

## Romans 6:13-14

**12** *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.*

**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.*

**14** *For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*

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As we discussed previously, in verse 12, Paul is not giving us a command to quit sinning in the sense many would understand it, but is appealing to us on the basis of what he has communicated to us up to this point in chapter 6: namely, that we have been baptized into Jesus Christ, that we are fully identified with Him, and that since we were baptized into Christ we were also necessarily baptized into (or unified with Him in) His death. And if this is true—if this is not just theological jargon, if this is not just some sort of symbolism, but if we truly were baptized into His death, then something *within us* must have died, as our physical body remained unchanged when we believed.

If this is the case, then that which died must have been that which was inclined to sin by natural inheritance from Adam. And if that part of our inner man was put to death, then what verse 2 says naturally follows:

*How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*

Again, this is an identity issue. The issue of sin in the life of the believer is one of knowing what God did in them when they believed and who they are in Christ—and who they are no longer—and requires a reorienting of the mind, or as the scripture refers to it, a renewing of the mind.

The freewill of man to live in the ghost of the old man and the sin that resides by memory in the members is an ongoing reality. But what we have seen here in Romans 6 is that God, through the gospel, did not just provide for the forgiveness of your sins but also for your freedom from sin and for your ability to serve God, or as Paul will say in Galatians 2:19, "live unto God."

And so with the freewill of man, and with the liberty of the son or daughter to live without threat of punishment from God, we naturally encounter a crossroads, and that crossroads is summed up with the word *yield*. We have two choices: we can yield ourselves to sin or to God, but with the proper edification of the saint—that is, with the proper knowing and reckoning of the truth—it is a freewill choice: believe, or don't believe. God says He did it all. Do you believe Him?

The Law of the Spirit that the Father has set in place is readily available and works in those who believe, and it is a Law that *always* works, because the work was already done. We need to reorient our thinking and get out of our own way.

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The English word *yield* comes from the Old English word *gielðan*, which means *to pay or pay for, reward or render, or to worship, serve or sacrifice to*. Within this semantic range is the idea that who you serve is who you worship. There is a direct correspondence between service and worship.

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Consider what Paul writes to the Galatians in Galatians 4:

**Galatians 4:8**

*Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.*

Worship and service is connected all throughout the Bible:

## Deuteronomy 8:19

*And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish.*

Our worship of God has to do with our service. And what have we been discussing this entire chapter? It has been the nature and mechanism of how we are *able* to serve God, how we are able to *live* for God.

When one says they love God but lives as those who don't know God, don't we question the quality of that love? If they were to *really* ascribe to God His *true* and *rightful* worthiness, wouldn't their life somehow reflect that, even in spite of their shortcomings? I am not saying they don't love God, or that they are not justified unto eternal life—what I am saying is the true weight of God's worthiness to them is balanced out in their daily lives, whether for good or bad. It is even *reckoned*, one could say, as it is accounted for in the reality of life. Words can be cheap. People tend to manifest what's in their heart.

Worship is a contraction of *worth-ship*, from the Anglo-Saxon *weorthscype*.

Though there is overlap in meaning between *worship* and *praise*, there is also a sense in which they are different.

In one sense, to praise is to *express* something of someone or something which you highly esteem or place a great value upon. In fact, the word *praise* actually comes from the same Old French and Late Latin words that we get the words *price* and *prize* from.

*Praise* typically holds the idea of some form of expression, usually with words, in that, in expressing something with words one communicates ideas, such as admiration or value of something which is *praiseworthy*. Again we see the idea of worthiness in this.

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Worship has within it the idea of ascribing worth also but is often used in regards to people doing something with their *physical bodies*, such as bowing, stooping or laying prostrate as an act that demonstrates the worthiness of the other.

#### **Genesis 24:26**

*And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the LORD.*

#### **Matthew 2:11**

*And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh.*

#### **Revelation 22:8**

*And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.*

And so when we read that we are to *yield*, not our members unto sin, but rather yield ourselves unto God, this has within it the idea of ascribing worthiness to God—of worshipping God—with *our physical bodies*. And isn't that *exactly* what Paul is saying here?

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The Webster's 1828 dictionary includes the following definitions for the word yield:

- To permit
- To give up
- To surrender

What we will see at the opening of Romans 12, after our doctrinal establishment in chapters 1-11, is that *our bodies themselves are to be a living sacrifice*. This can only be done by the process we are currently learning of here in Romans 6, and by *yielding* to the truth of what God has done in us.

The reason I am discussing this is to show that the ideas we encounter later in the scriptures are not entirely new or foreign but are in the same vein of reasoning that has been taking place all along the way, though not outright articulated.

The error we often make is to think that something necessarily needs to be spelled out for us in some succinct doctrinal statement, or in a single verse, in order to constitute doctrine; but the Father expects us to work diligently word by word and to understand *the ideas* that are being communicated. In this way correct doctrine begins to form in our minds so that when we look at other passages which may initially seem random or unrelated, we can understand that they are in fact connected.

In *yielding*, what is essentially being said is to *give up*, as we saw one of the senses it carries is *to render*, which literally means *to give*. *Render* yourself to the truth—*give up* and *give yourself to it*. In this we see the idea of the conscious decision to *die daily*, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:31.

We saw in Romans chapter 1 that God gave up and gave over the nations to their own sinful desires. Humanity's natural inclination, without the power of God, is to give themselves up and over to their sin—it is to *yield* to their flesh.

