

55. The Book of Romans 6:1

Paul's Epistle to the Romans
A message by Pastor Phil Ballmaier
(6-5-24)

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Tonight, we come to a new section in our study in the Book of Romans—Chapters 6-8.

- **Romans 1-5** told us that as unbelievers we were '*dead in sin*', or in other words—sin killed us all.
- **Romans 6-8** is going to tell us that as believers we are '*dead to sin*'—that sin no longer has authority over us.
- **Chapters 3-5** tell us we are free from the penalty of sin.
- **Chapters 6-8** tell us we are free from the power of sin.

In the last section the theme was **Justification**—as a Christian this refers to my position before God—the emphasis here is on being.

In this next section the theme is **Sanctification**—this refers to my practice for God—the emphasis here is on doing.

Understand that the order is *vitaly* important.

In the Christian life you have to first **be** what God wants you to be before you can **do** what God wants you to do—position always precedes practice.

In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew Chapters 5-7) Jesus gives us many practical commands and exhortations on living the Christian life—but He prefaces them with the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12). These describe what a Christian **is**, which is why we say (with tongue in cheek)—that they're called 'BE-attitudes' not 'DO-attitudes.'

Some have it backwards; they think *doing* precedes *being*—but that's a works/righteousness theology that Paul has just spent 2 ½ chapters trying to correct.

So first comes justification (salvation) and then comes sanctification.

Justification happens the moment you trusted in Jesus—Sanctification happens every moment after. (2 Corinthians 3:18)

The goal of *justification* is sanctification on earth—and ultimately, glorification in heaven. I'll say this—if you truly are justified you *will be glorified* (Romans 8:29-39)—but you will not necessarily be sanctified.

Sanctification involves surrender and obedience—it involves dying to self, crucifying my flesh and following after Jesus every day.

All Christians are *saved* by grace, but unfortunately not all Christians *grow* in grace—in other words, some Christians after having been saved out of ‘*Egypt*’ (the world) won’t make it into the ‘*promised land*’ (life of the Spirit)—but instead will die in the ‘*wilderness*’ (carnality and unbelief).

I hope that doesn’t happen to anyone here—the fact that you *are* here is a good start! Each of the chapters in this new section in Romans—is built around a key word:

- The key word in chapter 6 is ***Sin***—it appears 17 times.
- In Chapter 7 the key word is ***Law***—it appears 19 times.
- In Chapter 8 (a tremendously uplifting chapter), the key word is ***Spirit***—used 21 times—more than any other chapter in the Bible.

Someone has said that in those 3-key words there is a ‘Fort Knox’ of spiritual truth that will absolutely transform your walk with the Lord!

Greek scholar Kenneth Wuest sees in these three chapters the presentation of the Spirit-filled life—

- In Chapter 6 we have the *mechanics* of the Spirit-filled life.
- In Chapter 8 we have the *dynamics* of the Spirit-filled life.
- In Chapter 7 we see the *monkey wrench* to the Spirit-filled life which is legalism or self-dependence.

So, in Romans 6-8 Paul will be dealing with the subject of *sanctification*—or to put it in more practical terms—this section deals with victorious living in Christ.

Galatians 5:16–17, 25 (NKJV)

¹⁶ I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish...²⁵ If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

So, Paul admonishes us to walk in the Spirit but just what does that mean—I believe that Romans 6-8 is a commentary explaining how to do that very thing!

Look, I know I have been released from the guilt of sin—that’s what justification is all about. What I need now is to know how to be released from the power of sin. It’s important for us not to become discouraged if we don’t see victory all at once—or if after having known victory in a given area of our lives we lose ground and slide backwards.

We will find that we experience more and more victory from day to day as we understand and apply more and more the truths that God’s Word teaches on this subject. It’s also important to realize as the Bible teaches that ‘*in me*’ (in my flesh) there dwells ‘no good thing’—we don’t have the power to change for the better.

So, understand that we’re not talking about turning over a new leaf, or making some kind of a New Year’s resolution to give up our bad habits to try and be better people.

The Bible is not a glorified “*self-help*” book—sanctification doesn’t require *determination* it requires transformation—

Romans 12:2 (NKJV)

² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Let me take a few minutes to introduce you to the subject of sanctification that Paul is going to be focusing on in Romans 6-8.

One of the most frustrating and disheartening things that any pastor has to deal with, is pouring your heart into study week after week, month after month to teach the Word of God accurately and faithfully to God's people—only to have them rely on their *gut instincts* and *emotions (feelings)* when it comes to making important and potentially life impacting decisions.

Proverbs 3:5–6 (NKJV)

⁵ Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

- **A big part of the problem is how Christians in America today have come to view God and their relationship to God.**

George Barna—

“Consider how we have repositioned spirituality. Faith used to revolve around God and His ordinances and principles. The faith that arrests our attention these days is that which revolves around us. We have demystified God, befriended Jesus, abandoned the Holy Spirit, and forgiven and even warmed up to Satan. Few Americans possess a sense of awe, fear, or trembling related to God [anymore].”

Another commentator—

“To increasing millions of Americans, God (if they even believe in a supra-human deity)—exists for the pleasure of humankind. He resides in the heavenly realm solely for our utility and benefit. Although we are too clever to voice it, we live by the notion that true power is accessed not by looking upward but by turning inward. The focus of our faith has shifted from the transcendent to the mundane.”

