

## The Underpinning of Experiential Sanctification

### Romans 6:1-23

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Words such as “sanctification” and “holy” translate the Greek word group (see below) that means “to set apart,” with different nuances depending on context. To be sanctified or holy is to be set apart either *from* evil, or set apart *to* do good works.<sup>1</sup> Speaking of believers in the Church dispensation, the New Testament uses sanctification three ways:

- 1) Positional, which speaks of how God, by the baptism of the Spirit, sets apart each born again person into Union with Christ (1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2; Hebrews 10:10).
- 2) Experiential sanctification [aka progressive], which addresses how a believer becomes more-and-more set apart to doing God’s will (1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; Hebrews 12:14; 2 Corinthians 7:1).
- 3) Ultimate or final sanctification that speaks of when a believer is set-apart from mortality to immortality, which is to resurrected life in heaven (Ephesians 1:4; 5:27; Jude 24; cf., Romans 8:29; 1 John 3:1-3; Revelation 22:11).

Experiential sanctification, the subject of this paper, is of enormous practical importance. An Old Testament clue to its significance is that the word “holy” occurs 95 times just in the book of Leviticus, whose purpose was to teach Israel practical sanctification in the presence of a holy God. In the New Testament, we read “Pursue ... holiness without which no one will see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14). The imperative to “pursue ... holiness/sanctification” is uncomplicated. The difficulty many face is not that they fail to grasp what the command means, but that they are uninformed of the incredible work God accomplished at the new birth. His work makes the pursuit of sanctification not a pipedream, but an accessible goal. Even if some have an inkling of what God did for their sanctification, they are misinformed about *how* to attain the goal. All the while the Spirit works within them “both to will and to do for His good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13), which leaves earnest believers frustrated for they want God’s will, sanctification, but are in the dark as to how to get there.

Primary Greek nomenclature for the doctrine of sanctification is five words: ἅγιος (*hagios*), ἁγιαζῶ (*hagiazō*), ἁγιασμός (*hagiasmos*), ἁγιότης (*hagiotēs*), and ἁγιωσύνη (*hagiōsunē*). The primary Hebrew term is קָדָשׁ (*qādash*), which, depending on its morphology and context, can denote two opposites: (a) a holy individual who is set-apart to please the Lord, or (b) a male or female temple prostitute who is also set-apart for religious purposes, but obviously does not please the Lord. The common denominator is that at either end of the scale the “holy one” is *set apart* whether to good or to evil. Depending on the English version one uses, he will find these terms translated as “holy, holiness, consecrate, dedicate, sanctify, hallowed, sanctification,” and “*saints*.” Another important Greek word falls within the semantic range of sanctification: “transformed” (μεταμορφῶ, *metamorphō*); see Romans 12:2 and 2 Corinthians 3:18.

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<sup>1</sup> Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 752, recognized the negative and positive aspects of the process of sanctification saying “[c]leansing deals with the negative aspect, that of being cleansed from defilement of sin, whereas sanctification is the positive aspect, that of being set apart to God. They are two sides of the same coin.” Michael Horton, *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims on the Way* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 650, says “God’s sanctification separates people, places, and things away from their ordinary association for his own use.”

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The above family of Greek words in both the LXX<sup>2</sup> and New Testament provides basic vocabulary for the theological category labeled sanctification. For example:

- The concept of sanctification or holiness occurs both at the beginning and end of the Canon: “God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it” (Genesis 2:3) and “he who is holy, let him be holy still” (Revelation 22:11), providing a sort of *inclusio*, i.e., bookends for the Canon.
- The holiness of God Himself we see everywhere in scripture. Two classic examples are awesome heavenly scenes with seraphim exclaiming “holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts” (Isaiah 6:3). The other scene is of angelic-like beings and believers who fall down before the throne of God to worship saying “holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come” (Revelation 4:8). In addition, observe Jesus’ prayer that He begins “*Holy* Father” (John 17:11). In the model prayer Jesus teaches disciples to pray “Father ... let Your Name *be sanctified*, or hallowed” (Matthew 6:9, ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου, observe the passive voice).
- Each bona fide local church is *holy*. In fact, because of its holy character believers are not to be divisive disrupting its unity. Disunity defiles the holiness of the local church—a microcosm of the universal church—bringing divine discipline to the perps (1 Corinthians 3:16-17).
- Individually Christians are to be holy/sanctified because God is holy (1 Peter 1:15-16, quoting Leviticus 20:7). Paul pointedly declares “this is the will of God: your sanctification” (1 Thessalonians 4:3). Moreover, following 11 chapters of theological development that reveals the “mercies of God,” Paul urges the Romans to “present your bodies a sacrifice, living, *holy*, acceptable to God” (Romans 12:1).

Sanctification is an enormous subject. This paper limits itself to Romans 6, the first chapter of the apostle’s trilogy of chapters on experiential sanctification. To maintain contextual continuity and thus grasp the experiential thrust of the apostle’s teaching, however, we need to begin our study in Romans 5.

**As Adam’s sin results in all men experiencing punishment, so God’s grace, for those made righteous, may result in a righteous experience, experiential sanctification, from the source of life.**

Therefore, as through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation [=punishment], even so through one Man’s righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous. (Romans 5:18-19)

“Therefore” (οὕτως, *ara oun*, 5:18) picks-up and resumes Paul’s flow of thought from 5:12, introducing several implications because through Adam sin and death spread to all men. A result of God’s judgment is “condemnation,” which is an almost universal translation of κατάκριμα (*katakrima*)<sup>3</sup> to denote one’s eternal destiny in the Lake of Fire. It is, however, better to understand the term simply as “punishment” without importing the eternal element. Why?—

<sup>2</sup> LXX is the abbreviation for the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament.

<sup>3</sup> E.g., NKJV, ESV, Darby, NASB, NIV, NRSV, etc.

because of its immediate contrast with the phrase “righteousness of life” (5:18b), a temporal and experiential concept.<sup>4</sup>

Though Adam introduced sin and punishment to mankind, Jesus Christ introduced a free gift “resulting in justification [lit., righteousness] of life,” which sets the stage for where Paul aims to go in chapter 6. This clause, being introduced by εἰς (*eis*, “resulting in”), speaks of a “life” (i.e., “newness of life,” vs. 4) that leads to, or results in, righteous living—of what results in experiential sanctification rooted in “newness of life.” It is a grammatically simple phrase—“righteousness of life”—though not so simple interpretatively, in part, because here is the only New Testament occurrence of “resulting in righteousness of life.” The ending of “righteousness” (δικαίωσιν, *dikaiōsin*) denotes *action*,<sup>5</sup> moving the notion from a static positional or forensic idea into the category of a righteous experience flowing from a source of life. This understanding “of life” sees it as a genitive of source denoting righteous living from the source of life in keeping with “newness of life” (6:6). Or, one could take “of life” as a genitive of production speaking of righteous living produced by newness of life.<sup>6</sup> In 6:19, 22-23 we learn that experiential sanctification, flourishing from the source of “life,” permeates context and is where Paul’s teaching endeavors to take us.

The next verse (5:19) explains the contrasting experiences in verse 18 of temporal punishment and righteous living by contrasting the sinful or righteous states to which man is appointed/placed.<sup>7</sup> In other words, if one experiences punishment (*katakrima*, e.g., no peace with God, 5:1; no hope, 5:5; no deliverance from wrath, cp. 5:9 with Romans 1:18), it is because he is caused to be, or appointed to be, a sinner related to Adam’s offense. If one experiences righteous living from the source of life, it is because he is caused to be, or appointed to be, related to Christ’s obedience. Paul’s argument is that both the actions of Adam then Christ had universal consequences that play out in history, time, and space because the act of the representative head brings consequences on all appointed under that head—experiential consequences.

**Though the Law’s entrance increased sinful conduct, God’s grace super-increased that as sin reigned in death so grace might reign through righteous conduct to enhanced spiritual living.**

Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 5:20-21)

How does the Mosaic Law fit into the picture of experiential sanctification? It was a divine tool to magnify what is sin—magnifying sin’s reign in death [see comments regarding “death” in next

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix #1 for a defense that *katakrima* describes temporal punishment (divine discipline), rather than eternal condemnation (Lake of Fire/Hell).

<sup>5</sup> Bruce M. Metzger, *Lexical Aids for Students of New Testament Greek* (Princeton: self published, 1969), 42. In addition, note the following regarding δικαίωσιν (“righteousness”): NKJV translates “justification of life;” so Darby, ASV, YLT, et al, looking at context in a forensic or positional sense. ESV translates “justification and life.” James D. G. Dunn, “Romans 1-8,” *Word Biblical Commentary* [WBC] (Dallas: Word, 2002), 38A:283, though an advocate of perseverance theology, sees *dikaiōsin* in an ultimate sense, but also says that “Δικαίωσις ... can embrace the idea of a *process* as well as its result (BDAG), so although the final outcome is primarily in view ... believers *already experience* something at least of the new life (cf. particularly 6:4, 11, 13), even if its full manifestation is not yet.” (italics added)

<sup>6</sup> For this latter grammatical category see Daniel Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, under Adjectival Genitive [Logos 4].

<sup>7</sup> Regarding the verb “cause” (καίστημα/καίσιάνω), note its experiential usage in 2 Peter 1:8, *does not cause you to be useless and unproductive*.

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verse]. God's grace, however, is a greater tool opening the potential (subjunctive mood) for righteous living that results in eternal life (=enhanced spiritual living).

As a side bar, 5:20 reveals that the "entrance" (*παρεἰσερχομαι*, *pareiserchomai*) of the Mosaic Law happened as a subordinate player in God's plan: "entered in alongside, came in (additionally)."<sup>8</sup> The point is also made in Galatians 3:19 where we read that the law was "added along side until the Seed should come." At the Law's inception, God ordained a definite cut-off date for it as a system under which Israel was to live. Accordingly, following the Incarnation, believers are not under bondage to the Law as a system for living, which Paul will explicitly say in Romans 6:14.

In 5:21, "death" emerges for the first time in Paul's sanctification section.<sup>9</sup> The phrase "in death" (ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ, *en tō thanatō*) is elsewhere in the New Testament only at 1 John 3:14 with "abide" (μένω, *menō*), denoting there, not physical or the second death, but what we will identify as a death-like experience—an experience devoid of "abundant life" (cf. John 10:10). Physical death obviously is not in view in either passage for the recipients of the letters are very much alive. And, being "beloved of God, called saints," the second death is not a concern for them (Romans 1:7). So how do we validate the definition "death-like experience"? What is this thing called "death" in Paul's trilogy of sanctification chapters?

- ✓ In Romans 5 & 6 death is an effect of sin that reigns like a tyrant dominating one's life. Paul graphically describes such a death-like experience in 1 Timothy 5:6, saying *she who lives in pleasure/indulgence is dead while she lives*. Alive physically, but living a death-like experience! Following context describes such an experience as denying the faith (5:8), growing wanton against Christ (5:11), casting off their first faith (5:12), being idle, wandering about from house to house, and gossips and busybodies (5:13). Such self-indulgent & fruitless living is at cross-purposes to God's will that believers bear "fruit to sanctification" and as Jesus put it "bear much fruit" that glorifies God (Romans 6:22; John 15:8). Such a lifestyle is unfulfilling and frustrating making "death-like experience" a suitable label.<sup>10</sup>
- ✓ In addition, Paul has an instructive comparison in Romans 8:6—within his larger sanctification context—where "death" (θάνατος) contrasts with "life and peace," signifying that death is an experience lacking peace and life. We might say death is the absence of experiential peace and devoid of abundant life or "newness of life" (John 10:10; cf. Romans 6:4).

When speaking of how sin "reigns" (personification), a commentator explains that it is "the existential reality which is in view—death as exercising a power over human life which no individual can escape."<sup>11</sup> Another commentator says, when speaking of sin that reigns, the key thought is that unavoidably sin rules a person's thinking and behavior.<sup>12</sup> When Paul says that

<sup>8</sup> William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* [BDAG], 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000) 774.

<sup>9</sup> Romans [5:21] 6:3-5, 9-10, 16, 21, 23; 7:5, 10, 13, 24; 8:2, 6, 13 [active imperative verb, "put to death"], 38.

<sup>10</sup> Dr. David Anderson, personal email correspondence, February 12, 2011, says "'Death'" here refers to a state of being and its present effect on our souls. It refers to a life of corruption where everything is rotting and in a state of decay. One's children are rotting as their families fall apart; one's own marriage is slowly decaying as two people live in the same house but are miles apart; and one's labor in life as a man or woman has no fulfillment. It's a description of the living dead. ... in v. 23 Paul imagines two generals or commanders: the Sin Nature and Jesus. If we choose to serve in the army of the Sin Nature, our daily ration will be death. If this is a daily ration, the death Paul has in mind isn't some physical death from battle or old age; nor is it spiritual death from final judgment. Neither of those types of death could be described as a daily ration. No, this is the same death we have seen over and over in this section on sanctification—the daily death of defeat, despair, discouragement, and depression. Very simply, it is a life of misery. That's what is produced in our lives if we choose to serve on the side of the Sin Nature."

<sup>11</sup> Dunn, *WBC*, 38A:276.

<sup>12</sup> The notion of being unavoidable applies not only to unbelievers but to carnal believers who do not walk according to the Spirit (cf. Galatians 5:16-18).

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grace *might* reign (subjunctive, 5:21b), the thought is not of what is unavoidable, but of what God makes *possible* for believers: that His grace may inescapably, though not perfectly, rule their thinking and behavior. We say “not perfectly” not because God’s grace falls short, but because of human weakness.

On the one hand, sin reigns like a tyrant producing death-like experience, but that is not the end of the story. On the other hand, God’s super-increasing grace *may* reign (subjunctive mood) through righteous living resulting in eternal life in the present.<sup>13</sup> Because we find “eternal life” (εὐζωία αἰώνιον, *eis zōēn aiōnion*) in the sanctification section of Romans (6:1-8:39), it is best to take it qualitatively, i.e., “abundant life” (John 10:10), or a life-like experience that is the fruition of “newness of life” (6:4). The *quality* of a believer’s life and walk is in view. Paul pictures here and in 6:22-23 the result in a Christian’s experience when he walks by means of the Spirit (Romans 8:1-4). Elsewhere the apostle speaks of “laying hold on eternal life” (1 Timothy 6:12, 19; cf. Romans 2:7; 1 John 3:15), which is to appropriate the benefits of eternal life—the qualitative life that may now be experienced. The potential of these benefits was once-and-for-all granted the moment of new birth.

A commentator draws our attention to “eternal life”—its qualitative and quantitative aspects—as follows, which helps provide the milieu of Paul’s sanctification teaching.

The word “life” does not refer to something we receive in heaven. If it were, then this passage would teach that we earn eternal life by what we do—a false “works salvation.”

Eternal life doesn’t emphasize simply quantity; it also emphasizes *quality*. Both believers and unbelievers will exist forever. Both groups have “quantity” of mere existence; but their *quality* of existence differs vastly (see e.g., John 5:28-29). The unbeliever spends eternity separated from God. But the believer spends eternity in His presence.

Ps 16:11 emphasizes the quality of life Paul is thinking about. It’s a life where there is fullness of joy and pleasure forever more. . . . It is our blessed privilege as believers to choose to serve on the side of Jesus. If we do this, our daily experience is eternal life. As we have explained, the meaning here is not existence with God after we physically die. It is to experience a quality of life no unbeliever can ever know. It’s a spiritual life that comes only to those connected to God. The separation between a person and God (spiritual death) ends when he trusts Christ as Savior and receives the free gift of eternal life (the quality of life that comes from being connected to God). Now, this quality of life can get better and better in the life of a believer, but only if he serves in the King’s army, daily receiving the grace needed to reign with Him in righteousness (cf. Rom 5:17, 21).

