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Words for children: died, lived, new, old

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Text: Romans 6:12ff;
2 Cor. 5:14-17

Romans (29): Instruments of Righteousness

Introduction:

Last Lord's Day we gave attention to our self-identity as Christians. This is the major point of emphasis Romans 6:11, which reads, "So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus." We, who know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, because of our union with Him in His death and resurrection, are to identify ourselves with our new life in Jesus Christ. I am not to see myself as I was before being in Christ--a sinner condemned by God's judgment; rather, I am to see my identity as a new man in Jesus Christ. Yes, I still sin, or rather, sin dwells within me, but I, myself, am a new man, a new creature in Christ Jesus. I am no longer "Lars" the guilty sinner, but I am "Lars" the Christian, the new man in Christ. If you, the Christian, assume your new self-identity as a Christian, then you will not feel condemned and estranged from Your God when you sin. Because you have identified yourself as the new man (or woman) in Christ, bound in spiritual union with the life of Your Savior, then you will see sin as a foreign and invasive principle, a common enemy of yours and God's, which is seeking to defeat you and defile you. You will be able to call upon the Lord as a Friend and a Savior to help you defeat the sin that dwells in you, which is the common enemy to both you and your God.

Now there is a matter that is closely related to this that is not expressed here by Paul, but he does teach elsewhere in his New Testament Christians. Not only is each Christian to identify himself with his new life in Christ, but in the same manner *he is to identify other Christians as ones who are in Christ Jesus*. In other words, we Christians are to view other Christians' identity as in Christ, just as we are to view our own selves in union with our Savior. We are not to "identify" or characterize, or relate to other Christians on the basis of external *criteria*, but rather we are to view them and treat them as they are in reality—new creatures who are in spiritual union with Jesus Christ. Paul expressed this to the Corinthians:

¹⁴For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; ¹⁵and He died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for Him who for their sake died and was raised. ¹⁶From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard Him thus no longer. ¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Cor. 5:14-17)

Paul was explaining to these Corinthian Christians that their new life in Jesus Christ should shape their thinking about who they were. The same idea of Romans 6:11 is substantively set forth here. But there in Romans 6 Paul was commanding the individual Christian to identify *himself* to be in Christ, however here, Paul is telling the Christian to view *other Christians* to be in Christ. Paul reasons that the love that Christ manifested when He died for us should move us to live no longer for ourselves, but for Him, just as He gave Himself to die for us. Paul declared that from now on, that is, because of the death of Jesus Christ for us on the cross and upon our knowledge of this reality when we were converted, we should now view other Christians to be in union with Christ. If we are Christians, then we are not only to identify our individual self with the new life we enjoy in Christ, but we are to view and treat other Christians as they are in truth—ones who are new creatures, enjoying life with one another in the new creation.

Paul had declared in 2 Corinthians 5:16 that upon his conversion he no longer regard Christians “according to the flesh.” What is meant by this is that he no longer assessed a Christian’s identity or evaluated a Christian’s person according to external or worldly criteria, but rather according to who they are in Christ.

In 2 Corinthians 5:16 Paul made a statement that raises some interesting questions. Paul declared, “Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer.” Some have speculated that Paul was saying that he had formerly seen and heard Jesus Christ when He ministered on earth and before he, Paul, had been converted. Now it is possible, perhaps even likely, that Paul had seen and heard Jesus teach and witness Him doing miracles.

Probably Paul had heard and seen Jesus in Jerusalem, where he studied under Gamaliel for many years (cf. Acts 22:3). It would have been unlikely that Paul had never heard Jesus or of him during his student years. But whether or not he had heard Christ is not the point that Paul is trying to make. He viewed Jesus in those days with an unspiritual and worldly mindset (cf. 11:18). He refused to accept Christ in faith and repudiated his teachings to such an extent that he persecuted Christians.¹

Now, when Paul wrote, “Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh”, we should not think that the expression, “according to the flesh” is modifying Christ, which would suggest that Paul was not concerned with our Lord’s identity and person when He ministered on earth but is only concerned with Jesus as the risen and enthroned Lord.² No, the expression, “according to the flesh”, refers to Paul’s action conveyed by the verb, “once regarded.” He had once regarded Christ “according to the flesh”, but did no longer. The expression, “according to the flesh” should be understood as Paul saying that he had once assessed or regarded Christ according to worldly or external criteria. He had judged Jesus according to the outward appearance of things.

