

Romans Session 8o

Free from Sin!!!

Romans 6:15-23 (NASB)

¹⁵ *What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!*

¹⁶ *Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?*

¹⁷ *But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed,*

¹⁸ *and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.*

¹⁹ *I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.*

²⁰ *For when you were slaves of sin, you were free about righteousness.*

²¹ *Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death.*

²² *But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.*

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

Sin is the most devastating, debilitating, degenerating, power that ever entered the human stream.

It's evil, in fact, corrupted the entire creation, which **"groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now"** (*Rom. 8:22*)

Scripture characterizes sin and its effects in many ways. It refers to it as defiling, a pollution of the soul.

It is to the human soul what corrosion is to a precious metal or smog is to a beautiful sky.

Sin is called an impure thing in (Isa. 30:22), it is compared to the venom of serpents, and the deadly poison of cobras (Duet. 32:33,

Even things that men consider to be righteous are like a filthy garment (lit. menstrual cloth) in God's sight (Isaiah 64:6, Zech 3:3-4)

Paul refers to sin as defilement of flesh and spirit (2Cor. 7:1) and to sinners as those who's mind and consciences are defiled (Titus 1:15)

Sin is rebellious, ignoring and even trampling on God's Word.

Someone has called sin, God's would-be murder, because if sin had its way it would destroy God Himself along with His Righteousness.

Sin is ungrateful, refusing to acknowledge God as the source of every good thing.

The sinner indulges in God's gracious provisions that are all around him but fails to credit, much less thank, God for those things.

He takes God's blessings and uses them to serve self and Satan.

Every sinner is like Absalom, the undisciplined son of David who kissed his father while plotting to usurp his throne. (2 Sam 14:33-15:6)

Sin is incurable by man's own efforts and power. Even if fallen man wanted to rid himself of sin, he could not do it, any more than the Ethiopian could change his skin or the leopard his spots. (Jer. 13:23).

The puritan writer, John Flavel, commented on the damning effect of sin by writing that if a sinner's penitential tears were as numberless as all the drops of rain that have fallen since the Creation, they could not wash away a single sin.

Sin is overpowering, hanging above fallen mankind like darkness, overnight. It dominates the mind, the affections, and the will. (Romans 1:21, John 3:19-21, Jer. 44:15-17)

Sin brings Satanic control, because every sin serves the purposes of the prince of the power of the air (Ep. 2:2) Every unredeemed sinner is a spiritual child of the devil (John 8:44)

Although sin promises satisfaction, it instead brings misery, frustration, and hopelessness. Job lamented that **"man is born for trouble, as sparks fly upward"** (Job 5:7)

In fact, because of sin, all creation was subjected to futility (**Rom 8:20**)

Worst of all, sin damns the unredeemed soul to hell. In his vision on Patmos, the apostle John saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds.

And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:12-15)

With the single exception of Jesus Christ, every human being born into this world has been born with a sinful nature. The natural unredeemed person is under the tyranny of sin. It controls his thoughts, words, and actions and his total existence.

Jesus said;

John 8:34b (NASB)

³⁴ **"Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin."**

Paul notes in the present passage, the natural man is a willing slave of sin. Men prove that truth every day of their lives as they reject the light of God that they have.

Although unregenerate person often wants desperately to escape the unpleasant and destructive consequences of their sins, they do not want to relinquish the cherished sins themselves.

Paul began the major theological sections of this epistle with these sobering words;

Romans 1:18-20 (NASB)

¹⁸ **For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress**

the truth in unrighteousness,

¹⁹ *because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.*

²⁰ *For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.*

Sin is the terrible, life wrecking, soul damning reality that resides and grows in every unredeemed human heart like an incurable cancer.

Even when men try to escape from sin, they cannot, and when they try to escape its guilt, they cannot.

The greatest gift that God could give to fallen mankind is freedom from sin, and it is that very gift that He offers through His Son, Jesus Christ.

It is on that very gift that He offers redemption from sin that Paul now focuses his great inspired mind.

As he continues his discourse on sanctification, Paul first reminds his Christian readers of their own past enslavement to sin and then reminds them of their new enslavement to righteousness through their trust in Jesus Christ.

His primary point in chapter 6:15-23 is that believers in Jesus Christ should live in total subjection to Christ and His righteousness and not fall back into their former sins, which no longer have claim over them.

Because they have died in Christ to sin and risen with Him to righteousness, they are no longer under the lordship of sin but are now under the lordship of righteousness.

Because the Christian has a new relationship to God, he also has a new relationship to sin.

For the first time, he is able not to live sinfully and able also for the first time to live righteously

Paul's development of Romans 6:15-23 closely parallels that of verses 1-10. He presents the antagonist (6:15a), the answer (6:15b), the axiom (6:16), the argument (6:17-22), and the absolute (6:23)

So, we want to start with the Antagonist

ANTAGONIST

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

With his brief introductory questions, "*what then?*" the apostle again anticipates the false conclusions his antagonists would derive from his declaration that believers are not under law, but under grace.

To then the idea of no longer being **under law but under grace** was tantamount to being free of all moral restraint. If the law no longer needs to be obeyed, and if God's grace covers all sins, they would argue then that believers are perfectly free to do as they please.

Jewish legalists, on the other hand, believed obedience to God's law was only way of salvation. To them, Paul exalted righteousness out of one side of his mouth, while in reality, giving license to sin out of the other side.

They accused Paul of condoning lawlessness in the name of God's grace.

The doctrine of grace has always been subject to that false charge, which the apostle first answer in the first half of chapter 6. But because the misunderstanding was so common and the issue so critical, he gives the answer again from a slightly different perspective.

The doctrine of salvation by God's grace, working only through man's faith and part from any works is the furthest thing from a license to sin.

So here is his answer again;

ANSWER

"may it never be (6:15b)

Paul here gives the same forceful answer and denial he gave in verse 2.

The idea is No, No, a thousand times No!!!

The mere suggestion that God's Grace is a license to sin is self -contradictory, a logical as well as a moral and spiritual absurdity.

The very purpose of God's grace is to free man from sin.

So how then, could grace possible justify continuing in sin?

Grace not only justifies but also transforms the life that is saved.

A life that gives no evidence of moral and spiritual transformation gives no evidence of salvation.

So, what is the Axiom?

AXIOM

¹⁶ Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?

An axiom is a general truth that is so self-evident it needs no proof.

"Do you now know?" Is clearly rhetorical, implying that his readers would readily acknowledge the truth of what he was about to say if they gave it the least thought.

What would be more obvious than the fact **that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of that one whom you obey?**

The phrase **present yourselves** indicates the willing choice of **obedience** to a master and makes Paul's point even more obvious.

All **slaves**, particularly voluntary ones, are bound to total **obedience** to their master, **the one whom** they obey.

A person who is not so bound is not a slave.

The apostle applies the axiom to the life style of believers, the matter of sanctified living about which he has been teaching in verses 1-14.

In relation to God's will, a saved person has but two choices: **either to sin**, which is to disobey Him, **or of obedience**.

A person's general pattern of living proves who his true master is.

If his life is characterized by **sin** which is opposed to God's will, then he is sin's slave.

If his life is characterized by **obedience**, which reflects God's will, then he is God's slave.

The end result of the first slavery is both physical and spiritual **death**.

Whereas, that of the second slavery is **righteousness**, the inescapable mark of eternal life.

Believers are;

Ephesians 2:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

The habitually unrighteous life cannot be a Christian life.

We will talk more of this next time.