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Consider Ephesians chapter 4:

#### **Ephesians 4:17-24**

**17** *This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,*

**18** *Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:*

*19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.*

*20 But ye have not so learned Christ;*

*21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus...*

Now it is not my goal here to exposit this passage, but let me just say this passage was not written with only unbelievers in mind—if that had been the intention, Paul would have specified by saying “unbelievers.” Instead he says “other gentiles.”

These other gentiles have given themselves over to something, because of the blindness of their heart, that is, their unbelief, because with the heart man believeth unto righteousness (Rom. 10:10), and this led to their understanding being darkened, which led to being alienated from the life of God, which led to vanity in their mind, which led to vanity in their daily walk. And so from unbelief stems alienation from God and a fruitful walk. And isn't that what we learned in Romans chapter 1? That the gentiles, *even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient* (Rom. 1:28)?

The gentiles mentioned in Ephesians, whether saved or unsaved, did not *yield* to the truth; they did not *know* and *believe* and *reckon* the things we're learning in Romans 6; they therefore did not and *could not* yield themselves to it, and the natural consequence was alienation from the life of God.

This is speaking of their *functional life*, just as we've been learning in Romans, that is, how the death of our old man with Christ and His resurrection life can be present realities for us.

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This is exactly what **Romans 6:13** is saying:

*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.*

We must *know* the truth, *believe* the truth, *reckon* it to be so, and in doing so we can *yield*, or give, ourselves unto it, and in doing so the life of God, the life of *Christ*, will be something manifested within us.

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### **Romans 6:14**

*For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*

Again, Paul instructed us in verse 13 to yield ourselves and our members, not to sin, but unto God as those that are alive from the dead. *For*, he says in verse 14, meaning *this is why*.

As I stated previously he's not giving us commands to quit sinning, he's explaining something about what God already did within us; verse 14 bears this out as well.

He gives us the imperative in verse 13, and then tells us how this is even possible in verse 14. It is possible because we are not under the Law but under grace. What does this mean?

The Law was actually imposed on Israel to demonstrate something; it actually put them *under the dominion of sin*. Many religious people and even Christians extol the Law, and rightfully so, but without understanding its purpose they then try to keep it, as if it's a means of personal righteousness for us today.

Now it was given to Israel for them to keep, and for those who kept the Old Covenant *by faith* it was a means of personal righteousness, but it was not the Law itself that accomplished this, it was their faith in the covenant—essentially it was faith in God's word and promise.

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Look at what Moses tells the children of Israel in the book of Deuteronomy:

### **Deuteronomy 6:24-25**

<sup>24</sup> *And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day.*

*<sup>25</sup> And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us.*

Now let me ask you a question: did Israel observe to do all the commandments of the Lord? They did not, and the course of Old Testament history clearly shows their successive failures and subsequent covenantal judgments.

However, because of the provision that God made in the Old Covenant system of the Law for sin, through various sacrifices, offerings, and ritual cleansings, they could still technically be blameless according to the Law (Phil. 3:6), and have a righteousness which is of the Law.

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Now look at Leviticus 4:

**Leviticus 4:27-31**

*<sup>27</sup> And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while he doeth somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done, and be guilty;*

*<sup>28</sup> Or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned.*

*<sup>29</sup> And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering.*

*<sup>30</sup> And the priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar.*

*<sup>31</sup> And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat is taken away from off the sacrifice of peace offerings; and the priest shall burn it upon the altar for a sweet savour unto the Lord; and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him.*

We see there was provision in the Old Covenant to atone for sins; the fact that this was built into the Old Covenant system is a testimony that they would not keep the commandments of the Lord, therefore those commandments could not be used to attain their own personal



righteousness. Faith in the Covenant, and *faithfulness* in the commandments, is one thing—*perfectly* keeping the commandments for justification by works is another thing entirely. No one has or *ever could* accomplish that outside of the Lord Himself.

And so we see the commandments themselves, which are sometimes referred to as “the Law” (which we must be careful to contextual because sometimes the whole of the Old Covenant is also referred to as “the Law”), were not a means of justification at all, because man couldn’t perfectly keep them; they in fact put the Israelites under the dominion of sin, and made them functionally dead to God. How could God use His nation to be the light of the world when they were under the dominion of sin?

Instead, they had to continually offer blood and offerings to Jehovah to maintain their standing before Him.

If Paul was simply instructing us—*commanding us*—to not yield our members unto sin, then it would be no different from the function of the Law, which was an external command imposed on the will of man.

Paul says here in verse 14 that sin will not have dominion over us because we are not under the Law.

And so law, whether the perfect Law of God, or the laws and sensibilities contrived of man, will necessarily put one under the dominion of sin.

But sin shall not have dominion over us, for we are not under the law but under grace. The Law rests upon the strength of man’s will and flesh. We know that all born naturally into this world are born in Adam, and so their *will* is not the primary factor for them, because unregenerate man is a sinner by nature.

For the regenerate, the inner man and nature is new, but the flesh remains. And so to recruit the flesh to perform the Law is to recruit the sin which resides in the members of the body.

We are not under the law, or any performance system, and so we do not recruit the flesh to perform. We are under the reign of grace, as Romans 5:21 says, and grace, just as sin, has a power and dominion to it.

