

Romans 6:15–23

¹⁵ What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!

¹⁶ 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?

¹⁷ 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.

¹⁸ And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

¹⁹ I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. 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.

²⁰ For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.

²¹ What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

²² 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.

²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Whose Slave Are You? Romans 6:15-23

INTRO:

Last time Paul told us how we should practically work to have victory over sin. We must first put on the Lord Jesus Christ and then make no provision for the flesh. Sin is no longer the boss and we must choose to present our members to God and not sin. In the rest of **Romans 6**, Paul told us why this is so crucially important.

I. Under Law or Under Grace (v, 15-18)

II. Freedom and Slavery (19-23)

I. Under Law or Under Grace (v, 15-18)

Romans 6:15 ***“What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!”***

A. The Apostle Paul realizes some will conclude being in a state of grace meant we who trust Christ for salvation do not have to worry at all about sin. The first time Paul spoke of this change in our lives was in **verse 14**.

“For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.”

There it was a reason why we should not let sin reign over us. The Law meant the Old Covenant. This is the realm of condemnation. When we were declared righteous

because of faith, we were transferred from the domination of sin and condemnation to the realm of forgiveness in Christ. Does this mean we do not need to be concerned about sin? The answer is unequivocal. We can't even entertain the thought.

B. Romans 6:16-18 *“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? But God be thanked because 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.”*

1. In **verse 15**, the Apostle laid down the principle of slavery. Slavery is being committed to do the will of the one to whom you are a slave.

“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?”

We can identify a slave's master by observing who the slave obeys. So, whose slave are you. There are only two possible masters, sin or God.

2. For a slave to change masters something has to happen.

vs.16-18 *“But God be thanked because 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.”*

When we put our trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and God saved us, something important happened to each of us. Notice who did the changing? *“God be thanked.”* The reason we are freed from sin and slaves to God is because God did something only He could do. What did He do? He enabled us to obey the command of the Gospel. We had to believe. So, He provided the ability and the desire to put our trust in Christ to save us.

II. Freedom and Slavery (19-23)

Romans 6:19-23 *“I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. 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.”*

A. These people knew what slavery was. They experienced it in their daily lives either as slaves or as those who knew a slave. Slavery was not an entirely good

thing. Paul wanted them to know he was employing this as a human illustration of a spiritual reality.

B. What should we do because we believe?

v.19 *“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.”*

We should act toward God just like we acted toward sin. The result of sin is more sin. The result of presenting ourselves to God is holiness, which we know pleases God.

C. Why should we do this? We need to do this because we have been freed from sin.

vs.20-22 *“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.”*

1. When we were slaves to sin, we were not free to act in any way to please God. Everything we did was sinful. As Isaiah reminded us in

Isaiah 64:6 *“But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away.”*

The only thing we earned from God by our efforts was death.

2. What happened when God saved us?

v.22 *“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.”*

We are set free. Does that mean we can sin all we want? NO. Freedom from sin means we are able to please God because we have become God’s slaves. This means we are committed to doing His will. The result of our efforts is eternal life.

C. Paul is in no way saying that salvation and eternal life is earned by our works. Don’t forget the point Paul wrote two chapters to work out. We are saved by faith and not by works.

1. The point is, you have been freed from sin and with the help of the Spirit of God in you, can now please God. You are now God’s slave. What kind of slave are you?

2. One more thought on eternal life which results from our obedience. Remember our Lord’s prayer in **John 17**? He prayed in **17:2-3**,
“As You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”

If eternal life is a life and eternity filled with knowing the eternal God, may I boldly suggest Paul is telling us how we can fully know and enjoy our eternal life today by walking in obedience to Him?

D. Finally, Paul summarized what he wrote.

Romans 6:23 *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

We forget he wrote this to believers. It is a universal truth for unbelievers too. This is a summary and a warning. Do you remember in how Paul wrote to the Corinthians?

1 Corinthians 6 9-11 *“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.”*

This is the concern the Apostle addresses.

I sing a new song
Since Jesus came
Serve a new Master
Wear a new name
Walk a new road
Have a new goal
Know a new peace
Down deep in my soul

Hymn #259 *Breathe on Me Breath of God*