

Session 8 The Transforming Power of Knowing You are Alive to God

I. RECKON YOURSELVES ALIVE TO GOD

- A. Romans 6 tells us how to access, or experience, the power, favor, and blessings of God, which are freely available to us because of what Jesus did on the cross. Transformation in our life begins by *knowing* who we are in Christ or seeing ourselves in the way God sees us in Christ.

Romans 6 gives us details about how we are to access and experience the power of God in our lives in a practical way. So if this is a chapter you are not familiar with, you want to say, “Note to self: this is a must-know chapter.” Paul tells us what was made available to us because of what Jesus did on the cross for us.

Now, one of the main biblical principles in the New Testament is that transformation begins by knowing who we are in Christ. The beginning place for the transformation of our heart is knowing, and so we want to put time and effort into learning who we are in Christ. Another way to say it is to see ourselves in the way that God sees us in Christ.

- B. Paul exhorted us to reckon ourselves “alive to God,” or to see ourselves in the way that God sees us in Christ—as accepted by God, empowered by the indwelling Spirit, and much more.

¹*Reckon [see] yourselves to be...alive to God in Christ... (Rom. 6:11)*

*Romans 6:11 captures the idea. This is one of Paul's major points of emphasis in the New Testament in terms of how transformation happens. He says, “Reckon yourself to be alive to God in Christ Jesus.” Now there are a number of principles locked into that one simple, little sentence. When he says, “Reckon yourself,” that means know it, see it, understand it. But it is a little bit more than that. The word, **reckon**, is an accounting term. The idea is that Jesus put His wealth on your account, but you have to draw on that account in order for it to affect your everyday life.*

Romans 6 is like a bank statement. We read the bank statement, we understand the wealth, and then we draw on the wealth. You can have wealth in your bank, spiritually speaking, but never draw on it. You can live in poverty. That is bad, and that is what Paul is exhorting us not to do.

- C. We are transformed by changing how we think. As our mind is renewed, our emotions are transformed, and thus our behavior changes. Our emotions are not transformed by *trying harder*, but by *seeing more clearly* as we invest effort to fill our mind with the Word.

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

In Romans 12:2, Paul went on to say the same thing as “reckon yourself,” but he said it in a different way. He said that you are transformed—your emotions are transformed—by renewing how you think. So in Romans 12 he is actually looking back to Romans 6. He is referring to what he wrote earlier. He is, in essence, saying the same thing as “reckon yourself to be alive to God.” He is saying, “Renew your mind,”—fill your mind with the truth of Romans 6.

As our mind is renewed, our emotions are transformed. When our emotions are transformed, our behavior is changed in a most consistent and deep way. Now, we can change our behavior at times, even when our emotions are in a storm. Because if we do not restrain our behavior—well, you end up going to jail if you do not restrain your behavior. Paul is talking about something more than that. He is talking about inward transformation that will actually lead to a more consistent and deeper change in terms of our behavior.

Our emotions are not transformed by trying harder to transform them. You cannot grit your teeth, really put forth effort, and make fear go away, or make rejection go away, or make lust go away, or make anger go away. When anger rises up in our heart, we cannot just say no, and then all of a sudden anger goes away. It does not work that way.

So I encourage people not to try harder, but to see more clearly. To put their energy into understanding who they are in Christ, and then drawing on that, not trying to control their emotions. Again, you can control your outward behavior; that is different than controlling your emotions. You cannot control them by an act of your will. But we can control our emotions by transforming them. And they are transformed by seeing more clearly who we are in Christ.

- D. Paul's dramatic declaration that we have become a new creation in Christ, with all things becoming new, has vast implications. The "he" that is a new creation is our born-again spirit. All things pertaining to our spirit have become new. Our spirit was instantly made righteous.

¹⁷If 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)

In 2 Corinthians 5:17, Paul makes a very dramatic statement. He says, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation." He elaborates on what it means to be a new creation—the implications of it. He says two things right here in verse 17. One, the old things that were true about you while you were an unbeliever are now passed away. Two, all things have become new. Again, he is developing the idea of being a new creation in Christ.

