

Session 7 Cooperating with Grace: Three Primary Principles

I. THE REIGN OF GRACE (ROM. 5:21)

- A. As we were under the reign of sin before our salvation, we are now under the reign of grace.
*²¹As sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through...*Jesus Christ. (Rom. 5:21)**
- B. ***The reign of sin:*** We were under ***condemnation*** (judgment) before God. We were ***powerless*** before sin (at the heart level) 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, power, nature, insights, and destiny.

II. OVERVIEW OF ROMAN 6: THE TRANSFORMED LIFE

- A. Romans 6:1-10: Our ***legal position*** (what we received by being united to Jesus). Paul proclaimed that we died to the reign of sin (v. 2). We were freed from or “finished with” our former position where sin had a mandatory control over our hearts where we had no power to challenge it. When Paul wrote that we died to sin (v. 2), he was not exhorting us to do something for God, but to believe in something He did for us. He was not saying that “sinful desires died in us.”
²How shall we who died to sin [freed from the reign of sin] live any longer in it? (Rom. 6:2)
- B. Romans 6:11-14: How to ***cooperate with grace*** (the three primary principles)
- C. Romans 6:15-23: Our ***living condition*** (what we experience as we cooperate with grace)

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

- A. ***Knowing Principle (Rom. 6:11):*** We must know who we are in Christ. To “reckon ourselves” is to see ourselves in the way that God sees us and according to what the Word says about us. The knowing principle includes knowing about God’s majesty and heart as a Father and Bridegroom.
¹¹Reckon [see] yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ... (Rom. 6:11)
1. ***Reckon yourself alive to God:*** We must see ourselves as enjoyed, indwelt, empowered, and commissioned by God with a relevant purpose.
 2. ***Reckon yourself dead to sin:*** We are dead to the reign of sin. We are removed from the position where we were ***condemned, powerless*** before sinful promptings, in ***darkness*** without the ability to understand God’s Word, and ***destitute*** without a lasting purpose.

IV. PRINCIPLE #2: RESISTING DARKNESS (SELF DENIAL IN CHOOSING GODLINESS)

- 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)***
1. ***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 (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)***
- B. ***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.

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

- A. ***Pursuing Principle (Rom. 6:13b):*** We pursue relating to and serving God and people with love. 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)***
1. ***Present yourselves to God:*** This speaks of seeking to know, love, and please God in a personal and wholehearted way. We take time to cultivate intimacy with Him.
 2. ***Present your members as instruments of righteousness:*** This speaks of loving and serving people (family, church, and nations) in righteousness (more than just usefulness).
- B. 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.
1. Others pursue people (relationship or ministry) but without actively pursuing God or resisting sin and denying themselves to choose righteousness. It does not work to only know truth and to resist sin without actively pursuing God and people.
 2. Three expressions of the distorted grace message—legalism, compromise, and burnout—each hurt our faith. The most common distortion is to be ***relational and missional*** without pursuing God and resisting sin.