But if the parallelism is between the daily ration of the Sin Nature (death) and the daily ration of God is eternal life, why does v. [6:]23 say the “gift” of God? The word “gift” is *charisma*, the same word used in 5:15-16 where the entire passage (5:12-21) sets the stage for our understanding of 6:23. Note especially the use of “eternal life” in 5:21, a quality of existence to be enjoyed when we are reigning (victorious). . . . Our first installment of eternal life was a gift, and so is every additional installment. So, although we cannot say that God **owes** us a full and meaningful life if we serve in His army, God graciously gives/**gifts** us this kind of life (cf. 5:15), eternal life, and we can daily choose to receive this gift and “reign in life” (5:17, 21)—or not.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, “Romans,” *Baker exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* [BEC] (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998) 6:286, comments that “the eschaton has entered the present for Paul, and hence believers ‘walk in newness of life’ now (6:4). Thus it is more probable that believers reign in life now and will reign fully at the consummation (Moo 1991: 353). What we must see is that the rule in life fulfills the mandate given to Adam in Genesis and anticipates the renewal of creation in Romans 8:18–25.” Schreiner, as most if not all in the Reformed camp, holds the position that as God is sovereign in granting one eternal salvation so He is sovereign inevitably to bring about experiential sanctification. We agree with him that believers may walk in newness of life now, but disagree that the biblical evidence suggests it is inevitable.

<sup>14</sup> Dr. David Anderson, personal email correspondence, February 12, 2011.

### Implications based on how grace opens the potential for its reign, not sin's, in day-to-day living (6:1-14).

The climactic conclusion of 5:20–21, that as a consequence of Christ's act grace has swamped sin, and sin's rule in death has been matched by grace's rule through righteousness to life, naturally raises the question: Has the believer been wholly removed from the realm of sin and death? Have sin and death lost all hold on the believer? The initial answer seems to be clearly in the affirmative (vv 1–11), but the consequent exhortation indicates that the believer is vulnerable to the claims of both lordships and must continually choose between them (vv 12–23).<sup>15</sup>

**Implication #1:** Though grace super-increases more than sin, believers categorically should not continue in sin: “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not” (Romans 6:1-2a)! When the apostle says “Certainly not” (μὴ γένοιτο, *mē genoito*), it is his brief answer to the question. Its abruptness reveals that the very thought of continuing in sin is preposterous. Paul writes a theological treatise to the Romans, thus is composed in his delivery. If he had written this to the Galatians, when heated at their soon departure from grace, he would have responded to the question “shall we continue in sin?” with a rousing negative similar to what one would expect from a Marine! Paul's long answer follows in 6:2b-14.

**Implication #2:** Believers must not be ignorant that it is unthinkable they would continue in sin because they are a dead-to-sin-kind-of-people having been baptized into<sup>16</sup> Christ and His death.<sup>17</sup>

How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? (Romans 6:1b-3)

In certain contexts, a single word carries important significance. “We” (6:2, οἱ ὅτινες,<sup>18</sup> *hoitines*, describing *quality*) conveys the meaning *as such who*.<sup>19</sup> Translate: “how shall such as we who died to sin....” To bring out the qualitative concept of “we,” a fuller translation would be “we who are a dead-to-sin-kind-of-people” (dynamic equivalence!). Because of our baptism into Christ's death that liberated us from the tyranny of the “old man,” living in sin is an outrageous notion, hence Paul's “Certainly not!” (*mē genoito*). The point is that he roots his following challenge in the fact that believers have been enabled by God's super-increasing grace not to succumb to temptation. Precisely because God has made Christians a “dead-to-sin-kind-of-people”—provided supernatural provision against the reign of sin, that is not merely positional or

<sup>14</sup> Dunn, *WBC*, 38A:305.

<sup>16</sup> Dunn, *WBC*, 38A:311, says “it is hard to avoid the conclusion that in Paul the εἰς in the shorter phrase [ἐβαπτίσθημεν εἰς Χριστὸν ἠησοῦν, “baptized into Christ Jesus”] was intended to bear a more pregnant sense than “with reference to”: the sense of movement into in order to become involved with or part of is certainly implied in the sequence of thought here (vv 3–5), as also in the other nearest parallels (1 Cor 12:13; Gal 3:27; 1 Cor 10:2 ...) ... and in Paul the aorist passive clearly speaks of something done by God.”

<sup>17</sup> C.C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology: A Popular Systemic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truth* (Chicago: Moody, 1999) 345-347, points out that “Death means separation, not extinction. So death to sin in this paragraph means separation from its domain or realm, but not the extinction of its presence. Baptism means association or identification with someone or something. Here it refers to our identification with Christ in His death so that we have been separated from the power of sin.” (italics added)

<sup>18</sup> See C.F.D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* (London: Cambridge, 1963) 123-24, for a discussion of relative pronouns including ὅστις. Following classical writers, he understands ὅστις in the sense “who is such that.” This sense is followed by Moulton and Robertson, though Cadbury dismisses it.

<sup>19</sup> Dunn, *WBC*, 38A:276.

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ultimate, but actual for time, space, and history—Christians may live obedient lives leading to experiential sanctification.

The color-coded charts and diagrams in Appendices #3 & #4 shows that the first half of Romans 6 has a preponderance of nouns and verbs, denoting what God has done for believers. The second half of the chapter has a preponderance of verbs, denoting what believers are urged to do because of what God first enabled them to do.

**Implication #3:** We must understand that God crucified the “old man,” liberating us from its tyranny, so our bodies are rendered ineffective<sup>20</sup> to enslave us to sinful living. For as Christ was raised from the dead to new life, so believers are given opportunity to walk in newness of life.<sup>21</sup>

Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.<sup>22</sup> For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. (Romans 6:4-7)

Chapter 6:4 begins with “therefore” (οὖν, *oun*) signifying that “consequently we should understand that we were buried with him through baptism for death,” the death that rendered us a “dead-to-sin-kind-of-people.” In addition, as Christ was raised out of the dead by the glory of the Father that was a once-for-all-event with on-going, living, and unending effects, so we also may walk in newness of resurrection life<sup>23</sup> resulting in experiential sanctification.<sup>24</sup> Why?— having been identified with Christ’s death we will be identified with Christ’s resurrected life, but only so long as we know/believe that our former status of being dominated by the “old man” has experienced the crucifixion of its dominating power thus liberating the body from slavery to its reign.

Such crucifixion does not terminate temptation, but it has broken once-for-all the reign or tyranny of sin/temptation. So, though temptation’s existence is not removed, its ability to

<sup>20</sup> Schreiner, *BEC*, 6:315-319, wants to translate “The verb καταργεῖν (*katargein*, to destroy) ... meaning “nullify,” “abolish,” “destroy,” or “bring to an end” (cf. Romans 3:3, 31; 4:14; 7:2, 6; for this understanding see Hofius 1989: 96–99; Hays 1989: 134–35; Hafemann 1992: 37–40). Frankemölle (1970: 76) says rightly that the verb should not be watered down to mean “inactive,” “idle,” or “ineffective,” but it should be defined as “annihilate” or “destroy.” Though Schreiner prefers to give καταργεῖν an extreme definition, his commentary interprets the verb as does this paper, i.e., render ineffective.

<sup>21</sup> Richards, L., & Richards, L. O., *The Teacher’s Commentary* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1987) 817, put it well when they said, “The crucifixion of the ‘old self’ did not remove the pull of temptation. Instead, what happened was that the ‘body of sin’ (that whole package of old and warped responses) was rendered powerless or inoperative (v. 6). We will still feel the temptations, but are not in their power. Our days of slavery are ended. We are now free to choose the good.”

“Like Jesus, you and I are now alive to God, and we can choose to live for Him.”

<sup>22</sup> In Romans 7:6 we find the expression, ἐν καινότητι πνεύματος (“in newness of Spirit”), which suggests that newness of life and newness of Spirit go hand-in-hand experientially.

<sup>23</sup> Dunn, *WBC*, 38A:318, says that “In itself the ‘very likeness of his resurrection’ could be the equivalent reality of Christ’s resurrection as it may be experienced (like his death) in the here and now (cf. Phil 3:10).”

<sup>24</sup> James Montgomery Boice, *Foundations of the Christian Faith: A Comprehensive and Readable Theology* (Grand Rapids: InterVarsity, 1981) 345, encouragingly says that walking by faith “means that all who believe in Christ are united to him so that his life becomes available to them. We may be weak and utterly helpless, unable to resist temptation for a single minute. But he is strong, and he lives to give help and deliverance at every moment. Victory, therefore, is no longer a question of our strength but of his power. His power is what we need.”

reign/dominate is overthrown.<sup>25</sup> Practically, then, believers may say “no!” to temptation and make it stick.

The “for” (γάρ, *gar*) beginning 6:5 introduces an explanation of the relationship between Christ’s death and resurrection and the believer’s death-to-sin and prospect of newness of life. Having been baptized into Christ’s death and resurrection, we will indeed be also of the resurrection, which does not anticipate the resurrection of the Church, but present experience. Why?—because context speaks of a believer’s present potential, speaking of a bird in bush, not in hand. Accordingly, the future tense should be taken as future to learning/knowing and applying the sound doctrine being revealed (not future at the Rapture).<sup>26</sup>

In 6:6 the notion of *knowing* truth again surfaces: “Knowing this” re-emphasizes (cf. v. 3) the importance of grasping the teaching that we are a dead-to-sin-kind-of-people and how such knowledge is prerequisite—the underpinning—to experiential sanctification.<sup>27</sup> The truth to know is that our “old man,”<sup>28</sup> speaking of who we were as unbelievers under the reign or domination of sin, was crucified (passive voice) in the sense that the dominating or tyrannical power of the flesh (sinful nature), has been once-and-for-all shattered that our mortal bodies that produce sinful acts<sup>29</sup> might be rendered useless for future acts of sin with the desired result that we no longer serve sin.

Oswald Chambers, failing to grasp the import of the passive voice in Romans 6, sees co-crucifixion with Christ to be a volitional choice a believer must make. He says,

Co-Crucifixion. Have I made this decision about sin—that it must be killed right out in me? It takes a long time to come to a moral decision about sin, but it is the great moment in my life when I do decide that just as Jesus Christ died for the sin of the world, so sin must die out in me,

<sup>25</sup> Schreiner, *BEC*, 6:315-319, is on target saying, “What has been shattered is not the presence of sin but the mastery of sin over believers. Paul uses a number of expressions to show that he is speaking of sin’s dominion being broken instead of perfect sinlessness. As sons and daughters of Adam we were slaves to sin, but now we are free from its tyranny (v. 6). Death no longer “rules” (κυριεύει, *kyrieuei*, v. 9) over Christ. Believers must not “let sin reign” (βασιλευέτω, *basileuetō*, v. 12). There is the assurance that sin will not “rule” (κυριεύσει, *kyrieusei*, v. 14) over those in Christ. Believers were previously “slaves” (δοῦλοι, *douloi*) to sin (v. 16), but now they are “free” from its slavery (v. 18; cf. vv. 20, 22). From this we can conclude that Romans 6 teaches that believers are not free from the presence of sin, but they are free from its power, tyranny, mastery, and dominion.”

<sup>26</sup> Ryrie, *Theology*, 345-347, says “The future tense in verse 5 indicates what must inevitably occur (as in Gal. 6:5). Thus it refers to our resurrection to new spiritual living, not our future physical resurrection.”

<sup>27</sup> Cranfield, source not identified, says “There is a startlingly memorable sentence in one of John Chrysostom’s sermons on Romans, which puts succinctly what we may call the negative side of the imperative of Christian baptism: ‘If then thou hast died in baptism, stay dead!’ ... But, as we all learn by experience, the task of staying dead in John Chrysostom’s sense is very strenuous, a matter of striving constantly to die afresh to sin.”

<sup>28</sup> Dunn, *WBC*, 38A:318, points out that “παλαιός is used consistently by Paul to denote the condition of life prior to conversion (1 Cor 5:7-8; Col 3:9; also Eph 4:22).”

<sup>29</sup> “Of sin” is objective genitive conceiving of the body as the source or producer of sinful acts. Schreiner, *BEC*, 6:315-319, comments that “[T]he body of sin ultimately refers to the whole person ... Nonetheless, the word σῶμα is used because the body is the means by which sin is concretely accomplished (cf. 6:12-13). The purpose is not to say that the body is intrinsically evil, nor that sin exists because of physical bodies ... Rather, the body is the emblem of sin that has dominated those who are in Adam (8:10). Believers died with Christ so that the sinful body would no longer exercise mastery.

“The final clause in verse 6 also designates purpose ..., explaining why the body of sin must be destroyed: “so that we should no longer be slaves to sin” (τοῦ μὴ ἐτι δουλεύειν ἡμῶν τῷ ἁμαρτίῳ, *toū mēketi douleuein hēmas tē hamartia*). Slavery to sin is the lot of all those in Adam. Unbelievers do not possess freedom to choose the contrary; unbelievers do not have libertarian freedom. This does not mean that sin is forced on them against their will. It means that they invariably choose to sin because sin is the circumference of their desires. Believers have been liberated from such slavery to sin and are now free from its clutches.” Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 345-347, has a brief though illuminating comment saying “For a similar and instructive use of “destroyed” or “done away with” in Romans 6:6, see Hebrews 2:14, which relates the death of Christ to destroying Satan’s power.”

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not be curbed or suppressed or counteracted, but crucified. No one can bring any one else to this decision. We may be earnestly convinced, and religiously convinced, but what we need to do is to come to the decision which Paul forces here.

Haul yourself up, take a time alone with God, make the moral decision and say—'Lord, identify me with Thy death until I know that sin is dead in me.' Make the moral decision that sin in you must be put to death.

It was not a divine anticipation on the part of Paul, but a very radical and definite experience. Am I prepared to let the Spirit of God search me until I know what the disposition of sin is—the thing that lusts against the Spirit of God in me? Then if so, will I agree with God's verdict on that disposition of sin—that it should be identified with the death of Jesus? I cannot reckon myself "dead indeed unto sin" unless I have been through this radical issue of will before God.<sup>30</sup>

To the contrary, the crucifixion of Romans 6 is God working on behalf of believers. It is not a work of believers, self-applied, to dispense with sinful living. Accordingly, verse 6:7 teaches that "he who has died,"<sup>31</sup> denoting a believer baptized into Christ's death by a work of God, has had his physical body rendered useless. But useless in what sense?—in the sense that our bodies do not *have* to cave-in to temptation and sin for (*gar*) he who died is liberated<sup>32</sup> from sin being no longer dominated by its reign.<sup>33</sup>

Having said that, outside of Romans 6 we learn of a need for self-crucifixion. In Appendix #2 we do an exercise in biblical theology for perspective on what self-crucifixion is and is not. We need to be clear, however, that self-crucifixion is only possible because God first crucified our "old man" in Christ.

**Implication #4:** Our opportunity to experience newness of life resulting in experiential sanctification requires faith in sound doctrine, which is that Christ died once, but now forever lives so that death no longer reigns over Him. The implication is that believers in Christ are not under the reign of death but live and may walk in newness of life.

<sup>30</sup> Chambers, O., *My utmost for his highest: Selections for the year* (NIV edition) (Westwood, NJ: Barbour and Co. 1993) n.p.

<sup>31</sup> The most likely view has been suggested by Cranfield, *Romans* (1:310–311; cf. also Fitzmyer 1993c: 436–37): "Ο ἁποθανών refers to the believer who has died with Christ. The reference is not to death in general but to the believer's participation in Christ's death. Such a reading of the participle does not impose an alien reading upon it, for the previous verse speaks of the believer's crucifixion with Christ (v. 6) and the succeeding verse says specifically "and if we have died with Christ" (εἰ δὲ ἀπεθάνομεν σὺν Χριστῷ, *ei de apethanomen syn Christō*, v. 8). Verses 3–4 also stress that the believer died with Christ in baptism."

<sup>32</sup> Schreiner, *BEC*, 6:315–319, comments "The verb δεδικαίωται (*dedikaiōtai*, justified) is not merely forensic in verse 7 ... as is clear from the way the entire proposition in verse 7 relates to verse 6. The argument seems to be that righteousness necessarily involves freedom from the power of sin. This point is crucial for Paul's argument. ... Only those who have died with Christ are righteous and thereby are enabled to conquer the mastery of sin. Many commentators have struggled with the use of δεδικαίωται in a context in which power over sin is the theme because they invariably limit justification to being declared righteous. The use of the verb in this context, however, suggests that righteousness is more than forensic in Paul. Those who are in a right relation to God have also been dramatically changed; they have also been made righteous. This is confirmed by the language of being enslaved to righteousness (cf. 6:18, 20, 22); believers have been transformed by the Spirit (cf. 2 Corinthians 3:8–9; Stuhlmacher 1965: 75–76, 224; Byrne 1996: 194, 202)." Schreiner rightly notes that *dikaioō* is not forensic. However, he slides into theological eisegesis when he goes on to say that believers are transformed having been made righteous, further implying the inevitability of righteous living or experiential sanctification.

