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Romans 64 Sinful body to Holiness! Romans 6:19-23

Romans 6:15-23, *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.

Romans 1:17 introduction.

Romans 1:18-3:20 the sinfulness of man.

That truth helped us to understand how utterly sinful, guilty, hopeless and hell bound.

Romans 3:21- 5:21, the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith and the substitutionary work of Jesus Christ.

John 8:34, *“Whosoever commits sin is the slave of sin.”*

All men who live a life of committing sin are slaves to that sin. Every person who comes into this world is under the dictatorship of sin.

Sin controls their thoughts.

Sin controls their words.

Sin controls their actions.

Romans 6:17, *“you were slaves of sin.”*

Romans 6:20, *“For when you were slaves of sin,”*

Twice in that passage.

You used to be slaves, ***doulos***, bondslaves to sin.

Ultimate end of being a slave to sin is death.

Romans 6:21, *For the end of those things is death.*

Romans 6:23, *For the wages of sin is death*

Sin ultimately kills.

Having discussed that in chapters **3, 4 and 5**, he is showing the result of that we saw in the first half of **chapter 6** is to be made holy.

The result of that in the second half of chapter 6 is to be made free from sin. Both are one and the same.

Paul is looking at the same great reality from two angles. When we were redeemed and made right with God, it was to make us holy and free from sin. That was the intention.

Now, we learned in the first fourteen verses of the chapter that we are united with Jesus Christ in His death and resurrection, and thus we have died to sin and risen to walk in newness of life.

The penalty for sin has been paid in that death. The power for sin has been broken, and we walk now in newness of life, alive to God.

Now in **verses 15 to 23**, Paul demonstrates that we are made holy in another analogy.

Not only have we died in Christ and risen in Christ and now are walking in a new life, having died to the old one, but we also have become slaves to God and in so doing the slavery to sin which was characteristic of our former life has been broken.

Paul shows the believer has a totally new relationship to sin after salvation, different than before because he died in Christ and rose in Christ and because he has a new master which obviates the old master. This is the main theme of the second half of the chapter.

A truly regenerated person cannot go on in the same pattern of sinning that was characteristic of his life before he was saved.

Why?

Because we are no longer in the same relation to sin. We have died in Christ and risen. We have a new master now which means we no longer are under the old master.

A truly justified, redeemed, saved individual is going to have a different relationship to sin than he ever had before.

A redeemed person cannot continue to live as he was.

This section begins with a proposed question.

The legalist can't tolerate grace teaching.

The first opposing question came in verse 1.

Romans 6:1, *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?*

Does the doctrine of salvation by grace give freedom to sin in an unrestrained way?

The accusation that is made against this doctrine.

Again, the opposition asks the question.

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

Now who have been delivered from being under the law, and by that he does not mean that we are no longer responsible to obey God's Word.

Does grace free us to sin?

It is an utterly unacceptable thought.

To even ask the question is to prove you are not a Christian.

Paul doesn't just give you short answers.

Paul takes time to explain.

His explanation doesn't need proof because it's obvious,

V 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?

Paul personifies these two masters.

- Sin,
- Obedience.

Sin is disobedience.

- Disobedience,
- Obedience.

To what standard do we either obey or disobey God?

So, the whole issue then is some people yield themselves servants of disobedience to God, and some people yield themselves servants of obedience to God.

The idea is the slavery analogy.

When you became a Christian, you say that I submit myself to God through Christ.

There is no salvation apart from such a conscious submission.

So, you have your choice.

- ✓ You can be a slave to sin which you are by nature, or
- ✓ You can be a slave to God, which you are by new creation.

One who comes to God through Christ and says, “I take you as my Saviour, Master and Lord,” is not only ethically bound to obey but he is creatively made to obey.

This is a very important truth.

When you become a Christian, it is not simply that you are ethically bound to obedience. It is that you are creatively made unto obedience.

- The slavery to sin,
- The slavery to righteousness.

Paul gives us three Phases.

1. Position
2. Practices
3. Promise.

1. Position

V 17-18, *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. ¹⁸And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.*

Two slaveries.

V 17, you were the servants of sin.

V 18, you have become the servants of righteousness.

In the past, you were continually a slave of sin.

Now that is the natural condition of every man. People don't want to admit that.

Where did you get it?

From your mother and your father, and they go back to Adam and Eve.

Men and women born into this world are born into this slavery to sin.

The Greek word *tupos* here means "a mould, a casting mould." The mould is in the shape of a servant.

When you came into this world, you were poured into a mould, and you came out after the molten metal cooled into the world. You were a slave of sin.

You were a slave statue, and your slavery was to sin.

But God be thanked that you responded to the true gospel by obeying the form into which you were poured.

