

Romans: Verse-by-Verse

Romans 6:11-13

Paul's arguments defending his teaching on sin and grace:

1. We died to sin. This is the fundamental point of Paul's entire argument. He asks, "How can we live in sin if we died to it?" (verse 2)
2. The way in which we have died to sin is that our baptism united us with Christ in his death. (verse 3)
3. Since we share in Christ's death, God's will is for us to also share in his resurrection life. (verses 4, 5)
4. Our former self was crucified with Christ so that we could be freed from sin's slavery (verses 6,7)
5. Both the death and the resurrection of Jesus were decisive moments in human history. He died to sin once for all, but he lives continuously unto God (8-10)
6. Since we are in Christ, we are to share his status as, "dead to sin, but alive to God." (verse 11)

This time: Starting on the last two arguments:

7. Since we have become new people, we are to offer our bodies to God as instruments of righteousness. (verses 12, 13)
8. Because God has changed our status from being under the Mosaic Law to being under Grace, sin is no longer our master. Grace does not, in fact, encourage sin; it outlaws it. (verse 14)

- **Dead to Sin: Alive to God**

Verse 11: “we should count ourselves dead to sin but alive to God.” – NIV: “Count”, KJV: “Reckon”.

This is not a “make-believe” position. We are not pretending that our old nature has died; that we no longer feel the pull of sin and selfish interests. Instead, we need to count, reckon, or consider the spiritual realities – and then apply them to our very real life.

We are to realize that our former self – who we used to be when we were under the authority of Sin and Death – died with Christ, in Christ. As one person put it, We put an end to our old life’s career.

“Because Christ died to sin and lives to God, and because through union with Christ we are ourselves ‘dead to sin but alive to God.’”

- **A Two-Part Encouragement**

We are to reckon or count ourselves dead to sin. - This is on the level of attitudes and intentions. Although we do feel the pull of sin and self-interest, we decide to live as though they do not have any real power over us. Note: Matthew 6:22-24

“The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

“No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money. – Matthew 6:22-24

“Do Not Allow” -- Verse 12-13: “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.”

Another negative and positive aspect to these commands, which complement one another:

The Negative Statement: “Do not let”. It’s the language of permission, rather than commission.

Paul designates our physical being as, “our mortal body”. -- “Don’t let sin have authority over your temporary physical bodies.” See: Hebrews 11:25

While our bodies are not sinful -- Sin – as a power – can use our mortal body as platform from which to govern our lives: “Don’t let the power or force of Sin in our world take hold of your mortal body and use it for its own purposes.”

In the first part of verse 13 Paul makes this analogy more specific. He says, “Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness ...”

Paul moves from the language of permission (“Do not let”) to the language of intention: “Do not offer....” This is not unintentionally allowing the power of Sin to rule our lives: we are actually inviting Sin to do so.

The Positive Language: “... But rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.”

Notable verb tenses: “Do not offer” our bodies and body parts to sin is in the present tense. We must go on denying the power of Sin the use of our temporary, mortal frames. It’s a continuous action.

“Rather, offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life” – the “once for all” verb tense.

In our identification with Christ’s death we take on the attitude that we have died to the power of Sin. Going under the waters of baptism we make a definite decision that we will live a new life. In that sense, it is a “once-for-all surrender”; it is what one scholar calls a “deliberate and decisive commitment.”

As Paul proceeds, he uses the same analogy of “offering our physical being” to someone else. This is intentional, not permissive language.

We are not to offer our mortal bodies to the power of Sin: We are to offer them to God. Romans 12:1, “This is your reasonable service” or anticipated response to God’s mercy in your life.

At the end of verse 13 Paul again repeats the prior analogy about offering ourselves to the power of Sin – but applies it to our new station in life. He says, “Offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.”

While refusing Sin the use of our bodies as its “instrument”, we are to do the opposite with God. We are to deny sin the use of our bodies but offer them to God for his purposes.

We tend to do is offer ourselves to Sin but deny God the same service. How backwards is that?

Paul says what we ought to be doing is offering ourselves to God as his instruments – but deny Sin the same opportunity. Can’t we say from experience that God is the better choice?

Does God have the use of our hands, eyes, ears, feet, minds, hearts, and more? If we would offer these things to Sin – (in our old life, of course) – why would we deny God the same things?