<sup>33</sup> Dunn, *WBC*, 38A:320, addresses the clause "so that we might no longer serve sin" and interestingly says that "The very formulation, with the μήκέτι ["no longer"] and the present tense, implies that the possibility of the believer's *continuing* to serve sin is very real. The aorist identification with Christ in his death therefore provides the enabling to live under the lordship of grace (5:21) but does not prevent the believer from succumbing once again to sin at any particular point."

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Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over<sup>34</sup> Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. (Romans 6:8-10)

In 6:8, the apostle says that we believe that we will live also with Christ, experiencing newness of life in the here-and-now, since we died with Christ in the here-and-now. This belief, according to 6:9, is grounded in the knowledge that Christ no longer is dying, thus believers are no longer dying “in Him.” Furthermore, Jesus having been raised from the dead and believers being raised “in Him,” death no longer rules Him or them. Accordingly, being in Christ, believers are no longer under the rule of death and may walk in newness of life. Potentiality is promised, not inevitability, though Horton sees matters differently:

We are confident that we are holy and are being made holy in Jesus Christ simply on the basis of his promise, not because of what we see visibly in ourselves or each other. In sanctification as well as justification God the Father is the giver, the Son is the gift, and the Spirit is the one who creates faith within us through the gospel. In both, Christ is the object, the gospel is the means of its communication from God, and faith is the means of our receiving it from him. *Nor does sanctification require a different act of faith than that exercised in justification.* The faith through which we are united to Christ simultaneously lavishes us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places.<sup>35</sup> (italics added)

In another place, the same author quotes approvingly the aphorism frequently heard in Perseverance/Lordship circles: “Though we are justified through faith alone, this faith ‘is never alone, but is always accompanied by love and hope.’”<sup>36</sup> If they do not come out and say it, Reformed theologians imply that if faith is not accompanied by love and hope, or good works, then faith is dead, in the sense non-existent. Thus an individual is not saved because if there are no good works, they insist one cannot be eternally saved for ‘genuine saving faith’ inevitably produces good works. In effect, they combine (confuse!) justification and sanctification so that to be eternally saved one *must* remain in an upward trend of experiential sanctification, though some in the perseverance camp will allow for very brief episodes of carnality. Yet, they still insist that one is saved by faith *alone* in Jesus Christ alone! What is that but unadulterated sophistry?!

What Horton claims above effectively quashes every subjunctive and imperative mood in Romans 6 for, in his view, one’s initial act of faith in Jesus Christ brings into play an inevitable movement toward “being made holy.” What you see here is a classic example of theological eisegesis, of interpreting a text through the lens of one’s theological system while ignoring plain Greek grammar.

Verse 6:10 summarizes that death no longer rules Christ for (*gar*) He who died died to sin once-for-all, and He who is living keeps living to God—both of which (dead and living) are universally true for believers who have been baptized into Christ’s death and resurrection. In a believer’s case, entering into the experiential benefits of identification with Christ’s death and

<sup>34</sup> Dunn, *WBC*, 38A:323, says that “κυριεύω is used synonymously with βασιλεύω, as the parallel with 5:14, 17 shows; so 6:12/14. In each case it is effective and not merely assertive authority which is in view: death exercises effective lordship—all die! ... the law is not effective to break the rule of death (5:20–21); only Christ’s death has done that, and only by walking in the life which comes from the risen Christ can there be a conduct pleasing to God.”

<sup>35</sup> Horton, *Theology*, 651.

<sup>36</sup> Horton, *Theology*, 656, who gives the source of this quotation as the Formula of Concord (Epitome 3, art. 11; cf. solid declaration 3, arts. 23, 26, 36, 41).

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life requires walking by means of the Spirit and its resulting obedience. More later at Romans 6:16-23.

**Implication #5:** Because God has destroyed the reign/dominance of sin and put newness of life within reach, believers are (a) to consider themselves dead to the reign of sin and alive to God, and (b) to put themselves at the Lord's disposal not yielding to lust, but to righteous living. Why?—because sin no longer can reign as a dominating tyrant; furthermore, you are not under law but grace.

Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace. (Romans 6:11-14)

Progress in experiential sanctification requires that a believer's attitude square with the realities of his death to the reign of sin and to his resurrection with Christ with its potential of walking in newness of life. This attitude requires positive choices not to obey lust/temptation, but to put one's body at the Lord's disposal as a tool producing experiential righteousness.

Accordingly, 6:11 draws inference from what precedes: “Likewise (οὐτως, *houtōs*) you also consider (λογίζομαι,<sup>37</sup> *logizomai*) yourselves, on the one hand, to be dead to the tyrannical power of sin but, on the other hand, to be living to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”<sup>38</sup> “Consider” counters the fallacious reckoning of those who supposed it reasonable to continue in sin that grace may abound. To the contrary, Paul says that the right thing to consider is that you are dead-to-sin-people and alive to God.

6:12-13 continue with “therefore” (*oun*) drawing additional inference: In view of God's super-increasing grace that made us dead to sin and alive to God neither let sin rule in your mortal body that you obey its lusts,<sup>39</sup> nor present your members as tools of unrighteousness to sin. Instead, present yourselves to God as living out of the dead and present your members as tools of righteousness for serving the Lord; it is an achievable command.

“Present” (παρίστημι, *paristēmi*) occurs twice in 6:13. The first is a present tense, while the second is an aorist. The aorist has led some to conclude that the apostle calls for a once-for-all “presentation.” The aorist itself, however, does not require that interpretation and we should not so interpret it here. Paul urges believers to a consistent, on-going walk in newness of life. Thus,

<sup>37</sup> Here we have the first imperative in Romans specifically addressed to believers. An earlier imperative is at Romans 3:4, “Let God be (γινέσθω) true but every man a liar.”

<sup>38</sup> Keith H. Essex, *Masters Seminary Journey* [MSJ] 21/2 (Fall 2010) 193-213, quoting John Murray, says “What is commanded needs to be carefully noted. We are not commanded to become dead to sin and alive to God; these are presupposed. And it is not by reckoning these to be facts that they become facts. The force of the imperative is that we are to reckon with and appreciate the facts which already obtain by virtue of union with’ (John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 1:225-26).”

<sup>39</sup> Dunn, “Romans,” 38A:338, says “For πίθημία ... Note the parallels, ‘lusts of heart’ (1:24), ‘lusts of mortal body’ (6:12), ‘lust of flesh’ (Gal 5:16), all denoting not merely physical appetites but man’s dependency for satisfaction of his needs, including physical needs and also emotional, intellectual, social and religious needs. This dependency provides the means to bring him into slavery, since natural appetite can so easily become overwhelming urge (see on 7:7), with even Christian freedom itself providing opportunity for the same appetites and urges (Gal 5:13, 16–17).”

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it is better to understand the aorist in an ingressive<sup>40</sup> sense, denoting the point of entrance into a life-style of presenting oneself to the Lord *whenever* needed.

The verb in the sentence “do not present one’s members to sin” (μηδὲ παριστάνετε [*mēde paristanete*], do not present) is in the present tense, while the command to present oneself (παραστήσατε [*parastēsate*]) to God is aorist. The difference between the two should not be pressed; the aorist should not be understood to refer to once-for-all or decisive action ... Most likely, the two different forms are simply synonyms here ... Believers must consciously choose to place themselves at the disposal of their master, lord, and king.<sup>41</sup>

Verse 6:14 explains why the apostle urges them to “consider” and to “present.” For (*gar*) sin shall not reign<sup>42</sup> over you for (*gar*) you are not under law<sup>43</sup> but indeed under grace. Sin may, but should not, reign over Christians. In addition, the Mosaic Law is no longer a hindrance to growth in experiential sanctification.<sup>44</sup>

Through 6:11, Paul’s emphasis has been on what God has done, which he discloses by his use of the indicative mood, the mood of reality, or the mood describing what is.<sup>45</sup> Observe:

5:19, “will be made”	6:5, “we have been united” ... “we shall be”
5:20, “grace abounded”	6:6, “was crucified”
6:2, “we died”	6:7, “has been freed”
6:3, “were baptized” (2x)	6:8, “we died” ... “we shall live”
6:4, “we were buried”	

We may respond obediently to the imperatives, *only* because of what God has done for those in Christ. The indicatives above reveal what God has done; they do *not* reveal what a believer will do about it. Reformed theologians import their notion of divine sovereignty into the picture. They contend that since God sovereignly elected believers in eternity past, sovereignly infused them with a faith necessary for eternal salvation, and sovereignly engineers the events of their lives so that they will persevere until death, they will then *inevitably* follow through on God’s

<sup>40</sup> For a brief discussion of the ingressive aorist, see C.F.D. Moule, *An Idiom-Book of New Testament Greek* (London: Cambridge, 1963) 123-124.

<sup>41</sup> Schreiner, *BEC*, 6:323-324.

<sup>42</sup> Zane Hodges, *Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society* [JOTGES] 22:43 (Autumn 2009) 13, says “The future tense in the phrase shall not have authority [NKJV: ‘shall not have dominion’] ... should be understood as an imperatival future (like: you shall not kill). Paul is saying, ‘You must not allow sin to rule you.’”

<sup>43</sup> The expression, οὐκ ἔστε ὑπὸ νόμον (“you are not under law”), is also at Galatians 5:18.

<sup>44</sup> Essex, *MSJ* 21/2 (Fall 2010) 207, compares the relationship of those in union with Christ to sin and law:

Romans 6:1-23 “Sin”	Romans 7:1-6 “Law”
6:2 “we who died to sin”	7:4 “you were made to die to the law”
6:4 “we might walk in newness of life”	7:6 “we serve in the newness of the Spirit”
6:7 “he who has died is freed from sin” 6:18, 22 “you have been freed from sin”	7:6 “we have been released from the law”
6:14 “sin shall not be master over you”	7:1 “the law has jurisdiction over a person”
6:18, 19 “slaves of righteousness” 6:22 “enslaved to God”	7:6 “we serve in newness of the Spirit”
6:22 “you derive your benefit” [lit. “you have your fruit”]	7:4 “we might bear fruit for God”

<sup>45</sup> Horton, *Theology*, 649, says “In the Greek language we must differentiate between the indicative mood, which is declarative (simply describing a certain state of affairs), and the imperative mood, which sets forth commands. For example, in Romans Paul first explains who believers were in Adam and their new status in Christ (justification) and then reasons from this indicative to the imperatives as a logical conclusion: ‘Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life ...’ (Ro 6:13).”

indicatives. This theological eisegesis is unmistakably at cross purposes to context with its subjunctive and imperative moods denoting potentiality. God *has* done His part to destroy the tyranny of the “old man.” Yet, he leaves the volition of believers untouched to obey or disobey, thus reaping the consequences of their choices, which the second half of Romans 6 will delineate.

**It is preposterous to suppose that because believers are not under law but under grace they may sin. Why?—because one becomes enslaved by his choices either to sin leading to death-like experience, or to obedience leading to righteous living. Having been liberated from sin’s tyranny, the apostle’s recipients obeyed sound doctrine.**

What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? (Romans 6:15-16)

God has released believers from obligation to the Mosaic legal system; thus, Paul rhetorically asks, “does that not give us a green light to sin?” He immediately answers, “Absolutely not” (*mē genoito*<sup>46</sup>), unless they want to undergo divine discipline, reaping what they sow. A law of the creative order is that if we practice sin, we become addicted to sin—its slave—resulting in death-like experience. On the other hand, if we practice righteous living, we become addicted to it resulting in experiential sanctification.

Once again, “then” (*oun*, 6:15) introduces inference building on the doctrine having just been taught. In view of the law’s entrance that caused sin to increase, and though grace super-increased, coupled with the fact that being under grace we are not obligated to keep the law—what? Shall we sin because we are not under law but indeed under grace? Absolutely not!

6:16 adds validity to his “Certainly not,” arguing from the creative order and universal human experience. He asks rhetorically, Do you not know, based on mankind’s experience enlightened by revelation, that you are slaves to whom you present<sup>47</sup> yourselves slaves to obey, whether you obey sin resulting in death-like experience, the antithesis of experiential sanctification, or you act with obedience leading to righteous living that then results in growth in experiential sanctification?

**Paul thanks God that, without leaning on the Mosaic Law, the Roman’s obedience is leading to their experiential sanctification.**

But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. (Romans 6:17-19a).

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<sup>46</sup> Hodges, *JOTGES*, 22:43 (Autumn 2009) 13, says “The underlying Greek (*mē genoito*) is idiomatic and the phrase is to be translated as best suits each context. Here the words ‘that’s unthinkable’ might equally well be used to express Paul’s idea.”

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. Hodges says “The verb ‘present’ (*paristēmi*) clearly denotes the act of actually doing something. This might be either committing sin and thus producing (*eis*) death or it might be obedience (to God) and thus producing (*eis*) righteousness. Stated this way, the only reasonable choice was the obedience that produced righteousness, since who would wish to produce death.”

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Paul thanks the Lord that the Romans, having been liberated from the tyrannical power of sin, obeyed sound doctrine “from the heart”<sup>48</sup> (non-hypocritically), which they demonstrated by enslaving themselves to righteous living. Their flesh remains weak, he says, but since you are a dead-to-sin-kind of people and alive to God, continue to follow righteous living resulting in experiential sanctification (εἰς ἁγιασμόν, *eis hagiastmon*).<sup>49</sup> If we ask “How did they become enslaved (passive voice, δουλώθητε, *edoulōthēte*) to righteous living? the answer is in verse 16. That is, what they volitionally choose to obey to that they became enslaved. Or, we might say, to that they became addicted in a positive sense.

The concept of obedience has not been in vogue in recent decades, except in Lordship circles. Their distorting of the notion should not dissuade us from placing it in proper perspective.<sup>50</sup> Obedience is foundational—never to one’s eternal destiny—but always to experiential sanctification. One can, of course, obey sound doctrine in the energy of the flesh, which leads to no good end. On the other hand, as the apostle puts it here, one may obey “from the heart,” i.e., sincerely. Such obedience is one of the three driving forces that produce experiential sanctification: (1) The Holy Spirit, particularly revealed in Romans 8, (2) special revelation, the written word of God<sup>51</sup> (Romans 6:17; John 17:17; cf. Psalm 19:7), and (3) a believer’s choices to obey sound doctrine (Romans 6:16-19). In keeping with (3) Paul said to Timothy,

Therefore if anyone cleanses (καθάρα, *ekkatharē*, aorist active subjunctive) himself from these things [e.g., profane and idle babblings (v.16) and straying from the truth (v.18)], he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified (ἁγιασμένον, *hēgiastmenon*, perfect passive participle) and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. (2 Timothy 2:21)

It should be clear that obedience goes hand-in-hand with walking according to the Spirit (Romans 8:1-4). It is not a matter of someone gritting his teeth and clinching his fists resolving

<sup>48</sup> Horst Robert Balz and Gerhard Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990-) 2:250, say that “The theological meaning of καρδιά is more significant than simple anthropological usage: The καρδιά is the “place” of the person in which the encounter with God is realized in the positive or negative sense, in which religious life has its firm ground, and from which the ethical conduct of the person is determined.”

<sup>49</sup> *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* [TDNT], by Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-), says regarding ἁγιασμός that in the New Testament “the term ‘sanctifying’ fits it better than ‘sanctification,’ in accordance with its construction. It must be remembered, however, that the operation of ἁγιασμός can be accomplished only by a holy person (cf. the verb ἁγιάζειν), so that in the case of self-sanctifying it is always assumed that it is accomplished on the basis of the state of sanctification attained in the atonement according to the standard of the statement in Revelation 22:11: ἁγιος ἁγιασθήτω ἄνθρωπος. In ἁγιασμός we thus have a process which has as its presupposition the religious process of atonement. ... In the phrase ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος the emphasis does not fall on the character of the Spirit described as πνεῦμα ἁγίων, but on His operation, which consists in sanctification. Similarly, in the sequence ἐν πίστει καὶ ἁγάπῃ καὶ ἁγιασμῷ (1 Tm. 2:15) what is expressed is not the state but the conduct of children, and in Hebrews again (12:14: διώκετε ... τὸν ἁγιασμόν) ἁγιασμός is a moral goal. If atonement is the basis of the Christian life, ἁγιασμός is the moral form which develops out of it and without which there can be no vision of Christ. The term ἁγιασμός is always distinguished from ἁγιος and ἁγιάζειν by the emphasis on the moral element.”