You are new!

You now are a slave statue all over again, but you are a slave to God. Only God could melt down that old person and pour that ingredient back into a new mould and shape that new person.

The one who once was stamped with false teaching is now stamped with the image of the true doctrine of God.

So, two slaveries.

One begins at birth, and
one begins at new birth.

You are either under the bondage to sin or under the bondage to righteousness.

If you are a Christian, then you have been freed from sin and no longer belong to that old master.

Righteousness is your master, obedience is your master, the Lord is your master and you have been creatively made to obey and are also ethically bound to obey.

You can obey, and you should!

2. Practice.

V 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.

I want you to realize that I am using an analogy here about masters and slaves as an accommodation to your humanness. It's hard to put supernatural, eternal, incomprehensible, miraculous data into your heads.

Paul is bringing it down to a human analogy of slave and master.

Some people will be listening to this slave/master, and they would be trying to follow that analogy all the way out, and they would get kind of confused.

Your mortal body that is where sin finds its foothold. Because of your mortality, your body of sin, your humanness, where sin dwells.

Sin that's in your mortal body, your humanness, and your flesh not in the new creation. The flesh is the ability of man influenced by sin.

Even though we are Christians, as long as we possess humanness, in these bodies that are fallen, we are going to have a struggle with sin.

Not sin in the new creation, but sin in the flesh, which encases the new creation until we are glorified.

Paul is not talking about our position anymore.

Paul is talking about our practice.

V 18, *“the servants of righteousness.”*

That’s our position.

V 18 shows who you are.

V 19 says that you act like it.

Get your practice lined up with your position.

Here it is not talking about nature.

You are either by nature a servant of sin or by the new nature a servant of God, which we saw in the last study from verses 17 and 18.

Now talking about your lifestyle. Your lifestyle must accommodate your nature.

Now that you don't have to be a slave to sin, since you are a servant of righteousness then act like it.

Of course, the flesh wants to get in the way, and we will find out when we get to **chapter 8** how you deal with the flesh.

Paul basically says, "kill it."

We will find out how to kill the flesh when we get to chapter 8.

But he is saying here since you don't have to sin, don't sin.

V 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.

In the past, that describes the first family, the family of those who are in sin positionally. Their practice is to continually yield their members to sin. That was their lifestyle.

That is all they can do. They yield their members slaves to uncleanness. Life for them is like that only.

The word "members" means "bodily parts, the flesh, the mortal body."

The person in the state of sin has no choice. He must “yield,” and that word means “to present” or “offer.”

He gives his body to sin. It even uses the word “uncleanness.” That’s the word of inward pollution.

Then the word lawlessness.

So, he says that before you became a Christian, when you were in the family of sin, you were polluted on the inside, and you were evil on the outside.

You just continually yielded yourself to that, internally and externally. There is no choice involved.

The body of sin in an unregenerate person is in complete harmony with the nature of man. The nature of man is sin. The body of man is sinful. So, his nature and his body are in total harmony.

His soul and his body agree on sin as his master, and so he just sins, doing evil continually.

Now, notice the progression. You yield your bodily parts servants to sin, to uncleanness and lawlessness.

What sin leads to?

Sin.

More sin. Sin begets sin.

You used to be under sin, and as your position was under the bondage of sin, your practice was there as well and sin begat sin.

Suddenly there is an ultimate end to all of that.

Now you have been translated to a new master. As you did that in the past even so now, present, offer, yield your bodily parts servants to righteousness which produces Holiness.

As your members were 100 percent yielded to sin before Christ, so they should now be 100 percent yielded to righteousness since Christ.

Remember, the new creation soul is sinless.

The bodily parts, our mortality, our fallenness, our corruptible humanness must be yielded.

For the first time we have a choice. That is our freedom.

Romans 12:1, *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.*

Where is the problem?

It's the body!

Your soul is a new creation.

He doesn't say "present your inner man."

That's been transformed.

"Present your body."

Because that's where the battleground lies, in your fallenness, in your humanness.

1 Corinthians 9:27, *But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.*

You must control it.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8, *For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;⁴ that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honour,⁵ not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God;⁶ that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified.⁷ For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness.⁸ Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit.*

The body tends to drag us into evil.

Now yield your bodily parts as slaves to righteousness. You will do this because you are new but do it always because you can.

You will do it but do it all the time? You will do it sometime. You will do it because you are new but do it all the time. In other words when you came into salvation in Jesus Christ, God's grace was not given to you to allow you to do sin and get away with it, but to make it so you would never have to sin.

Big difference.

I don't think very many people understand that. So, the whole idea of being a Christian isn't liberty from sin. The whole idea of being a Christian is that you just don't sin.

