

Cooperating with Grace: Three Primary Principles (Rom. 6:11-13)

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

- A. Romans 3-8 presents the foundational truths necessary to walk in the newness of life (Rom. 6:4), so that we may love Jesus with all our heart, as expressed by walking in victory over sin, etc.
- B. 2 Corinthians 5:17 summarizes the truths in Romans 3-8. All things related to our spirit have become new. We become the righteousness of God (v. 21) by receiving a **new position** of righteousness and by receiving a **new nature** of righteousness in our born-again spirit.
*¹⁷ If anyone is in Christ, he is a **new creation**; old things have passed away...**all things have become new**...²¹ that we [our spirit] might **become the righteousness of God**. (2 Cor. 5:17-21)*
- C. At the miracle of the new birth, our spirit is joined to the Spirit and filled with supernatural life. Our spirit is instantly made new in being made righteous and indwelt by the Spirit.
*¹⁷ But he who is **joined to the Lord** is **one spirit with Him**. (1 Cor. 6:17)*
*²⁴ Put on the **new man** which was **created**...in true **righteousness and holiness**. (Eph. 4:24)*
- D. The challenge is that we do not feel our spirit. Our spirit man is “spirit” and therefore it is invisible and indiscernible, even “hidden” from our five senses.
*⁴ The **hidden person of the heart**, with the **incorruptible beauty of a gentle spirit**... (1 Pet. 3:4)*
- E. Paul gives us details of our union with Jesus and of our born-again spirit in Romans 6:1-10. Whatever is true of Jesus, as a man in His relationship to God, is true of those who are in Christ.
*⁵ We have been **united together in the likeness of His death**...and...**resurrection**... (Rom. 6:5)*
- F. 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. There is a division of labor. God will not do our part and we cannot do His part. Paul outlined three principles in cooperating with grace (Rom. 6:11-13).
*¹ We...plead with you not to **receive the grace of God in vain**. (2 Cor. 6:1)*

II. PRINCIPLE #1: KNOWING (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.
*¹¹ Reckon [see] yourselves to be **dead to sin**, but **alive to God in Christ**... (Rom. 6:11)*
- B. **Reckon yourself alive to God**: We see ourselves as **alive to God**—enjoyed, indwelt, empowered, commissioned (assignment). To reckon ourselves is to see ourselves according to what the Word says about us. We see ourselves as God sees us. We see our new identity as sons of God and the Bride of Christ, who function as kings and priests, who are more than conquerors (Rom. 8:37; Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6). We are to apply new creation truths to our spiritual identity.

- C. We are transformed by changing our thinking. We are set free by the knowledge of the truth. The renewing of our mind always includes the **faith confession** of the Word back to God. Our confession is what we say to the indwelling Spirit about who we are in Christ (Rom. 10:8-10).

² **Be transformed by the renewing of your mind...** (Rom. 12:2)

III. PRINCIPLE #2: RESISTING (REPENTANCE)

- 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.** ¹³ **And 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 the inward prompting of sin and the schemes of Satan. The need for self-denial has been minimized by false teachings on grace. Denying our lustful desires is the theatre God chose for us to express our love to Him (Jn. 14:15, 21-23).

¹¹ **The grace of God...has appeared to all men,** ¹² **teaching 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 do not go to places, buy items, or look at or talk about that which stirs up sinful passions.

IV. PRINCIPLE #3: PURSUING (LOVE)

- A. **Pursuing Principle** (Rom. 6:13b): We pursue serving and relating to God and people in love. We present ourselves to God, and our bodies as His instruments that He may use to bless others. We pursue loving God and people (Mt. 22:37-40).

¹³ **But present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.** (Rom. 6:13b)

- B. **Present yourselves to God:** Our first call is to love God with all our heart as an extravagant worshiper of Jesus. We cultivate His presence in our life and intimacy with God. This includes fellowship with the indwelling Holy Spirit. We are to be preoccupied with the superior pleasures of the knowledge of God. We abide in Christ—we cultivate the presence of God in our life.

- C. **Present your members as instruments of righteousness:** We express love to people by offering our bodies as vessels for the Spirit to use to bless and serve them. This includes making the effort to be equipped to minister to others and to build quality relationships that glorify God.

- D. We must **know truth**, **resist darkness**, and **pursue God and people**. 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. None of these principles can be omitted. Some people resist sin and pursue God without knowing who they are in Christ. Some pursue God at prayer meetings without pursuing people or resisting sin. Others pursue people (relationship or ministry) without pursuing God or resisting sin. It does not work to only know truth and to resist sin without actively pursuing God and people.