<sup>50</sup> By distortion is meant that obedience, which has its rightful and necessary place within the Christian way of life, must not be made a pre-condition for the new birth. Nor should obedience be made a post-condition, i.e., something necessary and/or inevitable not only for sanctification but to validate the reality of one’s eternal salvation.

<sup>51</sup> William D. Barrick, “Sanctification: The Work of the Holy Spirit and Scripture” (*MSJ* 21/2 Fall 2010) 186-87, reminds us that “A similar function of the Word of God appears in Paul’s first epistle to Timothy when he writes concerning food, ‘[F]or it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer’ (1 Tim 4:5). The Word of God can and does make something, or someone, holy.” Barrick’s article has much to commend it. When speaking of experiential/progressive sanctification, however, he frequently uses such terms as “ought” and “must,” which imply that a believer may or may not participate in experiential sanctification, yet he seems to labor with the tension of the inevitability of experiential sanctification.

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to obey God come hail or high water. It is a matter of walking by means of the Spirit, being filled by means of the Spirit, with the consequence that “the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit” (Romans 8:4).

Chafer put matters in sharp focus:

The God-honoring quality of life is always the divine objective in the believer’s daily life. Its realization is never by a human resolution or struggle or the resources of the flesh: it is by “fighting the good fight of faith.” There is a wide difference between “fighting” to do what God alone can do, and “fighting” to maintain an attitude of dependence on Him to do what He alone can do. The child of God has an all-engaging responsibility of *continuing* in an attitude of reliance upon the Spirit. This is the point of his constant attention. This is his divinely appointed task and place of co-operation in the mighty undertakings of God. ... The important conflict in the believer’s life is to *maintain* the unbroken attitude of reliance upon the Spirit. Thus, and only thus, can the Spirit possess and vitalize every human faculty, emotion and choice.<sup>52</sup>

In 6:19a, the apostle speaks in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh, i.e., either because he is not completely satisfied with using a slavery analogy,<sup>53</sup> or because their growth in experiential sanctification has not yet sufficiently matured. He explains himself as follows.

For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:19b-23)

The thrust of 6:19b is explanatory: For (*gar*) as you, when unbelievers, presented your members to be slaves to uncleanness and to lawlessness, so now, because you are a dead-to-sin-kind-of-people but alive to God, present your members to be slaves to righteous living resulting in experiential sanctification (εἰς ἁγιασμόν, *eis hagianmon*).<sup>54</sup> Paul here makes explicit a contrast between their past and present (“then” [τε & τότε] and “now” [νῦν & νυνί]). Earlier he implicitly contrasted their past against what is true of their current experience. At 6:20, he thanks continue for when they were slaves of sinful living, they were liberated from righteous living in the sense that they involuntarily were not able to live righteously. But, by God’s super-increasing grace, their former experience has done an 180° for which he thanks God.

6:21 begins to wrap-up part one of his trilogy of chapters: “Therefore (*oun*) he asks—in light of your experience as unbelievers—what kind of fruit were you then having, fruit in which now

<sup>52</sup> Lewis Sperry Chafer, *He That Is Spiritual: A Classic Study of the Biblical Doctrine of Spirituality* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1967), 97-98.

<sup>53</sup> Schreiner, *BEC*, 6:333, says that “The illustration from slavery is inadequate because the relationship believers have with God is shorn of all the negative elements present in slavery.”

<sup>54</sup> Hodges, 16, says “This past experience in wickedness [*anomia*] is the backdrop for understanding Paul’s reference to being enslaved to righteousness. As believers, the Roman Christians are now to turn over their body’s members as slaves to righteousness. What was once done in submission to sin should now be done in submission to righteousness. The result of this new form of active obedience will be the production of holiness [*hagiasmos*]. Thus the evil result of the former servitude can be replaced by the good result of a new servitude.”

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you are ashamed for the end [τέλος,<sup>55</sup> *telos*] of that fruit is death-like experience?”<sup>56</sup> His wrap-up focuses on practical consequences, which, to begin, formerly was death-like experience of which they are now embarrassed. Their current fruit, however, leads to experiential sanctification resulting in an experience of eternal life, i.e., a walk in newness of life. The antithetical kinds of fruit are expected because sinful behavior inevitably results in death-like experience; but, God’s gift of super-increasing grace is eternal life, a newness of life experience, for those who practice obedience enabled by the Spirit.

“Fruit” has a wide semantic range of meaning. Its usages are (a) edible produce of plant life (Genesis 1:11-12, 29; Revelation 22:1-2), (b) fruit that is not edible (Ezekiel 17:9, 23; Hosea 14:8), (c) fruit of the womb (i.e., children, Psalm 127:3; Luke 1:42, and offspring of animals, Deuteronomy 28:4; 30:9). It is also used metaphorically (d) of consequences—what is produced by—one’s thinking and/or conduct (Proverbs 1:31; 11:30; 12:14; Jeremiah 6:19; Philippians 1:11, 22; Hebrews 12:11; cf. James 3:12). “Fruit” may be positive resulting in experiential sanctification (Romans 6:22), or negative resulting in death-like experience (Romans 7:5). Jesus used “fruit” metaphorically in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 7:15-20), His central point being that as a tree’s fruit gives visible evidence of its character, so metaphorical fruit, one’s words and actions, gives evidence of his character.<sup>57</sup>

Because of God’s super increasing grace, the fruit that is death-like experience does not have to be the end of the story. Thus Paul continues in 6:22, “but now, having been liberated from the reign of sin and enslaved to God, you have your fruit<sup>58</sup> to experiential sanctification (*eis hagiason*<sup>59</sup>) and the end is a present experience of eternal life—a life-like experience characterized by spiritual mindedness and peace” (cf. 8:6b). How can this be? Why may the antithetical fruits/results of death or life become manifest in believers? 6:23 answers this question: For (*gar*), or because, the wages (tantamount to fruit or consequences) of sin in a believer’s life is death-like experience, but the gift of God (the super-increasing grace of God) is life eternal, a growing present experience of newness of life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Accordingly, their overall pre- & post-salvation experiences are in keeping with how things are and work out in life: sin’s payoff is death-like experience, but God’s gift in Christ is qualitative newness of life in *this* life.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, electronic ed. of the 2nd edition (New York: United Bible societies, 1996)] state “τέλος ... the result of an event or process, with special focus upon the final state or condition—’outcome, result, end.’ ... τὸ γὰρ τέλος τοῦ καίριου θανάτου ‘for the result of those things is death’ Ro 6:21.” Horst and Schneider, 3:348, add “In Rom 6:21f τέλος intends neither finality nor simply the ascertainment of an end; rather, it expresses a consecutive line of thinking, i.e., the result emerging necessarily from a certain manner of existence.”

<sup>56</sup> Hodges, 16, says “In speaking of death here, the Apostle no doubt had physical death in mind, but his concept of death is much broader than that. This becomes plain in his subsequent discussion, especially in 7:8-13 and in 8:6-13. For Paul, death is not the mere cessation of physical existence but is also an experience that is qualitatively distinct from true life.”

<sup>57</sup> Essex, *MSJ* 21/2 (Fall 2010) 199.

<sup>58</sup> Paul personally desired fruit from his ministry among the Romans: *I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles* (Romans 1:13).

<sup>59</sup> Dunn, “Romans,” 38A:349, commenting on “you have your fruit” says “the present tense (ἔχετε) allows the thought that while the wholly consecrated state is still future, the “fruit” which has that state as its final outcome should already be becoming visible. Alternatively, if the emphasis on the finality of outcome is reserved for the next clause, the εἰς ἁγιασμόν [“to holiness” NKJV] could be taken more closely with καρπός as denoting the actual maturing process itself (“sanctification”). Either way the tension between what is (already) happening and what is (not yet) end result is expressed once more.”

<sup>60</sup> From the system of Reformed theology, Schreiner, “Romans,” 6:341, contends that “The thrust of Paul’s argument in [Romans 6] verses 16–23 is that being under grace does not encourage believers to sin. For if their lives evidence slavery to sin, then the consequence will be eternal destruction. The power of grace must lead to a transformed life, for holiness of life is necessary for life eternal. Is Paul saying that holiness is the evidence that one is truly a slave of

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A new lifestyle is therefore made possible in which the believer can “walk in newness of life” (6:4). This “newness of life,” of course, is nothing less than *eternal life*. The believer’s “walk” in this new life is the outcome of possessing that life *in Christ*. Thus the end **result** [*telos*] of **producing holiness** is nothing less than an experience of **eternal life** itself. This idea is already implicit in the biblical quotation that Paul cites as part of his thematic statement for the entire book: “Now the one who is righteous by faith *shall live*’ (Rom 1:17; emphasis added).”<sup>61</sup>

## Conclusions

1. Romans 6 is doctrinal underpinning essential for experiential sanctification. Observe: *know* (6:3), *knowing* (6:6), *knowing* (6:9), *know* (6:16), and *form of doctrine* (6:17). Apart from revelation in one’s soul of the great work God has done to enable experiential sanctification—crucified the old man and raised believers to newness of life—there will be little, if any, experiential sanctification.
2. What we know, having learned it from Romans 6, requires each Christian’s personal application, which we can summarize in three words: (1) *Reckoning*, (2) *Refusing*, and (3) *Presenting*.<sup>62</sup> That is, reckon to be true what Romans 6 teaches; it is not a case of pretend, make-believe, or living a charade. Consider to be trustworthy the content that God has revealed about our death to the tyrannical power of sin and new life in Christ (6:11). Then, refuse to cave-in to temptation and, instead, present yourself to the Lord to do what is right. We can do our part because the Lord, by His super-increasing grace, first did what He did and reveals in chapter 6.  
The “reckoning” part often separates believers. That is, it separates believers choosing to walk by faith from those who walk by sight. Reckoning is a challenge, especially in the beginning stages of our walk with the Lord, because private experience seems to make a joke of the teaching of Romans 6. For, on the one hand, divine revelation says that the “old man” is crucified so that we are a dead-to-sin-kind-of people. On the other hand, experience shouts that we are still very much alive to temptation and sin. The issue boils down to this: which source of information will a believer accept as the higher authority, scripture or experience?
3. Walking in newness of life is not a given for those born again. Nor is it inevitable or necessary to assume such in order to protect God’s sovereignty, as though He needs it!<sup>63</sup> God has provided enablement to walk in newness of life, but honors the volition He created in each person, who ought to obey “from the heart that form of doctrine to which [he was] delivered” (Romans 6:17). The theological error that progress in experiential sanctification is

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righteousness, or that holiness makes one a slave of righteousness? ... Those who are slaves of righteousness have been liberated from sin by the grace of God. If they practice righteousness, it is an evidence of his grace in their lives. ... Those who have been freed from the power of sin must be holy in order to experience eternal life [i.e., to experience it in heaven]. They cannot rely on the indicative of God’s grace and shuck off the need for concrete obedience in the particulars of life.” (italics added)

<sup>61</sup> Hodges, 17.

<sup>62</sup> Ryrie, *Theology*, 345-347.

<sup>63</sup> Essex, 209, keeps Paul’s teaching in balance: “God has given believers everything they need for the Christian life of godliness, but they must to [sic] be diligent to put these God-given gifts into practice in their own lives.” As Essex develops his article he is careful to adhere to the biblical text, not imposing a theological “inevitability” on the text. He does quote Ryle in the conclusion of his article who crosses the line saying “those who know nothing of them [the visible marks of sanctification] may well doubt whether they have any grace at all” (p. 213). Essex’s article does not otherwise cross that line.

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inevitable is invalidated by the several subjunctives, imperatives, plus infinitives found throughout the chapter. Note:<sup>64</sup>

- ✓ Subjunctives at 5:21 (βασιλεύσῃ, *basileusē*, “might reign”); 6:4 (περιπατήσωμεν, *peripatēsōmen*, “should walk”); 6:6 (καταργηθῇ, *katargēthē*, “might be rendered inoperative”); cf. 7:4 (καρποφορήσωμεν, *karpophorēsōmen*, “should bear fruit to God”).
- ✓ Imperatives at 6:11 (λογίζεσθε, *logizesthe*, “consider”); 6:12 (βασιλευτέω, *basileuetō*, “reign”); 6:13 (παριστάνετε, *paristanete*, 2x, “present”); 6:19 (παραστήσατε, *parastēsate*, “present”).<sup>65</sup>
- ✓ Infinitives at 6:6 (μηκέτι δουλεύειν, *mēketi douleuein*, “should no longer be slaves”); 6:12 (ἐπιτακούειν, *eis to hupakouein*, “should obey”); cf. 7:6 (ἵνα δουλεύειν ἡμῶν, *hōste douleuein hēmas*, “should serve”).

This data is relevant for it shows contingency, potentiality, not inevitability. Being born again does not guarantee one will obey and bear fruit to sanctification—that he will persevere in experiential sanctification without slippage into carnality, even prolonged carnality, or worse, total apostasy. Such failure ought never to be, but may be. A believer’s volition remains operational and accountable for whether he obeys resulting in experiential sanctification, or disobeys resulting in a death-like experience, divine discipline, perhaps the sin unto death.

The Reformed view argues, however, for inevitability.

Those who have been justified are now being sanctified; if a man is not being [experientially] sanctified, there is no reason to believe that he has been justified.<sup>66</sup>

In other words, “sanctification is not merely the completion (correlate or implicate) of justification; it is justifying faith at work. In the faith counted for righteousness, actual righteousness is born. So the two are inseparable.”<sup>67</sup>

Michael Horton, a contemporary theologian in the Reformed tradition says the following.

The Reformers saw “Christ for us” and “Christ in us,” the alien righteousness imputed and the sanctifying righteousness imparted, as not only compatible but *necessary and inextricably related*. *Those who are justified through faith are new creatures and begin then and there to love God and their neighbor, yielding the fruit of good works*. Reformed churches agree with the Lutheran confession that if sin has free sway over one’s life, “the Holy Spirit and faith are not present.” However, it is not simply that justification and sanctification always go together in the application of redemption, as if they were parallel tracks; rather, justification is the judicial ground of a union with Christ that also yields renewal and sanctification. For Rome, we are justified because we are sanctified; for [Reformed] evangelicals, we are being sanctified because

<sup>64</sup> In Appendix #4 the Greek of our passage is diagrammed and uses color-coding to highlight the apostles’ flow of thought. The “key” at the beginning of the diagram explains the significance of the colors.

<sup>65</sup> Cary N. Weisiger III, “The Reformed Doctrine of Sanctification,” *Fundamentals of the Faith* (Christianity Today, n.d.) 11, points out that “these imperatives indicate a moral exertion that makes it impossible to believe that the desire and possibility of sinning are extinct.” He, however, goes beyond what is written when he says that these imperatives “rest upon such a complete internal change wrought by divine grace in the baptizand that a libertine response to grace (“let us continue in sin that grace may abound”) becomes impossible.” It seems that he bases such a conclusion on a doctrine of inevitability, or perseverance, i.e., if one is born again, he will inevitably not continue in sin but persevere in experiential sanctification.

<sup>66</sup> F. F. Bruce, “The Epistle of Paul to the Romans,” *The New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963) 142-43.

<sup>67</sup> R.E.O. White, “Sanctification,” *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984) 970.

