

# Notes for the Ekklēsia Meeting

Info: (651) 283-0568 Discipleship Training Ministries, Inc www.dtmnc.org Today's Date: June 8, 2014

## Reckoning - Determining The Reality You Will Live By

by Dan Trygg

“For we conclude that a person is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.”

Romans 3:28

“Let a person consider us in this manner, as servants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God”

I Corinthians 4:1

“Even so *consider yourselves...*

...on the one hand to be *dead* to sin,  
...but, on the other hand, to be *alive* to God  
in Christ Jesus.”

Romans 6:11

I was talking with a fellow the other day about his walk with God, and it became obvious that **he was very confused in his thinking**. He kept going back and forth about who he was (his identity) and what he was all about (his purpose). **He was missing out on a very important step in the spiritual growth process. It is crucial to implementing what God has made available to us in Christ.** So many people get stalled out because they do not clearly understand this principle, or apply it in their lives. In my own spiritual journey, I was involved in a church system that simply emphasized studying the scriptures, and learning what the promises of God are. **The underlying belief was that knowledge was enough to produce change, and bring about maturity.** Tragically, however, the leadership did not effectively teach this *additional* aspect, which is *also* necessary in order to experience growth, or to overcome issues in our lives. True enough, **we do need new information in order to change, or to understand what God wants to do in our lives. We need more than that, however.** In spite of what some people say, **knowledge does not equal power. Knowledge can reveal to us the opportunity for power and change, but in itself it cannot do anything for us.** Knowledge just *clarifies* things, it does not *change* things. **Knowledge is not the answer.** It is *one* key ingredient, ...but *only* one of *several*. Though these could be broken down into more detail, the big **three main ingredients that can help us discover and implement spiritual change are: (1.) Repentance**, which means *a change of perception*, or gaining new information and a fresh perspective; **(2.) Reckoning**, which is *the act of counting something to be true*, the process of determining the roadmap you will choose to live by; and, **(3.) Risk**, which refers to actually *moving out into life* based upon the new information and new orientation to life that you have embraced. It is trying new things, or trying to operate differently, in accordance with the new understanding and commitment you have.

**My friend had some new information, but he had not yet counted it to be true in his life.** He had not *chosen* to make God's roadmap *his own*. He was sloshing back and forth on the stormy sea of his emotions, and the chaotic influx of people and circumstances he was allowing in his life. He knew *about* God, and had “some measure of belief”, but **he was not “taking a stand” in faith, ...not even in his own mind.** He couldn't really begin to move out on step three, because he did not have the clarity and stability of mind to know who he was, or what his life was about. He had to *settle* some things within himself, before he could effectively *move forward* in his faith.

**The word, “reckon”, is a translation of the Greek word, *logizomai*.** This Greek word occurs 40 times in the NT. Of these, it is translated as “reckon” some 12 times in the NASB (1977), 6 times in the KJV, 15 times in the RSV, but less often by more modern versions. **Its basic meaning is to “think according to logical rules” with the emphasis on “coming to a logical conclusion”.** It was the word used for “*counting* or *totaling* up a sum”, and “*crediting* the total to someone's account”. It describes the “*result* of an objective evaluation”, and “the consequent view, belief and course of action” determined by this logical process. Some modern translations use “consider it, count it, or credit it” as renderings for this word. **Instead of *gaining new information to think about*, this word implies *making an evaluation on how to treat someone or something, or drawing a conclusion to live by.***

It is interesting to see how the word is used in various contexts. **It is often used to describe treating someone as though they were something, when in fact they were not.** For example, Jesus was “*counted with the transgressors*”, even though He was not guilty of anything (Lk. 22:37). When Gentiles were obedient to God's law, Paul says their “*uncircumcision is counted as circumcision*” (Rom. 2:26). A critical one is that, in God's judgment, “*faith is counted unto* (or “*considered as*”) *righteousness*” (Rom. 4:3,5,9,11,20-22,23-24; Gal. 3:6; Jas. 2:23). In his defense of this notion, Paul argued that “*even David speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works*”, and “*blessed is the person to whom God does not count iniquity*” (Rom. 4:6,7). This is echoed by Paul, when he says “*God does not reckon* (or “*count*”) *our sins against us*” (II Cor. 5:19). In Romans 8:36, Paul says that the Christians were being “*considered as sheep of slaughter*” by their persecutors. In II Corinthians 10:2, Paul's opponents were “*concluding*” or “*considering*” him as “*walking according to the flesh*”, ...which he said was *not* true.

