

How to Overcome Addictions

by Jim Van Gelderen

To overcome addictions and live a life of victory, you must acknowledge the right facts, account the right facts, and actualize or act on the right facts, as outlined in Romans chapter 6.

Duration: 55:54

Scripture: Matthew 5:16, Romans 6:14, 1 Corinthians 10:13, 2 Corinthians 2:14, Ephesians 4:22-24, Colossians 3:5, 1 Peter 2:12

Topics: "Spiritual Freedom", "Overcoming Sin"

Description

The video begins by describing a documentary where a camera was placed on the bottom of a Blue Angels jet, giving viewers the sensation of flying in the jet. The speaker then shares an anecdote about his daughters witnessing two teenagers getting sick while watching the documentary. The sermon then transitions to discussing the importance of knowing the right facts before making decisions, using the example of the debate over whether the country should have gone to war in Iraq. The speaker emphasizes the need for factual information in order to make informed decisions and applies this concept to the importance of knowing the transforming power of Christ in our lives. The sermon concludes by introducing Romans chapter 6 as a passage that confronts and challenges listeners, offering insights into the actions that God calls us to take in our faith.

Transcript

Romans chapter 6, if you take your Bibles tonight, Romans in chapter number 6. I'm going to turn my microphone on here so we're all set. Romans in chapter number 6. On Sunday night when we dealt with the least commandments, I made the mention that Lord willing on Monday or Tuesday, I thought it would be Monday, but the Lord gave us a different direction last night. Monday or Tuesday we deal with some truth that could help us in regard to being obedient to God's commandments, to God's least commandments or God's great commandments for that matter.

And tonight I believe the Lord would have us dive into that particular subject. And tonight we're going to look at Romans chapter 6. And I know that Romans chapter 6 is a well-visited chapter in preaching and in perhaps even in Bible study, but let's revisit it tonight. And I'm going to entitle the message of something a little bit different to perhaps kind of, again, jar our thinking for a moment.

But before I title the message, I want to give you a little story. It was I guess about nine months ago, I was asked at my home church up in the Milwaukee area to speak on our Friday night faith-based addictions

program. We just started a chapter of what's called Reformers Unanimous.

Some of you may be familiar with that ministry and it's based out of Rockford, but in a local church there. And so we started a chapter at our home church and it was just getting started. So three quarters of the people that would be there would be our own church folks who were learning the program and getting used to things.

And about a quarter of the people would be people who would call themselves functioning addicts who come in to find deliverance through the Word of God. And so I was asked to speak on that Friday night and I thought to myself, what can I preach on that will hit everybody? I don't want to just preach to the addicts. I really want to preach to our workers too.

And as I was sitting there really wrestling over it, the Lord opened my eyes to a thought and the thought is simply this. You know, friends, all of us have addictions. You know what the Bible calls them, besetting sins.

They are sinful things that are all too common and happen all too often in our life. That night I got up and I said, let's go look at Romans chapter six and I'm going to entitle the message, how to overcome addictions, how to overcome addictions. But before you dismiss the message, recognize that, you know, we think of the big addictions, you know, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, pornography, those kind of, and those certainly are addictions in a sense.

And I realized there's a technical issue here. We're speaking in a sense a little bit differently here, not a chemical addiction, but a habitual addiction. Okay.

So, so understand that. But, but anyway, I began to think, you know, there's a lot of other, how do we call it respectable addictions? You know, some Christians I know are addicted to worry. I mean, it's just something that constantly reoccurs in their life.

Some other Christians are addicted to an unbelieving response. In other words, when something bad happens, their initial response is always one of unbelief. I, my grandfather, who I never knew, I am told had that problem.

You know, things would go wrong. He'd just get frustrated. In fact, my uncle told me that one day he remembered my, his father, my grandfather, who I never knew was trying to put on a screen door.

And he says, he remembers that his dad got so frustrated. He couldn't put it on. He had this memory of the screen door on the floor and his dad jumping up and down on this green door.

I can relate with that. I got his genes, but anyway, but you know, some, some are addicted to an unbelieving response or addicted to frustration or addicted to irritation. Some are addicted to anger, just an angry response of, you know, why did that happen? Some are addicted to blame, always blaming somebody else for all the problems that occur.

Some, how about this one, are addicted to griping and complaining. Always got to gripe about this. You know, they're second in line at Walmart, they're griping.

You know, that's just the way we are. And so yeah, that one, that one resonated. Okay.

So my folks, my friends tonight, let's just be honest. You might be out here and say, well, you know, preacher, I don't know if I really have any addictions. Just go home and ask your spouse.

I'm sure she, in most cases would be glad to tell you. We men sometimes have a lot of blind spots, but, and if your spouse can't tell you, I'm sure your kids can't. They know what buttons and know what levers and certain responses are extremely predictable.

Okay. Face it, folks, all of us, it doesn't matter who we are, all of us, whether it's in our private lives or even in our family life, or even outside the walls of our home, we all too often recognize there are certain sins that get us all too often and they defeat us. And we get discouraged about it sometimes, which we shouldn't be in a moment.

We'll see that self-despair ought to lead you to God dependence. Self-despair should not lead to discouragement. Okay.

Satan wants self-despair to lead to discouragement. God wants to lead to God to dependence. That's another message, but I throw it out there just for your thinking right now.

So let's go into Romans chapter six and let's see, how can we have victory? You know, in other words, we have to come to a conclusion. Is this just something, you know, well, I guess I'll just have to, you know, this sin was just going to have to defeat me the rest of my life. Do we just have to accommodate or is there in the Bible a provision of victory? Is there friends? I mean, what about the verse? Thanks be unto God who always causes us to triumph.