Paul had despised and hated him because he had judged him only according to his outward appearance as a poor suffering man, yet claiming to be the Christ the Son of the living God. His Jewish notions of what the Messiah was to be led him to regard with indignation the claims of Jesus to be the Christ.³

But when Paul was converted, he saw Christ for who He truly is--He is the crucified, buried, and risen Christ the Lord. And Paul was telling the Christians at Corinth that they were in the same way to view one another as Christians who are in union with Jesus Christ.

Now, we have emphasized in the past that Christians are to have a high view of the nature of humanity as God having made man in His image. This should result in us regarding and treating every human being with dignity and regard. Of course being made in the image of God actually aggravates a man’s guilt before God and condemnation by God because of what man has done with God’s image through sin. Nevertheless, we are to treat all people everywhere with respect for the dignity that they have as made in the image of God.

¹ Simon J. Kistemaker, *2 Corinthians*, New Testament Commentary (Baker Academic, 1997), p. 516.

² This was the view of higher critics who tried to downplay the quest for “historical Jesus”, that Paul was only concerned about knowing Christ in His current exalted and enthroned estate. This is not what Paul was saying.

³ Charles Hodge, *A Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (Banner of Truth Trust, 1063), p. 140.⁴ Schreiner makes a good point: “The adage ‘become what you are’ has commonly been employed to set forth the relationship between the indicative and the imperative. This designation is not fully satisfactory, for believers still await the day of resurrection and the completion of redemption (8:22-25). Such a maxim falls prey to over realized eschatology, suggesting that believers already possess all that they need in Christ. The correlation between the indicative and the imperative is instead more dynamic. A better maxim is ‘become who you are becoming.’ Thereby the necessity of carrying out the imperative is preserved.” Thomas Schreiner, *Romans* (Baker Academic, 1998), p. 321.

But the Christian is to view another Christian on a much higher plane. If you are a Christian, you are in union with Jesus Christ. But your brother or sister in the faith sitting near you is equally in Christ. I am to have the same regard for you as I would have for Christ Himself, for you are in Christ. We are not to view one another as “sinners”, but as “saints”, separated ones, holy before the Lord.

This may be difficult for you if you are not “spiritually minded” sufficiently to see this truth. This maybe most difficult for some of you who have known one another your whole lives. You have established an opinion or an assessment of the character of another based upon what you have observed in his or her life for many years. But if you took this spiritual lesson to heart, you would resolve henceforth to “regard no one according to the flesh.” Why? “For if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” You should say, “From now on I will regard my brother or sister with the dignity which is his as a Christian. As I see myself in Christ, I will regard and treat my fellow believer as also a new creature in Christ.

Let us now look at the next paragraph of **Romans 6:12-14**.

¹²Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. ¹³Do 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, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. ¹⁴For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. (Rom. 6:12-14)

We emphasized that with Romans 6:11 we have the first imperative (command) that Paul expressed in this epistle. But having given a command in verse 11, he continued to issue three more successive commands, one in verse 12, and two commands in verse 13, four commands in all in these few verses.

The first command that we considered last week was *positively* expressed; we have a command of *what we are to do*.

(1): “So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus” (6:11)

Then we have the next two commands expressed *negatively*; we have the command of *what we are not to do*.

(2) “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions” (6:12).

We are also not to do this:

(3) “Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness” (6:13a).

The fourth command is worded *positively*; this is *what we are to do*:

(4) “But present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness” (6:14b).

And so, just as verse 11, **verse 12** contains an imperative mood verb, in other words, it is in the form of a command that Paul directs to his readers. *“Do not let sin therefore reign in your body, to obey its passions.”* This is a command to us that we purpose to live consistent with who we are—dead to sin and alive unto God. Whereas verse 11 had to do with our *self-identity*, verse 12 has to do with our *activity*. Sin is set before us as a power that would control us if we do not actively resist it and refuse to allow it to have control over us. We have been delivered from the dominion of sin through the death of Christ; therefore, do not let it reign over you as a Christian.

