

## **Shall We Continue In Sin?**

**Romans 6:1-14**

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We move into a new section of the book of Romans tonight. First of all we looked at Condemnation-The Wrath of God Revealed (Romans 1:18-3:20). We saw The Heathen Condemned, The Moralist Condemned, The Jew Condemned and The World Condemned. That was many, many weeks ago. Then, we moved into the second division, which we are still in, Salvation-The Righteousness of God Revealed (Romans 3:21-8:39). In this section of Romans, Paul is asking the question "How does God save sinners?" The answer is in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1). We just finished the section on Justification-declared righteous in Christ, and now we are going to move into the second division of Sanctification-made holy in Christ (Romans chapters 6 and 7) and on into Preservation-kept securely in Christ (Romans chapter 8). I just wanted you to get a feel of the lay of the land where we've been and where we are heading.

As we move into chapter 6 of the book of Romans, we are going to be dealing with the subject of sanctification. Now, don't let that word scare you. It sounds like a holy man with a robe and maybe some kind of holy garments and a real stoic face. The word simply means, and I think it's important for Christians to understand Biblical terms and what they mean, to be set apart. The word literally means to be set apart. It has the idea of God setting us apart from the world and from sin and setting us apart to a life of holiness. The words "saint," "sanctify," and "holy" all come from the same Greek word that appears in the Greek New Testament. It is translated holy, saint, sanctify. It means to be set apart and to be made holy. I don't want to tarry long before we jump into this text because we have a lot of verses to cover, but I want you to listen to me very carefully. I am going to say some things that I've said before, but I want to try to say them in a little different angle.

You've heard me say many times that salvation has three tenses: past, present and future. I've been saved—past tense. I'm being saved—present tense. I will be saved—future tense. This chapter begins the section on the present tense. We dealt with I've been saved, justified. Now we are going to be dealing with I'm being saved, sanctified. When we get to Romans 8, at the end of that chapter, we are going to talk about glorification. One day in the future we will go to heaven and we will be with Jesus Christ. What I want you to understand is once that process starts, if you have been justified, you will be sanctified and you will be glorified. There is no breaking of that sequence, and justification ties in with sanctification. You can't be a saved individual and not live a holy life. You got that? You can't say, "Well, I'm a Christian, but I'm not one of those holy Christians. I still kind of live like the world and like nonChristians, but I'm really a Christian." You and I have met those kinds of people, right? "Oh, yeah, I'm a Christian." Then, they cuss or swear, rip people off, sleep around, or do things that would be considered unholy or unChristian. Now, I'm a little bit hesitant to list those things because I don't by any means want to give you a standard or a law for holiness. This is what some churches do. To try to get the people to live holy lives they have rules, and you have to sign a

rule book. I won't smoke, I won't chew, I won't hang out with those that do. I won't go to the picture show. I won't play cards. I won't dance. I won't drink, and all those kinds of things because, "I'm a holy Christian." Holiness cannot be imposed on anyone by law. Holiness starts with justification. Holiness starts with being right with God, being forgiven of your sins, and having a relationship with God.

Let me take those three tenses and change some terms so that they'll shed a little light on what I'm talking about. Justification is "position" in Christ, position. Sanctification is "practice." It's how you live, Christian living. Glorification is the "perfect" state. All three of those categories, and I debated whether to mention this tonight but I've had the questions and some people get confused—past, present and future, justification, sanctification and glorification—all three of these categories can be put under one title, sanctification. The Bible does that. On those three categories we have positional sanctification, that is, my past has been forgiven and I'm free from sin's penalty; we have practical sanctification, how we live out our Christian life; and then we have perfect or complete or total sanctification, when I die and go to heaven or when Jesus comes to take us home, no more sin. Amen? No more struggle with sin, but until that, in this present state, my practice, I will not be sinless but I must sin less and less and less. Why? Because I've been justified, because God has made me in Christ, united me to Christ, declared me righteous in Christ, then I must live it out in my daily life. There are a lot of people that aren't even saved and they try to live the Christian life. They get frustrated and give up. Many times they are what we call "backsliders." I mean Christians can backslide, but many people backslide because they never frontslid in the beginning. I have people all the time come to me, "Pastor John, I have a friend. They were a Christian, but they went back into the world and they backslid. Are they still a Christian? Are they saved?" I don't know. I don't know their hearts.