And here's the key in Christ. What about that verse? You know, that teaches me friend, every time you and I, and I'm going to put myself right in this every time you and I fall prey to the best setting sins, we have failed the provision of victory that is in Christ. You know, none of us, when we sin, have any excuse, none.

You know why? Because every time we're tempted, there's a way of escape. And you might get out of here and say, Oh, you know, if my wife wouldn't do this, I'd be a good Christian. You know, friends that that's just not going to work.

That's not the way it is. And you can blame somebody else. And sometimes we get addicted to blame or whatever, but bottom line, every time we sin, we failed a provision of victory.

Now let's look at the provision of victory folks, because I'm convinced this is absolutely essential because I'm convinced this is not only essential for our children to see, but it's essential for our friends, neighbors, and others to see the transforming power of Christ is living and it is real. So let's look at a passage of scripture that I'm afraid sometimes becomes all too often head knowledge, and it does not change our hearts and our lives. I'm going to warn you, if you listen tonight, this passage of scripture will confront you.

It confronts me. So if you do not want to be confronted, tune out. But if you do, do not mind God confronting you with truth tonight.

I encourage you. There are some gems here in Romans chapter six that I have been stirred by. I hope to be a help to you.

I'm sure that others could do this and point out other aspects. I'm just going to show you what God has illuminated my heart with. Let's begin by simply saying there are three actions that God in his word here says we need to do.

Number one, I'm going to give the outline ahead of time. Number one, you've got to acknowledge the right facts. Number two, you've got to account the right facts.

Number three, you've got to actualize or act on the right facts. Okay. Now, first of all, the Bible says three times it uses the word no.

Verse three, no, you're not. Verse number six, knowing this. Verse number nine, knowing that.

So God says there's some things you need to know. Now face it, folks. There's a huge debate, and I'll not get into the politics of it.

There's a huge debate on whether or not our country should have gone to war in Iraq, and it's all based on did we have enough factual information. Now, I personally think we probably did, but that's beside the point. That's not the point.

The point is that there's a debate, and every time you and I make a decision, we want to have all the facts, don't we? You want to know everything so that you can make the right decision. Now, with all that aside tonight, what God is saying here is when it comes to the area of victory, you've got to know the right facts. In fact, I'm convinced that many times our defeat simply comes from wrong thinking, or could we say wrong theology.

So let's get the right facts down, and as we're going to see, it's very important that we got the right facts and we're not off on our facts. In fact, it reminds me of a cute little story. Some of you may have heard this.

There was a policeman sitting by the side of the road, and he had his little radar gun with him, and he's zapping people as they go by. I've always kind of thought that would be fun, zap people going down the road. I'm not even sure what a radar gun looks like, but anyway, they're going down the road and he's zapping them.

All of a sudden, a car starts pattering by, going real slow. He said, boy, that's unusual. So he aims it and zaps, and 22, 22 miles an hour.

The policeman thought, boy, that's dangerous. That's certainly not breaking the law, but that's dangerous. So he turns his lights on.

He doesn't have to go very far to pull it over, and he pulls over the car and he gets out. He walks up and he notices three older ladies in the car, and the driver rolls down the window and says, officer, is there a problem? And the officer said, no, ma'am, there's not a problem. It's just that you're going far slower than the speed limit.

The lady looks back and says, oh, no, officer, we were going the speed limit, she said a bit proudly. We were going 22 miles an hour. Well, the policeman kind of chuckled to himself.

He said, ma'am, that's not the speed limit, that's the route number. Well, the lady apologized. She all of a sudden got embarrassed and she apologized to the officer and said, I'm sorry, officer.

And the officer said, you know, ma'am, before you go, I've got to ask you one more question. I've noticed that ever since I've approached your car, I've noticed these other three ladies in here have not muttered a peep the entire time. They look like they're stunned, like they've seen a ghost.

Is something wrong? And the driver says, oh, no, nothing's wrong. We just got off route 119. You've got to know the right facts, don't you? Some of you teenagers wish the route number was the speed limit.

Interstate 95 would look pretty good, wouldn't it? But got to have the right facts. Now, let's look at this passage of scripture and let's get the right facts. Now, folks, let's look at verse number three.

It says, no, you not that so many of us were baptized, literally immersed, put into Jesus Christ, were baptized, immersed, put into his death. Now, what that is simply saying is this. The moment you and I got saved, we were put into union with Jesus Christ.

The book of Proverbs says, for we were made partakers with Christ. That's in the perfect tense, which has the idea that at the moment of salvation, we were brought into union with Jesus Christ. We will be with you in union with Jesus Christ into eternity.

So if you're saved tonight, whether or not you feel it or know it, you are put into union with Jesus Christ, which simply means that since you were put into Christ, don't miss this. His history has become yours. So that when he died, you died with him.

That's what he's simply trying to help us see here is what we have in Christ, our position. Now continue reading in verse number four. Therefore, we are buried with him by this immersion.

And in a sentence, maybe I could put it this way. It's like a sponge. You put it in the water.

Water is in the sponge and the sponge is in the water. Folks, when you got saved, you're in Christ and Christ is in you. The only problem is you can pull a sponge out and dry it.

And that's the only problem with the analogy for us. That union is inseparable. Now continues on in verse number four.

Therefore, we are buried with him by this baptism, this immersion in the death that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. So what God is saying is, listen, you are put into Christ so that when he died, you died. Don't miss this.

And when he was resurrected, you were too. And that brings us a possibility. And this particular last phrase of verse number four is in a mood that gives us it's a possibility.

So the fact that we are identified with Christ, we were buried with him when he died. We were raised with him when he resurrected, gives us the possibility that friends, if you're saved, you can walk in newness of life. In other words, you can walk animated, energized, enabled by him who is life.