Now it should be pointed out that Paul does not here give the means or manner of defeating sin. He will do so later in the passage. Here he is simply commanding Christians that they are to be actively resisting sin from having dominion over their lives. Later he will explain that this must be done through the Spirit, but here he is pressing upon Christians to live according to who they are in Christ.

Verse 13 is more specific as to the arena in which we are not to allow sin to control us. ***“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, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.”*** “Your members” have to do with your physical body as well as the aspects of your soul including the mind, the affections, and one’s will. He is essentially saying to his readers, “Sin no longer has mastery over you; therefore, do not let it have mastery over you.” Become who you are and who you are becoming in Christ.⁴ Again, here Paul gives the command, but later he will prescribe the manner in which this may be accomplished. He is commanding his readers to live so as to be consistent with who they are in Christ.

We then read **verse 14** the explanation for verse 13, ***“For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.”*** This follows the pattern that Paul commonly uses. He introduces a word or theme only to explain the matter fully at a later point. Here he states the truth: ***The believer is not under law but under grace.*** He will soon begin to tell his readers what this means for who they are and how they should live.

There are several principles respecting the believer’s *sanctification* that we may glean from these verses. And again, for our purposes we have used the definition of sanctification given long ago by the Puritans in 17th century England. They wrote:

“Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.”⁵

What are these principles from our passage?

First, sin is not dead in Christians, even in the most mature and pious Christians, but rather is something always to be struggled against.⁶ We will always be fighting against sin that dwells within us. You may gain victory over some sins now and then, but sin will always be a problem that we will be struggling against through this life. We have spoken of those who believe a degree of perfectionism is possible for the devout believer in this life, but they are only deceiving themselves. I recall years ago visiting with a husband and wife who had been visiting our church. They were both fairly young Christians, but they were very committed, very devout. The husband was sadly deluded, however, that he had arrived to where sin was no longer a problem for him. He claimed to have arrived to the place where he lived victoriously over all sin. I knew that he needed to be instructed more clearly about these matters and so I wanted to confront him with the realization that he was not as holy as he thought that he was.

⁴ Schreiner makes a good point: “The adage ‘become what you are’ has commonly been employed to set forth the relationship between the indicative and the imperative. This designation is not fully satisfactory, for believers still await the day of resurrection and the completion of redemption (8:22-25). Such a maxim falls prey to over realized eschatology, suggesting that believers already possess all that they need in Christ. The correlation between the indicative and the imperative is instead more dynamic. A better maxim is ‘become who you are becoming.’ Thereby the necessity of carrying out the imperative is preserved.” Thomas Schreiner, *Romans* (Baker Academic, 1998), p. 321.

⁵ This is the answer to the 35th question of the Westminster Shorter Catechism.

⁶ I am indebted to the comments of James Montgomery Boice who identified these principles in his expository commentary on Romans. James M. Boice, *Romans, vol. 2, The Reign of Grace, Romans 5:1-8:39* (Baker Books, 1992), pp. 682ff.

And so, when he declared that he no longer struggled with sin, I turned to his wife sitting beside him and asked her, “Is it true that your husband no longer has a problem with sin?” Now she was a loyal and supportive wife to her husband. But all she could do was lower her head in silence. The husband got the point, and owned up to his ongoing struggle. The fact is that everyone of us have sin that indwells us that we need to engage and resist.

Second, *sin’s hold on us is in or through our bodies.*⁷ This is what Paul is implying when he said, “**Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions**” (Rom. 6:12). Sin is manifested through our physical senses as well as through our thoughts of our minds. Paul is not saying that sin was presently reigning in the lives of these Christians at Rome and that they were supposed to stop sin from reigning in their lives. No, Paul had already declared that sin no longer reigns in the Christian (cf. Rom. 5:21).

It is only because sin does not reign that it can be said, “Therefore let not sin reign”... And so in this case the sequence is: sin does not have the dominion; therefore do not let it reign. Deliverance from the dominion of sin is both the basis of and the incentive to the fulfillment of the exhortation, “Let not sin reign.”⁸

Third, *as Christians, we can now offer the parts of our bodies to God as instruments of righteousness.* This is the major emphasis of these verses. You can choose to use your body as either a means to bring about God’s approval through living in obedience, or a means to commit sinful acts which are displeasing to God.

