

PART 12 – PUT IT IN THE BOAT

PART 1 – WHAT TO CHANGE+

This morning I want to look at [Romans 6:11](#) as our next verse to study relative to Embracing Change.

Ro 6:11 (NKJV) Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This is really a major turning point in Romans because it is the FIRST word of exhortation that Paul has spoken in Romans. It is the first verb in 5 ½ chapters that is in the imperative mood. Most everything else has been in the indicative mood, or the mood of fact, which is the primary mood used for teaching doctrine. So, up to [Romans 6:11](#), every chapter has been doctrinal in nature. From a hermeneutical perspective, **doctrine always precedes exhortation**. Why? It is because God provides us with a doctrinal foundation for what He is asking us to do. He never asks us to do something without giving a biblical reason for why He is asking us to do it. He never just barks out commands.

One of the reasons that I have chosen this verse is because of the word “**reckon**”. I want you think of the word “**reckon**” or “**consider**” as a “**MIND WORD**”, as a thinking word. It is a verb that requires the believer to give what I want to call “*focused thought*” to something, to give their “*full attention*” to what is being said. If you had a child that was experiencing a severe life or death medical condition and you were talking to their doctor, you would give them your full attention. Every thought that you had would be focused on what that doctor was saying. That is the idea with the word “**reckon**”.

You cannot ignore STRATEGIC words in Scripture, and “reckon” is a strategic word.

Most of the translations use the word “**consider**”. The Greek word is “*logizomai*” and it means to put together with one’s mind, to reason, to calculate.¹ It is a present tense verb in the imperative mood and the middle voice. The use of the present tense means that the idea of reckoning and considering is a process that must always be a part of a believer’s life. You could translate it as “**reckon and keep on reckoning**” or “**think and keep on thinking**”. I want to say this negatively, then positively.

The less you embrace the Word of God, the less you will believe it and act on it.

The more you truly embrace the Word of God, the more that you will believe it and act on it.

You cannot let yourself become mindless, thoughtless, and negligent to the truth and principles of God’s Word. That would be considered as being spiritually reckless. **You must reason, reckon, consider, and think about what God’s Word is saying to you.** You cannot bypass this part of the Christian life. This is a major part of loving God with “**all of your mind**” that is driving this series.

The middle voice is why the word “**yourselves**” is used in the translation – “**reckon yourselves**”. The middle voice is used to **emphasize** the importance of what God says that you as a believer have to do, what you have to consider and think about. It means that we are to take what God commands us to do, and then earnestly think about it and how we can incorporate His commands, principles, or particular truths into our life. There are certain **core truths** that every Christian should constantly be reminding themselves of, and the idea of reckoning themselves to be “**dead indeed to sin and alive to God in**

¹ Zodhiates, *logizomai*, ep.

Christ Jesus” is one of those truths. You want this to become a major controlling paradigm in your life. God wants you to embrace this truth. Why? It is simple.

We become what we repeatedly do.

Godliness and excellence in the spiritual life is not an act, but a habit.² For instance, if you are always unkind to people, then you will become an unkind person. You cannot prevent this from happening. You reap what you sow. On the other hand, if you are repeatedly kind to people, even those who may really irritate you, then you will become a kind person. Once again, this is the spiritual law that you reap what you sow. You cannot change this spiritual law. It is really difficult for most people to break bad habits and ungodly tendencies and propensities. Why? It is because the more you practice a bad habit, the more “*entrenched*” it becomes in your life. The biblical word that Paul uses in [2 Corinthians 10:4](#) to describe this is “**strongholds**”. Most **UNGODLY** strongholds by their very nature have some kind of demonic influence, or at least a very fleshly influence. It could be anything – impatience, anger, unforgiveness, immorality. None of that is from God, and if you are a committed follower of Christ, then you must “**consider**” these things in your life. You must think, you must look at your life and evaluate what is wrong in it and how it can be fixed. That is what this entire series is actually wanting to achieve.

Many Christians struggle to even read the Word, and rarely, if ever, even think about what God is actually asking them to do. Life just seems to get in the way – jobs, children, finances, recreation, goals, etc. There are many believers who mentally assent to the truth of God’s Word, but they have no idea whatsoever as to what it means to incorporate and appropriate those truths into their life. Here is a very important reality that all of us must embrace.

God holds each of us accountable to study His Word, to meditate on His Word, to obey His Word, and to make godly choices because of His Word.