What we are going to learn tonight in Romans 6 is that if you are a Christian, you are no longer going to practice sin. You've been taken out of that domain, out of that category. You are not going to be habitually, intentionally, willingly, purposely living a sinful life. So, if someone says they are a Christian, but they are living in sin, I question their conversion. I question whether or not you've really been justified. Yes, Christians will sin, but they aren't going to live in their sin. They are not going to follow the inclinations of their sinful heart. So, we move from justified to sanctified. In justification, when I gave you that definition, you remember I explained that it is the act of God whereby He declares (underline that word) you to be righteous. Sanctification is where God makes you righteous, and you have to keep those categories clear and distinct in your mind.

This chapter, chapter 6, revolves around two questions. I want to point them out to you. In verse 1, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin...," there's the idea that we can habitually, continually, ongoingly practice sin in order "...that grace may abound?" The answer is given in verse 2. "God forbid." No way, Jose. Perish the thought. Ain't gonna happen. The second question is in verse 15. He says, "What then? shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace?" Again, the answer in verse 15, "God forbid." No way. It's kind of a very stern, very strong "no" answer. It's not going to happen. We aren't going to continue in sin that grace may abound, and we aren't going to continue in sin because we're under grace and

not under law.

Now, I wanted to go from verses 1 to 14 because I want to deal with this first question. Go back there and look at it in verse 1. Here we have the question, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" Why did Paul ask this question? The answer is because he had been preaching that we're saved by grace, that we're saved by faith in Jesus Christ, that we're living under grace, and that we're not saved by our works. We are not saved by our righteousness. We are not saved by our goodness. Whenever you preach grace, someone is going to come along and say, "Well, if I believed in the grace of God like you do, then I believe that I can just be saved and I can live however I want." That's kind of the mentality that Paul is anticipating. Paul is actually anticipating an objection. It would be like you're in a courtroom. A lawyer would stand up and say, "I object, your honor." Paul has been laying down his case—the whole world guilty before God, and how does God save guilty sinners? By faith alone, by grace alone, in Christ alone. The argument would arise, and Paul had encountered it many times in his own ministry. They had even accused Paul of preaching grace so that they could sin and live however they wanted. Turn back with me to Romans 3:8. Paul says, "And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just." Go back with me to chapter 6. There were those that were accusing Paul of saying, "Yeah, let's do evil so that good will come out of it. So, Paul is anticipating this misunderstanding of the grace of God.

One of the things that are hard for people to handle is the grace of God. "That's too easy. That's just too easy, you just believe in Jesus and God will save you. You have to work for it. You have to be good. You have to try to live a good, holy life if you want to go to heaven." It's true that we should live in holiness but not to be saved. Because we are saved we should live in holiness. One is the root and the other is the fruit. The fruit of being saved is godliness and holiness. We don't try to save ourselves by our own good works.

So what shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin? The word continue means to live in. It was used of living in a house. When you move to a house, you live in a house, you stay in a house, you continue in a house. Until we moved down here to Murrieta, my wife and I lived in one house for well over 30 years, more like 37 years or more. We raised all of the kids there. Their handprints were in the concrete. It was a home we spent our life in raising our kids. We had to move out of that home and into another home. We continue in that home, and we dwell in that home. That's the imagery or the word picture here that Paul is painting. Shall we live, shall we dwell, shall we continue (it's in the present tense) in sin? Why would we even do that? Well, that the grace of God would abound. Notice that Paul in Romans 5:20 said, "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound..." or super abounded or super overflowed, so where there was great sin there was great grace. The foolish rationale comes along that says, "Wow! If my sin magnifies the grace of God, that's a good thing, then let's sin so God can look good. Right?" No. We're not going to all go out of here and sin tonight so that God can show His grace and God's grace can be magnified. Shall we continue in sin that God's grace may abound? Wherever there is abounding sin, there is abounding grace. In Romans 5:21, Paul says, "...as sin hath reigned

unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” In light of what he just finished saying at the end of chapter 5, that abundant sin brings abundant grace, he anticipates this argument. This is a rhetorical question that expects a “no” answer.

