

Time to Move  
Romans 6:1-23  
4-19-2026

Very few will recognize the name a religious figure named Grigory Yefimovich but he played an extremely significant role in shaping much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, particularly in Russia.

He was born in 1869 into a peasant family in Siberia. When he was 28, he had some type of religious experience and lived for a time in a monastery. After he left the monastery, he wandered around for a time and gathered a small band of followers, eventually ending up in Jerusalem where he gained a reputation as a holy man with the ability to heal the sick and tell the future.

In both his teaching and actions, he did what too many continue to do, using the name of God to justify their sin and further their personal ambitions. One of the central elements of his teaching was that the way to grow close to God was through sin and the person who could draw closest to God was the person who sinned the most. He declared that if you are just an ordinary sinner, you don't give God an opportunity to show his glory, so you need to become an extraordinary sinner, something he strove to live up to.

It was this teaching along with his grossly immoral lifestyle which caused him to be primarily identified with the name for which he is best known, Rasputin. In the Russian language it came to mean, "the debauched one," or one who is depraved, wicked, decadent. His many critics came to refer to him as, "the mad monk" and "the Anti-Christ, even as the "Devil incarnate."

**the Lord warned in Isaiah 5:20, "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter."**

When he returned to Russia, he was welcomed by many church leaders, and despite his smell, he never bathed, he became popular among some in the ruling class.

In 1906, when doctors were unable to help Czar Nicolas II and his wife Alexandra's son who had hemophilia, he was called in and was able to stop the bleeding and ease the boys suffering. This seeming miracle endeared him to the royal family, and he became an increasingly influential and powerful person in the Czars court. Many saw him as a humble and holy religious peasant with powers from God. This was in spite of his immoral lifestyle, seducing many young women through the belief that physical contact with his body produced healing effects. Rumors even

grew that he and the empress were having an affair. Even though Nicolas's other counselors increasingly called for his removal, the emperor refused.

When Nicholas left to command the Russian troops at the beginning of WWI, Rasputin became the chief advisor to Alexandra who had been placed in charge of Russia's internal affairs. He then used his newfound power to make a series of disastrous appointments which increased the suffering of the Russian people at the hands of the rich and powerful.

Seeing the effects he was having on the nation and the unrest it was creating, in December of 1916, a group of leaders assassinated him. But by then, the damage he had caused was too great and shortly after this, the Bolshevik revolution had begun. He may have been only one cause, but the influence of this one man's immoral teaching and lifestyle in the name of God was a major contributor to not just the Bolshevik revolution but turned many off to religion and led to the subsequent 70-year effort to eradicate any semblance of Christianity in Russia.

**Just as Paul said in Gal. 2:24, because of him, Gods name was blasphemed among the Gentiles.**

While this is an extreme example, it is certainly a warning of what can happen when people claim Gods name to justify their sin

It was something Paul was being accused of teaching

His detractors claimed he taught that sin and how we live don't really matter.

That as long as we are saved, why should it, since it only gives God more opportunities to forgive us and therefore show his greatness.

In essence our sin makes God look good so why not sin even more.

**Back in chapter 3:8 Paul refers to this when he wrote, that some were *slanderosly saying he taught, "Let us do evil that good may result"***

And now, here in Romans 6 he addresses this in more detail stating,

***"What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should***

***no longer be slaves to sin— because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness. When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”***  
**(Romans 6)**

This chapter marks one of the major transitions in the book of Romans, the transition from justification to sanctification, from how we are saved and made right with God to what happens next, holiness and the change which salvation brings to life.

So, chapter 6 deals with victory over sin

Chapter 7 with freedom from the law

And chapter 8 with life in the Spirit which makes it all possible

Without sanctification and change, it is too easy for us to be like the little boy who fell out of bed. when his mother asked him what happened he said, I don't know, I guess I stayed too close to where I got in.

Justification without sanctification is to stay too close to where we got in, treating our initial salvation as the end rather than the beginning of the Christian life, which can only lead to trouble.