So, it does not matter what you may intellectually know about the Word because until it is appropriated into your life by faith, it is just laying there dormant in your life. It is like it is just asleep or even dead in your life, and at that point, it has no value to you whatsoever and is not making any kind of impact on you or on others. This is why the Bible is filled with exhortations, with imperative mood commands. It is to awaken us out of our spiritual deadness. **In the Scriptures, there is nothing small or insignificant about a present tense verb in the imperative mood.** Why? It is because these are the verbs that define whether you are serious about your Christian life or not. If you can just read over a verb in the present tense and imperative mood and ignore it and its implications for your Christian life, it is very doubtful that you will ever grow spiritually because you will always be ignoring and rejecting what God has graciously implored and entreated you to do.

So, God is simply saying in [Romans 6:11](#) that He wants us to think in such a way that we are **ALWAYS INCLINED** to choose what is godly for our lives rather than choosing to do something that ungodly or inappropriate. It is critical to embrace these kinds of directives in our life if we are ever going to really see God work in us and through us. Paul gives the reason why we should always be thinking about what God wants us to do in [Romans 6:14](#). It is because He does not want sin to have dominion over us.

² Covey, 54.

Ro 6:14 (NKJV) **For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.**

Sin itself is a spiritual entity that is **always** operating against you as a believer, and trust me, but sin is not dead. **This is the change that you MUST embrace.** You must “reckon”, “consider”, and “acknowledge” what God says about you. You choose to believe God. He says that **YOU ARE** “**dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord**” (v11). This has to be your continual response to sin. It is like you literally think and reckon about what sin is doing to hurt your life, your family, your friendships, your future, and you say this to yourself from these verses. V11 – “*I am dead to sin and I am alive to God and what He wants me to do.*” V12 – “*I will not let sin reign in my body.*” V13 – “*I will not present myself to sin, but I will present myself to God.*” V14 – “*I will not let sin have dominion over my life.*” I keep saying this over and over, but if you will just think right, then you will get the right results, so I want to always be reminding myself of what God says is true.

God is always imploring us in His Word to THINK godly, to believe exactly what He says is spiritually true about us.

Believers who do not choose to develop and incorporate this kind of critical spiritual habit into their life will always be finding themselves struggling with sin, struggling with obedience, struggling with being a fully devoted follower of Christ. That is what this entire section of Romans is about – sanctification, growing in our Christian life, becoming more like Christ, learning to believe God.

Now, look at [Romans 6:13](#). This is so super important, but you cannot see it in English.

Ro 6:13 (NKJV) **And do not present your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God.**

The first verb “do not present” is in the imperative mood, present tense. However, the second word “present” changes to the imperative mood, aorist tense. The other verbs in this passage from v11-14 are in the imperative mood, present tense. This is a very significant tense change from the present to the aorist (past tense) because it signifies several things. Listen carefully. In this context, the aorist tense signifies a wholehearted, total commitment of yourself “to God” that took place in the past. It could be translated as “**but once and for all present yourselves to God...**” This change in the verb tense represents a very decisive moment in a believer’s life. You could call it a “critical moment” or a “life changing moment” in their life. If it were in the present tense like the other verbs, then it would signify a daily, ongoing process. However, this particular command to “present yourselves to God” is **NOT** intended to be an ongoing process because of the aorist tense. The first phrase “do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin” IS a continual effort and process. Every day we have to work at what that means and implies for our life – every day.

However, the idea to “present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead” is something that should happen just once. Think of it as a specific time in your life when you deliberately commit your life to God, when you intentionally make a decisive choice to follow Christ no matter what it costs. This verb represents a very decisive and pivotal moment in every believer’s life. This is a moment when you literally present your life to God. It is like saying “*Lord, I am completely yours. Do with me as you*

please” and you truly mean it. This is not something that you are always repeating. When Brenda and I were married, I made a vow to her that I would love her with all of my heart for the rest of our lives. It was a vow that I took seriously then, a vow that I take seriously now, and by the grace of God a vow that I will never break. It was a vow that I made to someone that I loved with all of my heart, but I do not keep repeating my vows to her. However, I will love her with all of my heart until the day that I leave this earth because of those vows.