In verse 21, he says, "...that we might become the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus." Now here in 2 Corinthians 5, Paul is really teaching "Romans 6 Made Simple." By this I mean that Romans 6 is the legal document of our transfer of wealth—the wealth that has been put into our spiritual account for us to draw on—and 2 Corinthians 5 summarizes it in very simple terms. It gets right to the point.

Now he says in this very dramatic statement, "If anyone is in Christ,"— anyone, no matter how messed up you are before, how many demons that you were involved with, how much pain, anger, and rage you had, or what you were addicted to, anyone—he says that if you come to Christ, then the day that you are born again—not a couple years later—the moment you are born again, you are "a new creation." That is a very big statement that Paul is making. "Old things passed away; all things have become new."

Now, when I first read this years ago as a young man, I said, "Paul, surely this cannot be true," because I did not understand Paul was talking about our spirit.

When he said, "All things are made new," he was talking about all things pertaining to your spirit. Because, as you know, our human makeup is three-fold—we are spirit, soul, and body.

Our spirit is different from our soul—which is our personality—and our body. I did not know the distinction. I thought that Paul was saying that everything passed away and everything was new in my soul. I was thinking, "No, I still have the same thought patterns. I still have the same negative emotions. I have the same anger. I have the same lust. I have the same fears. What do you mean everything has passed away? Surely you are exaggerating."

Well, Paul was not exaggerating. I was just misunderstanding. When he says, “He is a new creation,” he is referring the spirit man. The born-again spirit is radically recreated; it is a new creation. Our soul—our mind and emotions—is not new, but our spirit man is new, and I am going to give the implications of that. He says, “The old things are passed away; all things are new,” and then he gives the high point in verse 21. He says, “...that we might become the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.”

*Beloved, I cannot imagine anything more dramatic than that statement. You have become the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. Not your mind and emotions. He did not say that your mind or your emotions are righteous. He did not say your body is righteous. He said that you are. The true you is who you are **in your spirit**.*

The fullness of God's righteousness was given to your spirit the day you were born again. Now that righteousness is so complete, even God cannot improve it. God cannot improve it because it is His own righteousness, and His righteousness is perfect and eternal. The very righteousness of Jesus was given to you.

And, if you think about it, the Holy Spirit could not dwell in you unless your spirit was righteous. Because the Holy Spirit could not dwell in an unrighteous context, our spirits had to be made as righteous as God. If not, the Holy Spirit would not be comfortable, or it would not be possible for Him to dwell in us. Beloved, this is a most amazing truth! The Spirit of God, who came to dwell in you the day you were born again, will live in you forever. Forever and forever, it will never change, and you are instantly made righteous.

- E. ***Old things have passed away:*** We were under condemnation before God and powerless with regard to sin (at the heart level). We were under darkness, lacking ability to understand God and His Word, etc. We were destitute, without a relevant or lasting purpose in God.

When Paul says “the old things,” he means the old things pertaining to your spirit, the position of your spirit. Before you were born again, before you came into a relationship with Jesus, you were under condemnation. The wrath of God was over your life. If you had died, you would have ended up in hell because you would pay the penalty of your own sin. There was nobody who paid it for you. You were on your own until you came to Christ.

Not only were you under condemnation—there are a number of implications. We are not going to go through them all, but they are all glorious—you were powerless in regards to sin at the heart level, the emotional level. What do I mean by that? It means there are many different sinful emotions.

I will just take the emotion of anger as an example. When anger would rise up in our hearts before we were born again, we had no power inherent in our human ability to make that anger dissipate instantly. We could not make it go away. The anger in us would ride the storm, and the storm would just run its course, whether it was five minutes or five hours or five days. The anger would run its course like a storm, and then it would dissipate. Then, in a little while later, the anger would hit again and pass. Then a little while later, the anger would hit again. I am talking at the emotional level.

It was the same with lust. Lust would rise up. Lust would run its course for a few moments or a few hours or whatever. Then it would dissipate, then it would show up again. There are many different negative emotions you could put in this example. You had no ability in your human makeup to make it go away in your emotions.

