

LIVING BY GRACE

STUDY THREE

Needed Changes When Living by Grace

Romans 6:5–14

We're not only saved by grace, we're able to walk by grace and to be free to live a new kind of life.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

WHEN Christians sin, the remedy is 1 John 1:9:

If we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.

God is faithful even when we aren't. When we confess, He forgives and cleanses. What a relief! First John 1:9 is like a clinic built at the bottom of a ravine along a mountain highway. If we swerve off the road of right living, we can count on the doctor in the clinic to patch us up and get us going again. Confession is the corrective approach to sin.

“But,” according to Pastor Chuck Swindoll, “it’s not the best alternative.” He continues,

Romans 6, on the other hand, is preventative counsel, providing the signs: “No need to crash . . . slow down . . . danger ahead.”¹

Prevention makes more sense, doesn't it? It's better to drive safely than speed around the curves, skid over the cliff, and depend on God to pick up the pieces. Living by grace is about prevention—going God's way and heeding His warning signs to live free from sin. Let's find out more in Romans 6:5–14.



Needed Changes When Living by Grace

Romans 6:5–14



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Until now, you may have thought that sinning was unavoidable, and confession was the only method to manage sin. Ask the Lord to guide you to a better way.

Father, help me to see myself in a new light—not as a victim of forces beyond my control but as a changed person. Spark in me the hope that I can truly live free from “the sin that so easily trips us up” (Hebrews 12:1). My heart is open to Your truth. In Jesus’ name, amen.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

“Since we have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it?” (Romans 6:2). Paul’s rhetorical question challenges our assumptions. Yes, grace covers our sin, but it does not give us cover to sin. Just the opposite, it frees us *not* to sin.

Paul explained how to live free from sin in [Romans 6:5–14](#). Read the passage in the New Living Translation and The Message. Pick out three lines from these verses that stand out to you and write them in the spaces below.

- _____
- _____
- _____



Observation: Know, Consider, Present

Observation considers what a biblical passage is saying. Finding the key words helps us perceive the author’s main points. Note the words *know*, *consider*, and *give* (or *present* in the New American Standard Bible), and you’ll see the outline of the passage.

Truths We Must Know—Romans 6:5–10

When we trusted in Christ for eternal life, we were baptized into His death and resurrection ([Romans 6:3–4](#)), and we changed from sin’s slaves to God’s children ([Galatians 4:5–7](#)). We didn’t necessarily see the change, hear it, or feel it, but our identity changed nevertheless.



Needed Changes When Living by Grace

Romans 6:5–14

What did Paul say are the implications of this truth, according to *Romans 6:5–7*?

Christ broke the curse of sin that shrouds humanity in death. How did Christ do this, according to *Romans 6:8–10*? What are the benefits for those united with Him?

Victory over sin begins with *knowing* about our union with Christ, our new identity in Him, and the implications of this truth. Then, knowing must lead to a change in the way we think.

There is no sin that can overpower you any more than it could have overpowered Christ, unless you yield to its authority. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

A Reality We Must Consider—Romans 6:11–12

Find the word *consider* in *Romans 6:11*. Because of Christ's victory over death, what should we consider ourselves to be?



Needed Changes When Living by Grace

Romans 6:5–14

Why do you think this command, “consider,” is essential for experiencing victory over sin?

Paul culminates his points about knowing and considering with what two commands in *Romans 6:12*?

On the flip side of these negative “do not’s” is the positive “do” in *Romans 6:13*—the action step in Paul’s path to freedom.

I no longer must yield to the temptation to say ugly things about someone else, or react in anger, or to hold a grudge. I can forgive because the power of Christ is in me. It’s a new way to think. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Needed Changes When Living by Grace

Romans 6:5–14

An Action We Should Take—Romans 6:13–14

The first step was *theological*; the second step was *intellectual*; now this third step is *volitional*. Find the word *present* in the New American Standard Bible version of *Romans 6:13*. The Greek word is *paristemi*. How does the New Living Translation render *6:13* to express this concept? Put the ideas from this verse into your own words, as if Paul were writing them to you personally.

Paul wrapped his teaching with a ribbon of grace in *6:14*. What did Paul say?

Before coming to Christ, we didn't have the power to stop sinning. But now we live under the rulership of grace. We can say with confidence, "Sin is no longer my master."

