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**Talking to Yourself**  
**Romans 6:12-23**

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# Talking to Yourself

## Romans 6:12-23

### This is where we are now in Romans

- In chapter 5 we learn that the penalty of sin has been dealt with, and in chapter 6, we will learn that the power of sin has been dealt with.
- In chapters 3-5 we have talked about justification; from chapter 6 onwards, we are talking about sanctification.
- In chapter 5 we hear about our change of position; in chapter 6 we hear about our change of condition.
- If we have been justified by faith through God's grace does that mean that we should just go out and sin all the more, because we are forgiven? Should we be as bad as we can so God gets more glory?
  - Now Paul has a bunch of questions and answers to that question:

Romans 6:1a

*What shall we say then? Shall we continue to in sin that grace may abound?*

Romans 6:15

*What then? Shall we sin because we are under grace?*

Romans 7:7

*What shall we say then? Is the law sin?*

- Romans 8:31 sums it up.

Romans 8:31

*What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?*

- Each time that Paul answers a question, it generates another question and he builds around three different ideas in chapter 6.
- Paul's progression in chapter 6 is from knowing to reckoning to yielding.

- How does all this work out in our lives? He is dealing with the mind (knowing); the reckoning (will); and our yielding (heart condition).
- Evan Hopkins explains it this way, “The trouble of the believer who knows Christ as his justification is not sin as to its guilt, but sin as to its ruling power. In other words, it is not from sin as a load, or an offense, that he seeks to be freed—for he sees that God has completely acquitted him from the charge and penalty of sin—but it is from sin as a master. To know God’s way of deliverance from sin as a master he must apprehend the truth contained in the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of Romans. There we see what God has done, not with our sins—that question the Apostle dealt with in the preceding chapters—but with ourselves, the agents and slaves of sin. He has put our old man—our original self—where He put our sins, on the cross with Christ.”

#### Romans 6:6

- Hopkins continues, “The believer there sees only that Christ died for him—substitution—but that he died with Christ—identification.”
- The blood of Christ dealt with our sin, but the cross of Christ deals with our sinning.

#### Vs. 7-10

- This is the “Great Exchange.”
- You have exchanged your life of sin, rebellion, scripting, and the old life, for His life:
  - You are a new creation
  - You have new thoughts
  - You have a new future
  - You have a new positive reason for living
  - The Life of Christ lives within you
  - In other words, everything that happened to Christ has come to us
- Ex. I don’t understand all of this, but I don’t understand electricity, and yet we can turn on lights.
- The power of Christ is effective in our lives.

- If we are dead in Christ, really dead to the old life, then we have a newness of life.
- Who's your master?

Vs. 11

- As a young man in college, God spoke powerfully to me from a book, "Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret", about a man who had been struggling deeply with the weight of problems and issues in his life, "Since Christ has thus dwelt in my heart by faith, how happy I have been! I am dead and buried with Christ—and risen too! And now Christ lives in me."
- Our old man is dead and buried with Christ; this does not mean that we don't sin, but that sin's power has been broken at the cross and buried with Christ.
- Ex. The plug has been pulled on sin, like the power cord on a lamp; it's pulled unless you plug it back in.
- At the same time, we take on the resurrection of Christ and live in this resurrection power:
  - You are alive! Your spirit can come alive!
  - You can give to others with deep love.
  - You have a new identity.
- We are moving from justification to identification! You are a new identity in Christ!
- You must reject that old scripting. You have a new script writer, Jesus and the Bible.
- J. Penn Lewis said it this way: "If the difference between 'Christ dying for us,' and 'our dying with Him,' has not been recognized, acknowledged, and applied, it may safely be affirmed that the self is still the dominating factor in the life."

Vs. 12-14

- The great preacher, Dr. David Martyn Lloyd-Jones, once observed, “Have you realized that most of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself?”
- I really agree; all of us listen too much to ourselves.
- Ex. As soon as the alarm clock goes off, I’m listening to myself: “make it stop...make it stop...today is Wednesday. Oh no, I’ve got that meeting with Joe, and he’s going to hate my plan. I just know it. And that noise in the car yesterday, what was that? Shoot, I’ve got to get the car in to be looked at. How much is that going to cost? What did Heather mean yesterday at the water fountain?”
- You are faced with two choices everyday: 1) you can either listen to your thoughts and your ever shifting feelings, or 2) you can talk to yourself about the unchanging truth of who God is and what He says about you!
- We can listen to the old script: “I’m just like my dad. I’m just like what mom used to say about me. I am a loser. I’ve got to gratify my desires. I deserve a break. I need that release.”
- You can see the old movie: yourself as lustful, jealous, and envious.
- Or, you can change the script and believe God’s unchanging truth and what God says about you.
- Ex. If someone cuts you off in traffic, who shows up first? Old nature or New nature? You know who does! But then you renew your mind; you put the bazooka away, and you have to talk to yourself don’t you?
- You must make a choice: I will not blow this person up! I’m a follower of Christ.
- Ex. You get in an argument with your wife, and instead of acting, you start reacting! Then you remember: “A soft answer turns away wrath,” but I just want to strangle her. But as a non-Christian you would just continue to go at it. You are no longer a slave to sin.