Life is not an it. It's a he. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life.

See, resurrection life is capital R, capital L. It's the name of a person, Christ, who is our anybody know life. See, so the idea here is when we were put into Christ and Christ was put into us, it gives every believer out here the possibility that you can walk this Christian life, animated, energized and enabled by him who is life. Okay, now you may not get all that right now.

Just got to put it in the back of your mind and let's move on. Okay. Verse number five reiterates what we just said.

Our union with Christ and his death and resurrection. Verse number six, knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. So now we've got a second possibility.

So our union with Christ, his death and resurrection accesses the possibility of walking in newness of life. Number two, it accesses secondly, the possibility that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. You say, what does that mean? Well, there are obviously, when we think of the word destroyed, especially in our day, we almost think of terrorism, obliterated.

If I came to you after the service and said, Hey, I hate to tell you this. One of the teenagers got out of their cages and destroyed your car. Okay.

You would imagine that some teenager out there lit a stick of dynamite, threw it in your tailpipe and your car became spare parts. That's what you'd think. Well, let's just imagine they went out there and simply took the battery cables off your battery.

It might be overkill to say it was destroyed, but the word here simply means, don't miss this, rendered powerless, rendered inoperable, rendered ineffective. So what has been rendered in affection? The body of sin. Now I know there's some debate on what the body of sin means.

Personally, I believe the body of sin is talking about all sinful possibilities. In other words, you've heard of the phrase, the body of truth. Okay.

That includes everything that is truth. I believe that what this is talking about is the body of sin. In other words, it's like this.

When you got saved, you were put into Christ and that union with Christ accesses the possibility that every sin out there might be rendered ineffective. In other words, friends, there's not a sin on this planet that Christ in you can't be. All sin has lost its ability to boss you around in Christ.

Okay. So this is a possibility. Then what does it say? That's why the reason I believe this because the next phrase says that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Now let's just for a moment, think about this for a moment because our union with Christ is death and resurrection access is the possibility that sin no longer can, our sin no longer has authority to boss us around. Okay. It's just authority has been broken.

Now let me illustrate it this way. Let's imagine you were a slave in the civil war. Let's imagine that your taskmaster, your slave, your owner was very cruel.

He demands you work 12 hour days. He whipped you periodically. He never encouraged you.

He only criticized you. And let's imagine after a time life became unbearable and you came to despair of life itself. And you said something has to change.

I cannot go on this way. There would only be two ways out of that slavery. Number one, out of that, that relationship with that cruel taskmaster, number one for the master to die and hope you got a better one.

Number two, don't miss this for you to die. Let me just tell you friends, when you got saved before you got saved, you had a cruel taskmaster and his name was sin. And he had authority over you and he bossed you around.

But when you got saved, don't miss this. The taskmaster didn't die. You did in Christ.

So that the moment you died, sin's authority as taskmaster was broken. Listen, friend, if you're saved tonight, the boss, the old boss, the old taskmaster, the old slave master sin, his authority has been broken. Why? Because you in Christ died.

Okay. So see that our union with Christ really is important here because it accesses the possibility of walking in this resurrection life animated by him who is life. Number two, it accesses the possibility that the body of sin, all those sins out there can be rendered ineffective so that we don't have to be bossed around by sin anymore.

In other words, sin's authority has been broken. In fact, it goes on and says for he that is dead. Verse number seven is freed from sin.

Have you ever thought about this? It takes a body to sin. You know, the dead people don't sin. For instance, the town drunk dies and they bury him in the cemetery.

Do they have to send down the sanitation department every week to clear up all the beer bottles around the grave? Do they do that? No, the town drunk will never drink again. He is free from sin. When the town gossip dies and they take her down her, I don't know why we use the female pronoun there, but, but anyway, I'm in trouble.

Okay. I just lost half the audience. Okay.

But the town gossip dies and they take her down and they bury her. You know, the phone company doesn't say she doesn't have anything else to do. We're going to make a million.

No, they don't install a phone line down to her. I mean, you don't see the ladies gathering by her grave and say, shake lattice. Yeah.

You're the latest. No, they don't do that anymore. Why? You know what? If you're dead, you're free from sin.

See what God is simply saying is when you got saved, because you are identified with Christ who died to sin, sin's authority has been broken. Now, let me give you one other illustration before we move on. Let's go into modern day.

Let's imagine that you have a boss or have had a boss. And I won't ask you to raise your hands though. Some of you probably could, who is very unreasonable.

Maybe call you up in the middle of the night. Get in here. Never complimented.

You only showed out, showed you what you'd blown, you know, and constantly on your back, critical, et cetera, et cetera, demanding. One day you get another job and you absolutely relish the day you walk off the job and you say to that boss, goodbye. That boss's authority has now been broken.

Let's imagine two weeks later in the middle of the night, the phone rings your pickup and there's your old boss in the phone. He says, get in here. I need you in here right on the double.

Can you imagine how foolish it would be to get up, get dressed and go on in? She said, preacher, why would you do that? You don't work for the guy anymore. His authority is broken. Why would you listen to him? And that's exactly what God is asking each believer in this room.

Sin's authority has been broken. Why are you letting sin boss you around? You say, okay, preacher, I, I see that. I, I see that.

So, so what's the next thing we need to do? We got to know the right facts. We got the right. And again, we're taking a rocket ride through Romans six.

We can't deal with every little nuance here. We just want to get you the overview. So let's go to verse number 11, which gives us the next step.

You've got to account the right facts. It says, likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed in the sin, but alive in the God through Jesus Christ, our Lord. It's not in a certain sense.

Knowledge is agreeing in your mind. Now we're going to reckon. We're going to reckon it to be true.

