

Transforming Power of Being Under Grace: 3 Primary Principles (Rom. 6:11-13)

I. THE GOSPEL OF GRACE (ROMANS 3-8)

- A. Romans 3-8 is the most complete presentation of the gospel of grace. Here, Paul gave us the primary principles necessary for our personal transformation. He described who we are in Christ as those who received spiritual wealth—referred to as the riches of His grace (Eph. 1:7; 2:7). All who are in Christ receive a new position, new power, desires, insights and destiny in God.
- B. Paul often motivates us to wholehearted obedience by calling us to see who we are in Christ.
⁴Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? (Rom. 2:4)

II. THE GIFT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS: 3 ASPECTS

- A. ***Receiving the gift of righteousness:*** We received God’s righteousness freely, fully (100%), and instantly at our new birth. Our *standing* with God is not based on what we do, but on what Jesus did. However, our ability to *experience* what we have freely received in this age is related to how much we cooperate with the grace of God in the ways that the Scripture teaches.
¹⁷Those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One Jesus Christ... ¹⁸the free gift came to all [believers]... (Rom. 5:17-18)
- B. There are legal, emotional, and spiritual aspects to receiving the free gift of righteousness.
1. ***The legal aspects:*** All who receive the gift of righteousness are in a new legal position to stand in the Father’s presence with confidence in being fully accepted. Our new position is based on a historical event—Jesus’ death on the cross. A legal transaction occurred in God’s court. Jesus paid the debt of our sin that was required to satisfy the claims of God’s justice. Thus, Jesus’ righteousness was credited to our account or imputed to us (Rom. 4:6, 11, 23-24). Everything that could disqualify us from receiving a new relationship with God was removed at the cross. God now sees us through His own righteousness.
 2. ***The emotional aspects:*** All who receive the gift of righteousness are freely enjoyed and delighted in by God from the moment they are born again. We begin to feel His affection for us. (He does not delight in all that we do, but delights in His relationship with us).
 3. ***The spiritual aspects:*** All who receive the gift of righteousness receive a new nature. Our spirit is made righteous and indwelt by the Spirit (2 Cor. 5:21; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10).

III. THE REIGN OF GRACE: BEING ALIVE TO GOD (ROM. 5:21; 6:11)

- A. As we were under the reign of sin before our salvation, we are now under the reign of grace.
²⁰*Where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, ²¹so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life... (Rom. 5:20-21)*
- B. **The reign of sin:** We were under **condemnation** (judgment) before God. We were **powerless** before sin (at the heart level), sickness, and satanic attacks. We had no ability to challenge them. We had no power to resist the sinful promptings in our heart (anger, pride, bitterness, lust, etc.). We were in **darkness** without the ability to understand God and His Word or to receive divine direction for our life. We were **destitute** and without a lasting purpose or hope of a future in God.
- C. **The reign of grace:** We received a new position, new power, new desires, and new insights. This position is referred to as being **alive to God** (Rom. 6:11, 13; Eph. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13; 1 Pet. 3:18).
1. **God's acceptance with affection:** God enjoys and delights in relating to us as sons of God and the Bride of Christ. There is no condemnation or rejection from God (Rom. 8:1).
 2. **Indwelling Spirit:** The Spirit gives us new power with new desires and insights that we may know God, His Word, and His will. We received supernatural power to resist sin and Satan. We received a new nature when our spirit was born again and made righteous.
 3. **Authority:** We were given the authority to use Jesus' name to release the works of God and hinder the works of Satan in our life and circumstances, as well as in others.
 4. **Divine destiny:** We have a good future in God as those who will forever reign with Him. Every day is relevant as we do God's will because He sees our effort and it so moves Him that He gives us eternal rewards for our faithfulness even in small things (Lk. 19:17).
- D. As a new creation, we are under the reign of grace and no longer under the reign of sin.
¹⁷*If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away...all things have become new...²¹that we [our spirit] might become the righteousness of God. (2 Cor. 5:17-21)*
1. Our former **condemnation** has passed. We can now feel confident in **God's affection**.
 2. Our former **powerlessness** has passed. We have the **indwelling Spirit** and **Jesus' authority**.
 3. Our former **darkness** has passed. We have the **indwelling Spirit** to teach and lead us.
 4. Our former **destitution** has past. Now we have a **divine destiny** and a good future in God.
- E. Understanding who we are as a new creation "in Christ" involves the following truths:
1. **Legal position:** what we received in Christ (gift of righteousness and the indwelling Spirit)
 2. **Living condition:** how we walk out our legal position (a lifestyle of righteousness)
 3. **Affectionate relationship:** we are God's beloved (as the Father's sons and Jesus' Bride)
 4. **Anointed partnership:** we are co-workers with Jesus (using our authority in Christ)