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we have been justified ... *sanctification [is] the perlocutionary*<sup>68</sup> effect of the evangelical Word pronounced upon us by the Father in grace.” (italics added)<sup>69</sup>

Snider, who promotes Lordship theology, stumbles over himself for, on the one hand, he contends that justification does not cause sanctification.<sup>70</sup> Yet, on the other hand, he says:

The result of such a misstep [drawing a clear distinction between justification and sanctification] could include the notion that one believes in Jesus as Savior at one time, then may or may not bow to Him as Lord at some point later in life—the myth of the carnal Christian. This amounts to the idea that one can experience justification by faith alone and enjoy the benefit of a righted relationship with God, but never grow in personal holiness.<sup>71</sup>

For want of a more gracious way to say it, the author simultaneously speaks out of both sides of his mouth. Snider’s assumption is that experiential sanctification is inevitable. Furthermore, in his view the notion of a carnal Christian is a “myth,” i.e., that a Christian might not grow in personal holiness. Such a person cannot be eternally saved on the supposition believers inevitably progress in experiential sanctification. To the contrary, Romans 6 is clear that experiential sanctification is not a given so that believers are exhorted to consider, present, and negatively not to yield to sin. Nowhere does the biblical text suggest that experiential sanctification is automatic because of justification, the new birth, or a supernaturally imparted faith. A believer may choose to disobey and live a death-like experience, even doing so to the point of physical death (1 Corinthians 11:30). 1 John 5:16 speaks of a “brother” dying the sin unto death—being removed from this life by a disciplinary act of his Heavenly Father. James 5:19-20 encourages us to turn a wandering believer back to sound doctrine (“the truth”) thus sparing him “from death.” To gloss over such biblical data results in conclusions based on incomplete induction of which, on this point, Reformed theology has terribly failed for to them prolonged carnality with such a dreadful end is incompatible with their doctrine of perseverance.

In addition, isn’t it interesting that from the city from where he wrote Romans, Paul said to the Corinthians that they are “saints” (1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11), “washed” and “justified” (6:11), which signifies that their eternal place in heaven was secure. Yet, on the other hand, the apostle pointedly rebukes them saying “you are still carnal” (3:3a), and rhetorically asks “are you not carnal and behaving like mere men”? (3:3b), which identifies their failure to grow in experiential sanctification. The apostle obviously did not think that carnality among the born again is a myth! In fact, some Corinthians apparently did not progress at all, or at least very little, because when Paul wrote to them he said “many” of them “sleep”—that is have died the sin unto death that is maximum divine discipline (11:30). How then does one arrive at the conclusion that a carnal believer is a “myth”?—by superposing a theological system on the text that erroneously advocates inevitable sanctification.<sup>72</sup> Romans 6 reveals that such a humanly invented system is skewed.

4. In light of upcoming chapter 7, the content of chapter 6 alone, though foundational, is incomplete, leaving a believer frustrated: “O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me

<sup>68</sup> Merriam Webster (electronic edition, Logos 4): “The effect that a speaker’s words have on somebody’s emotions and responses.”

<sup>69</sup> Horton, *Theology*, 648-49.

<sup>70</sup> Andrew V. Snider, “Sanctification and Justification: A Unity of Distinctions” (*MSJ* 21/2 (Fall 2010) 174-75.

<sup>71</sup> Snider, 175.

<sup>72</sup> Snider, 177, manifests theological confusion when he later approvingly offers this quotation: “Sanctification is salvation, just as much as justification is salvation. It is grace. Nor is it optional, or dispensable, but necessary and inevitable.” (italics his)

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from this body of death (7:24)? This in no way minimizes the importance, even absolute necessity, of knowing and reckoning what God has done to enable us to advance in experiential sanctification. But chapter 6 is not stand-alone doctrine; we must wed it to chapters 7 and especially 8.

5. Chapters 6 & 7 are necessary preparation for Paul's "clincher" to the whole matter of experiential sanctification, i.e., the on-going work of the Holy Spirit in each believer's life (chapter 8). Building on knowing God's enablement (Romans 6), the inadequacy of energy of the flesh thus turning wholly to the Lord for deliverance (Romans 7, esp. v. 25), the apostle shows that by means of the work of the Holy Spirit—working in conjunction with our knowledge & application of Romans 6 & 7—experiential sanctification will happen with this result that "the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit" (Romans 8:4).

### Appendix #1<sup>73</sup>

#### "Condemnation" (κατάκριμα, *katakrima*)

It is doubtful that *katakrima* has anything to do with one's eternal destiny in either chapter 5:16, 18, or 8:1, its only three occurrences in the NT.

#### a. Translation and Definition

Whether one accepts the Majority Text or the Critical Text, there is no dispute that *katakrima* is parsed as a neuter, singular, nominative noun. Furthermore, in each text, it is clearly functioning as the subject of the independent clause. Most mainstream English Bibles have translated *katakrima* as "condemnation" in Romans 5 & 8. C. H. Dodd, however, translated it as "doom," and F. F. Bruce translated it "penal servitude." For the moment, it is sufficient to say that "condemnation" has been the overwhelmingly favored translation. Nonetheless, the standard lexicon of biblical Greek, BDAG, notes that "condemnation" is not the best definition for *katakrima*; rather, the word indicates "the punishment following sentence." BDAG prefers "punishment" or "doom." Support for this reading occurs in Dionysius of Halicarnassus (who wrote in the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C.) and in the ancient Corpus Papyrorum Raineri (CPR), among others. Interestingly, Liddell and Scott likewise cite Dionysius and the CPR, but under different categories. Their first definition is "condemnation; judgment." For this they cite Dionysius, among others. The second definition is the one favored by BDAG: "punishment; fine; damage." For support of this definition Liddell and Scott cite CPR, as well as the Archiducis Austriae (dating from the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D.) and the Amherst Papyri (dating from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D.).

Ultimately, the question to decide is whether *katakrima* in Rom 8:1, and in 5:16, 18, should be understood in the sense of "guilt" (forensic), or in the sense of "punishment" (the concrete consequences of guilt).

#### b. The usage of *Katakrima* in the Bible

The noun, *katakrima*, occurs nowhere in the Septuagint. Furthermore, it rarely occurs in the Greek-speaking world at large! The word only occurs in Scripture in three places—all of them in the book of Romans: 5:16, 18; 8:1. The context is so immediate that the first two references are probably determinative for the meaning in 8:1. Verse 5:16 reads (NKJV): "And the gift *is* not like *that which came* through the one who sinned. For the judgment *which came* from one *offense resulted* in condemnation, but the free gift *which came* from many offenses *resulted* in justification." Verse 5:18 reads (NKJV): "Therefore, as through one man's offense *judgment came* to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act *the free gift came* to all men, resulting in justification of life."

In both of these verses, "condemnation" is contrasted with "justification." In traditional understanding, "justification" is a forensic term, so it would be natural, given the explicit contrast, that "condemnation" should also be considered a forensic term. In this case, "guilt" rather than "punishment" is the concept Paul has in mind. On the other hand, in verse 5:16, "judgment" (*krima*) is said to result in "condemnation" (*katakrima*). Furthermore, the word for "justification" (*dikaiōma*) in

<sup>73</sup> Content provided by Stephen Andrew from an article to be published in a future issue of the *Chafer Theological Seminary Journal*.

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verse 5:16 is the same word used for “righteous act” in verse 5:18. The word translated “justification” in verse 5:18 (*dikaiōsin*) is technically a different word from *dikaiwma*, though the two are obviously related. All this is evidence for understanding *katakrima* as “punishment.”

### c. Theological Definitions

Kittel (TDNT) notes that, because “Paul views the wrath of God as a reality already revealed [Romans 1:18 ff.], for him God’s *katakrima* rests on the race from the time of Adam’s sin.” It is also argued that the *katakrima* of Romans 8:1 sees “as one the pronouncement and execution of the sentence.” Finally, Romans 8:1 “refers not merely to the divine sentence but also to its actual results.” Brown (NIDNTT) seems to agree with TDNT: “Divine condemnation, issuing, as the word implies, in damnation, is expressed by *katakrima*.” For NIDNTT, the word also implies a “two-for-one” deal: *katakrima* includes both the ideas of forensic guilt and actual punishment.

### d. Evaluation

The theological dictionaries in this case have “copped out.” In the light of Paul’s careful semantic distinctions within the passages in question, it is too simplistic to assume *katakrima* contains the force of both guilt and punishment. Based on the lexical data and especially on the usage of the word, the only two other times it occurs, “punishment” is the better translation of *katakrima* in Romans 8:1. Bruce’s “penal servitude” is a little too specific, and Dodd’s “doom” is a too broad and ambiguous (it has connotations of an eschatological event, which is far from Paul’s meaning here). Nonetheless, both of them are correct in viewing *katakrima* in the sense of “punishment” rather than in the sense of “guilt.”

In light of how Romans 5 & 6 naturally flow together, and how chapter 6 focuses on experience in the Christian way of life, we may conclude that Romans 5 “punishment” speaks in general terms of punishment in the sense divine discipline in this life, while Romans 6 becomes more specific defining this punishment as “death-like experience.”

## Appendix #2 Self-crucifixion

When Romans 6 teaches about crucifying the old man, it clearly identifies a work of God. The Lord does the crucifying and the believer is a passive recipient, doing nothing. Another side to crucifixion exists, however, that speaks of what a Christian should do to himself.<sup>74</sup> For example, note these various translations of Galatians 5:24 that describe what believers take initiative to do:

1. “Have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” (NKJV).
2. “Have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires” (NIV).
3. “Have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” (RSV).
4. “Have crucified the lower nature with its passions and desires” (New English Bible).
5. “Have nailed our sinful old selves on His cross. Our sinful desires are now dead” (New Life Testament). •
6. “Have nailed their natural evil desires to his cross and crucified them there” (Living Bible).

These translations/paraphrases have a correct common denominator: “have crucified” is an active voice, not passive voice, thus a believer’s initiative, not God’s, is in view.<sup>75</sup> The different voices

<sup>74</sup> All that follows in Appendix #2 presupposes abiding in Christ, walking by means of the Spirit, confession, faith, etc. Other papers at this conference will address these important doctrines while this paper centers attention on Romans 6 and issues involving passive and active crucifixion.

<sup>75</sup> Witmer, John A., “Romans,” *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1983) 2:609, interprets “crucified” in a passive sense: “This does not refer to self-crucifixion or self-mortification. Rather, it refers to the fact that by means of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, Christians were identified with Christ in His death and resurrection.” Witmer turns the active voice upside down probably influenced by Romans 6 and Reformed theology rather than the grammar of the immediate context. Students need to avoid such theological eisegesis.

*Appendices*

clearly distinguish from one another passages such as Romans 6:6 and Galatians 5:24.

Concerning the latter verse, and in keeping with the active voice, a commentator says “please notice that the ‘crucifixion’ of the flesh described here is something that is done not to us but by us. It is we ourselves who are said to ‘have crucified the flesh.’”<sup>76</sup> The same commentator also says,

“To ‘take up the cross’ was our Lord’s vivid figure of speech for self-denial. Every follower of Christ is to behave like a condemned criminal and carry his cross to the place of execution. Now Paul takes the metaphor to its logical conclusion. We must not only take our cross and walk with it, but actually see that the execution takes place. We are actually to take the flesh, our willful and wayward self and (metaphorically speaking) nail it to the cross.”<sup>77</sup>

In Galatians 5:24, Paul is not concerned with literal crucifixion. He uses crucifixion as a figure of speech to denote a severe action believers take against themselves. But we should ask, does such action not create a conflict with Galatians 3:3, where Paul asks “Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit are you now being perfected by the flesh?” We have no conflict! The question reminds us that the Holy Spirit initiates and completes our eternal salvation, freely giving believers all that one receives “in Christ” through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. Then, the Spirit enables us “to will and to do of God’s good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13), providing the incentive, resources, spiritual gifts, open doors, and results; thus, God receives all the credit for a believer simply utilizes what God puts at his disposal.

“Are you now being perfected by the flesh?” expects a “no” answer. Contextually, the question denotes that believers do not achieve experiential sanctification by determining to keep the law. Our obedience must not be motivated by the thought that “I am obligated to keep the Mosaic Law.” Nor is obedience to be motivated by the thought that God demands obedience apart from supernatural resources. We obey motivated by the “mercies of God” (Romans 12:1) and with faith that God will do for us all He promised: He has pledged to enable and make us adequate for what He wants us to do.

Nevertheless, Paul does not teach that we should not be obedient to attain experiential sanctification. In Galatians he counterattacks legalists who seek to mature by the energy of the flesh and mere law-keeping. But again he does not say to us who have begun in the Spirit that we are foolish and bewitched to obey. That notion perverts the grace of God into licentiousness (Jude 4). To the contrary, God’s grace teaches us to deny ungodliness (Titus 2:11-12).

Paul himself practiced incredible self-discipline to put doctrine into practice (1 Corinthians 9:24-27). Accordingly, having begun in the Spirit by responding to the Spirit’s convincing ministry, we should continue to respond to His initiative in our lives. As we respond, we do so trusting that the Spirit is in us, enabling us, so that the upshot may be that we fulfill the requirements of the law (Romans 8:4). God initiated at the moment of personal salvation and we responded with faith, period. God continues to initiate (working in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure) and we respond with faith and obedience, including zero confidence in the flesh.

In Galatians 5:24, the statement in which we are interested reads: “those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh and its passions and lusts.” “Have crucified” is an aorist tense that may denote an event, or series of events, either past, present, or future. Three things indicate a series of events is in view—events that should continue throughout a Christian’s lifetime:

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<sup>76</sup> John R. Stott, *The Message of Galatians* (London: Inter-Varsity, 1971) 150. Though we should not agree with Stott’s Lordship views, what he says about crucifixion has merit.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

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1. Luke 9:23 says take up your cross *daily*, which shows on-going, daily crucifixion. Though taking up one's cross and crucifying one's flesh are not the same thing, they cannot be divorced. Taking up one's cross inevitably resulted in an act of crucifixion.
2. Moreover, an on-going rather than one time self-crucifixion is in view because 5:17 says the Spirit and flesh carry-on perpetual warfare. Thus crucifying the flesh will be an on-going function of believers in this battle that exists from the new birth to death/Rapture. Peter adds that "fleshly lusts war perpetually against the soul" (present tense, 1 Peter 2:11).
3. Romans 7:13-25 reveals that on-going inner warfare is the experience of Christians, who are promised victory through Christ (7:24-25)! Success against the flesh may be on-going showing the struggle is on-going. In part, one achieves victory by self-crucifixion, which is a powerful weapon in our arsenal against the enemies identified as the world, flesh, and devil.

Accordingly, crucifying the flesh does not imply a one-shot event that destroys passion and lust. These have a way of attacking repeatedly either subtly like a seductress or like the charge of Patton's tanks (cf. James 1:14). Romans 6, which we cover in the body of this paper, teaches what our three counterattacks should be when the passions of the flesh rear up. These three constitute what it is to crucify the flesh:

1. First, we consider ourselves to be dead to sin because we are. We do not have to buckle under (Romans 6:11a).
2. Second, consider yourself alive to God because you are. Christ's resurrection life enables you to resist temptation with success (Romans 6:11b).
3. Third, resolve to honor God with your body's members. It's your choice—but a choice you can make because God first crucified the old man, applying the benefits of Christ's death and resurrection to your life at the moment you were born again (Romans 6:12-13).

Those "in Christ" should be in the on-going self-crucifixion business. They put to death the temptations of the flesh, thus denying themselves pleasures and desires at cross-purposes to the will of God. We never do it perfectly. And we do it better some days than others. Sometimes we do not do it at all. But the trend of those growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord should be more-and-more to crucify their flesh. Believers who do not more-and-more crucify the flesh, but instead drift into carnality, are headed for divine discipline, perhaps the sin unto death. Loss of reward will also await them at the Bema Seat of Christ.

Now what do we crucify?—"the passions and lusts of the flesh." These manifest themselves in the ways summarized in Galatians 5:19-21, called the "works of the flesh." Regardless of these "works," God crucified the tyranny of our flesh when we were born-again. In addition, He gave the Spirit who now indwells to enable. God has given us the written word to obey in the war against temptation. What remains is to crucify our temptations. How?—we crucify the flesh by believing I don't have to cave-in to evil because of what God has done and then refuse to cave-in. Nancy Reagan had it right: "Just say 'No'!"

Now let's look at this thing called crucifixion in its historical context?

It was only for capital offenders. So view your passions and lusts as capital offenders that deserve absolutely no mercy. They are not to be coddled. They are not to be fondled.

