

# Soul-Full: Living Out a Robust Faith

## A Study in Romans

### Week 5 – Romans 6 & 7 – A Work in Progress

Through a personal relationship with Christ we have been redeemed from the **penalty of sin** (justification), liberated from **the power of sin** (sanctification), and one day we will be freed from even **the presence of sin** (glorification) when we see Him face to face!

#### I. The Principle – Romans 6:1-23

Adam and Eve were made in God's image (see Gen. 1:26-27). Genesis 5:1 says, "In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. After sin entered the Garden, Adam became the father of a son in his own likeness according to his image" (Gen. 5:3). Every succeeding generation was born separated from God and bearing the marred image of Adam. We were sinners by birth, by choice, and by nature (see Eph. 2:1-3) and were held in bondage by sin, self, and Satan.

Everything changed when we met Jesus! Just as the first Adam affected all human beings by introducing sin and death, so, too, Christ is the representative figure for those who belong to him. Ephesians 2:4-6 says, "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)." Romans 6:11 says, "Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus..." because we have identified with the Lord Jesus in His historic death on the cross. Those who have joined with Him in death will also be united with Him in His resurrection. This is the wonderful truth of **our identification** with Christ. Not only did Christ die for us, but we died with Him. "Knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin" (Rom. 6:6-7). Romans 6:12 says, "Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts." Paul assures us adequate provision has been made by the death of Jesus and our identification with Him for any temptation (see 1 Cor. 10:13) that might arise. There should be in our lives such an experience of the reality of our death with Christ that sin can evoke no response from us at all. This is the essence of the victorious Christian life.

How can we make **our practice** reflect **our position** in Christ? The secret to the victorious Christian life is found in obedience to three instructions: **know, reckon, and yield.**

#### A. Know (6:1-10)

For most believers, ignorance or a lack of understanding is the key factor in hindering a life of victory. The word "**know**" occurs in verses 3,6,9 and 16 (NASB). The believer is dead to sin. The old man has been crucified.

The believer is freed from sin and the old nature can (should) no longer reign over the child of God who knows this truth. Christ broke the power of sin and put it (the flesh) out of commission. The flesh remains in us but it has been robbed of its power through the cross of Jesus Christ. The flesh has been dethroned for the Christian who **knows** the truth, **reckons** on it, and **yields** to the Lord.

B. **Reckon** (6:11)

This word is a bookkeeping term which means “to count, compute, to take into account.” It is not enough to merely know our position in Christ. By faith, we must reckon it to be true in our own experience. Reckoning is faith in action, resting on the Word of God in spite of circumstances or feelings.

C. **Yield** (6:12-23)

Yielding is an act of our wills, a step of obedience to the Lord. As we yield or submit to God, His Spirit is able to free us from the attraction of sin.

Prior to our conversion, we yielded ourselves to sin. We were servants of sin. Now in Christ we are free from sin. “For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification” (Rom. 6:19). The same power that raised Jesus from the dead lives in us through the indwelling Holy Spirit (Rom. 1:4; Eph. 1:18-20), but only as we submit to Him does He liberate us from the bondage of sin to bring about “the obedience of faith... for His name’s sake” (Rom. 1:5). The victorious Christian life is **available** to all believers, **but it is not automatic**.

## II. **The Problem – Romans 7:1-24**

Using the marriage relationship, Paul teaches about the believer’s relationship with the Law. Remember, the Law reveals our sin but is powerless to redeem us. By our conversion we “were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that [we] might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God” (Rom 7:4). Therefore we are no longer “married” to a system of rules and regulations. The Law has no control over us because we are “married” to Jesus who fulfilled the Law (see Matt. 5:17). “Now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter” (Rom. 7:6).

It is important to note that the demands of the Spirit-filled life are much greater than the dictates of the Law (see Matt. 5:1-48). God looks at our hearts and judges our motivations as well as our behavior.

In this passage, Paul describes the two contrary natures that reside in us as believers—the law of sin and death (commonly referred to as **the flesh**) and “the law of God in the inner man” (Rom. 7:22). “For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good” (Rom. 7:19-21). In Galatians 5:17 Paul wrote, “For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.” Paul perfectly describes the dilemma all believers experience, “I love the Lord so why don’t I obey Him? Why do I keep on sinning?” Romans 7:24 captures our experience accurately, “Wretched man that I am. Who will set me free from the body of this death?”

### **III. The Praise – Romans 7:26**

Obviously, Jesus Christ is the answer! Romans 7:25 says, “Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” We will not be immune to sin until we receive our glorified bodies, but we can overcome the downward pull of the flesh. Victory is found through a renewed mind (see Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:22-23) and a surrendered will (see Eph. 5:18-20). The victorious Christian life is not secured by submitting to a list of rules and regulation but through faith. Faith involves obedience to the Word of God, dependence on the Spirit of God, and confidence in the Son of God. Through Christ, God has given us a new nature and has crucified the old one (see Gal. 2:20). An aggressive pursuit of personal holiness and practical righteousness produces progressive spiritual growth, increases our appetite for holiness, and lessens the appeal of sin.

Just as eternal life is “through Jesus Christ our Lord,” (Rom. 6:23) so is escaping from the flesh is through Him. On the cross, the Lord Jesus dealt effectively not only with the problem of sin and the problem of Satan, but also with the problem of self as well. (John Phillips, “Exploring Romans” pg. 120).

Get your Soul-Full of Jesus and step into the joys of living out a robust faith in Him!!