

## The Life-Changing Truth of Romans 6

In the spiritual journey of my life, finding the truths revealed in Romans chapter six was life-changing. In this great chapter we find the secret to continuing strong in our Christian experience. Allow me to share these great truths with you today.

### **1. Discovery**

The Bible says, *“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin”* (Romans 6: 6,7). The discovery of which we speak is the knowledge that the old man has been crucified with Christ. This is what theologians call positional truth. In other words, when a person becomes a born again believer, he is placed into the Body of Christ. This is symbolized by baptism: *“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?”*

*Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life”* (Romans 6:3,4). In other words, when Christ died, the reality of His vicarious, substitutionary death was so real and so thorough that His death was my death, His resurrection was my resurrection. The biblical explanation is found in Galatians 2:20, which tells us, *“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”*

When you see an elephant in captivity, you will no doubt see a massive chain around one of his legs which extends to what seems to be a fragile post barely piercing the earth. You know the elephant has the power and strength to pull that stake out of the ground and cause all kind of havoc. What keeps the elephant confined? Why does the elephant come to the end of his chain and simply stop? The reason is disclosed by the trainers. When the elephant is a baby, he is chained to a massive railroad spike and he tries to walk free, but he does not have the power in his small body. He tries and tries for approximately three weeks then he gives up. Now his greatest asset (his memory) becomes his greatest liability. The elephant becomes convinced that once he stretches the chain to its maximum length, he cannot take another step. Even when he becomes a massive bull elephant with more strength than we can imagine, he still stays confined to his chain because he is sincerely convinced that he cannot be free; therefore, he never makes the effort to take one step beyond his outstretched chain.

The world, the flesh and Satan are dedicated to convincing you that you cannot be free of the pull of sin. This is a lie. Jesus said, *“If the Son therefore*

*shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed” (John 8:36). “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (II Corinthians 5:17). What a great discovery! The death of our Lord simultaneously put to death my old man and the power that took Christ from the dead is the very same power that empowers us to live a wholly consecrated life for Him. God wants us to know “...what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 1:19,20).*

## **2. Declaration**

This chapter continues by telling us, *“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord”* (Romans 6:11). The word “reckon” is an accountant’s word. The Lord is saying, compute this, do the math, revolve it in your mind until it adds up. We accept what God has said about us and in faith declare the same thing.

When our family was young, our church was in its embryonic state and we were financially struggling. A trip to McDonald’s was a treat that my wife, our kids and I really enjoyed. That was our luxury night out! One afternoon, Barbara came to me and asked if I would like to take the kids to McDonald’s. I agreed with enthusiasm. I was balancing the checkbook and replied, “Yes, I really want us to go, but first I need to balance this checkbook, pay the bills then go to the bank and get some cash.” I struck the balance, paid a couple of bills, but I realized at that point I was out of money in the bank to pay my remaining bills. So I told Barbara I was sorry, but not only do we not have enough money to get cash from the bank, but I cannot pay all of our bills yet. Therefore, we stayed home and ate oatmeal. The next day we had bologna and crackers. On the following day I had to go downtown to make a visit at the hospital. I had one dollar in my pocket. For those of you born after 1975, you may not be aware of this, but you could get enough gas on one dollar to get downtown to Houston and back. I put my one dollar’s worth of gas in the car and when I went inside to pay the attendant. As I pulled out my final dollar, stuck to the dollar was a smaller rectangular piece of paper -- a receipt of deposit to the bank. I was stunned. I opened my checkbook to see if I had added it to my balance. I had not. I made a detour and went home, pulled out my bank statement and checked the place on the statement that asks, “add all deposits since the date of this statement.” I had not added it! Immediately I added this overlooked amount of \$362.72. I paid off our remaining bills and joyously went to my wife and exclaimed, “Barbara, get the kids ready; forget about McDonald’s, we’re going to Luby’s tonight!” We ate like kings that night at the traditional Texas cafeteria. We had the money all along, but we were not acting on it because I did not believe it was in our bank account. (By the way, I did not ignore our church member, I made the hospital visit later).

Too many times we don’t live for Jesus in separation from this world because we believe we do not have the power. We have the potential and power,

but we must “reckon” this to be so. It is in our spiritual bank. We don’t operate on the truth all the time, we operate on what we believe is the truth.

### **3. Decision**

For emphasis sake, I want to pinpoint certain phrases from two verses: Romans 6:13: *“Neither yield ye your members...but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead...”* Romans 6:16: *“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?”*

Yielding is the decision to put the discovery and declaration into action. All of this power will go to waste if we do not, by faith, act on it. Yielding is not run by feelings. Yielding is the decision to do right in the face of all circumstances. You don’t ease into it; it is the instantaneous response of the obedient heart. This leads us to our last point.

### **4. Dedication**

Romans 6:17: *“But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.”* The key phrase is, “obeyed from the heart.” Doing right continually is contingent upon one thing - loving the Lord our God with all our heart. We are not dedicated to a principle, a dogma or a denomination, but to the person of Christ! Peter denied the Lord and was as barren in his heart as his net on the morning our resurrected Lord called saying, *“...Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No”* (John 21:5). Notice how Jesus brought Peter back. He ask three simple, understandable questions: *“...lovest thou me more than these?...lovest thou me?...lovest thou me?”* (John 21: 15, 16, 17). Relationship with Jesus and total dedication to Him is the starting and continuing requirement for God’s work.

-Pastor Pope-