

Here's How It Works, I

Romans 6:13

Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

REVIEW

We saw in Romans 6:12 that sin is wrong, stoppable, and a choice; that we must see our specific sins in that light; that our relationship to sin has changed; and that the time to say no to sin is now. In :13, Paul anticipates that true believers are in agreement, maybe even enthusiastic, and to varying degrees willing and desirous to carry out this victory. He also anticipates that believers commonly don't know *how* to carry out the victory. So here he explains what we have to do.

I. Here's the way to FAILURE

“Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin.”

A. Yield – *paristemi*: “present or render for the service of,” as one might present his bat to a slugger.

1. The same Greek verb is used in such places as Luke 2:22 – “They brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord.” Paul speaks of presenting every man perfect in Christ Jesus (Col. 1:28). In Ephesians 5:27 we read of Christ presenting a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle.
2. Here, the verb is in present active tense, which denotes a habit, an ongoing regular way of doing things. So the idea is, “Don't keep going on yielding” this way.

B. Members – there's no doubt what is meant here. It means the parts that make up the whole of who we are. The idea appears often, such as Rom. 7:5, 7:23; or I Cor. 12:12.

1. Outward: eyes, ears, tongue, hands, feet, etc.
2. Inward: mind, emotions, etc. (sometimes represented by heart, kidneys ...)

C. Instruments – *hopla* – tools of any kind for work or war: ship's tackle, blacksmith's bellows, carpenter's level, or a warrior's sword or spear.

1. The same word is used in John 18:3, where a band of men came with “lanterns and torches and weapons” and II Cor. 10:4 – “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal”

D. Unrighteousness – *adikia* – moral wrongfulness.

1. So, in sum, someone bad wants to use our parts, inside and outside, to do wrong things.
2. We are charged not to *present* our *parts* to the enemy to be used for evil *purposes*.
3. Put another way, we must not yield what God has given us to be used as weapons against Him.
4. Illustration: ISIS jihadists siezing huge caches of US-made weapons and using them to conquer US allies!

II. Here's the way to SUCCESS

“But yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”

A. Presentation – “But yield yourselves ... and your members ... unto God.”

1. It's the same verb: “yield.” It means to present or render for the service of.
2. But the tense is different. Before, it was present active, meaning “Don't keep on presenting your parts to be used for bad purposes.”
3. Here the tense is aorist active, meaning a one-time act of self-devotion. Once for all. Do it now, and do it completely. Let's end this. The Great Surrender. Our members should now and forever more be at the call of God “as alive from the dead.”
4. The same idea is seen in Rom. 12:1 – “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

B. Particulars

1. First yield “yourselves” unto God generally and then “your members” particularly.
2. It's like: “My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.” (Prov. 23:26)
3. Jesus taught that to be effective the surrender must be complete: “Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.” (Matt. 16:24-25)

C. Purpose – “as instruments of righteousness unto God”

1. That is, present what God has provided to be used as God has designed.
2. See Eph. 1:3, 6; 11, 12.
3. Illustration: you have a pressure cooker. You could give it to evil people with evil intentions, who will fill it with nails, ball bearings, and gun powder to maim and kill innocent people; or you could give it to good people with good intentions, to fill it with meat, vegetables, and spices to feed the hungry.
4. Some folks may think they are choosing a third option: not giving to evil, not giving to good, but, as it were, keeping the pressure cooker in the cupboard for themselves. But this third option is not available. What does Jesus say? “He who is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.” (Matt. 12:30) There is no neutrality.
5. Some might think the pressure cooker analogy, with its terrorist implications, is too violent. But the truth is that we *are* at war, are we not? Are not the tools made available to us called “weapons of our warfare” (II Cor. 10:4)? Are not the stakes of this warfare greater even than loss of land or lives? Have we not seen Paul's shock at the ignorance and incongruity of those who would say, “Shall we continue in sin”? And what is sin but yielding our members as instruments of unrighteousness?

III. Here's WHAT'S INVOLVED

“Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”

The Bible is eminently practical and specific. It is written so plain folks who understand plain English can know what to do. Here, we are told to take our “members,” retract them from being used as tools for evil, and present them to God be used as tools for good. We will have to wait for a future message to detail the “how.” We will conclude this message by listing some illustrations of these “members.”

A. Eyes

1. “I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?” (Job 31:1)
2. “I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.” (Ps. 101:3)
3. “Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way.” (Ps. 119:37)
4. “Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.” (Prov. 4:25)
5. “Look not thou upon the wine when it is red....” (Prov. 23:31)
6. A woman can “take thee with her eyelids.” (Prov. 6:25)
7. “The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart....” (Prov. 15:30)

B. Ears

1. “The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them.” – Pro. 20:12
2. Don't have an itching (II Tim. 4:3) or uncircumcised (Jer. 6:10) ear.
3. Priests were to have blood put on their ear (Ex. 29:20); faithful servants: ear bored (Ex. 21:6).
4. We are not to stop our “ears at the cry of the poor” (Prov. 21:13).
5. “Incline thine ear unto wisdom.” (Prov. 2:2)
6. “Give ear unto the law of our God.” (Isa. 1:10)
7. “The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise.” (Prov. 15:31)

C. Tongue

1. “I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle.” (Ps. 39:1)
2. “Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.” (Ps. 141:3)
3. “Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and with thy honour all the day.” (Ps. 71:8)
4. “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.” (Eph. 4:29)

D. Countenance

1. "LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us." (Ps. 4:6b)
2. "Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God...." (Judges 13:6)
3. "Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he." (I Sam. 16:12)
4. "Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's meat: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants." (Dan. 1:13)

E. Hair

1. "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering."
(I Cor. 11:14-15)

F. Hands

1. "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." (Eph. 4:28)

G. Feet

1. "Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established." (Prov. 4:26)
2. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Ps. 119:105)

DISCUSSION

1. Explain this idea of no neutrality in this war, that we are either yielding our members to evil or good.

2. Rank the importance of doing what Romans 6:12-13 says to do and tell why it's that important.