Now externally, in your behavior, you could restrain your physical activity because, again, if you do not restrain it, you go to jail. You have the ability to restrain it at the physical level, but you do not have the ability to dissipate it and cause it to leave at the emotional level. There is no power in you, no matter how educated, no matter how disciplined, no matter how polite, or how sophisticated you are. You have no ability over that anger in yourself. Well, until the day you were born again, and then a new power came into you.

- F. ***All things have become new***: We are *accepted and enjoyed* by God. Our former powerlessness and darkness have passed—we have the *authority of Jesus' name* and the *indwelling Spirit*, which enable us to resist sin, sickness, and Satan. Now we have a significant *destiny* in God.

Paul says the same thing, "All things have become new." It is the same thing as "old things have passed away." He is saying the same thing, but from the opposite point of view. When he said that old things passed away pertaining to your spirit, it was from the negative perspective. Now he says the same thing from the positive. He says that everything is new, that is, part of being a new creation.

Now, instead of condemnation, you are not only accepted by God, but you are actually enjoyed by God. You are standing before God in the same way that Jesus in His humanity stood before God when He was on the earth. It is a most remarkable reality.

Your former powerlessness, your inability to challenge negative emotions, is passed away. You now have the ability to challenge negative emotions. You may not use that ability, but you do have it, to challenge negative emotions effectively. You have the authority now to use the name of Jesus. You can speak the name of Jesus and use His authority, releasing the works of God and hindering the works of the devil.

Before you were in Christ, you had no ability to stop the enemy's attack. When a spirit of fear came on you in the night, you just had to ride it out there for a few moments or a few hours. Then it would leave, and you would feel like, "Oh, that was weird." But now in the name of Jesus you can command it to go. You have the indwelling Spirit living in you.

- G. ***Legal position***: This speaks of how God sees us and relates to us in Christ and of the benefits that He has given us because of what Jesus did *for us on the cross* and what the Spirit did *in our spirit*. At the new birth, our spirit is joined to the Spirit, and we are filled with His supernatural life (1 Cor. 6:17). We have the fullness of grace in our spirit and full access to God's presence.

¹⁷***But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him. (1 Cor. 6:17)***

Notice these two terms: our legal position and our living condition. These are two terms or concepts that describe our relationship with God through Christ. They are two facets of our relationship with God.

Our legal position describes our true state. It is the spiritual bank account that we are supposed to reckon as our own, where we can see the wealth that has been given to us. Our legal position describes how God sees us and how He relates to us through Christ. He sees us and relates to us in His presence, before His eyes, in the same way He sees Christ and relates to Him. We are fully accepted. We are fully in the family. We are not "kind of in the family." We are not on probation. We are fully accepted in His sight.

Our legal position describes how God sees us and includes the benefits we have because of what Jesus did on the cross for us. Our legal position is what happened already, what the Holy Spirit did in our spirit for us. You know, the day you were born again, the Holy Spirit did something very, very dramatic for you. He came to dwell in you. In 1 Corinthians 6:17, Paul said about the born-again believer, "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit with God." I mean, can you imagine the implications that your spirit is one with God, that the uncreated God, by the Holy Spirit, is one with you?

Now you are not God, and you are not uncreated. You are always the redeemed, and you are never God, but His Spirit is one with your spirit. This is the most remarkable reality. Well, that is our legal position. That is what is in our spiritual bank account. That is what Paul says to reckon—to draw on that account.

- H. ***Living condition***: This speaks of how we live—how much grace we experience as our mind and emotions are renewed by interacting with the Spirit. We can have the fullness of grace in our legal position (our spirit), and yet live in defeat in our living condition (our mind and emotions).

There is another dimension to our relationship with God called our living condition. Our living condition is what we actually experience in our everyday life. It is not what the Holy Spirit did in our spirit instantly the day we were born again. Rather, it is what the Holy Spirit is doing now in our soul—our personality, our mind, emotions, will. It is how much we are actually experiencing of Him. It is how much of the bank account we are drawing on, how much we are actually using of the great wealth that Christ gave us in our legal position.