What do we mean by “parts of our bodies”? Let us begin with our *minds*. Often times the mind is depicted in the Scriptures with the word itself, “mind.” Romans 12:1ff read:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ²And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your *mind*, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. ³For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. (Rom. 12:1-3)

But in other places of God’s Word, the mind is expressed by the word *heart*. We often assume “the heart” refers to one’s affections. But this is not so. Proverbs 23:7 reads, “For as he thinks in his *heart*, so is he.” We see the same idea in Isaiah where the prophet was condemning the stupidity of idolaters who carve an idol out of the same tree from which they collect firewood.

“And no one considers in his *heart*, nor is there knowledge nor understanding to say, ‘I have burned half of it in the fire, Yes, I have also baked bread on its coals; I have roasted meat and eaten it; And shall I make the rest of it an abomination? Shall I fall down before a block of wood?’” (Isa 44:19)

What you think in your mind will largely govern how you live. If you fill your mind with the thinking and values of the secular culture, you will tend to evaluate others, even those in the church, according to those values. If you expose yourself to corrupt teaching and values that are presented as desirable and favorable, they will influence you to desire and favor those values.

Let me provide a simple illustration. In modern cinema there is a plot formula that sells—the action picture. Usually these are revenge sagas in which the “hero” or “heroine” wreaks havoc upon the ones who are portrayed as evil and deserving of retribution. In order to justify the severity of the mayhem

⁷ Ibid., p. 683.

⁸ John Murray, *Romans* (Eerdmans, 1959), p. 227.

and destruction the “hero” inflicts on his enemies throughout the movie, the plot must first show at the beginning of the movie what “dirt bags” the bad guys really are. The greater the violence of the action hero, the greater the bad guy must be shown to be a real wretched sort of guy. But the entire plot underscores the notion that it is right and good to render evil for evil, to do evil unto others as they have done unto you. This is quite contrary to biblical teaching, which teaches us not to behave in this manner. Consider these verses from God’s Word:

Romans 12:17. “Repay no one evil for evil.”

1 Peter 3:8ff. “Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; ⁹not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. ¹⁰For “He who would love life and see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit. ¹¹Let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. ¹²For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.”

Matthew 5:43-45. Jesus said, “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, ⁴⁵that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”

But if we feed our minds with this wrong view of just retaliation, of blood vengeance, then it will govern our value system. We will find ourselves justifying the maltreatment of others when they do wrong to us rather than be governed by the will of God. And so, one way that we may obey the command of verse 13, **“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, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness”**, is to present our mind to God as an instrument of righteousness, as a way to do what is right.

James Montgomery Boice wrote several decades ago:

Have you ever carefully thought through that what you do with your mind will determine a great deal of what you will become as a Christian? If you fill your mind with the products of our secular culture, you will remain secular and sinful. If you fill your heads with trashy “pop” novels, you will begin to live like the trashy heroes and heroines whose illicit romances you read about. If you do nothing but watch television, you will begin to think like the scoundrels on “Dallas” and “Falcon Crest” or the weekday soap operas. And you will act like them, too. On the other hand, if you feed your mind on the Bible and Christian publications, train it by godly conversation, and discipline it to critique what you see and hear elsewhere by applying biblical truths to those ideas, you will grow in godliness and become increasingly useful to God. Your mind will become an instrument for righteousness.

Today’s media and “entertainment” industry as well as so-called “higher education” shape the opinions and values of our culture, and it has unhealthy influence on so-called Christian culture, for Christians fail or refuse to present their minds as instruments of righteousness.

