

PART 13 – MY PLAN OR GOD’S PLAN

PART 1 – WHAT TO CHANGE

In my last message 2 months ago, we were looking at [Romans 6:11](#) which says,

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

We saw that the word “reckon” or “consider” is what I called a “MIND WORD”, or a word that forces you to think and to analyze. Notice once again how Paul said it. This is about as emphatic as you can make it – “YOU also, reckon yourselves”. This is something that YOU have to do. The Greek word is “*logizomai*” and it means to put together with one’s mind, to reason, to calculate, to evaluate, to figure out, to clearly determine what God is asking you to do. It is a present tense verb in the imperative mood which simply 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, and biblical truths into our life. **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 God uses to define whether we are serious about our Christian life or not serious about it. Obviously, and this is Basic Christianity 101, but it is one thing to simply read the Word, but it is quite another to incorporate that truth that we have read into our life.

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 life rather than choosing to do something that is ungodly or inappropriate. **God’s truth always creates a personal responsibility for us to obey it.** The spiritual reality is that until someone actually embraces and acts on God’s truth that they are confronted with in His Word, that truth will have no meaningful impact on their life. The truth of God will always create tension in your life when it is not obeyed, but it will work powerfully in your life when it is obeyed.

Now, the goal of this series is very simple. It is about learning **HOW** to embrace the changes that God wants us to make in our life, and one of the key parts of that process is **developing good habits** that help us to achieve the results God wants us to achieve. Think of it this way:

Good habits produce good results and bad habits produce bad results.

Think of all of the bad habits that you can have and where they will ultimately lead you. You can smoke. That does not have a good ending. You can drive recklessly. That does not have a good ending. You can always vent your anger and frustration on people. That does not have a good ending. You can treat your marriage partner and children with disrespect. That does not have a good ending. So, what does God’s Word have to say about these bad habits? Listen carefully. He declares the following as an unchangeable, non-negotiable spiritual law in [Galatians 6:7-8](#),

Gal 6:7 (NKJV) Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸ For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

None of us can change this “law”, this life principle. That is why Paul says “**Do not be deceived**”. I.e., do not be misled into living under some illusion that makes you think that you are the exception to this spiritual law. No matter who we are, we all fall under the law of sowing and reaping that we cannot

change. We always reap what we sow. Let me put [Romans 6:11](#) in a different perspective. This is the first word of exhortation in Romans – that I am to “**reckon**”, to consider that I am personally “**DEAD indeed to sin and ALIVE to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**” I am **DEAD** to something and I am **ALIVE** to something. So, let me give you four very simple principles from this verse.

PRINCIPLE 1: The life of Christ should always control my life.

I.e., **my life should always reflect His life.** Obedience is my part and the outcome is His part. I simply live the way that I know that He wants me to live. I place my life into His hands, and I do that by becoming obedient to what He asks me to do. It really is very simple. We want this to become the habit of our life, the constraining principle of how we choose to live. Now, the next principle is really super, super critical to me personally, and I want it to be the same for you.

PRINCIPLE 2: Being dead to sin and alive to God should be every believer’s identity.

This is how I want everyone I meet to see my life. This is so important to me and I want it to be just as important to you. **I do not want people to see me. I want them to see Christ in me.** When they meet me, I want them to encounter Christ and not me. I simply want to be used by God to set up that encounter. However, this is what I know. I know that life changing encounter will never happen if I am NOT dead to sin and alive to God. I can never represent God to others if sin is controlling my life. If I as a believer do not see my life this way, then in essence, I have completely missed the Christian life.

PRINCIPLE 3: Sin should never be an option in my life.

If you know that something in your life is displeasing to God, all I can say to you is “Please stop”. When confronted with sin in your life that you know violates God’s Word – anger, ugly words, being unloving, treating people with disrespect, arrogance, being unkind, whatever it may be – at that moment you want to **run, run, run** back to your identity in Christ. You want to embrace that you as a committed follower of Jesus Christ are literally “**dead indeed to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus**”. You should say to yourself,

“I do not live this way anymore because my life is supernaturally connected to Christ, and He provides me everything that I need for life and godliness.”