Now, it is very possible—as a matter of fact, it happens all the time—to have the fullness of grace in your legal position, but live in defeat in your living condition. You can have the fullness of grace in your legal condition, your spirit man is full of God, but in your living condition, your everyday life, you live in total defeat—meaning your mind and your emotions are not being renewed by the Holy Spirit.

Now some people are content with who they are in their legal position, and they say, “I have everything in Christ in my legal position, and I do not care how I live or how much I experience.”

I cry, “No!” I love who I am in my legal position, but, beloved, I want to experience it in my living condition. I am not content to have wealth in my bank account; I want to spend it. I want to experience it. I do not want the Spirit to dwell just in my spirit. I want Him to move in my soul—my mind, emotions, and will.

- I. What Jesus freely and instantly ***worked for us*** on the cross is what He progressively ***works in us*** as we relate to the Spirit’s leadership in our life—referred to as abiding in Christ (Jn. 15:4-5).
- J. To understand the glory of the new creation, we must first understand that God created humans with three parts—spirit, soul, and body. Man ***is a spirit***, he ***has a soul***, and he ***lives in a body***.

²³***May your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless... (1 Thes. 5:23)***

Paul said that you are a new creation. Now to understand the new creation we have to see that God created us—our human makeup—in three parts: spirit, soul, and body. Man is a spirit, has a soul, and lives in a body. The real you is your spirit. You have a soul—a personality—and you live in a body.

- K. Our ***spirit*** is the place where God dwells—He lives in us. Our ***soul*** speaks of our personality, consisting of our mind, emotions, and will. Our ***body*** has five senses, which enable us to receive from the physical world. Many believers do not know ***who they are in their spirit***. As we receive training for our body and soul, so we must receive training related to our spirit.

Your spirit is the place where God dwells in you right now, in this age. He dwells in you, in fullness, in your spirit. Again, your spirit is the real you, forever. When you die, your body goes into the ground, and the real you goes into the presence of God.

Your soul is your personality. Now, you will have elements of your personality in the age to come, like you do now, but you will have a lot better personality in the age to come than you do now. I mean, I know you are amazing right now, but you are really going to be something then!

Your body has five senses. Our physical body is what gives our spirit the ability to interact with the physical world. If you did not have a physical body, your spirit could not interact with the physical world. That is why demons, which are fallen spirits, want to inhabit a human being. If demons inhabit a human being, they can have far greater interaction with the physical world, and that is why they care about that.

Many believers do not know who they are in their spirit. They are not trained; they do not understand what the Bible says about their spirit man. They are trained in their soul. They go to the university to get trained in their soul. They go to the gym to get trained in their body. But you have to go to the Bible to get trained in your spirit because the Bible is the only place that has understanding of what happened to your spirit man the day you were born again. There is no philosophy course, no religion course, and no other source of information regarding what happened in your spirit, except for the Word of God.

Romans 6:1-10 gives more information about this than any other passage of scripture. Verse 1-10, which we are not looking at today, is the legal contract that explains the wealth that was transferred into your account.

L. At the new birth, our spirit was made “new” in such a way that Paul used the term “created.”

²⁴Put on the new man which was created...in true righteousness and holiness. (Eph. 4:24)

M. The challenge of faith is that we do not “feel” our spirit. Our spirit is “spirit” and is indiscernible, even “hidden” from our five senses. We cannot measure it by our emotions or our five senses. Paul referred to our true life, or our spirit man in this age, as being “hidden” in Christ.

³For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. (Col. 3:3-4)

Now the challenge of faith is this—we cannot feel our spirit, meaning you cannot sense it with your five senses. You cannot get a handful of your spirit and measure it or dissect it. You cannot study it with the five senses of your body or your emotions. You cannot discern it because it is spirit, not flesh.

So without the Word of God giving us living understanding, we cannot understand who we are in our spirit; we are completely ignorant. Many believers, because they do not read the Word of God much, live ignorant of who they are in their spirit. Therefore they never draw on the account. Therefore their soul—their mind and emotions—continues in defeat year after year after year. They have this tremendous wealth, but they do not know the wealth is there. And, they do not know how to draw on the wealth. So they are spiritually rich, but practically they live as poor.