In the book of Jude it says that there are those false teachers “...turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness.” They are alive and well among us today. There are Christians that talk about grace, grace, grace, grace, grace. Do you know why they do that? Because they want to sin, sin, sin, sin, sin. I knew a group of pastors once that got into this hyper grace. It’s called license. On the other side of the coin is what’s called antinomianism. Antinomianism is to be against the law. “Weeeee! We’re free in Christ. We’re not under the law so let’s smoke cigars, drink alcohol and do whatever we want.” Again, I mentioned those two things and I probably shouldn’t have because I could be treading on someone’s liberty. So, if you smoke cigars, God bless you. I personally think it’s a bad habit to do. And, if you drink alcohol, that’s your choice. But to think that I’m under grace, therefore I can do these things and I’m not under law is contrary to the teaching of God’s Word turning the grace of God into lasciviousness. There are some that practice sexual immorality because God will forgive. “God will forgive me, and God’s grace is greater than my sin.” Listen to me very carefully. This is the argument of this chapter, and it is just starting. Paul is saying that justification by grace alone through faith alone is not a license to sin. It is not a license to sin, but he is also going to say in Romans 7 that you can’t be holy by keeping the law. No law imposed on anyone is going to make them holy. It starts with a relationship with God and, in Romans 8, it’s the result of the Holy Spirit’s work in our lives.

The question is answered in verses 2-14. We may not get through these verses tonight, but the question is now answered. Question number 1: Shall we sin and stay continually living in sin that grace may overflow? He gives two answers. The first answer is in verse 2, and the second starts at the end of verse 2 and runs to verse 14. Let’s look at the first answer. I love it, Paul just says, “God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” Do you know what Paul basically says? He basically says, “No way!” His answer is just “No.” He doesn’t change the teaching on grace. He doesn’t tweak it. He doesn’t water it down. He doesn’t soften it. He just says, “No.” That word, “God forbid,” could be translated, perish the thought. We would say in our modern vernacular, “Ain’t gonna happen. No way!” Perish the thought. Then he says, “How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” He moves then to the second portion of his answer in verse 2 down through verse 14. He is saying that it is not possible for Christians to sin because justification involves union with Christ.

Remember in chapter 5 we were taken out of Adam and placed in Christ. We were first, in our sinful state, identified with Adam and his sin and his death and his condemnation. We were taken out of Adam and were united to Christ, so the foundation for Christian holiness is union with Christ. It is union with Christ. I have become one with Jesus Christ and I’m identified with Christ. Thus, when Christ died, I died; when Christ was buried, I was buried; and, praise God, when Jesus rose from the dead, guess what? I rose from the dead. So, the old John Miller died and was buried, the new John Miller came out of the grave, and now I can walk in newness of life. That’s something to praise God for, newness of life. Amen? He says, “No way we would

continue in sin.” Then, he gives the reason.

First of all, union with Christ means death to sin. Because Jesus died, we died unto sin. Now, sin is not dead to us, but we are dead to it. Follow with me from verse 2 to verse 4. He says, “God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? 3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Here’s the point—union with Christ means death to sin. Go back with me to verse 2. He says, “How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” He answers the question with another question. You are dead to sin.

Now, if you’re dead to something, how do you live in it? You can’t, right? By the way, lest I forget, there is no blending together of death and life. There is no such thing as a dead live person. You’re either dead or you’re alive, right? You’re not kind of alive dead. I know that Hollywood has produced Night of the Living Dead and Zombies and all that kind of stuff. That’s so utterly stupid. Certainly you have better things to do with your time. You’re either dead or you’re alive. At one time, before your conversion, you were alive unto sin. That’s the way you lived, and you lived in sin. You were in Adam and lived in the sphere of sin. But, when you accepted Jesus Christ and you were born again and justified, guess what happened to you? Duh. You died. I just thought I’d encourage you, and it is encouraging. It’s great to know. I died. When did I die? This is why this passage is so profound and really hard to grab ahold of. I died when Jesus died on the cross. It’s a past experience. You also might explain and understand that in the sense of the moment I was born again, I died to my old life, and that’s all involved. I died with Christ, I died to my own life. The things I used to love, I now hate. The things I used to hate, I now love. If any man be in Christ he’s what? A new creation, old things pass away and all things become what? Brand new. So, I died. John Miller died, and then I rose again (we’re going to see that in just a moment). But, at this point in verse 2, he’s just saying that we’re dead to sin. We’re dead to sin.

