

**Let Not Sin Reign
Romans 6:11-14**

Intro

On the morning of December 7, 1941 a US Naval base in idyllic Hawaii experienced a surprise and brutal attack

On that fateful Sunday morning, the naval base at Pearl Harbor was overwhelmed by 353 Imperial Japanese aircraft and their attack was devastating:

188 US aircraft destroyed
Many Navy battleships severely damaged
2,403 Americans killed - 1,178 wounded

They were completely surprised and suffered terrible loss in this battle that would ultimately lead the United States into WW2

The soldiers at Pearl Harbor were surprised, they were unprepared, they were but sadly, this appears in some ways to have been a preventable tragedy

An article that came out 7 years after the bombing of Pearl Harbor - "Pearl Harbor in Retrospect" assessed what exactly happened leading up to that December day. The article was written by a former head of the Army's Military Intelligence Division named Sherman Miles, and as he examined the events of that terrible day, Mr. Miles concluded several things. Though the base was well fortified and the heads of the War department had warned of the possibility of Japanese attack:

- Throughout the government the warning signs were either not heeded or the communications fumbled
- They underestimated Japanese military power
- We had a misplaced confidence that the Japanese would, as one Admiral put it, they would never attack Pearl Harbor by air

...a country loath to admit the danger it faced...not yet geared to war. (Sherman Miles)

In our study of Romans, God has been revealing to us the danger we face - the oppressive reality of sin and having come under the reign of grace - dead to sin, alive to God in Christ - power and penalty broken - newness of life - now we find ourselves in a war - a war with sin

Whereas before we didn't war - we lived in it - new mentality - new psychology - affections - new Master

We must pay attention to the warnings of Scripture about the danger of sin so that we don't find ourselves surprised...so that we don't find ourselves unprepared, we must also pay attention to the grace of God for he has supplied all that we need to fight this war. Turn to text and hear from God warning about sin and also the way to fight against sin

READ TEXT

In chapters 1-5 we learned of the glory of Justification - right standing before God through faith in Christ and his cross - Justification always leads to sanctification - growing in godliness - a war against sin that we will fight till the day we die or Christ returns.

Graciously provides us instruction about we fight this war and provides the provision we need in the fight

4 steps towards sanctification 1. Keep the Gospel in View 2. Put off Sin 3. Put on Righteousness 4. Live in the Good of Grace

I. Keep The Gospel In View

- A. What precedes v. 11 is rich and weighty gospel theology
 - 1. We stand right before God - justified - in Christ - through faith alone
 - a) For the Christian we have been united to Christ as the Holy Spirit raises up our souls out of death to see the unparalleled, irresistible beauty of Christ and causes us to feel our absolute need for him - all through the proclamation of the Gospel - good news of the risen Christ of the cross
 - (1) God calls us through the gospel and says LIVE and in the power of the Spirit we rise up out of death and stand before him accounted as righteous
- B. 6:1-10, Paul begins to describe what God accomplishes in us through the gospel - great and weighty supernatural realities in the realm of the soul
 - 1. In taking hold of Christ with the empty hands of faith we are not just looking out across the panoply of religious traditions and choosing the one we prefer - as we cast ourselves on Christ for the forgiveness of our sins through his substitutionary death and glorious resurrection - we are 6:5 "united with him" we are joined to him.
 - 2. specifically in his death to sin - where the power and penalty of sin was broken
 - 3. united to him in a resurrection like his - we live IN him - we live WITH him - we live THROUGH HIM and now we walk in newness of life 6:4
 - a) And so - as we trust Christ - our certain and future bodily resurrection secured in the empty tomb - reaches back into this moment and we have the power that raised Christ from the dead at work in us
 - (1) All of that necessarily means we have a new relationship with sin - we were enslaved to sin 6:6 - we have been set free - we were dominated by death - sin's constant companion - v. 9 but we now live to God in Christ
 - (a) Objectively true - we can't adjust or diminish - for the Christian this is gloriously true on our best days and our worst days

- C. v. 11 following these objective theological realities - he says SO - therefore - you must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God - **FIRST STEP IN OUR WAR AGAINST SIN**
 - 1. We **MUST** - not optional - we **MUST** bring down what is true objectively into how we live experientially
 - 2. Paul unfolds the reality and effect of the gospel to his readers so that we know how to think about who we are - our new identity in Christ
 - a) Theology that must pass through the intellect and into the heart - the mind engaged - v. 3 know, v. 6 know, v. 8 believe, v. 11 consider, reckon, count as true
 - (1) Take that which is true objectively down into your psyche and emotional care and live out of it to the glory of God - that is the intended result of grace