Crucifixion was one of the most painful of executions. So do not expect self-crucifixion to be painless. It is never easy to give-up what feels good, what seems so pleasurable of the devil's

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world. It is not pleasant to deny yourself rights, fun, or privacy when the demands of serving others in love call. Don't expect self-crucifixion to be a smooth and unjarring road.

Crucifixion did not instantly kill the criminal. Victims sometimes lasted for several days before they died, yet death did come. So it will be for us. We will not see the final death of lust in this life. Yet we must determine to keep nailing it to the cross until its death becomes decisive at the Rapture.<sup>78</sup>

Observe the following in terms of applying Romans 6.

... holiness lies in the degree and the decisiveness of our repentance. If besetting sins persistently plague us, it is either because we have never truly repented, or because, having repented, we have not maintained our repentance. It is as if, having nailed our old nature to the cross, we keep wistfully returning to the scene of its execution. We begin to fondle it, to caress it, to long for its release, even to try to take it down again from the cross. We need to learn to leave it there. When some jealous, or proud, or malicious, or impure thought invades our mind we must kick it out at once. It is fatal to begin to examine it and consider whether we are going to give in to it or not. We have declared war on it; we are not going to resume negotiations. We have settled the issue for good; we are not going to reopen it. We have crucified the flesh; we are never going to draw the nails.<sup>79</sup>

### **Comparable Ideas within the Semantic Range of Crucifying the Flesh**

There are several passages that do not use identical terminology, but theologically speak of crucifying the flesh. The following fall into the semantic range of self-crucifixion.

**Put to Death** (θανάτω, *thanatoō*). In Romans 8:13, Paul teaches that “if by the Spirit you *put to death* the deeds of the body, you will live.” This doctrine is most important coming as it does in Paul’s great trilogy of chapters on experiential sanctification. Backing up a moment, we see in 8:10-11 that though our bodies are dead because of sin, the Spirit grants life to our mortal bodies. So in what sense are our bodies “dead because of sin” (8:10)? His point is that our mortal bodies still have the sin nature with its lusts, and are “completely unresponsive to the new life the Christian now possesses.”<sup>80</sup> As a corpse cannot respond to stimuli around it—the sun or rain from above, a great party, or exciting football game, so our mortal bodies cannot respond to the Spirit. Our mortal bodies are numb or indifferent to the things of God. Though we possess the gifts of eternal forgiveness and life, our physical bodies could not care less.

Nevertheless, note the contrast here: “The [mortal] body is dead because of sin but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.” The physical bodies that we spend time bathing, grooming, primping, and dressing up have zero interest in doing the will of God—their interest is to gratify their lusts. The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, has great interest in promoting God’s will. These competing interests are what cause the enormous struggle we internally sense—wanting to do right, yet doing what is wrong; not wanting to do wrong, yet doing it anyway. The apostle in effect says that we will not mature until we accept the fact that these bodies are dead, caring nothing about God’s will. Whatever comes from our bodies—our thinking, choices, affections, and conscience—summons us to follow temptation and lust. Is it any wonder that it is futile, even foolish, to think that we can do something to our bodies—eat not, drink not, touch not!—supposing that such taboos will lead to spiritual growth? Legalistically following humanly invented rules only succeeds in inflaming the passions of sin (7:5), thus making progress toward authentic spirituality impossible.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 150-52.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 151-52.

<sup>80</sup> Zane Hodges, *Six Secrets of the Christian Life: The Miracle of Walking With God* (Dallas: Redencion Viva, 2004) n.p.

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In our pilgrimage towards true sanctification, therefore, we have to recognize that our mortal bodies are dead—totally indifferent to the things of God. We must cease attempts to find a solution or hope in the flesh. Our daily pilgrimage must concentrate its efforts on the inner man where the Holy Spirit has taken up residence. Accordingly, we have the next clause: “but the spirit is life because of righteousness.” The bad news again is that our mortal bodies are indifferent to spiritual things. Here is the good news: “the Spirit is life because of righteousness,” i.e., because God has imputed Christ’s righteousness to every Christian—the Holy Spirit indwells us and He is the Source and Supplier of abundant life. Remember that in 8:9, the apostle revealed that every believer has the Spirit; now we learn that the indwelling Spirit is life—even though our mortal bodies are dead to the things of God. That the Spirit is life gives us hope, in spite of the deadness of our natural bodies to spiritual things.

Paul continues in 8:11 saying “but if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies.” We see here a double mention of Christ’s resurrection. Why emphasize that Christ rose from the dead?—because the resurrection of Christ is *the* ultimate display of divine power. For Christians the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the event in which we most clearly see God’s omnipotence at work. The point is that the same Spirit who omnipotently raised Jesus from the dead is inside of each one of us. And when the Spirit raised Christ from the dead, He did not exhaust all of His power. He still has an unlimited supply to go around. Therefore, the apostle goes on, He “will also give life”<sup>81</sup> (future active indicative) to your mortal bodies, or simply “make [us] alive.”<sup>82</sup> This flows beautifully within chapters 6-8. For Paul explains how the Spirit gives the “life” mentioned in 8:6 that is the “newness of life” of 6:5, and He does not do it apart from but in conjunction with believers knowing and applying Romans 6.

And how does this new life in our dead mortal bodies becomes yours and mine?—“through His Spirit who dwells in you.” The same omnipotent Spirit who produced the resurrection of Jesus Christ has taken up residence in us. Accordingly, as the Holy Spirit gave life to Jesus’ dead body in the tomb, so He indwells to give life to us who still inhabit dead or insensitive mortal bodies.

This leads Paul to two Conclusions in 8:12-14. First, simply put, we owe nothing to the flesh (8:12-13a), a conclusion introduced by “therefore” drawing inference from what has preceded. His point is that we are not obligated to follow the lusts that spring from our mortal bodies and its sin nature. We have no duty or responsibility to be lead around by temptation and sin as though we have a ring in our nose. Why is that?—“for if you live according to the flesh you will die” (8:13a)—your daily experience will be *without* the life and peace of 8:6, and unable to please God (8:8). Thus, to die is living out a death-like experience.

The second conclusion is that the Spirit indwells to give us resurrection-like experience, though conditionally (8:13b-14). He says, “but if by the Spirit you *put to death* (θανάτοϋτε, *thanatoute*) the deeds of the body, you will live,” which is to experience life-like experience as opposed to death-like experience. The Spirit resides in our mortal bodies to give abundant life: “He who raised Christ will also give life to your mortal bodies” (8:11). Giving us life is *not* resurrection life, which we receive at the Rapture. What Paul *is* saying is incredible to say the least! The life that the Spirit has come to give our mortal bodies, He gives to dead bodies—bodies insensitive to spiritual things. Nevertheless, in these dead mortal bodies, God wants to give us newness of life that is such a contrast to death-like experience that the apostle compares it

<sup>81</sup> Cranfield (so Luther, 121, who quotes Augustine), “Romans,” 1:391, takes it to refer to the final resurrection because: (1) of meaning of v. 10, (2) the use of *thenta* here, (3) the way in which the thought of dying and living is picked up in v. 13, and (4) the fact that the subject of ethics is not again intro until v. 12.

<sup>82</sup> BDAG, 342.

to resurrection life. He does not talk about an out-of-body experience, but a sanctifying experience that may increase regardless of mortal, indifferent bodies. Authentic experiential sanctification, then, is a supernatural process that only the Holy Spirit can work within us; it is never the result of mere human strength, determination, or religious effort.

The conditional clause should not be lost on us: “**if** by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body,” which signifies that experiential sanctification is neither automatic nor inevitable. God created and allows the free exercise of our volition that we might make the kinds of choices that will lead to sanctification. Choosing to put to death the deeds of the body—the body insensitive to spiritual things—does not require rocket science. It is to say “no,” and mean it, to temptation. The phrase “by means of the Spirit” is tantamount to “by means of His enablement,” which assumes that we will not quench the Spirit because of unconfessed and/or unrepented of sin. When permitted, because we are not quenching Him, the Spirit *will* do what God sent Him to do. Know that, trust that, and then *confess ... consider ... present ... put to death ... bear fruit!* As we follow scripture’s guidance, the Spirit enables us to do what the Lord requires. Undergirding the challenge is a promise given to Old Testament believers and by application given to us: “Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord of hosts” (Zechariah 4:6).

**Put to Death** (νεκρόω, *nekroō*, a synonym of the previous word). In Colossians 3:5, Paul says “*put to death* the members of your earthly body.” “Put to death” is how many English translations render this verb.<sup>83</sup> In Romans 6, we learn that “considering” ourselves dead to sin and alive to God is foundational to authentic spiritual progress.<sup>84</sup> Colossians 3:5, however, has more than that in view, taking matters a step further. Figuratively, “put to death” means we are to see ourselves as hit men for the kingdom of God in the here and now, aggressively putting to death our members as tools for evil.

Ancient medical circles used “put to death” to denote a part of the body that had atrophied through sickness.<sup>85</sup> In effect disease killed a part of the body, rendering it useless. What’s the point? We must put to death our members so that they become useless for evil, no longer producing sinful acts.<sup>86</sup> It will be a lifelong adventure with ups-and-downs—the ups increasing and the downs decreasing as we progress in experiential sanctification.

O’Brien who quotes Bruce sees matters similarly: “The term ‘members’ (μέλη [*melē*]) comes to be extended beyond its ordinary sense to comprehend ‘the various kinds of sin which were committed by their means and in which the ‘flesh’ (the old nature) expressed itself actively.’”<sup>87</sup> Accordingly, we do not cater to the flesh thus strengthening it in our lives, or as Romans 6:16 put it, becoming enslaved to it. We put it to death allowing for maximum growth of godliness.

“Put to death” is an active voice, in first position, thus stressed! We do it, continually. We do not look for the Holy Spirit to do it for us, though He enables us. We know that God crucified our old man, thus the lusts of the flesh have no claim on us, freeing us to put to death fleshly aspirations. Sin is a criminal at large in our lives. We need to execute this outlaw. We do it; we

<sup>83</sup> For example, see the NIV, NKJV, RSV, Darby, and NEB. The NASB surprisingly translates “consider the members of your earthly body as dead,” which seems to follow Romans 6:11 rather than the Greek of Galatians 5:24! The imperative of Galatians indicates more than merely “considering.”

<sup>84</sup> Joseph Barber Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon.*, 8th ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1886) 209, comments as follows: “Νεκρώσατε ο[υ]τ[ό]ν i.e. ‘Carry out this principle of *death* to the world (2:20 □πεθάνετε, 3:3 □πεθάνετε), and kill everything that is mundane and carnal in your being.’”

<sup>85</sup> TDNT, 4:94.

<sup>86</sup> See S. Lewis Johnson, Jr., “Studies in the Epistle to the Colossians Part X: Christian Apparel,” *BSac* 121:481 (Jan 64) 21-33, for an exposition of the Greek text of this section of Colossians.

<sup>87</sup> WBC, #44, “Colossians, Philemon,” 176-7).

take the initiative. Paul lists immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed as the criminals to be executed (Colossians 3:5).

How do we do it? What's the bottom line? Keep sin confessed so that the Holy Spirit is not quenched in our lives. Then say "no" to temptation! Don't cave-in to its alluring come-ons. *That* is crucifying the flesh. We can because the Spirit and word make us adequate.

**Take Up Your Cross.** "And [Christ] summoned the multitude with His disciples and said to them, If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me" (Mark 8:34).

Let's not leap into overkill, becoming overly dramatic about how it is impossible to crucify oneself. Obviously in a literal sense it cannot be done because after you have nailed two legs and an arm to the cross, two insurmountable problems remain. You cannot nail down the remaining arm, nor drop the cross upright into the ground.

So where are we? In the Mark passage quoted above, the main idea is "desires to come after me," which is true also in Matthew 16:24 and Luke 9:23. How does one "come after" Christ? Mark records three things that Jesus said about "coming after" Him: (1) Deny yourself (8:34a), (2) take up your cross (8:34b), and (3) follow Me (8:34c). These give substance to "come after Me." Let's examine each one.

1. To "deny oneself" is to renounce personal opinions and ambitions when they clash with "the mind of Christ." Denying self is saying "No" to oneself, instead of doing as one pleases. Denying self is not merely denying ourselves momentary pleasure in sin. It includes, if necessary, relinquishing our plans, long-range hopes for success, and dreams of accomplishment. That should not shock us. Christ emptied Himself, becoming a servant and humbled Himself even to death. He denied Himself—even His life—to be obedient to God. So the first aspect of "coming after" Christ is to deny ourselves our cherished pleasures and plans that conflict with God's will.
2. "Take Up His Cross"<sup>88</sup> has as its background the Roman penal system that required a condemned man to carry his cross to the place of execution. The phrase "take up his cross" comes from this practice. Plutarch said "every criminal who goes to execution must carry his own cross on his back."<sup>89</sup> This was normative Roman practice. When writing about 16 slaves about to be executed for running away, Chariton of Ahrodisias said that they had to carry their crosses as an "effective . . . example to the rest' (of the slaves)."<sup>90</sup> Thus bearing one's cross motivated others to higher levels of obedience to Rome.

Roman officials reserved crucifixion "for hardened criminals, rebellious slaves and rebels against the Roman state."<sup>91</sup> In each case, disobedience to Rome was at the core of the matter. Thus crucifixions happened in public places to dissuade other would-be rebels. When others saw a man carrying his cross down the street to be executed, they thought "That's what will happen to me if I break Rome's laws." A historian says:

In the provinces Roman rule was held together by the popular perception that any challenge to her authority was doomed. It was thus imperative that any serious challenge to Rome's rule be met not only victoriously but also turned into a public demonstration that in the end the rebel had submitted. Having condemned a man to die for his rebellion, Rome required him, as his last act,

<sup>88</sup> See Michael Green, "The Meaning of Cross-Bearing," *BSac* 140:558 (Apr 83) 116-127.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 124.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 125.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

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to display submission publicly to the authority against which he previously had rebelled. This was done by having him carry the instrument of his judgment through the city to a public place while wearing a sign which said that he had been a rebel. But as all could see, he was now submissive. To “take up his cross” was thus a figure of speech easily understood by anyone in the Roman Empire to mean “to submit to the authority against which one had previously rebelled.”<sup>92</sup>

For the Christian, then, taking up one’s cross means to submit to the authority of God against whom he formerly rebelled. It is instructive to observe in Matthew 16:21-25 how Jesus denied Himself, talking up His cross:

- ✓ He submitted to the Father’s plan to die on the Cross (16:21).
- ✓ Peter resisted God’s plan for Jesus (16:22).
- ✓ Christ then rebuked Peter for seeking man’s interests, rather than God’s (16:23).
- ✓ Finally Christ says to Peter “take up your cross” (16:24).

Is not the implication clear?—taking up one’s cross is to submit to the will of God even to martyrdom. Luke 9:23 adds that we are to take up our cross *daily*, showing that the once-for-all event of being forgiven and granted eternal life is not in view. Neither is a one-shot taking up of one’s cross within the Christian way of life under consideration. Instead, Jesus views taking up our cross as on-going, daily submission to the will of God. Such cross bearing is an integral aspect of the Christian way of life for experiential sanctification.

In Mark 8:34 Jesus challenges “the multitude with His disciples” to take His cross and follow Him. Then in 8:38, He says “Whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him.” Accordingly, taking up one’s cross is willingness to endure shame for the Lord’s sake; it is putting to death a desire to save face when one’s testimony for Christ is on the line.

We cannot “come after” Jesus if we go the opposite direction of following after carnal desires. That’s counterproductive. Christ says to deny ourselves such a pursuit. Yet to deny ourselves, though crucial, is incomplete. It leaves us in neutral. Thus we need the second requirement, to “take up your cross” that is active submission to the Lord. Accordingly the coin has two sides: the negative side is to deny yourself, ceasing to rebel against the Lord’s rule. The positive side is to take up your cross, submitting to His rule.

3. “Follow Me” in essence repeats “come after me.” What’s that mean? Keep responding to the guidance of the Spirit who works in us both to will and to do of God’s good pleasure. And divine guidance takes us into the arena where we—not someone else, but we—must crucify the lusts of our flesh.