You say, well, what does the reckon mean? Reckon is an accounting term. It has the idea. It has nothing to do with the future, you know, faith and hope.

They have something to do with the future. Reckon does not reckon has only to do with what is what has been, or what is, for instance, if you're balancing your checkbook and, and, uh, you, you don't, you put down what is, you know, you don't, you don't write a check and, and, uh, then put down the different amount. No, we recognize what accounting, let me give you this illustration.

Maybe this would be even a better one. Let's imagine I was doing to get my wallet out here. Let's imagine we were doing, I was doing a, um, kind of an audit of, of, of my assets.

And so I'm going down, you know, here's what I got in the checking account and here's what I got here and blah, blah, blah. And so I want to be accurate. So I get my wallet out and I put a little line wallet.

And so I open up my wallet and count up the money, which, uh, I don't know, there's a lot of ones in here, but anyway, okay. I found a 20. That's pretty good.

Okay. So let's just, I won't count it up. Let's just say it's \$29.

So, um, I put down the line 29, that's accounting. If I put down \$2,500, that's wishful thinking. See what we're trying to do here.

What reckoning is saying, okay, God, according to your word, I'm in Christ. Christ is dead to sin. Now I got to understand reckoning.

We're let's put it down folks. I, in and of myself, I'm not dead to sin. My deadness to sin is only in my union with him who is dead to sin.

See? And so that's what we got to count the right facts. And by the way, sin's not dead to us. Sin is very well and alive.

Okay. We all know that, but we Christ is dead to sin and we are in the one who is dead to sin and alive on the God. Okay.

So reckoning is simply, it's simply saying, okay, God, and many times I find praise really helps you reckon. Sometimes I'll go, well, hallelujah. Christ is dead to sin.

Is he? Yeah. Hallelujah. Christ is dead to sin.

And I'm in Christ. That means I'm dead to sin. And hallelujah.

Christ is in resurrection life. Is he? Yeah, he is. And hallelujah.

I'm in resurrection life. I'm in Christ. That means I'm in his resurrection life.

You say, yeah, okay. Preacher, but you know, that sounds so simple, but you know, it's not that easy. I mean, there's times, you know, when the kids get all bent out of shape and I just, I just can't help it.

I just, I just, it just feels so alive to sin. I just can't help blowing up. I just can't.

I get so frustrated. I just, I just can't help it. You might be out here and say, wait a second, preacher, this is nice theology here, but let's get down to reality.

There may be a dear gentleman out here who's defeated in your mind with, with lustful thoughts. And you say, well, preacher just seems to overwhelm me. It just seems like there's, there's no victory there.

What do you mean this reckoned? I mean, how does this work? Now, folks, that is a very valid question. And that's why many times people just push off Romans chapter six, because they say, well, that's just not my, that's not the way it is in my experience. Folks, we're forgetting one thing and do not miss, miss this.

Satan is a master illusionist. You know, I'm convinced that Satan's greatest power is his power to deceive. In fact, in Isaiah 14, when the Bible talks about Satan being cast into hell, it quotes somebody who says, is this the man that made the earth to tremble that did shake kingdoms? In other words, there's going to be in hell, evidently, I don't know how this is going to happen, but people are going to say, you've got to be kidding me.

That's the devil. Why? Because my friend, some of his greatest power is simply his power to deceive. He's an illusionist.

And you know what he wants to do? He wants to weave around your experience so that you feel like you can't help it. But I will tell you, the Bible says you can help it. You can do all things through Christ was strengthened with me.

And you don't know the great tragedies. Whenever a Christian says, I can't help it. You know what they're doing? They're reckoning to deception.

You see friends when, when that moment of temptation comes and you just says, well, I just so overwhelmed. I just got a sin. You know what you've just done? You have reckoned to a lie.

You have believed a lie. So, so in our experience, I put it this way in our, our experience is either delusion or reality. You know, every Christian, every moment of your life is either in delusion or you're in reality.

Every moment of your life. And Satan is constantly weaving the delusion, the illusion so that we buy into it. And in doing so, of course, we reckon with error.

We buy into a lie. You say, Oh yeah. Okay.

I see that because sometimes I just feel so overwhelmed and I just think I am. And we believe our experience instead of believing the word and experience because I mentioned can be delusion. And let me illustrate this way because some of you are saying, well, wait a second, preacher.

I mean, that's out there. Can I get it down? Okay. Let me give you an illustration.

About two years ago, I went with our homeschool group at my local church. We went to, uh, to the IMAX to watch a documentary on flight. I'd never been to the IMAX before, and I'd heard about it and I knew it was kind of an eggshell type thing, you know, and kind of gave you the feel that you were there.

So I thought, well, I'll go and see what's going on. So we sat down and they did one on flight and they put a camera on the bottom of a blue angels jet. So that you felt like you were flying in this jet.

I mean, you really did. And, uh, there's several things about the, the, uh, documentary, but, but one thing is they took that jet and they put it in a barrel roll at the end of that presentation. My two girls, two older girls told me they saw two teenagers at the garbage can losing lunch.

Do you know why those guys were losing lunch? Don't miss this because they had reckoned the lie. They had believed a lie. They had believed don't miss this in illusion.

They weren't going around and around, but they believed that they were and they threw up. I mean, that, that proves they, they, they, they really fell for it. Folks.

They went toward me. Okay. I'm trying to, this is a teenage audience.

We'd go a little farther there, but we'll just leave that alone. Okay. Now, um, you say, well, preacher, what about yourself? Now, normally I don't talk to myself.

I'm convinced that everybody, everybody has a little bit of compartmental insanity, but we'll leave that one alone too. But, um, uh, I don't normally talk to myself, but I'm going to make up a little conversation with my stomach and my brain, because in a certain sense there was thought processes. And, and so I'm kind of overdoing it to illustrate the point, but you'll get what I'm saying.