Paul tells us here in Colossians 3:3, “Your life is hidden in Christ.” When he says that your life is hidden, he is talking about your spirit, the real you. It is not just the real you that is hidden from someone else—who you are in your spirit. Did you know your life is so hidden that it is actually hidden from you? Even you cannot see the real you. You need the Word of God as the road map. You need the Word of God as the compass to understand who you are. The owner's manual is the only place you get insight into who you are in your spirit. Again, nowhere is it laid out more systematically than in Romans 6:1-10. We are looking at verse 11 where Paul is saying, in essence, to reckon or draw on the truth from verse 1-10.

N. The gospel is the good news of salvation, of receiving God’s righteousness (in three tenses). Much of the misunderstanding about grace can be traced back to misunderstanding these truths. One third of our salvation is complete (the salvation of our spirit); the other two parts are not.

1. ***Justification***: our legal position—***past tense***, focused on my spirit (I *have been* saved.)

2. ***Sanctification***: our living condition—***present tense***, focused on my soul (I *am being* saved.)

3. ***Glorification***: our eternal exaltation—***future tense***, focused on my body (I *will be* saved.)

Now the gospel is the good news of salvation, of receiving God's righteousness in all three tenses. The message of the cross is the same thing as the gospel. Meaning number one—in our justification we fully received the salvation of our spirit. Our spirit is fully saved, but that is not the end of the gospel message. That is only one-third of the gospel message. That is only one-third of the salvation message. That is only one-third of the message of the cross.

*The second part of the gospel message is your living condition. That is, what He did for us on the cross, He wants to manifest in us, in our soul. What He does in our soul by the Spirit because of what He did on the cross is the gospel. It is the message of the cross, but it does not end there. There is not only a past tense part of our salvation—our legal position, we are justified—there is also a present tense. We are **being** changed; that is also our salvation.*

Then there is also a future tense—our eternal exaltation—when our body is completely made new. Physical healing now is a down payment on our glorified body in the age to come, the promise of a glorified body.

This is important because we want to be faithful witnesses of the message of the cross, faithful witnesses of the message of the gospel. To preach the gospel in fullness, we have to talk about all three levels, not just the introductory level.

I talk to some people who say they preach the gospel, and all they mean is one-third of it. I talk to some people who say they love the message of the cross. They only mean one-third of it, the justification part—the legal position. Well, the Lord wants us to experience it all!

I am not content with just the legal position; I want to experience the living condition and the eternal exaltation. Concerning the eternal, I want to live in the hope of that now, so it affects my life. I want to live in it now; I want God to heal my body now—that is part of the redemption of our body that is mostly in the future.

II. OUR LEGAL POSITION IN CHRIST

- A. Paul described our legal position before God in Romans 5:12-21. He developed a foundational principle for understanding salvation and how God views the human race. God sees all humans as being in one of two legal positions before Him—either as being “in Adam” or “in Christ.”
 1. Whatever was true of Adam’s standing before God is true of all who are “in Adam.”
 2. Whatever is true of Jesus’ standing before God, as a man, is true of all “in Christ.”

Romans 5:12-21: this is the clearest description of the truth of our legal position, Then in Romans 6 he gives the details of the principle he establishes in Romans 5. You can read that on your own if you want.

- B. All who are “in Adam” are under the “*reign of sin*” in their legal position before God. All who are “in Christ” are under the “*reign of grace*” in their legal position before God.

²¹ *...as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through...Jesus Christ... (Rom. 5:21)*

Romans 5:21 is the final statement of Romans 5. Paul has laid out the truth of the legal position of human beings. Every human being is either in the legal position before God that Adam was in, or they are in the legal position before God that Christ is in. Every human being is in one of those two positions before God, and again you can read a little bit more about that later. Here is Paul's grand crescendo. He ends Romans 5 with this high point. One of the most significant statements he makes in the entire book of Romans is Romans 5:21. He says, "Let me tell you this. In the same way that you were under the reign of sin when you were in Adam, in that legal position, you are now in the reign of grace because you are in Christ" (Romans 5:21, paraphrased).

