

THE BOOK OF ROMANS
"How God's Grace Liberates"
Romans 6:11-14

INTRODUCTION

1. God saves a sinner from sin so that he will not live in sin (vv. 1, 2).
2. It is one's union with Christ in crucifixion, burial, and resurrection which calls the believing sinner to walk in newness of life (vv. 3, 4).
3. This union with Christ is the counteracting work of Christ which robs the flesh of its power (vv. 5, 6).
4. The connection with sin was broken at the Cross. Just as Christ now lives unto God (the conflict with sin and death being over) so the believer lives to the pleasure of God and has the pledge of enduring life.
5. How is all of this "theory" transferred to "reality" in a believer's life? What is the mechanism to accomplish that?

1. NEW ACTION vv. 11-13

a. Reckon

The "likewise" applies all that has been said. The present imperative avers that a believer is to take it as a settled fact that he is dead to sin and alive to God. Facts are to be acted upon as facts. The emphatic "you" befits the imperative. The pregnant phrase "in Christ Jesus" is met here for the first time in Romans. The preposition "in" denotes a vital spiritual connection and is to be construed with both parts of the verse. There is no christian living without Him.

b. Reign v. 12

In view of the reckoning (v. 11), "the" sin is no longer to be king in the believer's mortal body. The verb is a present active imperative suggesting "reigning" be changed to "being deposed." To get real liberation from the tyranny of "the" sin is accomplished when, by the power of Christ's death, sin is ousted from its throne in the soul. The verse urges that the ousting be completed in regard to the "mortal body." The obvious purpose and result will be that the body will not be given what its evil desires want.

c. Release v. 13

Here is a third item expressing in a different way what God wants the believer to do. "Neither" enforces what has already been commanded. The first verb is present imperative. Not one small unit of the body is to be placed at the disposal of the sin at any time. The word "instru-

ments" is actually "weapons" or "arms" as the verb suggests military service. With the negative, Paul thus commands, stop presenting your members as aids (arms) to the sin. "Unrighteousness" is everything that contradicts God's norm of right. As one time--before actual conversion--the believer was alive to sin, but since he is united with Christ, he is alive to God. The second verb is an aorist imperative and commands the complete final once-for-all disposal of "yourselves" unto God. What to do with God's "members" is the result of what one does with "himself." How is this possible?--Only as those actually alive from the dead who respond to God (Psa. 119:32).

2. NEW PROMISE v. 14

a. Stated

Here is a forthright word: sin shall not (promise), indeed, sin will not (assurance) lord it over the believer. The believer can make it in the holy warfare!

b. Explained

Paul shows the meaning of being united to Christ (vv. 1-10), the consequences and appeal (vv. 11-13) and now the provision for the complete fulfillment of the exhortations. "under law" is powerless for living the christian life. Why? Law requires: 1) Perfect obedience. 2) Reward for obedience. 3) Punishment for failure. "Under grace" shows 1) God as gracious. 2) God bestowing inward power to obey. Sin and law go together. Righteous living and grace go together.

3. NEW PROTEST v. 15

a. Questioned

Question #1 is given earlier (v. 1). It concerns a permanent state (in sin). Question #2 is here (v. 15). It concerns the isolated act (to sin).

b. Answered

For both questions the answer is "God forbid" or "perish the thought." Grace cannot possibly mean license to sin. A variety of motives are characteristic of those united to Christ. Service betokens the Master served. To sin is proof that Christ is not our Master.

CONCLUSION A radical change takes place when a person believes. Don't minimize this truth for your own life.