Can we do that?

Technically, yes.

Practically, no.

Why?

Because our fallenness gets in the way.

But we want to do it more and more.

Look at the progression here.

"Yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness."

Holiness is a state of perfection.

As sin leads to sin, doing righteous leads to spiritual perfection. Spiritual completion is being utterly separated from sin. That is what holiness means.

As you go on living the righteous life and practicing it with all your might, energy, and all your time, you will become cleaner and cleaner, purer, and holier. More and more conformed to the image of the Son of God.

The difference of the outworking of that new nature as over against the outworking of the old nature. That's the difference in the second half of Romans 6 in being under the Master, the Lord, or under the master, sin.

So, we progress to greater and greater purity, and greater holiness as sinners go down, and down.

Nobody stands still. Christians who allow themselves sin under the wrong understanding of grace or because they give into the flesh, will find at work in them the same principle that's at work in an unbeliever. Sin will lead to sin.

So, each slavery is a developing slavery.

Neither stand still.

When Israel was in God gave Pharaoh a command.

Exodus 9:1, *Then the Lord said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh and tell him, 'Thus says the Lord God of the Hebrews: "Let My people go, that they may serve Me.*

You don't understand the command if you don't understand that part.

Nobody was ever delivered from bondage to do what they wanted. When we were delivered from bondage, we were to do what God wants.

God's plan for them was that they might be delivered from the bondage of their cruel masters in Egypt in order to become committed to a new master and serve Him.

It took a whole generation to learn that. So, we haven't been freed from sin to do what we want but we have been freed from sin to do what He wants.

So, the question asked in verse 15 is a ridiculous question.

3. Promise.

Where do these two slaveries end up?

Certainly, they end up in two different places!

V 20-21, *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.*

You were totally cut loose from righteousness.

You had no cause to respond to righteousness.

You had no need.

Righteousness made no demands on you because you had no capacity. You can't respond to the demands of righteousness. They are not bound on you.

The unredeemed have no responsibility to righteousness. They are controlled by, ruled by sin, and all they can do is sin. They have one master. Righteousness has no pressure to apply to them, because they have nothing in their nature that can cause them to respond to it.

Because there are people who don't know Christ who think they are good people. The truth is they are slaves to sin and totally free from righteousness.

Righteousness has no cause to which they must respond. The world is full of people who think they are good people. They think they do right things and good things and honourable things.

On a human level, they do. But when God starts talking about the standards that are His standards, they are totally free from righteousness. They are not bound to obey righteousness. There's no need for that because they have no capacity for that.

Paul has a good word for self- righteousness, for man doing his best apart from God.

Paul called it as "Dung."

Philippians 3:7-8,

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

People without Jesus Christ have no obligation to righteousness at all because they couldn't fulfil it.

Either a slave of sin or a slave of righteousness and nobody is in the middle.

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

What fruit did you have?

None.

The only fruit you had when you were unregenerate was fruit that you are now ashamed of.

Person without Christ talks about all his sin and boasts about all the things. He boasts in his sin and when he comes to Jesus Christ, all the results and the product of his sin is cause for shame.

We look back to that period of time, and we look at all the fruit of our sin, and the only thing it brings to us is shame.

When someone really comes to Jesus Christ, that is the last thing in the world they want to talk about.

They want to tell you how the Lord delivered them from drugs, or from crime, or from some evil sin and so forth. But they don't relish in that sin anymore. It's a shame to them.

Why would we want to come to Christ and then go on sinning when the only fruit of that is something we were utterly ashamed of?

As soon as the godly begin to be enlightened by the Spirit of Christ and the preaching of the gospel, they freely acknowledge

that their whole past life, which they lived without Christ, is worthy of condemnation.

They go farther and continually bear their disgrace in mind so that the shame of it may make them more truly and willingly humble before God.

You can look back on your life before Jesus Christ and you can see a lot to be ashamed of. You wouldn't want to talk about that. You don't glory in that. But the people who don't know Christ, they glory in the thing you are ashamed of.

Where does it all lead?

"The end of those things is death."

Why in the world would a Christian, justified by grace through faith, brought to Jesus Christ and given the choice to do right, ever choose to sin when sin only begets sin and death and shame, from which he was delivered?

Paul was really making a case here.

If we sin, we are really stupid.

The way the devil tries to get us to sin is to get us not to be thinking. It leads to death.

What death is this?

Second death.

Spiritual death and hell, the death of the soul. That's where sin leads. That's its fruit.

Now if all you can produce with sin is fruit that brings shame and spiritual and eternal death, if sin is a shameful killer of the soul, then why would you sin?

What about the second master?

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.*

Romans 4:6-8, *just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: ⁷“Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered; ⁸Blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin.”*

How blessed that God doesn't hold our sin against us.