You were 100 percent under the reign of sin. Now you are 100 percent under the reign of grace. That is the great crescendo statement with which he ends Romans 5. Then in Romans 6 he unpacks it. In the verse that we are considering this morning, he says, "Now reckon this to be true,"—draw on your bank account as though this is true (Romans 6:11, paraphrased).

- C. ***The reign of sin:*** We were under ***condemnation*** before God, ***powerless*** before sin and satanic attacks, and were in ***darkness***, without the ability to understand God and His Word, etc.
- D. ***The reign of grace:*** We received a new position, power, nature, insights, and destiny. We are now enjoyed, indwelt, empowered, and commissioned by God, with a relevant purpose.

III. MORE ON THE REIGN OF GRACE

- A. ***Acceptance by God, with affection:*** The result of receiving this new position is that God enjoys and delights in relating to us both as the sons of God and the Bride of Christ.

⁹***"As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. (Jn. 15:9)***

The day you are born again, you are 100 percent under the reign of grace, instantaneously. That is your new legal position in God's sight because of Christ. The way that God sees Jesus before Him legally, He sees you. If you grasp that truth, and you know that truth, you begin to draw on that truth. I am going to give you a practical way to do that in just a moment, and then your living condition will be transformed.

More on the reign of grace: we are accepted by God with affection. That is one of my favorite subjects in life.

- B. ***Indwelling Spirit:*** The Spirit gives us new power with new desires and insights that we may know God, His Word, and His will. We have received power to resist sin and Satan effectively. The presence of the indwelling Spirit is His love and peace, etc. being in our spirit (Gal. 5:22).

²²***The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness... (Gal. 5:22)***

You possess the indwelling Spirit living in your spirit the moment you are born again. Paul describes the impact or the result of the Spirit living in you. In Galatians 5:22-23, he says, in essence, "Do you understand that that person living in you has an infinite, supernatural supply of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control?" (paraphrased). There are nine fruit or nine results of the Spirit's activity in our life.

Now here is Paul's point. The Spirit in totality lives in your spirit. That means there is an infinite and supernatural supply of peace in your spirit. That is good! That is in your bank account. Now the challenge is, you want that peace to be in your soul, in your emotions; you do not just want it in your spirit. You want it in your soul, and that is the challenge of faith.

1. We access the Holy Spirit's power simply by acknowledging His presence in our spirit and thanking Him for it; this is how faith works. The simple act of thanking the Spirit for His peace in our spirit releases it to our soul (emotions).
2. We have a Person living in our spirit on Whom we can draw. Before we were born again, our spirit was spiritually dead or devoid of God's life (Gk. *zoe* = life).

The way that we access the Spirit's power so that His power goes from our spirit to our soul—and I am breaking this down in kind of a mechanical way just so you can grasp it—is simply by acknowledging His presence in your spirit and thanking Him.

*Let me give you an example. When anger rises up in my emotions, instead of gritting my teeth trying to make the anger go, or just letting the storm of anger run its course, what I am suppose to do is—I do not always do it, but I want to do it more—the idea is, I turn my attention to the Holy Spirit dwelling in my spirit. I **thank** Him for peace. I **do not ask** Him for peace in my spirit; I **thank** Him for peace. When I do that, the most remarkable thing happens—the peace that is infinite and eternal, which is in the person of the Holy Spirit that dwells in my spirit, actually touches my soul for a few moments.*

The anger dissipates. I can challenge the anger through that interaction with the Spirit. It is as simple as acknowledging it and thanking Him for peace, and the storm of anger dissipates. Now the anger will come back a little while later, and the peace will dissipate. I have to draw on that peace again in my interaction with the Holy Spirit, yet this is an amazing reality.

I remember the first time this ever happened to me. Somebody taught me this. I was about twenty years old, not quite, and my youth leader told me that if I wanted personal transformation, I had to understand Romans 6. I said, “OK.” I read Romans 6. I did not like it at all; it was so confusing. I thought, “Ugh, if I have to understand this to get changed, I am never going to be changed!”

I was fascinated and frustrated by Romans 6 for ten years. I preached on Romans 6 more times the first ten years of my ministry than any other passage of the Bible. I was trying to figure it out, and my friends used to make a joke about it because I kept changing what it meant. They said, “Bickle, why don't you just figure it out? Just go process it quietly.” I was always teaching a new version of Romans 6 because I was trying to find out what it meant. I was so fascinated and frustrated by this glorious chapter.