IV. WE DIED TO THE REIGN OF SIN AND ARE UNITED TO JESUS (ROM. 6:1-10)

- A. Romans 6:2 is one of the most important truths to understand in order to walk in victory over sin. Paul was speaking of the reign of grace being more powerful than the reign of sin (Rom. 5:21).
²¹As sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through...Jesus...^{6:2}How shall we who died to sin [permanently freed from the reign of sin] live any longer in it? (Rom. 5:21-6:2)
- B. Paul proclaimed that we “died to sin” or in other words, to the “reign of sin.” We “died” or were “separated” from our former position where sin had a mandatory control over our hearts. Paul was not giving an exhortation to die to sin in the sense of renouncing it. He was not exhorting us to do something for God, but to believe in something that God did for us.
- C. The impulses of sin do not all go away, but now we have power to effectively challenge them. We may still have the old thought patterns and emotions that were formed in us while we lived under the reign of sin. We may feel condemnation, powerlessness, darkness, and being destitute. By living under the tyranny of sin for years, we established thought patterns and emotions related to it. We grew accustomed to feeling condemned and powerless before of the promptings of sin.
- D. Next, Paul described our union with Jesus by the indwelling Spirit (6:3-10) as the implication of being dead to the reign of sin and alive to God. The main principle set forth here is that whatever is true of Jesus, as a man in His relationship to God, is true of all those who are “in Christ.”
³Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into [placed into] Christ Jesus were baptized into [placed into the benefit of] His death?...⁵We have been united together in the likeness of His death...also in the likeness of His resurrection... (Rom. 6:3-5)

V. PRINCIPLE #1: KNOWING THE TRUTH (FAITH)

- A. **Knowing Principle (Rom. 6:11):** We must know who we are in Christ and what we have received in Him as well as the truth about God’s heart as a Father and Bridegroom. We must see ourselves as those who have died to the reign of sin and are alive to God (reign of grace).
¹¹Reckon [see] yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ... (Rom. 6:11)
- B. **Reckon yourself alive to God:** We must see ourselves as enjoyed, indwelt, empowered, and commissioned by God with a relevant purpose. To “reckon ourselves” is to see ourselves in the way that God sees us and according to what the Word says about being under the reign of grace.
- C. **Reckon yourself dead to sin:** We are dead or permanently freed from the realm where sin and death have a mandatory reign over our lives without our ability to challenge them (Rom 5:21). We are dead to sin or we are removed from sin’s penalty, shame, and mandatory control over us.
- D. We are transformed by changing our thinking. We are set free by the knowledge of the truth.
³²And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. (Jn. 8:32)
²Be transformed by the renewing of your mind... (Rom. 12:2)

VI. PRINCIPLE #2: RESISTING DARKNESS (CHOOSING RIGHTEOUSNESS)

- A. **Resisting Principle (Rom. 6:12-13a)**: We resist sin, Satan, and sin-provoking circumstances.
¹²**Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin... (Rom. 6:12-13a)**
- B. **Do not let sin reign in your body**: We must resist sin by denying fleshly lusts that war against us (1 Pet. 2:11). Jesus emphasized the need for self-denial.
²⁴**If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross... (Mt. 16:24)**
¹¹**The grace of God...has appeared to all men, ¹²teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly... (Titus 2:11-12)**
- C. **Do not present your members to sin**: We must refuse circumstances that inflame sinful desires. We must avoid being in circumstances where we must trust our flesh to choose right. We do not go to places, buy items, or look at or talk about that which stirs up sinful passions.

VII. PRINCIPLE #3: PURSUING GOD AND PEOPLE (LOVE)

- A. **Pursuing Principle (Rom. 6:13b)**: We pursue relating to and serving God and people with love. We present ourselves and our bodies to God as His instrument to bless others. This speaks of loving God and people with all our heart (marriage, family, church, neighbors, and the nations).
¹³**But present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members [your body, time, money, abilities, etc.] as instruments of righteousness to God. (Rom. 6:13b)**
- B. **Present yourselves to God**: This speaks of seeking to know and please God in a personal way. Our first call is to love God as an extravagant worshiper as we seek to grow in the knowledge of Him. We pursue God as we take time to cultivate intimacy with Him and to actively obey Him.
- C. **Present your members as instruments of righteousness**: This speaks of seeking to serve others as an instrument of God. We express love to people by offering ourselves as a vessel for the Spirit to use to bless and serve others. This includes making the effort to be equipped to effectively minister to others and to build quality relationships that glorify God.
- D. God requires us to cooperate with His grace. Paul urged us to not receive His grace in vain by neglecting to cooperate or lay hold of it. God will not do our part and we cannot do His part.
¹**We...plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. (2 Cor. 6:1)**
- E. We must **know truth**, **resist darkness**, and **pursue God and people**. We must embrace all three of these principles without neglecting any of them. We pursue loving God and people as we resist sin, Satan, and sin-provoking circumstances in the context of knowing who we are in Christ and the truth about God's heart as a Father and Bridegroom. Some resist sin and pursue God without knowing who they are in Christ. Others pursue God, but do not pursue people or resist sin. Some pursue people (relationships or ministry) without pursuing God or resisting sin.