I'm looking at the screen. It's going around, head around and around. And my stomach starts to say, you know, I think we're in trouble.

And my brain says to my stomach, listen, stomach, don't you have a brain? And my stomach says, no. And my brain says, listen, stomach, we're not going around around. That's just a picture on the ceiling.

We are seated in a stationary seat. And my stomach said, I don't care what you said. So what you say, we're in huge trouble and we're going to be in real trouble soon.

If you don't do something about. And so my brain says to my stomach, now, listen, let's get logical about this. He said, I'm going to prove to you that we are not going around and around.

And so I took my eyes off of the screen and I put them on the chair sitting next right next to me. You know what my stomach said? You know, we're not going around and around. I'm feeling better about this already.

And my brain says, should have listened to me in the first place. And so I'm feeling a little bit better. So I take my eyes off the seat, put them back on the screen.

It's still going around and around. And my stomach says, we're in trouble again. And my brain said, I'm not arguing with you this time back to the seats.

And immediately my stomach felt better. Now, friends don't miss this. You know, I was doing, I was looking at illusion and the illusion began to affect my experience.

And I knew it wasn't reality, but I, here I am, I'm getting effect by illusion. And so, you know, like when I took my eyes off the illusion, put on the chairs, you know what I was doing? I was reckoning. So here you are, you say, preacher, I just feel so overwhelmed.

Like I got a blow up or I just feel so overwhelmed with, with lust, or I just feel so overwhelmed with that frustration. Friends, you're in the middle of an illusion. So take your eyes off the illusion and put them on the word of God that says you're in Christ.

He's dead to sin. You're united with him who is dead to sin, which means you're dead to sin in Christ. And you're in resurrection life because he's in resurrection life and you're in him.

That's truth. Folks, I'm convinced the moment you continue to look at truth is the moment. You know what happens? Your experience will catch up with you.

Watch Menina's book, *The Normal Christian Life*, put it this way. He had Mr. Fact, Mr. Feeling, and, um, um, let me say Mr. Fact, Mr. Faith, and Mr. Feeling. We're on a brick wall, walking on the wall.

As long as Mr. Faith kept his eyes on Mr. Fact, everything was fine. But when Mr. Faith turned around to see how Mr. Feeling was getting along, they all fell off the wall. Isn't that the way it is? And reckoning, my friend, is keeping your eyes off the feeling and keeping your eyes on the fact.

And don't miss this. Reckoning is not an emotional decision. Reckoning is an act of the will.

It is saying, I am, I may, I feel like I can't help it. I feel overwhelmed. I feel like I got to sin, but the Bible tells me I don't have to.

And so I choose to believe Romans chapter six. It's reckoning. Okay.

Say, okay, free try. I think we're getting reckoning down a little bit. And by the way, folks, really, to be honest with you, we all understand this to some degree, because if you, let's just say you were in a beautiful garden and you walk out in this beautiful garden and you have your eyes closed, you are not experiencing the beauty of that garden, but it doesn't change the fact that the garden is beautiful.

You know, friends, you may be a defeated Christian, but it does not change the fact that you're in Christ dead to sin in Christ a lot. You're in the resurrected one. It does not change that.

That's the fact you just had your eyes closed and reckoning is opening your eyes. So you see reality. It doesn't see when we reckon, it doesn't make us dead to sin.

It just realizes that we are, it stops believing the lie and acknowledges what we are in Christ. Okay. Now hopefully you get it.

See reckoning doesn't make us dead to sin. Some people say, oh, make me that this. No, no, you're already dead to sin.

Okay. Now with that in mind, you say, okay, pretty sure I get it. One last thing now, friends, and we're done with it.

Number one, you got to know the right facts. Number two, you got to count the right facts. Number three, don't miss this.

You got to act on the right facts. It's the way it always is in the Bible. Faith without works is okay.

So we're going to see now that the step of faith is followed up by some very important action. Okay. So let's look at it.

Look what it says in verse number 12, let not sin. Therefore reign in your mortal body that she should obey in the lesser of. Now look at that fourth word, let not sin.

Tell me. No, that's, that's the, that's not the, that's not the next word. It says, um, well, wait a second.

Let not sin. Third, fourth word, let not sin. Tell me therefore.

Okay. You say, why is that so important? Because everything we've just learned you pack into. Therefore, based on everything we were, what we learned, God is saying, okay, let not sin reign in your mortal body.

Now folks, really, this is what they call in the Greek language, a present tense with the negative. There are two ways to interpret it. One of the ways to interpret it is simply this.

What God is simply saying here is stop letting sin reign in your mortal body. So folks, what he is doing here is he thought he told us all this wonderful truth. And now the Lord is getting in a certain sense, right in our comfort zone.

And he's saying to us right now, listen, based on the fact that you're in Christ, you're dead to sin. You're alive on the God reckoning to be true based on those truths. Stop it.

Cut it out. You see, listen, friends like this, stop letting sin boss you around. That's what God's saying.

He's challenging us tonight, friends like this. Hey, he's saying, stop, let anger boss you around. Stop it.

Stop letting frustration call the shots in your life. God is saying, stop it. Stop letting lust dominate your brain.

Stop it. He's saying, stop, let dirty internet sites fill your mind with filth. Stop it.

He's saying, stop jamming out on flesh to music. Stop it. Stop your griping and complaining.

Stop it. And friends tonight, what God is doing tonight is you're a born again believer. He's saying you're in union with my son.

You have no excuse to let sin call the shots. Sin's authority has been broken. So stop letting sin call the shots in your life.

