What is it that gives you victory over sins and about, over the world and over the trials and afflictions of life, what is it that keeps you in victory? 1 John 5:12 tells us, even this is the victory, it is our faith. Faith, believing. You see, this is the key word, reckoning, believing, faith that overcomes the world. Why?, because you are believing in what God has already done. Christians, friends, so many of us are believing in trying. Everyone tells you, you have got to try harder, try, try, try, try, try, try and we forget Christians living is first, trust, trust, trust, trust, trust, trust. It's not about you crucifying yourself, it's about you knowing you're already crucified. It's not about what you will do, but what Christ has already done.

Keep on reckoning, he says. This is the tense of verse 11, keep on reckoning.

So, there will be new temptations, new situations that arise in your life. You've got to keep on reckoning it to be true. If the auntie has to keep on reckoning that all the ang ku keuh are going to choke up her blood vessels and even though she keeps herself in check today, she still has to reckon it to be true tomorrow.

Christian living is a moment by moment process of knowing and also reckoning.

Time stamp in audio 0:34:59.9.

Keyword, and may the Lord help you, to have firm, settled confidence, in this declaration of God, that you're dead unto sin but alive unto God.

By the way, this is not positive thinking. Some of you may think, Wah, pastor, you're teaching a positive thinking, think positive things and you will be fine. No, no, no, this is not positive thinking. The world teaches positive thinking, in fact, there is something called the word of faith that has crept into churches. They think that, what word of faith essentially is, is this, if you confess and believe something, it will come true.

So, for example if I'm sick and you confess, God I am healed, but you're still coughing away, but God I am healed, then, you are coughing away still, but God, I am healed, but three days later, you are still coughing. But the word of faith propagator says, the more you say it, the more you confess, the more it will come true.

Now, I think, that is absolute rubbish. That is positive thinking from the world brought into the church, confused into the church and Paul, is not teaching, positive thinking, Paul is teaching, positional thinking. That's the difference.

Positive thinking is wishful thinking, but positional thinking is biblical thinking. What God has already said, you stand up on His Word and reckon it to be true. So, sanctification begins not so much with what we will do, but it begins with what God has done. Know it, He has crucified your old man, given you a new life and reckoned it. When you meet with temptations, you don't have to give in to those temptations. You can know and reckon that you are freed from the bondage of sins and God has given you a new life. Keep on reckoning.

3. Yield

But finally, there is a third word you need to grasp and it is the word to yield. The word yield is made up of two words in the Greek, is a compound word and it means to place beside. So, when I yield something, it means, I take what I have and place it beside you for your use. Place beside, to give over. That's the word yield and Paul here tells you what you to yield and who you are to yield to. He says in verse 13

13 Neither yield ye your members (Added by Pastor : That's a reference to the body, the body) as instruments

Really the word in the Greek should be better translated as weapons, strong words, don't yield your bodies as weapons; wow, a different light altogether isn't it and you can yield your body as weapons to two masters, for two different purposes, one master is sin and sin will use your body as a weapon of unrighteousness. You can yield your body to God and God will use your body as a weapon of righteousness.

So, you have a choice. You see, what Jesus has done is that He has broken the dominion in the authority and the slavery of sin, but it doesn't mean you are never to sin because you still have a choice.

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.

He has broken the authority, but He has not taken over, in a sense, your will. You still have a choice. You have a choice to yield your body over to sin so that it can be a weapon of evil or you can yield your body over to God as a weapon of righteousness. There's a choice for you.

I learned something about the body, the body is neutral. You can see the body as evil or good. It depends on who you yield it to. That's why, over here it says, it can be yielded as righteousness. In Romans 12:1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that ye present your bodies, a living sacrifice.

Your body, a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God.

So, the body is neutral, the problem or the danger is that we might yield it to sin. And so, Paul warns us, he says, be careful, let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body. You see Jesus has set you free from the bondage, but you can still foolishly re-surrender yourselves and yield yourself to sin's control. You can!

I today can still do jumping jacks for Sgt. Yong when he comes into my life, I can, I can choose to do that. I need not do that but I can choose to do that and that would be foolish.