Then we find here in verse 3 he says, “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?” I want you to notice a key word, and this word you’ve got to mark or note or highlight or write down. It’s the word “know.” From verse 3 down to verse 10 he is imparting knowledge to us. I want you to note the repetition. In verse 6 we’re going to see it again, “knowing this.” Then we’re going to see it again in verse 9, “knowing that.” So in verse 3, “know ye not;” verse 6, “knowing this;” and then it’s in verse 9, “knowing that.” Do you know that the Christian life has to be built on knowledge? You have to know who you are in Christ to live who you are in Christ? One of the sad things today in the church is that Christians don’t want to learn their Bibles. They want to be entertained. They want to be pacified. They don’t want to think deeply. They don’t want to learn the Bible. They don’t want to learn doctrine. They don’t want to grow. By the way, this study tonight so dovetails with my sermon on Sunday morning in 1 Peter 2, desiring sincere milk of the Word that you may grow thereby. Do you know what another term for sanctification is? Growing as a Christian, Christian growth, spiritual maturity. The title of my sermon this Sunday morning is “It’s Time to

Grow Up.” How do we grow up? By feeding on the Word of God. The greatest way to live a holy life is to feed on the Bible, to learn the Bible, to yield to the Bible so you grow in your knowledge.

There’s going to be two other key words, let me point them out to you before we get there. The second key word is “reckon” in verse 11. It means to believe that what you know is true. The third key word is in verse 13, “yield.” So, you know something, you reckon it, you believe it, you put it to the account of, and then you yield to it (verses 13-14). The first point here is that union with Christ means that we are dead to sin. Notice he refers to it as we “...were baptized into Jesus Christ...were baptized into his death.” In verse 4 he says, “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism...,” by the way, the word buried there is the same as dying. Dead people are buried, right? We don’t bury people alive, so it’s just another way of saying that we died with Him by baptism unto death, “...that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” We’ll get there in just a second.

Why does he use baptism as an illustration of our death with Christ? First of all, I want to say this. This baptism reference here is not talking about or teaching water baptism. It is included in the picture, but it is not what it’s about. Someone calls these “dry” verses. They are not wet. You are not being dunked in water here. When you are baptized, it is a symbol of something. What is it a symbol of? It is a symbol of you died with Christ. This is why I believe that this scripture clearly reinforces that water baptism should be by immersion because it pictures burial, so we take you all the way under. And, if you’ve been a real big sinner, we take you real deep. We shake you around a little bit, hold you down for a while, and make sure you’re dead. I’ve never lost anyone yet baptizing them because I always bring them back up. Oh, that’s the glorious part! We’re going to bury you, praise God, you need to be buried, and then we’re going to resurrect you with Christ. You come out of the water, and it’s a picture of your new life in Jesus Christ.

Baptism is only a symbol. Listen to me very carefully. Baptism is only a symbolic picture of what actually happened to you the moment you were justified. The moment you were declared righteous, the moment you were saved, the moment you were regenerated, you actually buried your old life. Isn’t that good news? Buried it. All your sins are forgiven and separated as far as the east is from the west. Then, when you come out of the water, and we do bring you back out of the water, it’s a picture of you’ve risen with Christ, and now that you’re alive you walk in newness of life. That’s why when I pray with people when they are baptized I always pray, “Lord, help them from this point on to reckon that old life to be dead. When they come out of this water, Lord, help them to realize that they have a new life in Jesus, and they are going to live for you the rest of their days.” That’s the picture.

What I want to tell you is that the moment you were saved, you were baptized into Jesus Christ by the work of the Holy Spirit. I simply must have you turn there in your Bible to 1 Corinthians 12:13. There are a lot of cross references I could give you, but I want you to see this one that is very clear. Paul is talking about the oneness of the body of Christ. In verse 12 he says, “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many,

are one body: so also is Christ." Look at verse 13. He says, "For by one Spirit..." that's the Holy Spirit, "...are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." Notice the repetition of all, all, all.

Now, go back with me to Romans 6. I believe that all Christians are baptized by the Holy Spirit the moment they are born again and are taken out of Adam and placed into Christ. That is the work of the Holy Spirit. You can't get yourself out of Adam, you can't get yourself in Christ, and you can't get yourself out of Christ. I believe, once in Christ, always in Christ. Romans 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." This whole passage is teaching something marvelous! When you got saved, you didn't just accept a gift. You didn't just accept the gift of salvation, God actually did something to you. Do you know what He did to you? He put you in Christ. He put you in Christ, and in Christ positionally I've been declared righteous. That can never change. In Christ practically, I can live a righteous life. I can be free from the power of sin because I died with Christ, I've risen with Christ, and in Christ one day, I will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. I'll have a new body. I will be glorified. I will be transformed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, because of my union with Christ, not because I go to Revival Christian Fellowship but because I'm united with Christ. He is the vine, I am the branches, and I've been grafted in. We're the branches grafted into the vine, and we're united to Him. The picture here is our union with Christ, and we need to know and understand that.