Stop it. Stop having fights with your spouse. Stop blaming your spouse for your problems.

Stop it. Stop blowing up. Stop it.

Friends, I cannot say it as strong as I'm convinced what God is trying to tell us tonight. We have no excuse. None.

There's a provision of victory in Jesus Christ. And none of us in this room have any excuse for unbelief, for frustration, for griping, for complaining, for backbiting, for undermining authority. God says, stop it.

Now, the only reason I'm going after that like that is because I'm convinced that's what God is doing to us tonight. Because as long as we kind of think, well, you know, I really couldn't help it. We are in trouble.

The only way you're ever going to have victory is when you realize the problem's not God. The problem's not my wife. The problem's not my kids.

The problem's not my boss. The problem is me. And the problem is I'm simply disobedient to clear teaching in the Bible.

There's a provision of victory. The problem, friend, is not your weakness because God answers that with his strength. The problem is we aren't obeying God.

We're not doing it God's way. We're failing the provision of victory. So weakness is no longer excuse.

God knows we're weak. That's why he gave us this wonderful plan. Okay, so you say, okay, well, boy, that's strong, preacher, boy.

Stop letting sin reign in your mortal body. That's what sin, yeah. But you say, preacher, that's just kind of general, you know.

Stop sinning. Okay. Well, how? Well, I'm glad you asked.

Because verse number 13, I love this. God goes from the general to the specific. And this is just, friends, this is outstanding.

Please don't miss this tonight. Look at verse number 13. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God as those that are alive from the dead.

Actually, it's the same grammatical force. Stop yielding your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. I've said it already, but it takes body parts to sin.

And every time you and I sin, I'm going to use the word body parts for members from time to time to help us understand exactly what he's saying here. He says, stop yielding your body parts to sin. And my friend, none of us can sin, nobody in this room, not a person in this room can sin without yielding body parts.

You say, well, preacher, what about worry? Well, friend, you cannot worry without a brain. There's a lot of sins you've got to have a brain to do. See, but all of us know that in order to sin, you've got to have body parts.

And the word yield, once we get it, is translated Romans 12 and verse number one, present. The word yield is not just passive, not just like, I give up. You know, the idea of yield is yielding is surrendering to the enemy and turning around and going to work for him.

It's not just being in a concentration prison camp. Oh, no, it's going to work for the enemy. That's the idea of yielding.

It's yielding and presenting. So God says, why are you yielding your body parts to sin, going to work for sin, letting sin boss you around? Stop that. What you need to do is yield yourself to God and present yourself to do what God wants you to do.

Yield your body parts to God. You say, okay, preacher, I see that. See, if you really believe this, folks, then you're going to recognize I'm in Christ.

I'm dead to sin. I'm alive in the God. So my next thing I need to do, instead of yielding body parts to do what the devil wants me to do, I'm going to yield myself to God to do what he wants me to do.

You say, okay, I see that preacher. That's real specific. I mean, you've got to yield body parts.

Now, how do you do that? Three things that will be done tonight. Number one, it says in verse number 15 here, or get the, I think it's verse number 15, 13, excuse me. It says, but yield yourselves into God as those that are alive from the dead.

Now don't miss this folks. What this is simply saying is this, is in order for this thing to work, you must yield your body parts as those who are resurrected because in our union with Christ, they are. Now, let me, let me help you with this.

How many of you have ever made a decision for Christ? In other words, you yield yourself to God. You presented your members to do what God wanted you to do. You made a decision for Christ that you meant you wanted it to last.

Maybe it did for a week or two or a month or two, but a long haul decision didn't last. You went back on it and live like you were the day before you, you made that decision. It could have been a decision to be consistent devotional time, decision about soul winning or whatever.

And maybe for a while it lasted, but in the long haul, you went back on the decision and it did not lastingly affect your life. If that's ever occurred in your life and it has, as it has in mine, would you with me raise your hand? Okay. You can put your hands down.

You're saying, well, wait a second preacher, you're telling us to yield and present. And then all these people are saying they did that and it didn't work. Don't miss this folks.

Here's your problem. And here's my problem. The only way it's going to work.

If you yield yourself, don't miss this as those that are alive from the dead, you say, well, preacher, what's the difference? It's like this folks. It is not, don't miss this yielding independence upon my life to live it. It is

yielding independence upon his life to live it.

It is not flesh dependent obedience. It is God dependent obedience. It is simply saying, I cannot do this.

I am too weak, but hallelujah. I am in union with him who is life. I'm in resurrection life.

Resurrection life is in me. And I'm depending on Christ who is my life to enable me, to animate me, to strengthen me. I can do all things through which there it is.

It is yielding yourself, recognizing your weakness and recognizing his strength. And friends, this is key. That little phrase is those that are alive from the dead is the difference between defeat and victory.

We're yielding ourselves, not independence upon our life. We're yielding ourselves independence upon him who is life. Okay.

Number two, look at verse number 16, something else about yielding. No, you not that to whom you yield yourself servants to obey his servants. He are to whom you obey whether of sin and death or of obedience and the righteousness.

I want you to see a little word that is tied in union with the word yield or present. And that is the word obey. Now the word obey simply means to hear under, to hear under.

Now, what that simply means is, is intrinsic to yielding or obedience is hearing. Let me illustrate this way. How many remember that commercial when EF Hutton speaks, people listen, remember that some of the older folks.

Okay, boy, it's every place I go, it's getting older and older people raise their hand. But anyway, I will tell you, EF Hutton had nothing on my dad. When my dad spoke in our house, people listen.

I will tell you when I heard my dad speak, the antennas went up. I listened to everything he said. And then I immediately obeyed.

You say preacher, you must have been a good kid. No, if you'd have been a kid in our house, you'd have done it too. That's what kids did in our house.