But here in **chapter 6**, how doubly blessed that not only does God not hold our sin against us, but He frees us from its dictatorship.

To know that I don't have to sin, I am no longer a subject!
You are free from ever sinning means you are free from its dictatorship, and you have become slaves to God.

If you are truly saved and the divine life is in you and you are a new creation, holiness will manifest. You cannot have a Christian with no fruit at all.

You might have to look a long time and find a shrivelled grape here and there, but there is got to be some. Your fruit unto holiness.

The word "holiness." it's God's most glorious attribute.

Isaiah 6 God is said to be holy, holy, holy, and to think that we could be like God!

We can't be God, but we can be like Him when we walk in holiness.

So, we have been made free from sin. It has no claim on us. We have become bondslaves to God and we have a new product, and that's holiness.

What does that lead?

"The end everlasting life."

- **V 21** it produces death
- **V 22**, it produces everlasting life.

Position: you are either in slavery to sin or slavery to God.

Practice: your life is either progressing viler, or holier.

Promise: the end over here is “death “or “everlasting life.”

Romans 6 first the opposition and then answer.

Then he establishes the axiom in verse 16,

Then comes the argument in verses 17-22.

Conclusion:

Finally, the absolute.

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

There is an absolute law, and that law inevitably works.

That is the inexorable, divine absolute. There is no possibility of a violation. Nobody gets around the absolute law.

The reason sin adds to sin, adds to sin, ends in death is because *“the wages of sin is death.”*

The word “wages” means something you have earned. The rations that were given to soldiers for their military service in exchange for their duty. It was just compensation for service rendered.

You earn death. When God brings to bear on a life eternal death, hell forever, it’s because the person earned that.

It is proper compensation for their sin because there is an inexorable law in the universe that says the pay for sin is death. It’s like any other law.

The law of gravity. The law of gravity says you jump off something, you go down. That’s a law. That’s the way the universe is made.

If God made laws in a physical dimension, there can be laws as well in the spiritual.

“The wages of sin is death.”

The payoff for sin is death, eternal death, spiritual death. It’s what you earned.

When God gives eternal death to a soul, He is giving him what he has worked for, earned, deserves, and what is the defined compensation for his life.

If God didn't give him eternal hell, it would be unjust.

You earn death by your sin, and you will get it.

Those who hope for pardon and those who hope for deliverance without Christ are hoping that God would be unjust.

There's another side to the absolute, bless God.

"But the gift of God is eternal life."

"Eternal life" is not a wage.

Did you notice the change?

It is a "gift."

Can you earn eternal life?

No, it's a gift.

"The free gift of God."

Just so that nobody gets confused, it is a free gift.

You can't earn it by your works. You can't earn it by your religiosity. You can't earn it.

Ephesians 2:8-9, *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

No merit, no earning, no worthiness. It's a gift.

So, if you want what you deserve, God will give it to you. But if you want what you don't deserve, God will give that to you as well.

How do I get that?

I don't want to be a slave to sin.

I don't want to be free from ever being able to do what's right.

I don't want to go from sin, to sin, from being vile to being viler, ultimately ending in eternal death.

I don't want to do that.

I want the gift of eternal life.

How do I get it?

"Through Jesus Christ our Lord."

It's the great climax to the chapter.

Any other place?

No other place.

Acts 4:12, *Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."*

John 14:6, *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*

So, the **Romans 6:1-14** has taught us that we are one with Christ because we died with Him, we rose with Him, and as new creations with resurrection life, we walk in newness of life. Therefore, we should yield to that new life principle, yielding our fallenness, our humanness, our mortal bodies to that new life power.

In **Romans 6:15-23**, he uses a different analogy to say the same thing. We were slaves to sin. Now we have become slaves to righteousness. So, in one sense we have died to walk in newness of life. In another sense, we have a new Master. Both saying the same thing.

Salvation doesn't free you to sin.

It frees you from sin for the first time in your life to do what's right. Salvation takes unholy men and makes them holy. Salvation is a call from sin to holiness.

When you come to Jesus Christ, He is calling you from sin to holiness.

If you are not willing to come on those terms, there are no other terms available.

Jesus is not looking for people who want to add Him to their sin. He is not looking for people who want to add Him to their lifestyle. He is calling men who want to die and rise again.

Jesus is calling men and women who want to say no to the present master and yes to a new Master.

Grace covers sin. But it never condones it. Grace transforms the sinner.

*“Cheap grace is
grace without discipleship,
grace without the cross,
grace without Jesus Christ.*

*Costly grace is the grace of Christ Himself now prevailing upon
the disciple to leave all and follow Him.”* **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**