Christ's power resides in you. Let Him speak through you. Let Him decide through you. Let Him react through you. Let Him forgive through you. Let Him have His way through you. You're a channel through which He works. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: The Outcome of Our Freedom

Paul used the Greek word *paristemi* to communicate the outcome of our freedom. God freed us so that we can stop *paristemi*-ing our bodies to sin and, instead, *paristemi* our bodies to God (*6:13*). It's repentance in a nutshell—turning from sin to God.



Needed Changes When Living by Grace

Romans 6:5–14

Look up *paristemi* using Bill Mounce’s Greek lexicon available at billmounce.com. What definitions do you find?

How do these definitions help you understand the goal of your freedom in Christ?

Presenting yourself to God means you “use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God” (6:13). How is your body an instrument? How does that change your view of your body?

Our freedom from sin is freedom to obey God. In theological terms, *God saved us to sanctify us*—a theme Paul picked up later in Romans 12.

Today, Lord, I’m Yours from the moment I put my feet on the floor. I’m Yours when I leave my house and drive to work. I’m Yours when I’m in the shop or working with the team. I’m completely Yours. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Needed Changes When Living by Grace

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Correlation: Change the Way You Think

How does Romans 6:13 resemble Paul’s teaching in 12:1–2? Use the following chart to compare the similar phrases and concepts.

<i>Romans 6:13</i>	<i>Romans 12:1–2</i>

Paul stated plainly in 12:2 the key to sanctification. You can stop serving sin and start serving God by “the renewing of your mind” (NASB) or, in other words, by *changing the way you think* about sin, your identity in Christ, your purpose, and how you relate with God. Let’s work out this principle in application.

It’s in the mind. You don’t track sin. You don’t play with it. It is a radical transformation in how you think. It’s a matter of self-talk. It’s what you tell yourself.

—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Application: First Thoughts

Do you lie awake at night recalling all your sins—sins in your thoughts, sins in your words, sins in what you did, sins in what you didn’t do? The list is endless, and what hope do you have that you won’t commit the same sins tomorrow?

In his book, *The Grace Awakening*, Pastor Chuck Swindoll points out the bondage this thinking brings.

The shame and self-imposed guilt this brings is enormous, to say nothing of the “I’m defeated” message it reinforces. We begin the day afraid of sin. We live ashamed. We go to bed with a long list, ready to confess. If it isn’t very long, we fear we’ve overlooked several “hidden sins.”²



Needed Changes When Living by Grace

Romans 6:5–14

He urges us to shift our mental gears to a grace mind-set.

God says to every one of us, “Where sin abounded, grace superabounded. You were once enslaved to a passion, yes, but no longer . . . Now you’re free from that. You can live above it.” Grace awakens, enlivens, and empowers our ability to conquer sin.³

Would you like to change your thinking today and conquer sin? What first thoughts would you like to have in the morning? Use the following phrases to shape your thinking based on Romans 6.

Lord, I know . . .

I consider myself to be . . .

I present each part of myself . . .



Needed Changes When Living by Grace

Romans 6:5–14

Use this prayer each morning. When tempted, say the prayer again. Call upon God's truth and indwelling power to win your battles with sin.

As you close this study, meditate on Romans 6:12–14 from *The Message*, and use personal pronouns to make it yours as a declaration of your intent.

[I will] not give sin a vote in the way [I] conduct [my life]. [I won't] give it the time of day. [I won't] even run little errands that are connected with that old way of life. [I throw myself] wholeheartedly and full-time—remember, [I've] been raised from the dead!—into God's way of doing things. Sin can't tell [me] how to live. After all, [I'm] not living under that old tyranny any longer. [I'm] living in the freedom of God.



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, You have the power. I don't. You have authority. I don't. Because Your Holy Spirit lives in me, I ask You to answer the door when sin knocks. I ask You to take charge of my life right now to keep me from sin. I give myself completely to You, and I give to You the members of my body as instruments of righteousness to use as You will. In the victorious name of Jesus, amen.

ENDNOTES

1. Charles R. Swindoll, *The Grace Awakening* (Nashville: W Publishing Group, 2003), 111.
2. Swindoll, *The Grace Awakening*, 99.
3. Swindoll, *The Grace Awakening*, 99.