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. (1 Peter 2:24)

D. Illustration

- 1. In chapter 6 we understand sin not just wrong things we do but as a power, an enslaver - a power opposed to God's will that wants to make us obey v. 12
- 2. God has supplied all necessary provisions for us to make war against the power of sin - it begins by taking the reality and effect of the gospel into the whole of how we think about our lives
 - a) Daily - this is a discipline we must practice - not automatic else he would have no need to give the command - one-time and ongoing
 - b) Muscle to be exercised and strengthened - a reflex to be developed - each day upon rising turning toward God and thanking him for the gospel - reminding ourselves each day that we have been set free from the power and penalty of sin and have received the Spirit of God to make war against sin
- 3. This is the first step but not the only step

Illustration: Counseling a man who is just trying to believe his justification more - teaching in recent years that essentially that is how we grow in godliness by believing our justification more - **KEEP IN VIEW** and make war

- 4. It undergirds and informs all of our lives and our relationship with sin but not the whole of it - **KEEP THE GOSPEL IN VIEW**

II. Put off Sin

- A. V. 12 you are no longer enslaved therefore - let not sin reign within you - don't let sin get it's tyrannical claws back into you again - don't let sin into your life in such a way that you begin to obey your bodies passions

- 1. Sin attacks at the level of our bodily passions - eyes, sex organs, stomach

[14] But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. [15] Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. (James 1:14-15)

- B. How will we fight against the dominion of sin - step 1 keep the gospel in view step 2 put off sin

- C. V. 13 - do not present your members to sin as instruments of unrighteousness - members = parts of our bodies - refuse to allow temptation to draw you into using your body to sin
 - 1. Includes all we are - mind - our hearts - passions - emotional core - don't present your body, your affections, your intellect to unrighteousness - to that which is not right - not godly - PUT IT OFF - Do not allow it

Illustration: Don't eyes look at porn - don't let feet lead you into foolishness - don't let coveting reign in your heart - don't let your mouth snarl in bitterness - PUT IT OFF - DON'T PRESENT YOURSELF TO IT

- D. This is the negative aspect of our war against sin - temptation comes and armed with gospel truth we rise up and declare NO I will not present myself to sin - put it off - imperfectly, always needing the grace of God, failing but forgiving but moving forward by the grace of God. Put it off - put it to death

[5] Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. [6] On account of these the wrath of God is coming. (Colossians 3:5-6)

- E. Application
 - 1. Are you putting off the sin that is waging war against your soul? Is there an area of life where you are regularly presenting yourself to sin
 - 2. If one saw the way you treat others, your entertainment choices, the places you go for comfort, the things you consume for relief, would they discern that you are seeking to put off sin or are you letting yourself be drawn into sin - presenting yourself to sin - placing yourself in the way of sin?

The Christian no longer has sin as the dominant principle in his life. Certainly the old sin-nature is still there, and still wants to capture us and rule over us. However, it is a usurper, it has no right to reign in our bodies, and it can only reign if we allow it to. Paul says this is exactly what we ought not to allow it to do.

(R.C. Sproul, *The Gospel of God*, p. 114)

- 3. In Christ we have died to the penalty and power of sin though the presence still remains - our call is to rise up in the grace of God and put off sin - but there's more
 - a) Keep the Gospel in View, Put off Sin and...

III. Put on Righteousness

- A. Not just a negative aspect

Illustration: If sin is a weed to plucked out than we don't leave fallow ground in it's place where 10 more weeds can spring up - we pull the weeds and plant a garden - that barren ground will grow a verdant and fruitful harvest of righteousness.

- B. Don't do this - do this instead - don't present yourself to sin - BUT RATHER - present yourselves to God - all of yourself - as those living in the good of the gospel - brought

from death to life - aware of the fruit and effect of the gospel because we have responded to the command of v. 11

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. (Romans 12:1)

- C. Step 1 Keep the Gospel in View Step 2 Put off Sin Step 3 Put on righteousness
 - 1. Present your members - your body to God as instruments of righteousness - negative = don't present yourself to unrighteousness - positive do present yourself to God and pursue righteousness

- D. It is insufficient to simply try to avoid committing sins - proactive pursuit of righteousness

It would be a mistake to think that the main way we live our new life is simply through looking at sin and its desires and saying to ourselves: *Don't*. Our new life in Christ is about living positively and proactively — about *Do*. (Tim Keller, *Romans for You*, p. 146)

- E. This is the God-ordained pattern

Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. (Ephesians 4:28)

- F. Application
 - 1. Out of pornography yes - but into serving your family and others
 - 2. Out of selfishness - and into generous giving and self-sacrifice
 - 3. Out of criticism and anger - into encouragement
 - 4. Out of love and comfort and ease being preeminent - into the mission of Jesus
 - 5. Is there something that God's calling you to put on - is their righteousness in front of you that God is calling you to put on?

