

Romans Session 84

Free from Sin 5

Romans 6:23 (NASB)

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

Paul in speaking to the Romans Church has been talking about the Christian life and he has pointed out our position in Christ, and what the practice of Christian living should be, and what the promises bring for us as God's Children.

These we have considered in our past studies.

Tonight, we want to talk about the absolutes related to these wonderful truths.

The verse we just read is one that many Christians memorize, they know it by heart. Yet miss much of what it means. It expresses two inexorable absolutes.

The first is that the wages of sin is death.

Spiritual death is earned.

It is the just and rightful compensation for a life that is characterized by **sin**. Which is every life apart from God.

The second absolute is that the, free, gift, of God, is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

By definition, a gift is free, but lest anyone underestimate the magnitude of God's grace, Paul speaks of God's **free gift**.

Salvation cannot be earned by works, by human goodness, by religious ritual, or by any other thing that man can do.

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NASB)

⁸ *For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;*

⁹ *not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

If a person wants what he deserves, eternal death, God will give that to him as his just **wages**.

If a person wants what he does not deserve, eternal life, then God offers that to him as well, but as a **free gift**, the only source of which is **Christ Jesus our Lord**.

That is Paul's greatest climax to chapter 6 of Romans.

Jesus Christ is the only way from sin to righteousness, from damnation to salvation, from eternal death to eternal life.

As he stood before the Sanhedrin shortly after Pentecost, Peter boldly proclaimed the same truth, testifying that;

Acts 4:12 (NASB)

¹² *"And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."*

To the unbelieving Pharisees, Jesus said,

John 10:7-9 (NASB)

⁷ *So Jesus said to them again, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.*

⁸ ***"All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.***

⁹ ***"I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.***

During the upper room discourse, Jesus said;

John 14:6 (NASB)

⁶ ***Jesus *said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.***

The noted German pastor and theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer was imprisoned for several years by the Nazis and was executed just before the close of World War 2. In his book *"The Cost of Discipleship*, he wrote the following insightful words about what he called the gospel of cheap grace:

[Cheap grace] amounts to the justification of sin without the justification of the repentant sinner who departs from sin and from whom sin departs. Cheap grace is not the kind of forgiveness of sin which frees us from the toils of sin, Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ.

[Costly grace on the other hand] is the call of Jesus Christ at which the disciple leaves his nets and follows him. When [Martin Luther] spoke of grace (he)always implied as a corollary that it cost him his own life, the life which was now subjected to the absolute obedience of Christ.

Happy are they who, knowing that grace, can live in the world without being of it, who by following Jesus Christ, are so assured of their heavenly citizenship that they are truly free to live their lives in this world. ([New York: Macmillan, 1959], pp.47, 53, 60)

Only the Son of God could have paid the cost of salvation. But He calls His followers to pay the cost of discipleship.

Matthew 16:24-25 (NASB)

²⁴ ***Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.***

²⁵ ***"For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.***

Luke records the matter of dealing with the cost when he quotes Jesus;

Luke 14:26-33 (NASB)

²⁶ ***"If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.***

²⁷ ***"Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.***

²⁸ ***"For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it?***

²⁹ ***"Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him,***

³⁰ ***saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'***

³¹ ***"Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand?***

³² ***"Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace.***

³³ ***"So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.***

When the Lord gave the parables of the pearl and the treasure in the field;

Matthew 13:44-46 (NASB)

⁴⁴ *"The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.*

⁴⁵ *"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls,*

⁴⁶ *and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.*

Now the common thread here is that the man sold all he had to make the purchase.

The Lord is not looking for men and women who want to add Him to their sin as insurance against hell.

He is not looking for people who want to apply His high moral principles to their unregenerate lives.

He is not looking for those who want only to be outwardly reformed by having their old nature improved.

Jesus Christ calls to Himself those who are willing to be inwardly transformed by Him, who desire an entirely new nature that is created in His own holy likeness.

He calls to Himself those who are willing to exchange their sinfulness for His holiness.

He calls to Himself those who are willing to die with Him in order to be raised with Him, who are willing to relinquish slavery to their sin for slavery to His righteousness.

And when men and women come to Him on His terms, He changes their destiny from eternal death to eternal life.

DEAD TO THE LAW

Romans 7:1-6 (NASB)

¹ *Or do you not know, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives?*

² *For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband.*

³ *So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man.*

⁴ *Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.*

⁵ *For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death.*

⁶ *But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.*

As you study the Old Testament, you cannot help being struck by the dignity and honor accorded the revealed law of God, also referred to by such names as His statutes, commandments, ordinances, and testimonies. God inspired Moses to write;

Deuteronomy 6:1-9 (NASB)

¹ *"Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the judgments which the LORD your God has commanded me to teach you, that you might do them in the land where you are going over to possess it,*

² *so that you and your son and your grandson might fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged.*

³ *"O Israel, you should listen and be careful to do it, that it may be well with you and that you may multiply greatly,*

just as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.

⁴ *"Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!*

⁵ *"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.*

⁶ *"These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart.*

⁷ *"You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.*

⁸ *"You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead.*

⁹ *"You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

Solomon wrote;

Ecclesiastes 12:13 (NASB)

¹³ *The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person.*

Psalms 119 uses some ten different synonyms for God's law;

Psalms 119:1 (NASB)

¹ *How blessed are those whose way is blameless, Who walk in the law of the LORD.*

Psalms 119:4 (NASB)

⁴ *You have ordained Your precepts, That we should keep them diligently.*

Psalms 119:5 (NASB)

⁵ *Oh that my ways may be established To keep Your statutes!*

Psalms 119:11 (NASB)

¹¹ *Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You.*

Psalms 119:12 (NASB)

¹² *Blessed are You, O LORD; Teach me Your statutes.*

Psalms 119:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ *I shall delight in Your statutes; I shall not forget Your word.*

Psalms 119:34 (NASB)

³⁴ *Give me understanding, that I may observe Your law And keep it with all my heart.*

Psalms 119:97 (NASB)

⁹⁷ *O how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day.*

Psalms 119:160 (NASB)

¹⁶⁰ *The sum of Your word is truth, And every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting.*

Psalms 119:165 (NASB)

¹⁶⁵ *Those who love Your law have great peace, And nothing causes them to stumble.*

Psalms 119:172 (NASB)

¹⁷² *Let my tongue sing of Your word, For all Your commandments are righteousness.*

To his father-in-law Jethro, Moses explained that his primary purpose as the divinely-appointed leader of Israel was to:

Exodus 18:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ *"When they have a dispute, it comes to me, and I judge between a man and his neighbor and make known the statutes of God and His laws."*

We begin to see here how dominant in Ancient Israel the law was even to the point that many had made it virtually an idol.

Listen to David's words concerning the Law

Psalm 19:7-10 (NASB)

⁷ The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

⁸ The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

⁹ The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether.

¹⁰ They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.

We have just begun on this subject and will continue next time together.