The challenges of self-denial, taking up our cross, and following Christ must be seen in the light of the ministries of the Holy Spirit. If we do not, we have a sure prescription for defeat and frustration. By themselves, terms like “deny” and “self-crucify” sound like another religion where man tries to work himself into spirituality. Nothing could be further from the truth. Scripture does challenge us to be responsible. It urges us to subordinate our desires to God’s will. But how do we do it?

On the one hand, we do it with an attitude of dependence on God to enable us to do what He requires! On the other hand, we do it by diligence and positive choices to follow Christ! That is, making the hard decisions to crucify self in order to be faithful to the One who loved us and gave Himself up for us! As a sidebar, Jesus says two things about personal failure to take up our cross that puts “teeth” into the challenge:

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 127.

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- “He who does not take his cross and follow after me is *not worthy* of Me” (Matthew 10:3).
- “He *cannot* be My disciple” (Luke 14:27).

The operative terms are (a) “not worthy” and (b) “cannot.” Jesus roots forward progress in experiential sanctification (discipleship) in taking up one’s cross. Here is evidence that being a believer and a disciple are two different matters though they may overlap. The first—being a believer—is the result of faith alone in Jesus Christ alone and is a free gift without cost, including the cost of taking up one’s cross! The second—being a committed disciple—requires counting the cost and paying it; thus, it is not a free gift.

**Daily Death.** Paul said “I die daily” (ἐποθνέσκω + καθ’ ἡμέραν, *apothnēskō + kath hēmeran*) which being a present tense coupled with the modifier “daily,” signifies on-going, consistent activity (1 Corinthians 15:31). In context the apostle is in “danger every hour” (15:30), including fighting with wild beasts in Ephesus (15:32)—a metaphor for being exposed to life-threatening encounters. These Paul willingly submitted himself to on behalf of his converts whom he loved and desired to protect and edify in the Lord.

When one discovers that he is in harm’s way, the natural inclination is self-preservation. To “die daily” is to crucify one’s desire for self-preservation. Thus Paul says he did not give up ministering the word in the face of personal danger, or jeers, and social stigma. If God keeps us alive, fine; but if He wants us to get beat-up, or become martyrs, equally fine! Either way we must crucify a desire for self-preservation when tempted to curtail or cease daily ministering.

**The Sentence of Death.** Paul’s missionary team “had the sentence of death within ourselves” (ἐπέκριμα τοῦ θανάτου, *to apokrima tou thanatou*, 2 Corinthians 1:9). “We had” is perfect active indicative, denoting a past decision to be under a sentence of death that has carried over into present experience and ministry. The contextual issue is frequent danger from the enemies of Christianity for he endured affliction (1:4), abundant sufferings (1:5), “being burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life” (1:8), and faced a peril of death (1:10).

In spite of great troubles, they voluntarily took upon themselves a sentence of death in the sense that they refused to trust human resources but only look to the Lord for divine power and protection (1:9). And, they resolved faithfully to serve Christ no matter what the consequences might be (1:6). Thus they crucified the temptations of the flesh to run and hide in the face of external difficulties. They chose to obey Christ despite personal attack, ridicule, and even death. They would not quit, being able to crucify themselves because God had first crucified the old man.

### Considerations regarding “Put to Death”

#### What It Is Not

- Merely denying yourself things that Scripture does not prohibit, which are enjoyable yet frowned upon by modern Pharisees. Voluntarily denying oneself whatever out of love for the weaker believer has its place.
- Conquest of the sin nature by the energy of the flesh. For example, flagellation as practiced by ascetics, or any sort of self-inflicted physical pain.

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- Training—mere attendance at Bible class, going to a Christian school, or home Bible class. These may be aspects of preparation to put to death one’s members, but are not the putting to death itself.
- Revivalism where a dynamic preacher visits for a week of meetings and pumps up everyone to do great things for God.
- Growth—this will influence your effectiveness and consistency to put to death the members of your body, but is not the same thing as putting your members to death.
- Cleansing by confession, which deals with sins already committed and, of course, which is an absolutely necessary preparatory step to progress in the Christian way of life. Nevertheless, confession does not deal with the root but fruits of temptation. Crucifying the flesh confronts the root or source of sin.
- “Super” experiences such as speaking in tongues, or being slain in the Spirit, which have zero biblical justification.
- Personal resolutions made at New Years, Christian conferences and camps. These may help launch young (or older) believers in the right direction, but only if they move believers to get serious about the “mind of Christ.”

### **What “Putting to Death” presupposes**

Putting to death our members with their sinful activities, presupposes teaching such as Romans 6-8 and 2 Corinthians 3:5. That is, God has not abandoned us to inadequate human resources. We have the indwelling Spirit. We have the word of God. By God’s grace we have each other to stimulate one another unto love and good deeds. Thus God Himself enables us to succeed at “putting to death” our members as we make a genuine attempt.

### **What to Expect When “Putting to Death” Your Members**

Does anyone need to be reminded that crucifying our passions is not a Sunday school picnic? Christianity is more than social times, swim parties, beach get-togethers, and hunting for Christian mates. Authentic Christianity is warfare against the flesh and learning to depend on the Spirit to do in us what God sent Him to do, such as produce the fruit of the Spirit:

1. To love, when we are tempted to hate or be indifferent.
2. To rejoice, when it’s natural to bellyache.
3. To be at peace, when jumping into a feud is so exhilarating.
4. To be patient, when you need it done yesterday.
5. To be kind, when you would rather punch him in the nose, or scratch her eyes out.
6. To be good, when evil is so delicious, so delightful.
7. To be trustworthy, when it’s easier to flake out.
8. To be gentle, when you could be pushy and get your way.
9. To exercise self-control, when you would rather cut loose and do it your way.

Temptation at cross purposes to God’s will should be put to death. And we must do it. Not because we are super warriors, but because the Holy Spirit makes us adequate for all things God requires. Do not expect “crucifying the flesh” to be easy. It is not, figuratively speaking, slapping the problem on the wrist, but going to war and putting to death the enemy.<sup>93</sup> We have to put on a serious attitude without becoming weirdo. For example:

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<sup>93</sup> We may illustrate by Israel’s attitude toward defeated Jericho, *and they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword* (Joshua 6:21).

*Appendices*

- Christ said to “pluck out an eye, or cut off a hand” that violates God’s norms (Matthew 5:29), which is not a reference to literal maiming of one’s body, but to taking severe action in confronting the sin in one’s life and rooting it out.
- How did the Father deal with sin? Remember Christ on the Cross! No half-way measures there. No lukewarm attitude toward the dilemma of sin. No attempt to whitewash or rationalize away sin. The Father put Christ to death to deal with sin.

## Appendices

### Appendix #3

Dr. Robert Dean, Jr. submitted the data in Appendix #3. It gives an overview of how a Bible student can use Logos 4 Software to dig deeper and more accurately into scripture. Note the following color coded key (Figure 1), then observe in the next two charts (Figures 2 & 3) how it applies to the Greek and English texts of Romans 6.

**Verb NT Logos Morphology** ↗

Search **All Morph Text** in **New Testament** in **All Resources** with **Logos Greek Morphology** for

@VP	→	Yellow Highlighter
@VA	→	Blue Highlighter
@V??M	→	Exclamation!
@V??P	→	Double Underline
@VF	→	Green Highlighter
@VI	→	Brown Highlighter
@V??N	→	>>Inline Pointers<<
@VL	→	Pink Highlighter
@VR	→	Purple Highlighter
@V??S	→	[Brackets]
@V?P	→	Passive <sup>3</sup>
@V?M	→	Formatting
@	→	Formatting

Figure 1

--See texts on next page--

6 Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν; [ἐπιμένωμεν] τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ, ἵνα ἡ χάρις [πλεονάσῃ]; 2 μὴ γένοιτο. οἵτινες ἀπεθάνομεν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ, πῶς ἔτι ζήσομεν ἐν αὐτῇ; 3 ἢ ἀγνοεῖτε ὅτι, ὅσοι ἐβαπτίσθημεν<sup>†</sup> εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν, εἰς τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ ἐβαπτίσθημεν<sup>†</sup>; 4 συνετάφημεν<sup>†</sup> οὖν αὐτῷ διὰ τοῦ βαπτίσματος εἰς τὸν θάνατον, ἵνα ὡσπερ ἠγέρθη<sup>†</sup> Χριστὸς ἐκ νεκρῶν διὰ τῆς δόξης τοῦ πατρὸς, οὕτως καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐν καινότητι ζωῆς [περιπατήσωμεν]. 5 εἰ γὰρ σύμφυτοι γεγόναμεν [p 419 τῷ ὁμοιώματι τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως ἐσόμεθα. 6 τοῦτο γινώσκοντες ὅτι ὁ παλαιὸς ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος συνεσταυρώθη<sup>†</sup>, ἵνα [καταργηθῆ<sup>†</sup>] τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας, τοῦ μηκέτι >>δουλεύειν<< ἡμᾶς τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ. 7 ὁ γὰρ ἀποθανὼν δεδικαίωται<sup>†</sup> ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας. 8 εἰ δὲ ἀπεθάνομεν σὺν Χριστῷ, πιστεύομεν ὅτι καὶ συζήσομεν αὐτῷ, 9 εἰδότες ὅτι Χριστὸς ἐγερθεὶς<sup>†</sup> ἐκ νεκρῶν οὐκέτι ἀποθνήσκει, θάνατος αὐτοῦ οὐκέτι κυριεύει. 10 ὁ γὰρ ἀπέθανεν, τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ ἀπέθανεν ἐφάπαξ· ὁ δὲ ζῆ, ζῆ τῷ θεῷ. 11 οὕτως καὶ ἡμεῖς λογιζομεθα! ἑαυτοὺς [>>εἶναι<<] νεκροὺς μὲν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ ζῶντας δὲ τῷ θεῷ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

12 Μὴ οὖν βασιλευτέω! ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐν τῷ θνητῷ ὑμῶν σώματι εἰς τὸ >>ὑπακούειν<< ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις αὐτοῦ, 13 μὴ δὲ παριστάνετε! τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν ὅπλα ἀδικίας τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ, ἀλλὰ παραστήσατε! ἑαυτοὺς τῷ θεῷ ὡσεὶ ἐκ νεκρῶν ζῶντας καὶ τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν ὅπλα δικαιοσύνης τῷ θεῷ. 14 ἁμαρτία γὰρ ὑμῶν οὐ κυριεύσει· οὐ γὰρ ἔστε ὑπὸ νόμον ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ χάριν. 15 Τί οὖν; [ἀμαρτησώμεν], ὅτι οὐκ ἐσμὲν ὑπὸ νόμον ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ χάριν; μὴ γένοιτο. 16 οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι ᾧ παριστάνετε ἑαυτοὺς δούλους εἰς ὑπακοήν, δοῦλοι ἔστε ᾧ ὑπακούετε, ἥτις ἁμαρτίας εἰς θάνατον ἢ ὑπακοῆς εἰς δικαιοσύνην; 17 χάρις δὲ τῷ θεῷ ὅτι ἦτε δούλοι τῆς ἁμαρτίας ὑπακούσατε δὲ ἐκ καρδίας εἰς τὸν παρεδόθητε<sup>†</sup> τύπον διδαχῆς, 18 ἐλευθερωθέντες<sup>†</sup> δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας ἐδουλώθητε<sup>†</sup> τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ. 19 Ἀνθρώπινον λέγω διὰ τὴν ἀσθένειαν τῆς σαρκὸς ὑμῶν. ὡσπερ γὰρ παρεστήσατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δούλα τῇ ἀκαθαρσίᾳ καὶ τῇ ἀνομίᾳ εἰς τὴν ἀνομίαν, οὕτως νῦν παραστήσατε! τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δούλα τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ εἰς ἀγιασμόν. [p 420 20 ὅτε γὰρ δούλοι ἦτε τῆς ἁμαρτίας, ἐλεύθεροι ἦτε τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ. 21 τίνα οὖν καρπὸν εἶχετε τότε; ἐφ' οἷς νῦν ἐπαισχύνεσθε, τὸ γὰρ τέλος ἐκείνων θάνατος. 22 νυνὶ δὲ ἐλευθερωθέντες<sup>†</sup> ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας δουλωθέντες<sup>†</sup> δὲ τῷ θεῷ ἔχετε τὸν καρπὸν ὑμῶν εἰς ἀγιασμόν, τὸ δὲ τέλος ζωὴν αἰώνιον. 23 τὰ γὰρ ὀψώνια τῆς ἁμαρτίας θάνατος, τὸ δὲ χάρισμα τοῦ θεοῦ ζωὴ αἰώνιος ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν.

Figure 2

**Chapter 6**  
*Believers Are Dead to Sin, Alive to God*

1 <sup>a</sup>What shall we say then? Are we to <sup>b</sup>[continue] in sin so that grace may [increase]?  
2 <sup>a</sup>May it never be! How shall we who <sup>b</sup>died to sin still live in it?  
3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been <sup>a</sup>baptized<sup>†</sup> into <sup>b</sup>Christ Jesus have been baptized<sup>†</sup> into His death?  
4 Therefore we have been <sup>a</sup>buried<sup>†</sup> with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was <sup>a</sup>raised<sup>†</sup> from the dead through the <sup>c</sup>glory of the Father, so we too might [walk] in <sup>d</sup>newness of life.  
5 For <sup>a</sup>if we have become <sup>1</sup>united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be <sup>2</sup>in the likeness of His resurrection,  
6 knowing this, that our <sup>a</sup>old <sup>1</sup>self was <sup>b</sup>crucified<sup>†</sup> with Him, in order that our <sup>c</sup>body of sin might be <sup>2</sup>[done<sup>†</sup>] away with, so that we would no longer >>be<< slaves to sin;  
7 for <sup>a</sup>he who has died is <sup>1</sup>freed<sup>†</sup> from sin.  
8 Now <sup>a</sup>if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,  
9 knowing that Christ, having been <sup>a</sup>raised<sup>†</sup> from the dead, <sup>1</sup>is never to die again; <sup>b</sup>death no longer is master over Him.  
10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.  
11 Even so consider! yourselves to >>be<< <sup>a</sup>dead to sin, but <sup>b</sup>alive to God in Christ Jesus.  
12 Therefore do not let sin <sup>a</sup>reign! in your mortal body so that you >>obey<< its lusts,  
13 and do not go on <sup>a</sup>presenting! <sup>1</sup>the members of your body to sin as <sup>2</sup>instruments of unrighteousness; but <sup>b</sup>present! yourselves to God as those <sup>a</sup>alive from the dead, and your members as <sup>2</sup>instruments of righteousness to God.  
14 For <sup>a</sup>sin shall not <sup>b</sup>be master over you, for <sup>c</sup>you are not under law but <sup>d</sup>under grace.  
15 What then? <sup>a</sup>Shall we [sin] because we are not under law but under grace? <sup>b</sup>May it never be!  
16 Do you not <sup>a</sup>know that when you present yourselves to someone as <sup>b</sup>slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of <sup>c</sup>sin <sup>1</sup>resulting in death, or of obedience <sup>2</sup>resulting in righteousness?  
17 But <sup>a</sup>thanks be to God that <sup>1</sup>though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that <sup>b</sup>form of teaching to which you were committed<sup>†</sup>,  
18 and having been <sup>a</sup>freed<sup>†</sup> from sin, you became <sup>1</sup>slaves of righteousness.  
19 <sup>a</sup>I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just <sup>b</sup>as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, <sup>1</sup>resulting in further lawlessness, so now present! your members as slaves to righteousness, <sup>2</sup>resulting in sanctification.  
20 For <sup>a</sup>when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.  
21 Therefore what <sup>1</sup>benefit were you then <sup>2</sup>deriving<sup>†</sup> <sup>3</sup>from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is <sup>b</sup>death.  
22 But now having been <sup>a</sup>freed<sup>†</sup> from sin and <sup>b</sup>enslaved<sup>†</sup> to God, you <sup>1</sup>derive your <sup>2</sup>benefit, <sup>3</sup>resulting in sanctification, and <sup>d</sup>the outcome, eternal life.  
23 For the wages of <sup>a</sup>sin is death, but the free gift of God is <sup>b</sup>eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Figure 3