Well, my youth leader had explained to me, “The Holy Spirit actually lives in your spirit. If you will acknowledge Him, thank Him for the peace that is inherent in His personality, He will touch your soul.”

I said, “Really?” I tried it. I was angry, that peace came instantly, and the anger left. I was so excited! I could not believe it. I said, “This is supernatural.” The anger left, and I said, “Uh, where did it go?”

I was so excited. I went into the other room. I was at home—again I was not quite twenty—I was so excited! I went to one of my sisters and just provoked her to get her mad to test it, to see if it would work again. She got mad, and I got mad, but it really did not work because I was so excited, you know, it just did not work.

Don't worry! I had a chance a few hours later to do it for real. Anger rose up again. I said, “Lord, this is remarkable.” It is the same thing with kindness. It is the same thing with goodness. We can acknowledge the Holy Spirit's presence. We are going to break this down some more in the weeks to come.

- C. **Authority:** We were given the authority to use Jesus' name to release the works of God and hinder the works of Satan and to release or host the presence of the Spirit where ever we go.

- D. ***Divine destiny:*** We have a relevant and lasting purpose in God. Every day is relevant as we do God's will. Our small deeds so move Him that He eternally rewards us for them.

IV. ROMANS 6: THE TRANSFORMED LIFE

- A. Romans 6 is the main chapter in the Scripture that teaches on personal transformation. It tells us how to access, or experience, the power of God, which is available to us in our legal position. Note the three main sections in Romans 6:
1. ***Romans 6:1-10:*** Our ***legal position*** (what we freely and fully received at our new birth)
 2. ***Romans 6:11-13:*** How to ***cooperate with grace*** (three principles to access God's power)
 3. ***Romans 6:14-23:*** Our ***living condition*** (what we experience as we cooperate with grace)
- B. Paul declared that we are now under the reign of grace, as we were once under the reign of sin.
- ²¹***...as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through...Jesus Christ...^{6:2}How shall we who died to sin [freed from the reign of sin] live any longer in it? (Rom. 5:21-6:2)***
1. The key to understanding Roman 6 is found in Romans 5:21. We are now dead to the reign of sin (6:2). We are *dead—removed, freed*—from our former position of bondage to the penalty and mandatory power of sin over our emotions.
 2. In declaring that we “died to sin” (v. 2), Paul was not exhorting us *to do something* for God, but *to believe in something* He did for us. Paul was not saying that “sin died in us” in the sense of sinful desires dying in us, but that we died to the reign of sin (Rom. 5:21).

V. SEEING OURSELVES AS ALIVE TO GOD

- A. To reckon ourselves alive to God is to see ourselves in the way that God sees us—as under the reign of grace (Rom. 5:21). We are in a new position under the *reign of grace* with its privileges in Christ. We are dead to our former position of being under the *reign of sin*.
- ¹¹***Reckon [see] yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ... (Rom. 6:11)***
- B. ***See yourself alive to God:*** We must see ourselves as enjoyed, indwelt, and empowered by God. We apply “new creation truths” to our identity by seeing ourselves as sons of God and the Bride of Christ, who function as kings and priests (Rev. 5:10).
- C. ***See yourself dead to sin:*** We are dead to the reign of sin or freed from our former position under the reign of sin, where we were powerless before sinful promptings, etc. Sin formerly had a mandatory control over our hearts, and we were powerless to challenge it. Temptation to sin is not removed, but now we have the power to effectively challenge sinful impulses, because the power of the Spirit dwells in our spirit (Gal. 5:22).
- ²***How shall we who died to sin [freed from the reign of sin] live any longer in it? (Rom. 6:2)***

VI. APPLYING THE PROMISES OF GOD

- A. The renewing of our mind involves more than gaining information about biblical truths. It includes ***confessing*** the Word—interacting with the Spirit as we speak the Word to Him.

- B. Our confession is what we say to the indwelling Spirit about who we are in Christ. Confession engages our heart with God and His truth. Truth changes us as it gets into our conversation with God. We can know truths intellectually without applying them to our heart by confessing them.