I want you to notice that union with Christ means participation in new life. This is at the end of verse 4 to verse 11. The union with Christ means participation not only in His death but in His life, in His resurrection. Notice at the end of verse 4 he says, "...as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." That's another way of saying that we should walk and live in holiness. He says (verse 5), "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death..." and a beautiful imagery there again of the vine and the branches—that we are actually growing together with Christ. We've been grafted into Him. We've been united to Him. We're in Him. We're planted together in the likeness of His death. "...we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection," there's our key word, "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..." or control or reign, "...over him. 10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." Notice, here comes our second key word, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." So, union with Christ means that we died to sin, we're no longer alive to sin, and we're dead to it. A dead person can't live in something. Secondly, we're united with Christ and we have His life—the life of God in the soul of man.

I want you to go back with me and notice in verse 5 he says, "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Again,

a picture of baptism. What would it be if we took people into the pool and just put them under and they never came up? It wouldn't be good, would it? I think the church would shrink instead of grow. Every time we baptized people they would just never seem to come back. So, you're risen with Christ. What you need to understand is your union with Christ in His death includes your union with Christ in His resurrection. That's how we live the Christian life, in the power of the risen Christ, in the power of His resurrection. Then he says in verse 5, the rationale, "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man..." what does he mean by our old man? The old man there is not your dad. It is your sinful Adamic nature. It's talking about your sin nature. It's not talking about your physical body.

Did you know that your physical body is neutral? It's not evil. You don't have to beat it. You don't have to whip it. You don't have to starve it. You don't have to lie on nails. You don't have to crawl on your knees. It's neutral. Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit as a Christian right now, and you can use your body to glorify God. You can use your body to live in true godliness and holiness. Whereas once you used your body to do sinful things, so let's not talk about that too much, right? You used your hands, you used your feet, you used your eyes, you used your body to do sinful things, but now your body belongs to God and should be used to do holy things, things that honor God and things that glorify God. So, he says "...our old man is crucified with him..." when? When He died on the cross. Why? "...that the body of sin might be..." here's an important word, "...destroyed." That word "destroyed" in the Greek is *katargeo*, and the word does not mean annihilated. It doesn't mean that it ceases to exist. The best translation would be to render inoperative or, a free paraphrase would be, put out of business. If I had a vacuum cleaner that was plugged into the wall and I was vacuuming, (which I wouldn't do because I don't vacuum. My wife vacuums. She actually likes to vacuum. Pray for her.) and you go over to the wall and pull the plug. What happens? The vacuum stops, right? You have just rendered it inoperative. You have just *katargeo*. You've just put it out of business. Do you know what happened when you were saved? Your old flesh, your old sinful nature, the plug was pulled. It was *katargeo*. That's why we're going to get to this third key word, that not only know, not only reckon, but yield because what happens is we want to plug the vacuum back in. I kind of like that sin, and we plug it back in. We yield to the old man. Because it was only rendered inoperative, we can still yield to that old sinful nature. That's why we still have the capacity to sin. That's why he says in verse 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." So, your old nature has been rendered inoperative, put out of business. "For he that is dead is freed from sin." If you went into a morgue and brought in a piece of Marie Callender's pie, or whatever kind of pie you like. This dude's dead and you run the pie under his nose to tempt him. Do you think he is going to sit up and eat the pie? I hope not because if he does I'm freaking out! I'm running. He's dead. The plug has been pulled on your sinful nature. It's been rendered inoperative, and he that is dead is freed from sin. The idea is the picture of a master and a slave. If a master has a slave and the slave dies, can the master order the slave to do anything? No. He's dead. He can't order him to do anything. He just died. We are going to see in the second question that when we die we are free from the law. Do you know that when you break the law, but if you

die, they aren't going to bring your corpse into court and have a trial, handcuff you and throw you in jail. They're just going to say, "Case dismissed, the dude's dead," you know. "Put him in the ground."