What of our *eyes*? Do we present our eyes as instruments of righteousness? What is it that we place before our eyes? Or what of our *ears*? What kinds of music and lyrics charm us and become the content of our reflection? The old adage regarding computer technology applies in a measure to us: “garbage in, garbage out.” If you desire to live a godly life, you will guard what it is that you place before your eyes or what you subject your ears to hearing. The classic biblical illustration is the sin of

Achan. When Joshua led Israel into the promised land, they first conquered Jericho. God had given strict instruction through Joshua prior to their attack upon the city:

¹⁷“Now the city shall be doomed by the LORD to destruction, it and all who are in it. Only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all who are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent. ¹⁸And you, by all means abstain from the accursed things, lest you become accursed when you take of the accursed things, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. ¹⁹But all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, are consecrated to the LORD; they shall come into the treasury of the LORD.” (Joshua 6:17ff)

But Achan had secretly taken some gold and other things he found and had hidden it in his tent. As a result, God brought defeat to Israel in their next conquest. After inquiry was made, Achan was found out. When asked why he did what he did, these were his words:

“Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and this is what I have done: When I *saw* among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I *coveted* them and *took* them. And there they are, hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent, with the silver under it.” (Josh. 7:20ff)

“I first saw, then I coveted (sinfully desired), and then took them.” This is what occurs when we set before our eyes things that are forbidden us.

This was the way that sin entered the world. The serpent was more subtle than any creature, so he came and tempted Eve. We read of how she was enticed:

⁶So when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. (Gen 3:6f).

We are to present our eyes unto the Lord, dedicating them as instruments of righteousness. Job had once said,

“I have made a covenant with my eyes;
Why then should I look upon a young woman?
²For what is the allotment of God from above,
And the inheritance of the Almighty from on high?
³Is it not destruction for the wicked,
And disaster for the workers of iniquity?
⁴Does He not see my ways,
And count all my steps? (Job 31:1-4)

Now we cannot separate ourselves from the world. We are in the world. But we are not to allow the world to cast us into its mold. The only prescription to prevention or recovery is to feed your mind with the truth of God’s Word. If you refuse, or if only you fail, to instill in your thinking the Word of God, you will be like what you see and hear, to your detriment. To some it means an ineffective witness. To others it means a forfeiture of God’s blessing. To others it is the eternal damnation of their souls.

What of our *tongues*? Can they be considered in the light of God’s command, “***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, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness***”? James speaks directly to this, doesn’t he?

James 1:26. “If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless.”

James 3:1ff. “My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. ²For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. ³ Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. ⁴ Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. ⁵Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! ⁶And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. ⁷For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. ⁸But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. ¹⁰Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. ¹¹Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? ¹²Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.

I suspect some of us, if not a number of us, would experience a transformed life and transformed relationships if we could but control our tongue. The tongue can be so sharp as to deeply and permanently wound another, causing a wound that may never be healed in this life. When I consider the weddings that I have performed over the years, everyone of them was characterized by a man and woman deeply in love and committed to live together in peace and harmony and happiness. But some of those marriages have resulted in divorce. I wonder how many of those divorces could have been prevented if one or both spouses had been struck with dumbness, unable to speak. For their speech as driven one another from each other.

And what of the instruments of our *hands* and *feet*? The hands of a man are sometimes used as a metaphor of one's honest and hard work.

⁹Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another, ¹⁰for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more, ¹¹and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and *to work with your hands*, as we instructed you, ¹²so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one. (1 Thess. 4:9-12)

Paul wrote of one's hands respecting *honest* work. “Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working *with his hands* what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need” (Eph. 4:28).

Your *feet* carry you to different places. the feet of some Christians carry them to places they have no business being as Christians. Do your feet take you to places where Christ's name is dishonored or blasphemed? Do you go to places that you would be ashamed to be if the Lord were to return when you are there? If we tend to live in that fashion, the Lord will see to it that He will return for us at the most awkward time from our perspective.

³⁵“Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; ³⁶and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. ³⁷Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them. ³⁸And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. ³⁹But know this, that if the master of the house had known

what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.
⁴⁰“Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

⁴¹Then Peter said to Him, “Lord, do You speak this parable only to us, or to all people?”

⁴²And the Lord said, “Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? ⁴³Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. ⁴⁴Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has. ⁴⁵But if that servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, ⁴⁶the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. ⁴⁷And that servant who knew his master’s will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. ⁴⁸But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more. (Luke 12:35-48)

May the Lord give grace to each one of us who know Him to dedicate each and all of the members of our bodies to His service to bring glory to Him as well as true happiness for ourselves.

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,
And to present you faultless
Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,
To God our Savior, Who alone is wise,
Be glory and majesty, dominion and power,
Both now and forever. Amen. (Jude 24, 25)