**As one commentator put it, there is no such thing as justification without accompanying sanctification**

- Which is why in Ephesians 4 Paul wrote that Gods intent is that we become mature and attain to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ and to grow up into him who is the head, that is Jesus Christ.
- 1 Peter says we are to be like newborn babies who crave pure spiritual milk so that by it we may grow up in our faith.
- in 2 Peter he said that we must grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ.
- And the writer of Hebrews scolded his readers for not progressing beyond the most basic or elementary teachings of the faith, saying they were like babies, content with milk and never moving on to solid food. It then challenges readers to leave those elementary teachings about salvation and move on to maturity.

**To quote one writer, Growth is the goal of the Christian. Maturity is mandatory. If a child has ceased to develop, the parent would become concerned. Doctors would be called. Tests would be run. When a child stops growing, something is wrong. So too, when a Christian stops growing, help is needed.**

**Popular longtime pastor and author Ray Stedman said, God's overarching goal is to produce men and women who demonstrate the character qualities of Jesus Christ. God does not want a church filled with white robed saints. He does not want a church filled with theological authorities or cultured clergyman. He wants a church filled with ordinary men and women who exemplify the extraordinary integrity, temperament, wholeness, compassion, individuality, boldness, righteousness, earnestness, love, forgiveness, selflessness, and faithfulness of Jesus Christ!**

For that to happen, Paul uses three verbs to instruct the Romans on claiming our victory over sin, which correspond to our head, our heart, and our will.

- I. His first is simply to know

We need to get to know what it is we believe, what salvation is all about beyond the sinner's prayer.

To understand the nature of our faith, what happens to and in us when we make a commitment to following Christ

And most importantly of all, not just know some things about Jesus like we might learn in Bible study or from reading a book, but get to know Christ personally and intimately,

### **to explain this, he turns to baptism as an illustration**

Verse 3 says don't you know, understand, are you still ignorant of the meaning of your baptism It means to be closely identified with him, literally to immerse ourselves in him, his death and resurrection.

Immersed in his ways, his thoughts, his values, which means His word also

To develop the **mind of Christ**, as Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 2:16

:6 says that means knowing that our old self was crucified with him

And in :9 he says that means knowing that since Jesus was raised from the dead we are raised with him

Breaking with the past and dying to the old self so we can begin to live in the newness of life as a new creation which Jesus offers

**In his commentary on Romans, CT Barrett said, to be baptized into the name of' means 'to become the property of', and those who are baptized into the name of Christ become Christ's men and women. Baptized Christians become not just adherents but the property of the one whose death, resurrection, and ascension marked the dawn of the Age to Come**

The death and resurrection become not just true of Jesus', but of us as well, as we identify with him and what he has done

This is central to what we need to know and understand if we are to begin to gain victory over sin in our lives – when he was crucified our old nature died right along with him

When he was resurrected, we rose in new life as well

Sanctification is learning to live out this truth

If we don't really know this is what following Jesus is all about, then we will have no hope of finding the resources we need to stand firm in the face of trial and temptation

We can know about Jesus, his death and resurrection, know what they mean and represent, but if this knowing goes no farther and makes no real difference in how we live then it becomes just another set of information to store away

This is where Paul's next instruction comes into play

- II. We must not just know but in verse 11 he says we must also reckon or count ourselves dead to the power of sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus

To reckon is accounting term which refers to taking all the necessary information into account, adding it all up, and the answer you will come up with is that you are dead to sin but alive to Christ

To reckon means to take what we know in our heads and move it into our hearts

To make it a part of us so it's not just words but reality.

**Weirsbe said Reckoning is simply that step of faith that says, What God says about me in the Bible is now true in my life. I am crucified with Christ. Reckoning is faith in action, resting in the Word of God in spite of circumstances and feelings. God does not tell us to crucify ourselves, but rather to believe that we have been crucified and that the old man has already been put to death. Crucifixion is one death you cannot inflict on yourself; you must be crucified by another. Reckoning is that step of faith that believes God's word and acts upon it.**

**It is a matter of faith that issues in action, its not claiming a promise but acting on a fact. WE ARE DEAD TO SIN, Paul says, so now act upon it**

This is important because there are a lot of things we may accept as true but deep down don't really think they are that true for me.