They listened to dad. You say, well, your dad, he must have really swang a belt. I'm going to tell you this and don't miss this folks.

Do not miss this. My dad could swing a belt, but I will tell you when I think of my dad, I do not think of someone who could primarily swing a belt though he could. I think of someone who loved me unconditionally.

He was a great disciplinarian. Do not, he did not put up with junk at all. But I want to tell you, I never doubted one second in my life that he loved me.

And sometimes I'll tell you, I'm going to, this is probably getting ahead of myself, but I will tell you, Christian, we are not to run our homes like the military. Your house is not the Marines barracks. When I think of our home, I will tell you, I think of parents that love me unconditionally.

And I will tell you, you talk about a hard line. I didn't even think about that. But in my sense, I'm not sure how my dad did it, but I will tell you to the day the Lord called him home to heaven.

When he spoke, I listened. I was a grown man. When dad spoke, everything else dropped and I focused on my father.

Now friends, by the way, teenagers, you mark this. If your parents have to speak two or three times, you mark it as not obedience. I don't know what it is about teenage guys and their moms, but it's a huge problem.

Teenage guys don't listen to the moms. And I will tell you, young man, it's your mom speaks and tennis should go up, listen intently to everything your mother says and obey it. Anything less is disobedience in God's sight and it does not please Almighty God.

I do not know what it is today, but in our house, I will tell you, dad, I didn't hear you held no water. Mom, I didn't hear you held no water. In other words, it was our response.

It was their responsibility to speak. It was our responsibility to get it. And believe me, under those circumstances, you always got it.

If you were running up the stairs to listen, you would. Now I'm telling you, friends, I'm convinced one of the reasons our kids don't listen for God is because we don't train them to listen to us. Mark it down, folks.

Obedience starts with listening. And I'll tell you, young people, stop saying to your parents, I didn't hear you and start saying I got a listening problem and I need to get right with God about it. And I didn't intend to go that far with that part, but for whatever reason, the Lord, somebody out here needed that.

But we'll just leave that with the Lord. But see, see, obedience is listening, folks. So it starts.

So the first thing we've learned about yielding is you've got to do it in dependence upon him who is life. But secondly, don't miss this obedience or this yielding. Don't miss it starts with listening.

And so the question I have for you tonight is this. Where's your satellite dish pointing? I'm not talking literally. I'm talking figuratively.

Is your satellite dish due north to the kingdom of God? You say, well, preacher, I come to church every time the doors are open. Do you know you can come to church and not be listening for God? I will tell you, friend, what you want to do when you walk through the doors of this church or before you ever get here is say, oh, God, speak to me, open my eyes. Then I make all wondrous things out of the law.

If you're sitting here and saying, hey, preacher, I'm not getting anything out of the messages. I will tell you, friend, the problem is your problem because God is more than willing to speak if you're listening. And if you will come to this body of assembly, the assembly of believers saying, Lord, speak to me, he will.

If you'll open your Bible and say, preacher, I don't get anything out of reading the Bible. I don't get anything out of my devotions. Why don't you get on your knees? Oh, God, I need to hear you.

Lord, speak to me. I'll tell you, you listen for God. He'll speak.

You want God. I'm not talking audibly. We all know what you're talking about.

That spiritual voice of the Lord where he takes his word, he illuminates it. He brings life to it and it transforms us. See, I'm going to tell you this, if you're listening for God, that is the first step to yielding to

him.

Say, okay, Lord, I'm all ears. You speak, I'll listen and I'll obey. Okay, now either you're listening to God or you're listening to the world.

Now I'll tell you, folks, if you watch television and you don't control it like we talked about a couple of nights ago, and you watch and you hear the curse words and you hear the profanity and you hear the dirty innuendos and you watch the amount of stress of the female actors and you watch the provocation and you hear the dirty innuendos, I can guarantee you this, don't be shocked when sin bosses you around. Because the very first step to obedience is listening. And I will tell you this, whoever you're listening to is who you're going to obey.

And if you're listening to the world, don't be shocked when you obey sin. So we learned something else that's very practical. God's helping us here, folks.

He's helping us get real practical. Okay, so first of all, we're going to yield ourselves as those who are alive from the dead, those who are depending on Christ who is our life. Secondly, we yield ourself as one who are listening, listening to God and not to this world.

Number three, I'm going to be dead honest with you. This is an analogy none of us would dare to make if God had not given it to us. Look at verse number 19.

I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh. For as, here we've got a simile, ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. You're saying, well, preacher, how do you do this yield thing? I mean, how do you do it? Okay, how do you do this yield present thing? How does it happen? Well, God is going to give us something, friends, that again, an analogy none of us would dare to make if God hadn't given it to us.

He's simply saying this, you know how to sin. Tragically, we all do. He said, just like you yielded yourself to uncleanness and to iniquity is the same way you yield yourselves unto righteousness.

That word uncleanness is a little jarring. You know why? Because if you studied in most contexts, it is talking about moral uncleanness. So just like you yielded the lost or to moral uncleanness or the old Puritan writers used to call it unholy passion.

God says, you know how to do that. Now yield yourselves to righteousness. Now let's just go through a couple of this, because how do we sin? Again, we'll be appropriate here, but how do we sin? Well, like we said, we got to yield body parts.

Okay, here you are. You go down to the grocery store. You went to the grocery store for one reason, and that is to get groceries, none other.

You find yourself standing in line, and I think it's tragic in the United States of America that you cannot check out groceries without being confronted with sensuality on magazine covers. I think that is tragic. But here you are, you're checking out groceries.

You didn't go there for the wrong reason, and all of a sudden your eyes just catch something that Satan uses to begin to tempt you in your mind. Now folks, don't miss this. At that moment, you will yield.