- You have to start talking to yourself:
  - I am alive in my spirit
  - My body is for holy purposes from now on, because it is Christ's body
  - Sin will not have dominion over me
  - I am under God's powerful, active, alive grace!

Vs. 15-16

- The question is: are we going to build our lives on what we feel or what is real?
- We have a choice as to what or to who we will present our bodies, our minds, and our future.
- Ex. We sin because we love the sin more than we love Jesus! Face it, we love that sin more than we love Christ.
- We need a revelation of God's love. Ask the Lord to show Himself to you and give you a love and a passion greater than your sin.
- Your choices today will set in motion the rest of your life:
  - Sow a thought, Reap an action
  - Sow an action, reap a habit
  - Sow a habit, reap a character
  - Sow a character, reap a destiny
- Your thoughts really matter. You are bombarded by the world's systems and values.
- Scottish theologian Sinclair Ferguson has noted, "The evangelical orientation is inward and subjective (based entirely too much on our feelings-me). We are far better at looking inward than we are at looking outward. Instead, we need to expend our energies admiring, exploring, expositing, and extolling Jesus Christ."
- What this means is that we spend way too much time focused on ourselves and our feelings.

Vs. 17

- It means a form, like you would pour molten metal into. This form is the doctrine of the New Testament, the Bible.
- Your mind must be renewed, changed by the Scriptures.
- Jesus said:

John 17:17

*Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.*

Vs. 18-19

Romans 12:1-2

*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 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.*

- Do you desire to know God's will for your life? Be transformed in your thinking!
- Start talking to yourself about your freedom or you will become a slave!
- Who is your master today?
  - If money is your master, it is a cruel master. Have you seen all the millionaires busted for drugs or at the Betty Ford clinic?
  - If alcohol is your master, it is a cruel master
  - If anger is your master, it is a cruel master
  - If gambling is your master...
  - If lust is your master...
  - What greater master exists than the One who gave His life and blood for you?
- Tell yourself daily:
  - You have been set free from sin!

- You are a slave of righteousness!
- You can be holy!
- Ex. This is why we need the Body of Christ, small groups of people who can speak some sense into us.

Vs. 20-22

- Do you recall those days when you were a slave to sin?
- It was so plastic, so fake; we lost our minds back then.
- Ex. After walking with Christ for awhile, we start looking back with nostalgia and talk about the “good old days.” Those were not good old days!! The hangovers, the guilt, the jealousy, and all the junk.
- Sin is a cruel taskmaster: the hangovers; the guilt; the wondering if you will get caught; trying to cover your trail so no one finds out; the burned relationships.
- There is a spiraling affect that takes us from bad to worse. We would be a sad story without Jesus.
- You always reap what you sow, according to the seeds used:
  - Spiritual Law: if you sow apple seeds, you will reap apple trees
  - You never sow apple seeds and get peach trees
  - If you sow to sin, you will reap sin
  - You will never sow in the flesh and reap in the Spirit
  - If you sow to righteousness, you will reap righteousness
  - Three notes about sowing and reaping:
    - 1) You always reap in the same manner that you sow;
    - 2) You always reap later;
    - 3) You always reap more than you sowed.
- If you are sowing God’s word and prayer in life, you will reap!! But it’s going to be later. You sow in the spring, you reap in the fall.

- We have a choice when it comes to slavery: We can be slaves to sin when it is presented as freedom, or we can have freedom in Christ presented as becoming a slave!
- Ex. We must choose our master. I'm choosing Christ because there is no greater master than the One who gave His life for me.
- Satan has set his trap through TV, images and identity that appear to be so free! But they're not free! They kill our spirits and smash our hearts.
- Ferguson has said, "We think with our feelings."
- Sin always leads to death in our spirits, the loss of joy and peace.
- Talk to yourself! Tell your spirit the truth! Tell your heart the truth!
- Remember Romans 1:21

Romans 1:21

*because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.*

- Our hearts follow our thoughts.

Vs. 23

- There are always wages! There is always a payback; pay me now or pay me later.
- Usually instant gratification wages are death; usually what comes natural pays us with the death of our spirits.
- Satan and sin pays!!
- But the free gift of Jesus Christ leads to life. Eternal life can begin today.
- Have you really been born again? Has your spirit come alive? Has your mind been renewed in Christ?

- If you're a prodigal, if you're playing with sin, if a nuclear bomb goes off, this church will be packed. We can't follow the 16 oz. vials of anthrax; we can't track dirty bombs coming in through our porous borders.
- It is not a matter of "if" but "when."
- This will make our lives very uncomfortable. Are you ready? Come back to Christ.
- America is going to reap what we have sown! The only thing that stays in God's hand is our commitment to missions and our support of Israel.

Matthew 5:14

*"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden."*

- Jesus talks more about "return" than "turn." If you have backslidden, if you have turned away from Christ, turn back. God's arms are open to you!
- If you are AWOL to Christ, come back.
- We deserve the wages of sin, but there is a free gift given to us, Jesus Christ.
  - All of us deserved the wages of sin, but some of us have received the free gift.
  - The wages of sin is death.
  - The free gift of Jesus is life eternal.