It is important to see that **in all of these instances people were *considered as something they were not, in actuality, ...and that they were treated according to the evaluation made of them.***

**The next set of examples describe conclusions we can make.** In each case, **the conclusion we draw will affect how we choose to deal with these situations or people.** In Romans 3:28, Paul wrote, “We *conclude* (or ‘we consider’) a person to be justified by faith apart from works.” He really believed this. This was the message he preached, and he strongly opposed any other message. He devoted his life to spreading this truth. In 8:18, “I *conclude* (consider) the present sufferings are not worthy to compare with the future glory”. Again, he really believed this! Because of this conclusion, he was willing to bear great hardship and suffering for the sake of spreading the gospel. In Romans 14:14, Paul observed, “...in the Lord Jesus nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who *thinks* (‘concludes’, ‘considers’) anything to be unclean, to him it *is* unclean”. Here is an example where our conclusion may be *faulty*, but it will still affect how we live, potentially disrupting both our inner conscience and even our relationship with God (cf. vs. 23). In another passage, Paul says, “Apapē-love does not *take-into-account* (‘count’ or ‘consider’) the wrong, evil, ‘unsoundness’ or brokenness [of the person we are called to love]” (I Cor. 13:5). We can choose to forgive sin, or overlook people’s defects. (God does not want us to be foolish, either. There is balance to this principle. Cf. Matt. 7:6; 18:15-17.) It is important to see that sometimes we must die to or disregard the natural process of reckoning or calculating, in order to follow the leading of the Spirit. In another passage, we see that we also *calculate* and *conclude* how to talk with people (II Cor. 10:2). Paul was saying he could be very direct and bold, but was praying that he would not have to address them that way. On a strong, positive note, we learn from Hebrews 11:19 that Abraham *chose* to trust and obey God, *concluding* that He could even raise the dead. We need to “count-up” and honestly evaluate God’s abilities, so we will be moved to trust Him, as Abraham did. Then, from Peter, we learn that it is appropriate, at times, to evaluate and regard others. Peter said that he “counted” Silvanus to be a “faithful brother”. This was a conclusion, a summing up of experiences with and information about Silvanus. He treated Silvanus based upon this.

**This final section has to do with our self-perception.** This is where the “meat” is, in my estimation, so keep going! In Romans 3:28, Paul said that he concluded, reckoned or considered that **a person is justified by faith, apart from the works of the Law. What does this mean, if you come to this conclusion?** You will see your salvation as a gift to be received and embraced by faith. You will *take* it, and stop striving to earn it. It is a *gift*. If you take the gift, it is *yours*. **You are to consider yourself, reckon and conclude that you are “of Christ”** (II Cor. 10:7). Another way of saying this is that **you are “Christ’s”**. You are *not your own*, you have been *bought* with a price (I Cor. 6:19,20), so you *could* and *should* live to honor God. **Consequently, you should consider yourself as a “servant of Christ”** (I Cor. 4:1). The word for “servant” is interesting, here. It means an “assistant” or “helper” (Acts 13:5; 26:16). It implies that *we work along with God*, as His assistants in His work. **You need to conclude this about who you ARE, and what your calling IS. You are a man or woman who belongs to Christ. Your purpose is to glorify God and assist Him in His Kingdom business.** Another point of reckoning in this verse is that **you are a “steward of the mysteries of God”**. What does this mean? **It means that you have been entrusted with God’s word, and you are to make responsible use of it.** If we really understood and believed this, what would it mean? It would mean that *we would take seriously the responsibility to study and learn God’s word. Is this a responsibility only for pastors or preachers? No.* The scriptures are “God-breathed, and profitable for teaching, reproof, correction and training in righteousness, that *the person of God* may be proficient, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (II Tim. 3:16,17). **Who does this apply to? “The person of God”. Who are you?** What can you *conclude*? *Consider* yourself a steward of God’s word! That means you’d better read and study it, so you get equipped for every good work God has for you to do. (cf. II Tim. 2:15) In Romans 6:11, Paul exhorts us to *consider, reckon, and conclude* that, because we were put into Christ, we *are* dead to sin and alive to God. **Do you count it as true that you are dead to sin? Why do you still casually continue to do it? Do you really count it as true that you are alive toward God? Do you present yourself to Him to serve Him with all your being?** Paul told people *he was someone who did what he said*. They could *consider that* to be true of him (II Cor. 10:11). **What about you? Are you just a talker, or a doer?** What would people *conclude* about you? Paul *concluded* that **he was not inferior to any so-called apostles or religious leaders** (II Cor. 11:5). He didn’t need letters or ad campaigns. **He purposely chose to just be himself so that others could draw their conclusions from what they saw and heard of his life** (II Cor. 12:6). Similarly, he told Timothy to let no one look down on his youth, but to *show himself an example* (I Tim. 4:12). Nevertheless, **Paul also considered that he had not yet arrived at full maturity, but he humbly kept pressing forward to what God had for him** (Phil. 3:13). What about you? Do you count this as true *for yourself*? **Are you pressing on after God’s call for your life?**

**The key to maturity that my friend was missing was that he did not really count as true what God had said was true about him.** He did not believe that God’s word trumps his own experience. He does not *feel like* he is God’s child, or that he *is* dead to sin, or that he could even *change*, but if he were to *count it to be true*, he would choose to cast his lot with God, and start seriously pursuing Him. **Knowledge, counted as true, will produce action.**