

Right in God's Sight

Studies from the Book of Romans

Lesson 8

Romans 6:15–23

Romans 6:15–19

Remember Who You Are!

Paul labored to emphatically make the point that where sin increased, God's grace increased much more. He then went on to say that in order for believers to live lives that are out from under the control of sin, we must reckon ourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ. We must stop presenting ourselves as instruments of unrighteousness and continue to present ourselves to God as instruments of His righteousness and here is the reason: *"Sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law but under grace"* (6:14).

Verse 14 would have been the logical place to end his argument. But in case there was still someone who would rationalize that it was alright to continue sinning because they were a child of God and He would forgive them, Paul takes the next nine verses to address anyone who may try to use this kind of perverse logic.

Read Romans 6:15–23.

It is estimated that in Paul's day there were approximately 60 million slaves in the Roman Empire alone. It's possible that fifty percent of the congregation in the Roman church were either slaves or were previously slaves that had been freed. Consequently, Paul used the familiar analogy of slavery to illustrate the concept of the believer reckoning himself or herself dead to sin and alive to a new life of righteousness. Everyone in the church would have easily understood the point Paul was making.

1. According to verse 16, all of humanity serves under one type of slavery or the other. What are these two types and what is the result of each one?
 - a.
 - b.

There is no middle ground here. Jesus said: *"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other"* (Matthew 6:24).

2. What does Paul do as he remembers what the grace of God has already accomplished in the believers' lives? v. 17

- a. What is every believer's condition before he or she responds to the gospel?
- b. Upon hearing God's Word, how do true believers respond?

To *obey from the heart* means literally, *wholeheartedly*, or *out from the heart—inwardly and genuinely*. Those who hear God's Word and believe it in their hearts, commit themselves to obeying the truths in Scripture.

3. Once free from sin, what do believers become? v. 18

In verse 19, Paul tells his readers, "*I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh.*" He must have had a little twinge using the analogy of slavery when speaking of Christianity because God does not put His children in bondage, but Paul needed an illustration they would readily perceive. Once again Paul reiterates his point that before becoming Christians, they had voluntarily turned themselves over to be slaves to sin. But now they were to offer themselves as *slaves of righteousness to holiness*.

Selah . . .

It is possible to be a slave to sin and not realize it. Think for a moment about what held you captive before you came to Christ. Was it a *thing*—or possession; was it some form of bad *habit*? Paul says you obey the thing which enslaves you. What affect did this have over your life?

Once out from under the authority of sin, believers are not to allow themselves to fall back under sin's control. F.F. Bruce said, "To make being under grace an excuse for sinning is a sign that one is not really under grace at all."

- ❖ Personal: Now that you're a believer in Christ, are you still allowing something that is bad for you to hold you in its control? Would you acknowledge it here, confess it before God, and ask for His forgiveness and cleansing today? Then obey Him in the next thing (no matter how small) He asks you to do.

***Memory Verse:** “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?” Romans 6:16*

Word Wealth:

Using the resources you have on hand (i.e., additional Bible translations, dictionary, Bible dictionary, concordance, etc.), write a definition for the words below.

slave (6:16–18; 20, 22) _____

obey (6:16–17) _____

fruit (6:22) _____

wages (6:23) _____

You are free to choose which master you will serve; you are, however, not free from the consequences of that choice.

Romans 6:20–23 Enslaved to Righteousness

Paul has presented his readers with two types of slavery, one which leads to unrighteousness and death, and one which leads to righteousness and eternal life! In the end all of us fall into one category or the other. In the closing verses of chapter 6, Paul speaks of the fruit of both types.

Read Romans 6:20–23.

Paul causes us to pause and consider who and what we were before becoming believers and to contrast this with our lives since we accepted Christ. He states that when we were slaves to sin, we were free from the control of righteousness, but the end was death! On the other hand, when we died to sin and became *enslaved to God*, we were free from the control of sin and the result is righteousness that leads to eternal life.

1. Share a personal example of the *fruit* of a sinful life. v. 21

2. Now share a personal example of the *fruit* of a holy life. v. 22

For Group Discussion . . .

In John 15:16, Jesus said: “*You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.*”

- According to the above verse, for what purpose did Jesus choose *you*?

- What do you think He meant by the words, “*that your fruit should remain?*”

- ❖ In Galatians 5:22–23, Paul lists the *fruit of the Spirit*. Write these below in the space provided. Go back over the list and highlight the fruit that is currently evident in your life.

Did you realize that Jesus chose and appointed *you* for the purpose of *fruit bearing*? Go ahead and ask Him for the fruit you long most to exhibit to others and note it here. Trust Him for the answer and allow Him to work in your circumstances to bring it about.

Remind yourself often in the coming weeks to *remember who you are!* Remember too that *the wages of sin is death*—these wages can be earned—but eternal life is God’s gift to you. It is a free gift but it cost Him everything! Will you let your life exhibit your praise?

My Romans Road

Listen . . . Learn . . . Live . . . God's Truth!

Take a look back at this week's lesson. Briefly recap what you learned this week and how you intend to live it out.

1. What lesson in your study became real to you this week?

2. How do you intend to apply this lesson to your daily life?

Memory Verse:

Write down what you learned about God from this week's memory verse.

Write out the verse from memory.

Prayer Request:

Write out your most earnest prayer request and lift it to the Lord.

Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.