- **Another serious part of the problem is the alarming number of professing Christians in the Church today who are biblically illiterate.**

The repetition of the word “**know**” in Romans 6:2, 6, and 9 indicates that Paul wanted us to understand a basic truth—Christian living depends on Christian learning; and duty is always founded on doctrine.

If Satan can keep a Christian *ignorant*, he can keep them *impotent*—how's he doing?

Os Guinness says,

“We have left out substance, it is no longer the holies of holies—but vanities of vanities... We worship the god of the gut, no deeper than our last experience...”

Whatever happened to loving God with all our *mind*?

George Barna—

“Although most Americans believe they already know the fundamental truths of the Scriptures, our research has discovered that fewer than 10 percent of American Christians actually possess a biblical worldview—a perceptual filter through which they see life and its opportunities. Lacking that filter, most Christians make important decisions on the basis of instinct, emotion, assumptions, past experience, external pressure, or chance.”

In a George Gallup survey, he found that only 42% of Christians know that Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount—and most of them know that because of television!

Those who could identify the writers of the Gospels or name the Ten Commandments were fewer.

He concluded that—*“Evangelicals demonstrate a startling biblical illiteracy.”* (This in turn gets passed along to the children.)

George Barna did a study among 10,000 evangelical youth—the results show the alarming rate of declining values among churchgoing evangelical teens.

- By eighteen years of age, 43% had experienced sexual intercourse.
- 24% considered premarital sex as acceptable.
- 35% found other sexual activity as normal.
- 55% could not state that premarital intercourse was wrong.

Discipleship author and pastor Bill Hull said—

“The transfer of values and priorities from parents to children is weak because the majority of parents in evangelical churches have an accommodated value system. They are not committed as a whole, therefore the children reflect the same slippage of commitment.”

➤ *Is the problem a lack of good, solid biblical teaching?*

In some cases—but for the most part we live at a time when we have more exposure and access to good Bible teaching than at any other time in the history of the Church.

The problem isn’t a lack of *information*—the real problem is a lack of *application*.

George Barna—

“In essence, while millions of Americans possess beliefs that qualify them as Christian, assert that the Bible contains practical lessons and principles for life, and claim that they believe God wants to bless their efforts—they ignore their spiritual resources when the rubber meets the road.

In short, the spirituality of Americans is Christian in name only. We desire experience more than knowledge. We prefer choices to absolutes. We embrace preferences rather than truths. We seek comfort rather than growth. Faith must come on our terms, or we reject it. We have enthroned ourselves as the final arbiter of righteousness, the ultimate rulers of our own experience and destiny. We are the Pharisees of the new millennium.”

I saw a survey entitled, *“Examples of the similarity of behavior between Christians and non-Christians”*—here’s a little of what it had to say:

1. *Practically the same percentage of Christians watch secular music videos*
2. *The same percentage of Christians get divorced as non-Christians*
3. *The same percentage of both play the lottery*
4. *The same percentage are in counseling*
5. *The same percentage sued someone last year*
6. *The same percentage of Christians and Non-Christians are on prescription medication for depression*
7. *9% of Christians as compared to 16% of non-Christians say they watch X-Rated movies. And a much higher percentage of Christians than that go to R-Rated movies.*

Now I want to be careful here, because it's easy when we talk about the subject of sanctification and holiness to begin to develop lists of things that Christians can't do if they really want to be Christians.

Many groups who define holiness in terms of long lists of 'dos' and 'don'ts' have done a lot more harm than good in helping Christians walk with God and be sanctified. Yet, the fact of the matter still remains that—the dynamic of the Church has always been in its *separateness* from the world—which in fact is what sanctification is all about (the word sanctification means *"to be separate"*).

It's because Christians are not taking sanctification and personal holiness seriously that our witness in the world is so weak.

George Barna—

"Americans today are more devoted to seeking spiritual enlightenment than at any previous time during the twentieth century. Yet, at this moment of optimum opportunity, Christianity is having less impact on people's perspectives and behaviors than ever. Why is that? Because a growing majority of people have dismissed the Christian faith as weak, outdated, and irrelevant."

One pastor added this observation—

"Interestingly, the stumbling block for the Church is not its theology but its failure to apply what it believes in compelling ways. The downfall of the Church has not been the content of its message but its failure to practice those truths. Christians have been their own worst enemies when it comes to showing the world what authentic, biblical Christianity looks like—and why it represents a viable alternative to materialism, existentialism, mysticism, and the other doctrines of popular culture. Those who have turned to Christianity and churches seeking truth and meaning have left empty-handed, confused by the apparent inability of Christians themselves to implement the principles they profess."

Matthew 5:13–16 (NKJV)

¹³ "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. ¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all *who are* in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Now I believe that most of you really want to let your light shine, you really do want to live for the Lord in a way that really honors and glorifies Him—but like Jesus said to Peter, *“the Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”* (Matthew 26:41)

Or as Paul said in Romans 7—*“The things I want to do I don’t always do and the things I don’t want to do I find myself doing—O wretched man that I am!”*

To say it one more time—I know I have been released from the guilt of sin (that’s what justification is all about)—what I need now is to know how to be released from the power of sin.

Paul wants to help us—so he builds this chapter around 4 key words → ***Know, Reckon, Present and Obey.***

So, we have arrived at one of the most powerful passages ever penned by the Apostle Paul.

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower—please reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Want to know more? Click [here](#).

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