There's a story told about two Princes, Raynod and Edward and they were fighting for the throne of the kingdom. Well, Raynod is an unusual man, he was particularly greedy and he was obese, really fat. And Edward, eventually won over Raynod and what Edward did, so as not to be seen as a cruel man to his subjects, say, alright, I will not kill Raynod, what I would do to Raynod is I will build him a castle and he would stay in the room of the castle and he's free to walk in and out of the castle, he is free to do so. But the only condition is that he must go through the door. Now, the door is a normal sized door, but to Raynod, it's not big enough. And so, he puts Raynod into this room where there is a normal sized door and says to Raynod, you can go out and when you go out by yourself, through this door, you are free.

But Raynod tries his best, he's so obese, he tries to squeeze, all kinds of directions, he crawls on the floor, he goes through the side, but he could not get out through the door. So, how can he get out through the door, , loose weight lah. (Laughter in the congregation). Or get a plastic surgeon of our day, to go there or he lose weight by eating less. But his brother, Edwards, knows how to get him. Every day, Edwards hands the best delicacies of the land to Raynod. And Raynod, sees all the food, he could not resist himself and he feeds, and stuff himself with all kinds of delicacies and instead of trimming down, he got bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger and he was trapped in that room for all his life.

Now everyone would say, hey, Edward, how could you do this? Edwards says, no, I never imprisoned him, he could walk out free. It is Raynod who trapped himself.

Jesus has set us free from the bondage of sin, but you know what, we can still indulge in our appetite, our sinful appetites and trap ourselves in sin. Let not sin, reign therefore in your mortal body.

Now, you say, how pastor, can I choose to do right, because I have tried many times. I've tried to live a good Christian life and I know I should'nt yield myself to sin, I should yield myself to God but I failed, over and over again, why?

Well, let's look at this verse.

Don't yield yourself your members as instruments or weapons of unrighteousness unto sin but yield yourselves unto God. There's something, I thing it's so precious; holy living, is not simply saying no to sin. You know how often it is, when a sin comes, a temptation comes, we say, no, no, no, no, no and we respond to it immediately by our saying no to it. And then you realize, soon after you fall back into the that sin. Because, I think, true victory comes with not just saying no to sin, but saying yes to God. There is that negative aspect of not yielding and there's that positive aspect of yielding to God.

I have read many commentaries on this verse, I have read literally hundreds of sermons and I like what Ray Stedman has to say.

Ray Stedman, is a pastor who is now gone on to be with the Lord. He is a contemporary with Howard Hendricks of Dallas theological seminary, a coworker with J. Vernon McGee and this is what he has to say about this passage and that is what he has to say also about his personal discovery of sanctification. I read to you, I don't think I would do a better job than him in any way, so, I rather let him speak.

He said, I have learned, the way to say no, is by saying yes. For years I focused on the wrong thing. He says to the church, if you wake up in the morning and says, God, I'm not going to have a sinful thought or lustful thought, all day today, you will probably last till you say amen to your prayer. Lust, is going to rise up and try and defeat you, the rest of the day.

Have you ever had trouble with that? The whole problem, is that you have the focus on not presenting yourself to unrighteousness. But that's not the focus. The focus, is presenting yourself to righteousness. You have better not focus on that problem or it will overcome you. You've got to learn to focus on Jesus. That is the greatest secret that finally was revealed in my heart. The victory, is not me overcoming sin. I never could. The victory is Jesus and you've got already that victory over sin because Jesus is your victory.

You have better learn this. Don't focus on the sin, focus on the Savior, who has conquered the sin. As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord so walk ye in Him.

We say, O Lord, give me strength, O Lord, I need strength. Give me patience or give me purity, give me power or, Lord, give me victory and all the time Jesus is saying, "I am your strength, I am your patience, I am your power, believe in Me, just take it." What a difference this truth makes. When Christians begin to discover the glory of the indwelling life of Jesus Christ, there is a transformation that is immediately visible on their faces. It is a life of rest. It is the life we sing about:

Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care,
Not a blast of hurry, touch the spirit there.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are fully blest,
Finding as he promised, perfect peace and rest.

This is the secret of the so-called 'great saints' of God. They are common, ordinary people like you and me, who have learned this secret. This indwelling, risen life of Jesus Christ is available to every single Christian, without exception. We can all be 'great saints' because of this indwelling secret.