Personally, I did this when I got saved. I knew at that moment that God had entered my life and that He wanted me to forever live for Him. I have never looked back, I have never one time yearned for my old life. As a new creation in Christ, the Holy Spirit actually planted this into my heart, into my mind, and I embraced it. I intuitively knew that I was to be “**dead to sin and alive to God**”. I knew that God hated sin and loved righteousness. At the moment of salvation, “**the old things passed away and all things became new**”. The Holy Spirit placed that into my life and I embraced it. Listen carefully.

God’s truth creates a personal responsibility to obey it.

Every truth of Scripture forces you as a believer to choose what you are going to do with it. You simply cannot take the truth of God’s Word lightly. If God says that something is wrong, then it is wrong. There is no debate about that reality. Obviously, the world will argue passionately and vehemently against what God says, but not a genuine believer. They will always embrace the truth. They want to always be incorporating God’s truth into their lives, so here is what I want you to appreciate.

The deeper your commitment to take God’s Word seriously, the more it will deepen your faith and strengthen your life.

Many Christians are very weak in their spiritual life and the ultimate reason why is because they take God’s Word lightly. It is almost like they think that they can take it or leave it, but that option simply does not exist in God’s world. The believer who thinks that God’s Word is like a shopping list where they can choose what they want to obey or disobey is a very slippery slope that actually invites God’s discipline into their life. In many cases, it may simply reveal that someone is not really saved. I fully understand that God is longsuffering, patient, merciful, and forgiving, and I am deeply grateful for that beyond words. However, if someone can knowingly and habitually live in ongoing sin and continually practice sin as a habit of their life, then Scripture is very clear that they are not actually saved. [1 John 3:9](#) explains it this way,

1Jn 3:9 (NKJV) Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

The phrase “**does not sin**” is in the present tense and means does not continue to live in sin, does not continue to practice sin as a way of life, as their lifestyle. It does not say that the believer never sins because every believer battles with sin. The actual Greek text reads “**does not practice sin**” which is the actual way that the verse should be understood. There is a huge difference between **committing** a sin and practicing and knowingly **continuing** in sin. So, what Paul is clearly saying in [Romans 6:11-14](#) is that sin should never even be considered as an option, as an alternative. For the believer, habitually and knowingly living in sin is like trying to have a meaningful relationship with a corpse. Your entire perspective as a believer should be that you were **actually** and **radically** changed at the moment of

salvation. Truth, by its very nature, is life-transforming in its effect, and that is exactly why this idea of reckoning is so critical. Listen carefully. This is so important.

You cannot think of truth as being passive or inactive.

In [Hebrews 4:12](#), God says that His word is “**living and powerful**”, never passive or inactive. The Amplified Bible says that it is “**active, operative, energizing, and effective**”. It is the Greek word “*energes*” from where the English language gets the word “energy”. It has the idea of always being effectual in what it accomplishes. Let me give you three critical principles of God related to His truth.

1. The truth of God is never passive; therefore, it should never be approached passively.
2. The truth of God makes demands and creates tension in the believer’s life when not obeyed.
3. The truth of God works powerfully in your life when obeyed.

This series is about “Embracing Change”. It is about being willing to make the kind of changes in your life that God says are good and essential and right for your life. You must embrace the truth that God is not a liar, that He is not a deceiver, and that He is not playing a game of spiritual make-believe with us. What He requires of every believer is devotion and commitment to His Word. Think of it as being married. Being married to my wife requires my constant devotion and commitment to her.

The discipline of “**reckoning, considering**”, and “**thinking**” is not always easy, and is not something that the believer can achieve without effort and determination. Even though a believer is free from the dominion of sin, they are not free from the daily battle that sin creates in their life, so he has to think how to be an overcomer and not someone who is always being overcome. Just because sin has been defeated does not mean that it has been eliminated. Here is the problem every believer faces.

Much too often the believer’s personal experience seems to indicate that sin is more powerful in their life than the Word of God.

When that happens, it makes the truth seem superficial and weak – which it is not. What the Word of God declares is that the “**old man**” is dead ([Romans 6:6](#)) and that you as the “**new man**” must “**reckon**” that to be true. Until a believer actually acts on what the Word of God says, the truth will have no practical value for their life. You might know that you need to take a life preserver with you when you go boating, but if you leave it at home, what you know to be true will have no value for your life whatsoever if you have an accident. So, here is our last principle for today.

You must EMBRACE and ACT on the truth in order for it to actually impact your life.

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