As a Christian, you are to surrender your mind, your heart, your will, your arms, your legs, your eyes, your ears, your mouth, indeed every part of the complex make-up that constitutes you as a human being. Each part is to be surrendered and yielded to God, so that your mind is committed to righteousness, your heart is committed to righteousness, your ears are committed to righteousness, your legs are committed to righteousness. We cannot yield part of ourselves to righteousness and the rest to unrighteousness. We are called to yield our entire selves as instruments of righteousness to God. That's the response of a justified person; a person who commits his whole life to God. (R.C. Sproul, *The Gospel of God*, p. 115)

- a) Protracted war against sin - having trouble making headway - maybe this is the missing piece - put off yes - put on righteousness
- b) Don't delay - make a move - renewed hunger and thirst for righteousness - great joy and satisfaction in presenting ourselves to God and pursuing his righteousness
- 6. 1. Keep the Gospel in View 2. Put off Sin 3. Put on Righteousness 4. Live in the Good of Grace

IV. Live in the Good of Grace

- A. v. 14 our text ends with a MOST HOPE-GIVING PROMISE - a promise for those who are in this war against sin - for sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace
 - 1. We obey the command to not let sin reign in our bodies - put it off and as we seek to obey God and put on righteousness because of his grace - behold a precious promise
 - a) That sin that seeks to reign over you - exert dominion over your life - it ultimately will not because of the grace of God - because we are not under Law but grace - SIN WILL NOT HAVE DOMINION - SIN WILL NOT REIGN BECAUSE GOD...BY HIS GRACE...REIGNS OVER OUR LIVES - v. 14 is not conditional it's a hopeful promise for weary Christians who are engaged in the fight - a banner over the war - we will know the victory of God's grace - live in the good of that grace even as we war against sin
- B. What does it mean we are not under law but grace
 - 1. Our relationship with God is not based on rule-keeping
 - a) We fall
 - b) We are convicted of falling short and crushed under the weight of our failure in an obedience based relationship
 - 2. Since our relationship with God is on the grounds of grace - live under grace - in the good of grace
 - a) Liberty and freedom
 - b) Heart that hears the commands of God and responds not so much a "have to" obey God but a "get to" obey the God of all grace
 - c) All that we need to obey his commands is kindly, generously, given to us by God - UNDER THE REIGN OF UNDERSERVED AND GENEROUS KINDNESS - EVEN OUR OBEDIENCE TO GOD IS ALL OF GRACE - Augustine "command what you will and give what you command"
- C. Application
 - 1. Live in the good of grace - Grace trains and upholds and cracks open our hearts - love God and do what you please
 - a) Captured by the truth of the gospel - heart rises in gratitude and affection - Come with a billion dollars if we will only do the slightest sin - Oh there is no comparison with the riches of the glory of Christ! NEVER SIN AGAIN - TASTE OF HEAVEN
 - 2. You living in the good of grace?
 - a) Anxiety and condemnation before God as we see sin in our lives instead of receiving his forgiveness and trusting him for his grace
 - b) Pride in performance - I'm doing pretty good - better than most
 - c) Amazed and grateful with a desire to please God

3. Faithful, obedient, Christian living involves exertion, can be hard, grueling, we WORK but in the ends, we understand that what enables and empowers our work is the grace of God - we “act the miracle” Piper
 - a) Can’t neglect - need each other in community - godliness is a core value of our gospel culture as we work to help others live in the good of the grace of God - reminding one another - encouraging one another
 - (1) Not CG - encourage you to step into our gospel culture - you need us - we need you in this war

Close

My prayer is that we won’t be surprised by sin, or unprepared for sin - but we would take hold of the means to war against sin. Keep the Gospel in View, Put off sin, Put on righteousness, live in the good of grace. FRESH CONSECRATION - SPIRIT BLOW

Back to Pearl Harbor

“We underestimated their war power, yes; but their fundamental failure to understand America and our potential in a long war was colossal.” (Sherman Miles)

We aren’t going to underestimate the war power of sin, I can guarantee that when sin rears its head and temptation comes, we will reveal that sin has failed to understand our potential for a long war - by the grace of God - in the power of God

He will hold us fast - won’t let our souls be lost - he will sustain us by his grace to the end when he will present us blameless before him in the day of Christ.

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