[2 Peter 1:3](#) says it this way,

2Pe 1:3 (NKJV) as His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,

[Philippians 4:13](#) says,

Php 4:13 (NKJV) I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

When we were born again, it is like God unzipped us and placed Himself and His life inside of us. Every time I now get in the shower, I see this place on my chest that was not there two months ago. It is where the heart surgeon “unzipped” me and in a physical way literally gave my heart a new beginning. I was on the doorstep of having a major stroke or a major heart attack, but in my mind, I now have a new heart. Something has been done to me on the inside that makes me different than I was before. My heart is different. If you as a believer do not take these promises of God seriously, then you will literally miss the Christian life. None of us can live the Christian life disconnected from the Word of God. If we do

not take the Word of God seriously, then we have nothing to help us live the way that God wants us to live. It really is very simple. If we are always giving sin the upper hand in our life, then we will never become a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ.

PRINCIPLE 4: I can never be alive to God if I am more inclined to be alive to sin.

Stated another way, **you will never live for Christ if you are always living for yourself**. God simply does not allow it to work that way. [1 John 3](#) is very clear that to always be willingly and knowingly living in sin and never letting God deal with those areas of our life casts an enormous shadow over the authenticity of a person's confession of Christ.

Now, I want to inject into this message two other areas of encouragement that I believe are super critical for anyone who really sees themselves as a committed follower of Christ. The first is so simple.

GOD IS ABLE

Whatever you may be struggling with in your life, **GOD IS ABLE** to give you the grace and the power that you need to be all that He wants you to be. Listen to [Ephesians 3:20](#),

Eph 3:20 (NKJV) Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

If I did not believe this, then I would have no hope if I thought for one moment that everything depended on me. In fact, the more I grow in Christ, the more I am convinced that nothing depends on me. If I decided tomorrow to forsake everything I know about God and Christ and the Word of God, it would not affect God's work in any way. It would surely affect me, but not Him. His purposes cannot be thwarted by my sin. He will still accomplish whatever He has chosen to accomplish – either with me or without me. Please listen to these other verses that I want to read to you about how God is able. Just listen. Just let God speak to you and build you up in your personal faith through His truth.

Ac 20:32 (NKJV) So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

1Co 10:13 (NKJV) No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

2Co 9:8 (NKJV) And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may have an abundance for every good work.

Eph 6:13 (NKJV) Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Heb 7:25 (NKJV) Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

How could I ever complain about not being able to live how God wants me to live after I read verses like this. I cannot. I have to reckon that I am dead to sin and alive to God and that when I think that sin is more powerful in my life than I can deal with, that I have to literally fall on the promises of God that

His truth in me is greater than the lies that the enemy and the world and the culture wants me to believe. The second area is just as simple as God is able. Here it is.

God’s plan for my life is ALWAYS much better than my plan for my life.

There comes a point in our life where we MUST decide Who or what is going to control our life, but we only have two options, so please listen carefully.

OPTION 1: I will let God control my life.

OPTION 2: I will let everything else control my life.

Those are our only two options – God or everything else. God has built you a certain way. He has zipped you open, placed His Spirit within you, given you His Word and empowered you by His grace to choose Option 1. **You have been supernaturally empowered and endowed by God to choose Option 1.** When something difficult happens, **STOP, RECKON (THINK) AND CHOOSE GOD.** Choose self-control, choose obedience, choose forgiveness, choose kindness, choose mercy, choose grace. Choose God. God has designed you and equipped you to do the right thing, so please choose to do the right thing. When someone challenges your life in a negative, condescending way, just choose to be alive to God and dead to reacting in a negative way. Here is the paradigm shift, the change that you want to embrace. You want to always be reminding yourself and saying to yourself the following:

“I will not be driven by my feelings or my circumstances, but by my identity in Christ. I am dead to sin and alive to God. That is my identity. That is who and what I am. I am a follower of Christ.”

Always remember that God is never as concerned with WHAT happens to you as much as He is with HOW you respond to what happens to you, so make the right choice.

Develop this habit in your life. As a believer living in a fallen world, you will always face difficulties and adversities. However, you must understand what adversity does to you. Adversity always **REVEALS** your character and it always **REFINES** your character. When difficult people and difficult moments confront you, you have two options, and both options have very specific consequences.

OPTION 1: When you choose to react in an ungodly and negative way, your influence is greatly diminished and your impact on other people is quickly lost.

OPTION 2: When you choose to respond in a godly and redemptive way, your influence is greatly enlarged and the impact of your life on other people is greatly increased.¹

You must always have a **mindset** that is telling you to choose to do what you know God wants you to do. Why? Why? It is simply because God’s plan is always, always better for your life than your plan.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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¹ Covey, 90-91.