Time stamp in audio 0:46:51.6.

You see, it is not about us facing sin, and saying no to sin, we can't. Do you get that? We can't. Yes, we have been set free from the bondage of sin, we have been set free from the authority but the ability still doesn't reside in us, it's in Jesus and you have

got to trust Jesus to overcome the sins of life. You have got to place yourself in the hands of God and He sets you free.

I think, what Ray Stedman preached or delivered in his message is simply Galatians 2:20

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith (Added by Pastor : The reckoning, the believing, by the faith) of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me

You know, this is what it means to have the exchanged life. Not I, but Christ. It's my Savior who gives me the victory, who is the victory. So many Christians today are trying, trying, trying, frustrated, worn out, discouraged, because they have failed to be resting, they have failed to be trusting in what God has already done. You see, it's about knowing, reckoning, yielding.

So often, our Christian's life is about doing. I think doing is right at the end, you know, it's right at the end. Before the doing there must be the being, being the right man, being the person God wants you to be. Before the doing, there must be the being and before the being, there must be the yielding and before the yielding, there must be the reckoning and before the reckoning there must be the knowing. And yet, we tell people ah, you've got to start with doing, it will change your life. No, you've got to start to know how God has changed you already and progress from there. Knowing, reckoning, yielding and thus testify to the amazing grace of God. From beginning to the end it is all of grace and when you know grace, and when you know God, we would not be proud, we will not be lifted up to think I am a super Christian, but we would say, "God, we are humbled and we are grateful to the amazing grace you have poured out into my life."

I like, what JI Packer has to say "Proper theology leads to doxology." Do you get that? "Proper theology, needs to doxology? ". Doxology is praise to God. Knowing the right truth, knowing the right things about God, knowing God brings in us, a proper praise unto His name.

John Newton said, "I am not what I hope to be, I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I wish to be, but I am certainly not what I used to be."

And friends, you can say the same thing, if you begin with knowing, reckoning, yielding. There's so much more I wish I had time to say, but may the good Lord help

you with these three words and daily in your life, keep on reckoning, keep on yielding because it is all about Jesus. Let's bow for a word of prayer.

Are you a discouraged, frustrated, disillusioned child of God and you have not tasted the real victory and sanctifying grace in your life. Maybe it's because like me, you have reached out to those leaves, and not realize they are thorns, you have not read, you have not known. Or maybe today, you have known these truths but you have not been able to consistently reckon it to be true for your life that I am indeed dead unto the sins but alive, a new man in Jesus Christ. Or maybe in your life, you have consistently chosen to yield yourself over to sin when you need not. My friends, today, would you revel, would you rejoice, would you reflect upon the amazing grace of God? He has given you freedom, from the bondage, from the authority, from the slavery of sin. He not only gave you a new nature, he lives in you my dear friends. Jesus lives in me, the hope of glory, the life which I now live in the flesh, I now live by the faith of the Son of God, who gave Himself, for me, He lives in you today.

The ability is found in Jesus so instead of you trying to fight sin, to master sin, would you recognize your Master and let Him do it, to rest in Him, to yield to Him, to place your body into His hands. That is the secret of the abiding life, the secret of the exchanged life. Doesn't matter, if you are struggling with smoking, pornography, bitterness, anger, covetousness. It is all about Jesus.

Stayed upon Jehovah,
Hearts are fully blest,
Finding, as he promised,
Perfect peace and rest.

The mantra of Christianity, not trying, but trusting. Father, we thank You today, we can know, help us to reckon and even help us to yield, not just today, but every single day, moment by moment, looking unto Jesus that we may say with Paul "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me. Bless Your Word to the hearts of Your people. I pray for those who are outside the kingdom of God and even in this message, they are reminded, they are forced to face up to the reality, maybe they have never seen authentic grace in their lives, they have never trusted Jesus for salvation and life. Would you today, by your Spirit, draw them to the cross, to see Jesus, the Lamb of God which takes away the sins of the world and bless those hearts as well. We thank You today that your Word gone forth will not return unto You void. Prosper it, in the hearts of Your children, we thank You, we pray, in Jesus name, amen. God bless all of you.