**I don't remember where I read it but when Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, all slaves in the US were free as of January 1. While that was legally true, it did not become a reality for most slaves until much later. The majority of African Americans had never known anything but slavery. In Shelby Forbes three volume history of the Civil War she wrote;**

**Word spread from Capital Hill out across the city, down into the valleys and fields of Virginia and the Carolinas, and even the plantations of Georgia and Mississippi and Alabama. Slavery Legally Abolished! Read the headlines, and yet something amazing took place. The greater majority of the slaves in the south went right on living as**

**though they were not emancipated. That continued throughout the Reconstruction period.**

**The Negro remained locked in a caste system of race etiquette as rigid as any had known in formal bondage. Every slave could repeat, with equal validity, what the Alabama slave had mumbled when asked what he thought of the Great Emancipator whose proclamation had gone into effect. I don't know nothin about Abraham Lincoln cept they say he set us free. And I don't know nothing about that neither.**

They could hear and know about freedom but in the minds of many, it didn't really apply, they remained slaves because they hadn't reckoned on it being so.

Too many know and can recite the facts that Jesus died and rose again but like those former slaves, don't really reckon they have been set free from sin. They don't live as if it is a reality but just a nice idea and so sin continues to hold sway over them.

If we haven't identified with dying with Christ and being raised with him, it may be a nice thought to accept as true but don't really expect to make much difference in our daily living.

Paul said you are already dead to sin and alive in Christ, therefore reckon on this being true and begin to live it which then leads to his third word of instruction

- III. Take what you know, what you have reckoned to be true, and now he says yield or offer or present yourself to God instead of to sin

Like those signs we see on the road which seem to be increasingly ignored, yield means the other driver, or in this case Jesus Christ, has the right of way in our lives. We need to let him go and we follow.

When we begin to reckon ourselves dead to sin, we will begin to prove the reality of our faith by yielding ourselves to God and joining in his work

The majority of Romans 6 is devoted to this and what we are giving ourselves and our lives to. Presenting our lives to God means not just entering into his service but putting ourselves at his service

As someone wrote, This is an act of the will based on the knowledge we have of what Christ has done for us. It is an intelligent act—not the impulsive decision of the moment based on some

emotional stirring. It is important to notice the tenses of the verbs in these verses. A literal translation is: Do not constantly allow sin to reign in your mortal body so that you are constantly obeying its lusts. Neither constantly yield your members of your body as weapons or tools of unrighteousness to sin; but once and for all yield yourself to God.

If we know the basis of our relationship with the Lord in our minds and are deeply committed to it in our hearts, then the next step is to begin to exercise it in our will, making it more of a reality in our lives, yielding ourselves to God and being immersed in him, cooperating with the work of His Spirit in our hearts and as we grow, bringing greater freedom and victory in our lives

To say we are to yield ourselves to God doesn't mean it becomes some work we do to earn our way but rather we must make a decision to join with God, to follow his leading in what he wants to do in and through us.

It means cooperating with Gods Spirit, following His lead, not trying to get him to follow ours or just bless our efforts

As Paul will say in chapter 12, it is offering up ourselves as living sacrifices which are holy and pleasing to God for this is our spiritual act of worship.

**Warren Wiersbe said too many Christians are betweeners: they live between Egypt and Canaan, saved but never satisfied; or they live between Good Friday and Easter, believing in the cross but not entering into the power and glory of the resurrection. Romans 6:5 indicates that our union with Christ assures our future resurrection should we die. But Romans 6:4 teaches that we share His resurrection power today.**

A little boy stays too close to where he got in and falls out of bed.

Many of us may be staying too close to where we got into our faith, and as a result find ourselves regularly falling to sin.

Maybe it's time to move.