We're free from the law and the penalty and the power, and we're free because we are walking now in newness of life. So, we died. This is the way Paul the apostle said it (Galatians 2:20). He said, "I am..." what? "...crucified with..." who? "...Christ." But then what did he say? "...nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Amen? "...and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Paul says, I am crucified with Christ nevertheless I live. That's the idea of dying with Christ and rising again with Christ, pictured in Lazarus when he came out of the grave but still had the grave cloths. Jesus said, "Loose him and let him go." You know, a lot of Christians have been saved but are still walking around in their grave cloths of their sinful life. Justification must result in the process of sanctification.

By the way, I didn't say this. Justification happens instantaneously, and you can never become more justified. The moment you are saved you are perfectly righteous positionally before God. It's not progressional. You never grow in it. It happens instantaneously, but sanctification starts at that moment and goes your whole life. It starts the moment you are saved and goes until you go to heaven or you go to be with Christ. The question is, now that you've become a Christian, how far along are you in likeness to Jesus Christ? The goal is being like Jesus. You'll never perfectly arrive this side of heaven, but the goal is that we become more like Him as He uses His Word and His Spirit and trials and other fellow believers to make us into the image of Jesus Christ.

He tells us that He died once. He didn't die twice, He only died once, so we die once. It's a permanent death in the person of Christ, and we live unto God. Then, he tells us to reckon. The word reckon there is not like the word they use in the south, "Ah reckon." I'll never forget my one and only trip I went to Alabama. They wanted me to eat grits. I couldn't get anyone to explain what they were, and everyone loved them. "Ah, come on, Pastor, eat some grits." They said, "You reckon you like em?" I said, "I reckon I don't like them. I reckon that they're nasty, and I don't like eating stuff that you don't know what it is either." That's not what this word "reckon" here means. This word means to put to the account of. It is connected to the same word of imputation or to reckon it or impute it. It's a banking term. It means to put it in an account. So, if you have a bank account, you put money into it, you've put it in there. You've reckoned it in there. You've put it into the account. The application means that we actually believe, shoe leather, we believe. The first thing is we know we died with Christ, we've risen with Christ. The second thing we need to do is actually believe it. The cool thing is that God never says anything that isn't true. If God says that I died with Christ, and God says I've risen with Christ guess what? It's true. So I have to reckon it's true. I've got to reckon it to be true. I have to believe what God says in His Word before I can yield to that. That's what that means in verse 13. He says that we should yield our members, but first we reckon it to be so.

Last, but not least, verses 12-14, union with Christ is incompatible with a life of sin. Let's read

this and we'll wrap it up. "Let not sin therefore reign..." at the end of chapter 5 we had the reign of sin in Adam, and we were slaves to sin. Now, we have the reign of God's grace, and we're free from sin. We are in Christ. So he says, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." In verses 12 and 13 there are three commands. I want you to notice the first command there in verses 12-13. He says, "Let not sin...reign in your mortal body..." that's commandment number 1, "...that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." Commandment number 2 is in verse 13, "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness..." and the third command, "...but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead." So, don't yield to sin and your body as an instrument of sin, but yield to God as instruments of righteousness. Don't yield to your sinful impulses. I believe that if you've been born again that you have the capacity to resist sin, you have the capacity to walk in victory over sin, and that's what Paul is actually saying here. Then he gives us a promise in verse 14, "For sin shall not have dominion over you..." and then he gives an explanation at the end of the verse, "for ye are not under the law, but under grace." This wraps up what we've covered in verses 3-14, and it introduces us to the next section, verses 15-23.

We have commands not to yield, we have a promise that sin will not control us, will not dominate us, will not be our master, and then we have an explanation in verse 14, in closing, because we are not under the law, but we are under grace. As I pointed out those three key words, write those three words down. First, know. Know this that when you were born again you were taken out of Adam and were placed in union with Jesus Christ. Therefore, it's completely inconsistent that you would take your body, your life, in union with Christ and sin. In Corinthians Paul says to the believers in wicked Corinth, "You're going to take your body and attach it to a prostitute in sexual immorality and behavior like that? God forbid. Perish the thought." So, I've been united with Christ in His death. You and I actually died on the cross with Jesus. Three days later what did Jesus do? He rose again. Guess what? We rose with Him. You can take it even farther. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father, we're seated with Him in the heavenly places. Do you know where you are right now? You're in heaven, in Christ, seated with Christ in the heavenlies. What an exalted position we have in Christ! The second key word is reckon or believe. Believe it's true. Believe what God has said in His Word by faith. The third word, and we're going to build on it next Wednesday night, it gets very practical, is yield. Yield your members as instruments of righteousness walking in that newness of life that we have in Jesus Christ. Amen?