

Romans: The Crown Jewel of Salvation
20 - A Biblical Strategy for Fighting Sin
Romans 6:11-13

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / Jan. 26, 2014

Paul gives us a biblical strategy for fighting sin in our lives.

I. You Have to Keep Your Mind in Gear – Speaking Truth and Spotting Lies – because the battle starts between your ears

Romans 6:11 “Likewise you also, RECKON yourselves...”

The word *reckon* is a translation of a Greek word that’s used **41x** in the New Testament—**19x** in the book of Romans alone. And it means “to take into account, to calculate, to estimate.” There’s no guess work about it.

There’s been a radical change that you won’t necessarily FEEL so you better know it and calculate this into the equation of your thinking.

He’s not saying, ‘*Try to Become* dead to sin.’ He’s saying, ‘God’s already done that for you through the death of Christ on the cross.

A. It Matters What You Think as You Head into this Battle Everyday

Hosea 4:6 “My people are destroyed for *lack of knowledge*...”

As a Christian, you can’t afford to put your mind in neutral... EVER because there’s a war; so you better get your mind in gear.

I Peter 1:13-16 “Therefore *gird up the loins of your mind*, be sober... as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance.”

You can’t afford to be a sloppy thinker or an IGNORANT Christian because ignorant Christians quickly become casualties! You better know what God says about you and what God has done FOR you! Or you won’t make it.

B. You Better Know Your True Condition and Position in this Battle – or you won’t last

There are spiritual casualties all around us.

You need proper coordinates if you’re going to be ready to engage your own flesh and the enemy, in hand to hand combat. If you don’t know WHO *you are* and WHERE *you are* – then you’re not going to fight very well.

Wars are won or lost with more than courage and swords.

- How clear are you as to WHO you are in Christ now and what your new relationship to sin is?

If there’s a FOG over that, there’ll be FEAR and FAILURE on the battle field!

You are dead to sin... but alive to God!

II. You Better Keep Your Desires in Check – because every urge you have is not a God-given urge

Romans 6:12 “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.”

Literally in the Greek it says, ‘Stop allowing sin to reign in your mortal body.’

The verb tense in the Greek indicates he's saying, 'Stop doing something you've already been doing for a long time now. It's already been set in motion. It's a habit. It's a pattern in your life, but it has to change.'

When you put your faith in the finished work of Christ – 'King Sin' was toppled and dethroned in your life but it's YOUR responsibility now to keep it from mounting the throne of your heart again, because it will if you'll let it.

Sin is a usurper that lurks around the edges of your heart and is ready to spring into action and plop down on the throne of your heart again like it belongs there – if you'll let it!

- **FOOD is not a sin**, but when rebel desires get a hold of it, the desire for food can become gluttony or bulimia or anorexia as it starts to rule us... and our mouth and stomach become instruments of unrighteousness - weapons against us.
- **The desire for DRINK** or (Thirst) is not a sin, but when rebel desires get a hold of it – it can turn into drunkenness or caffeine addiction and the thirst becomes an instrument of unrighteousness that tries to enslave us all over again.
- **The desire for SEXUAL SATISFACTION** is not a sin – it's a God-given desire that serves us well in marriage... but when rebel desires get a hold of that and twist it... it turns into selfish lust for pornography or masturbation or fornication or adultery or homosexual relations, and God's good gift then becomes an instrument of unrighteousness in your life.

Satan wants to bully and bluff his way back onto the throne of your heart; to take the very members of your own body and use them against you to keep right on serving sin like you always did, BUT you don't have to say 'yes' and you don't have to listen to his lies anymore!

III. Keep Your Body on Track – Working Out Practical Holiness

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

That word 'instrument' is only used 5x in the N.T. and in every other case it's translated as 'weapon.'

The members of your body either become weapons of righteousness for the glory of God or they can still serve as weapons of unrighteousness to destroy yourself and others around you. It's up to you and your choices!

- Do you really understand what God has done for you when Christ died and rose again from the dead?
- And are you putting forth a grace-empowered and faith-filled EFFORT to fight sin and pursue righteousness?

"Be killing sin or sin will be killing you." - **John Owen**

Hebrews 12:4 "In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood."

That's the biggest problem for some of you. You've not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood. You're just playing at it. You've settled for just WOUNDING sin over and over again - taking little stabs at it because really you haven't made up your mind YET whether or not you really want it out of your life.

John Piper has a great resource with additional strategies for fighting sin, titled 'Strategies for Fighting Lust,' that you can check out on our church Facebook page or Twitter.