⁸The word is near you, in your mouth...that is, the word of faith...⁹that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart...you will be saved [delivered from the penalty and power of sin]. ¹⁰For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation [complete deliverance]. (Rom. 10:8-10)

I am going to talk about how to apply this, just in the next two minutes. This is later on, in Romans 10. We are still in Romans. Paul is now telling us in Romans 10 how to access the power of Romans 6. It is a very, very important principle. A very simple principle, but very, very important.

He said, in Romans 10:8, “The word is near you,”—the word of promise, the word that contains the promises of God—but it is more than that. The word that releases the power of God in your experience is what he is talking about. He said, “The word that releases the power of God,”—it is not some mysterious thing, it is not seven steps to transformation—“the word is in your mouth,”—it is so close, if you say it, you will actually write the check on your bank account. You will say it; it is called confession.

When we speak the truth of who we are, we speak the truth of our legal position to the Holy Spirit. When we bring the truth, and we dialogue with the Holy Spirit, the power of that truth actually touches our emotions. It not only touches our emotions for a few moments before that goodness, that good influence, lifts, but, as we draw on it again, and as we stay in dialogue and call on the Holy Spirit, it keeps touching our emotions. Jesus referred to that on-going dialogue as “abiding in Christ.”

Here in Romans 10:8 he said, “The word that releases the power is so close, you do not have to go to some seminar; you do not have to have a heavenly visitation. It is there” (paraphrased) He goes on in verse 9, “Say it. Confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and you will be saved.” Now he is talking about all three tenses of salvation.

A lot of people know this verse but they limit it to only when they were born again, then they quit using confession. They confess Jesus once, and they say, “I am born again.”

Paul is saying, “No, this being saved is more than being saved from the penalty of sin on the day you are born again. You can be saved and delivered from the power of sin. Confession accesses the power of God.” Thank the Holy Spirit, talk to Him about who He is in you, and draw on the contract that is laid out in Romans 6:1-10.

- C. When condemnation, shame, fear, hopelessness, or lust, etc. rise up in us to challenge what God promised in His Word about loving, forgiving, empowering, directing, or providing for us, then we must apply the promise of the Word to our heart, by *confessing the truth* and *resisting lies*.

When condemnation rises up—you feel condemnation, or shame, or hopelessness, or lust, and they challenge the truth, saying that you are not in Christ, you are a loser, you do not have any power—turn your attention inward, talk to the Holy Spirit about who you are, and speak the truth about who you are. You say, “It is written, ‘There is no condemnation.’ It is written, ‘Holy Spirit, You are filled with love, joy, peace, and patience. You have peace. Thank You for Your peace.’ It is written, ‘You will direct me. You will lead me. My life is meaningful to You.’” I tell you, you will feel different in your emotions. You do that over weeks and months and years, your life will change.

- D. We present ourselves to God to love Him and be His instruments, that He may use us to bless people. Some resist sin and pursue God without knowing who they are in Christ.

¹³ *...but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead... (Rom. 6:13)*

Look at Romans 6:13. It is only two verses later, and Paul says, “Even when you present yourself to God, when you offer yourself to God,”—let's just say in your prayer life; presenting yourself to God means more than your prayer life, but when you give yourself to God in your prayer life—Paul said in essence, “Make sure when you offer yourself to God in worship and prayer, do it as somebody who is alive from the dead,” meaning, do not just come before God in your sincerity, come before God on the basis of who you are in Christ.

Do not spend your prayer time negotiating with God, talking Him into forgiving you. Go there as a person who is alive in Christ Jesus in your spirit. Do not go there based on what your track record has been the last couple of weeks. Paul said, “When you present yourself to God, do not present it on the basis of how good you are doing this week. Present it on the basis of who you are in Christ” (paraphrased).

Change the dialogue. Make the dialogue about you interacting with Him, not the dialogue about your failure. Talk to Him about who you are in Christ. Do not talk to Him about your sin of which you have repented, asking Him to forgive you again. He has already forgiven you; it is off the record. Amen and amen.