You say, what do you mean you'll yield? Preacher, I thought there was a way of victory. Don't miss this. You're either going to yield to wrong or going to yield to right.

But you will yield. You know, sometimes we have this idea, hey Preacher, I'm a lone man. Nobody's telling me what to do.

You know, friends, you can just mark this down. It's not a matter whether you're going to be a servant or not be a servant. It's a matter of who you're going to serve.

See, either doing right calls the shots in your life, or doing wrong calls the shots in your life. But I will tell you, somebody's calling the shots in your life. So here you are in line, and you get a moment of temptation.

Now what happens in order to sin? In order to sin, you must yield body parts. You must take your neck muscles. You must turn toward the wrong image.

You must focus your eyes. You must yield your brain. And I'll go no further, but we all understand that.

The tragedy of yielding to anything that is unclean. Okay, you say, well Preacher, what's God getting at? He's getting at, okay, just like you yield to uncleanness, even so now yield yourselves unto God. Take that same neck muscles, and instead of yielding to sin, yield to God.

Look up toward the ceiling. Yield that same brain. Instead of yielding it to filth, yield it to the pure words of God that cleanse from filth.

Now are you clean through the word which I have spoken unto you? Every word of God is pure. And you begin to yield to those passages you've memorized to cleanse your mind. Or perhaps you begin to take your mind, and you begin to pray, and begin to attack the very gates of hell that Satan is obviously attacking you with.

But here's my whole point. Just like you did wrong, hey, yield those same members to doing right. Okay, how about another illustration? Iniquity unto iniquity.

Here's a person who has trouble with anger. And certain things happen, you know, and that man, that tongue starts running. The Bible calls them grievous words.

And you always know they're grievous words when they stir other people up, they provoke. They don't solve the problem, they provoke. So here you are, you know, the things happen, everything happens, and you can just sense in your heart the grievous words.

They're boiling. Okay, friends, you know what you do at that very moment? You say, hallelujah, I'm dead to sin in Christ. Christ is dead to sin, I'm in Him.

I'm alive under righteousness. So based on that truth, I reckon it to be true, I'm going to yield myself right now. Instead of yielding these lip, you know, what would you do before? You'd yield your tongue, your mouth, and you yield it to grievous words.

So what God is saying is take those same lip muscles, those same tongue muscles, and instead of yielding them to grievous words, yield them to a soft answer. That's all right, honey, we didn't need that car anyway. Well, maybe that wouldn't be the thing to say, okay.

You yield them the soft answer. You know what happens, friends? I'm convinced that the moment we take those same body parts and members, and instead of yielding them to sin, we take them and we yield them to God, God imparts grace. For sin shall not have a dominion over you, for you are nothing of the law but under grace.

Oh, see it, friend, one more illustration for you young people. I mentioned flirting the other night. Flirting is what I would start that first step down the road of uncleanness.

It's that inappropriate tension between the genders God only intended for in the marriage. Two young people get together and they begin to do that coying with one another. You say, well, Preacher, what's the difference between flirting and friendliness? I don't care who you are in this room, everybody knows the difference.

You know the difference. You begin to, as I mentioned, the writers call it that unholy passion, and you begin to have that, and what happens is you have to yield your members. Now, friends, I can also make an analogy for some of you out in the workforce.

Here you are, gentlemen, you're walking by some desk and one of the ladies there who works in the office begins to be too friendly. And I'm going to tell you something, friends, the most godly, manly thing a man can do when tempted with uncleanness is to take his two good legs and run. Lester Roloff said about Joseph, he lost his coat, but he kept his character.

And you know, friends, here you are, you're at a point where you sense that wrong draw, and you can either yield your members to respond or you can yield your members to run. Teenagers, it's the same thing. When that inappropriate attention comes, you can either give in to that unholy passion and begin to return the flirtatious spirit, or you can turn and do what 2 Timothy says, flee, also youthful lusts, and keep that interaction between male and female appropriate as God intended to be outside of the bonds of marriage, chaste, pure, without question.

Or do you see it, friends? For as you yielded your members' servants to uncleanness and to iniquity and to iniquity, even so now yield your members' servants to righteousness and to holiness, because inside of you, friends, is life. He is holy life. And when he animates, and when he enables, and when he strengthens, friends, it is literally Christ's righteousness being fleshed out through our dependent obedience.

I'm convinced God is not impressed with my righteousness. He is not impressed with yours. All of our righteousness is as filthy rags.

You remember that Isaiah wrote, our. He didn't say their. Isaiah is going to be in heaven.

Do you know my righteousness? In the sight of Almighty God, it's filthy rags. But I will tell you Christ's righteousness pleases God the Father. And I'll tell you, friend, when Christ, who is our life, when Christ, who is our righteousness, when we yield ourselves as those that are alive from the dead, as those that are dwelling in the righteous one, who the righteous one dwells in us, and we yield ourselves as those that are alive from the dead, and we present our body parts to righteousness, to do what God wants us to do, independence upon his spirit to strengthen us, Christ's righteousness is fleshed out through our dependent obedience, and God is pleased.

My righteousness and my holiness is always corrupt with wrong motives and flesh, etc. But I will tell you, friends, when Christ's righteousness is fleshed out through our life, it pleases Almighty God. But of him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God has made into us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, that according that is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

See it, friends, there's a provision of victory in Jesus Christ. Nobody in this room, including this preacher, none of us in this room, none of us, including myself, have any excuse for any besetting sins. None of us do.

Why? Because thanks be unto God, who always causes us to triumph, don't miss those last two words, in Christ.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/14/SID14517.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jim-van-gelderren/how-to-overcome-addictions/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net