*Appendices***Appendix #4**

**See Excel Attachment for Color-coded Greek Diagram  
of Roman 5:18-6:23**

### Romans 5:18-6:23

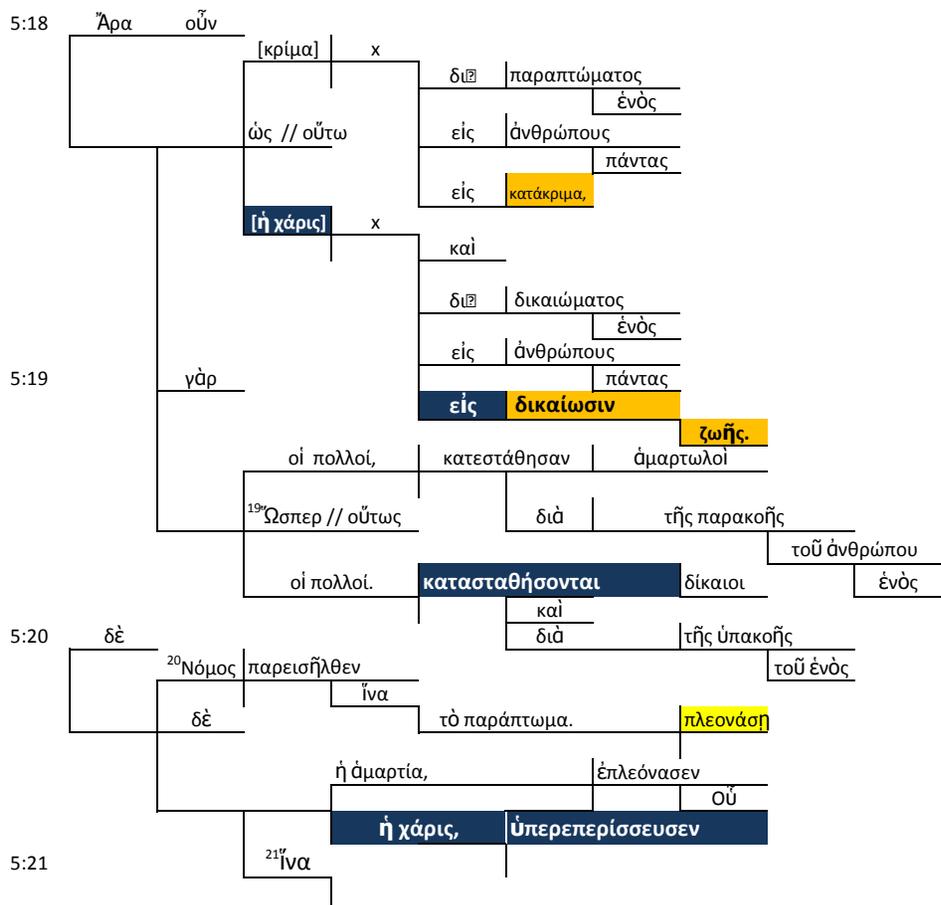
**KEY:**

"Blue" signifies what God has done for believers in Christ making possible experiential sanctification. Note especially indicative moods.

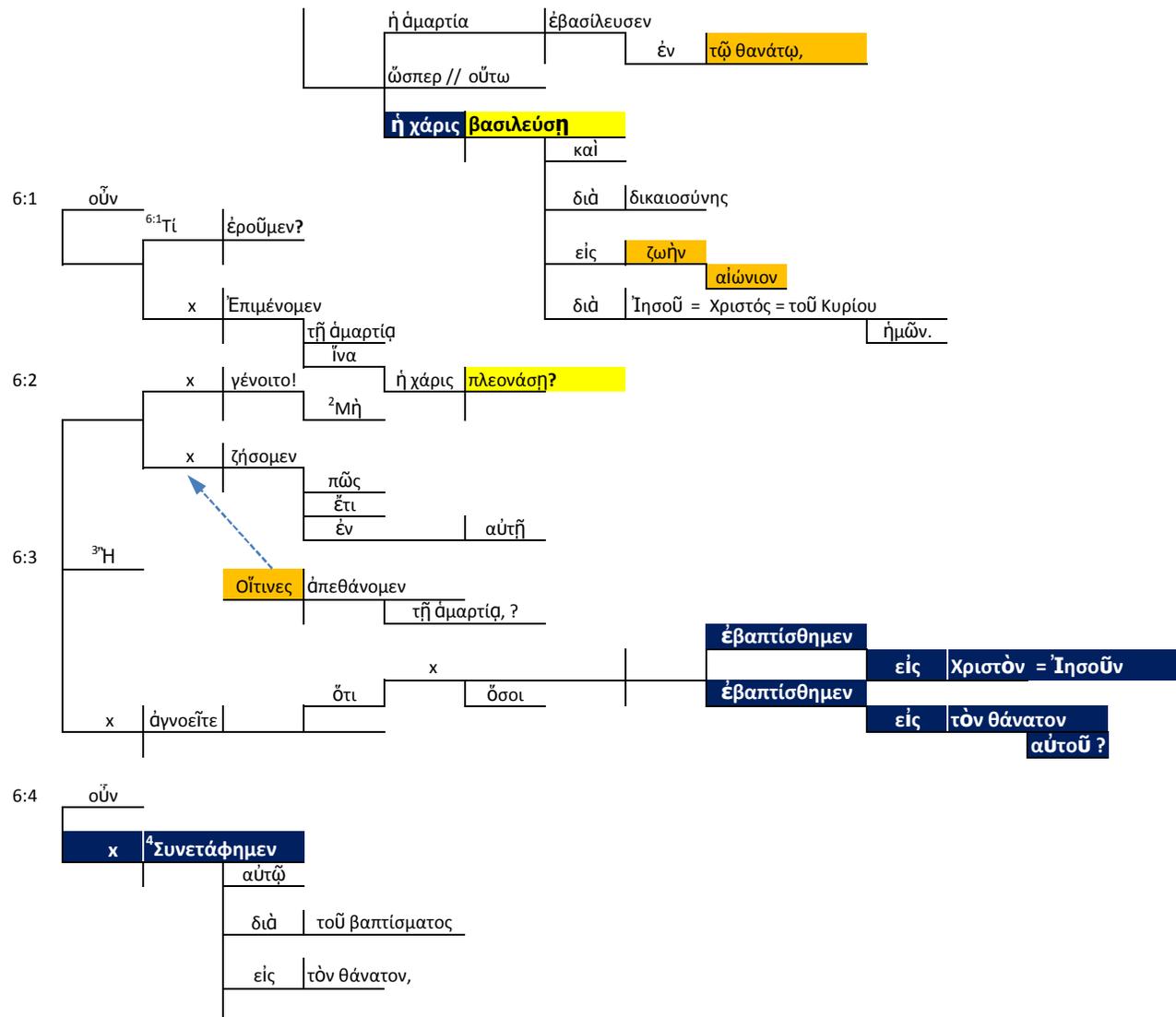
"Red" denotes believers' volition used either positively or negatively.

"Orange" signifies important words or phrases to understand.

"Yellow" denotes the subjunctive idea speaking of intent, not what is inevitable, sovereignly compelled, or assured.

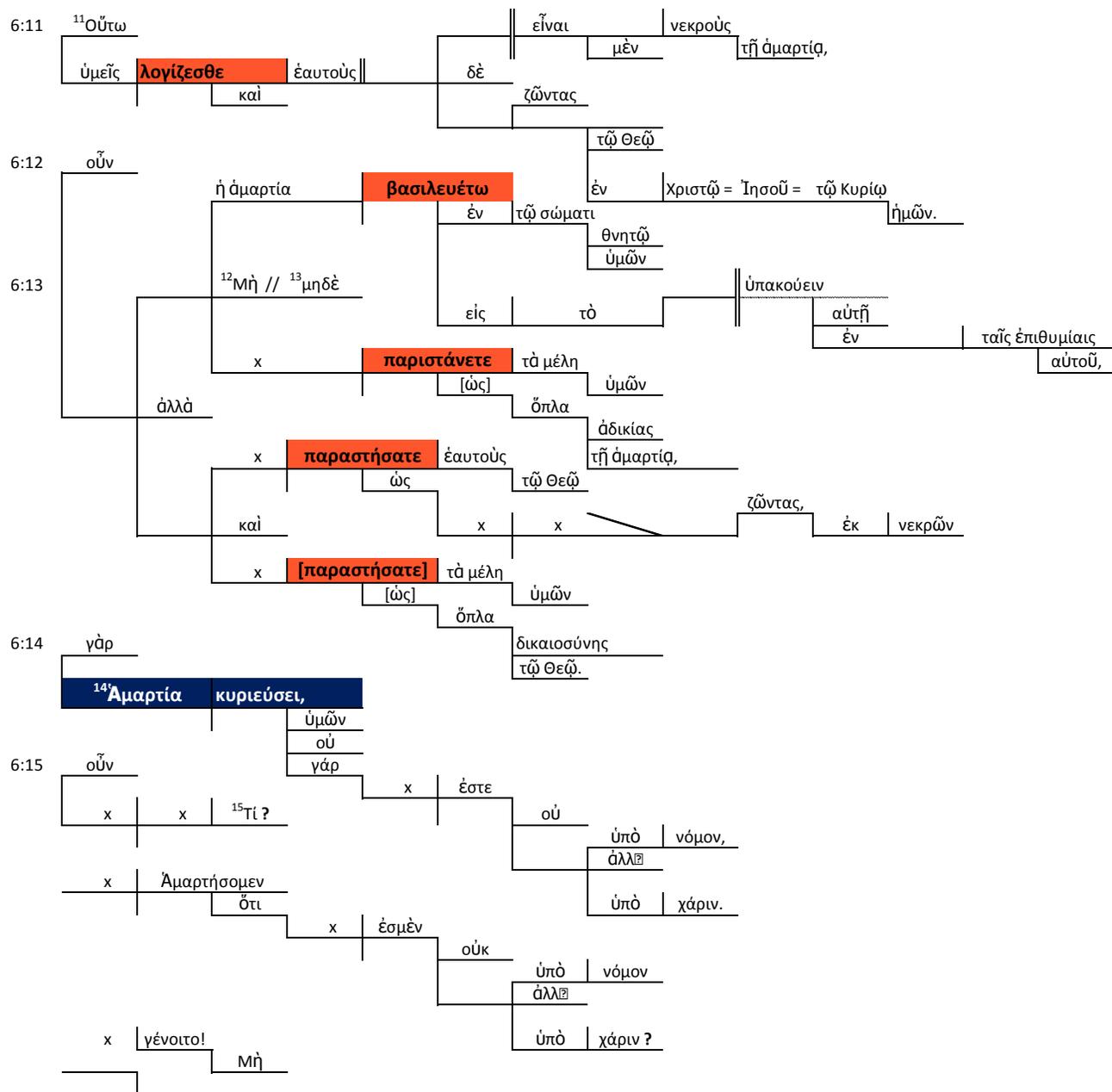


### Romans 5:18-6:23

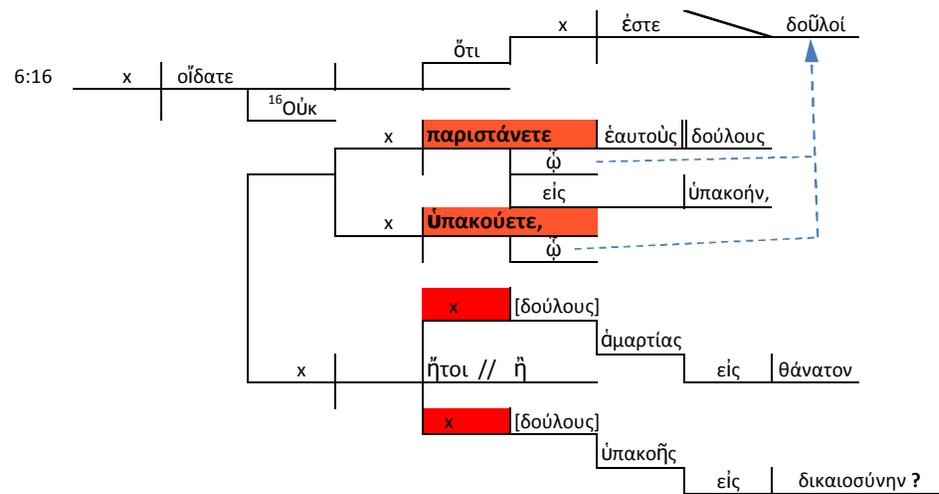




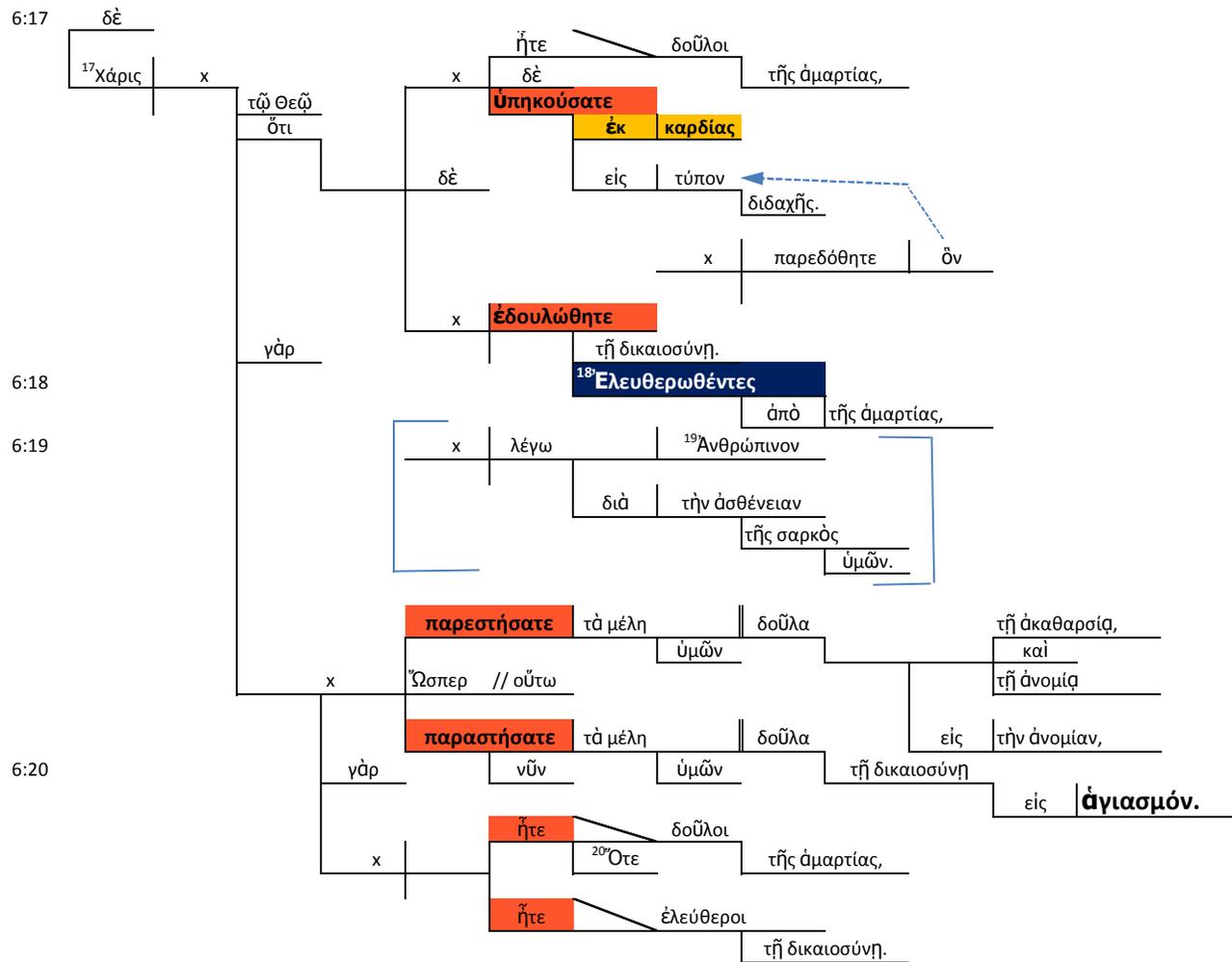
## Romans 5:18-6:23



## Romans 5:18-6:23



### Romans 5:18-6:23



Romans 5:18-6:23

