

## ROMANS 6:15-23

### RECAP:

Now backing up a little bit in Romans, just so we understand how we got here, Paul is presenting the marvelous story of salvation.

- He starts out, of course, in the first few chapters, chapter 1 through chapter 3, talking about our sinfulness.
  - Whether we have the Law or don't have the law,
  - we are still guilty before God, Jew or Gentile.
  - All of us are bound by sin, dominated by sin and headed for eternal punishment. T
  - Then in chapter 3 verse 21 hinge pin ,
  - Paul he talks about salvation 3, 4 and 5 on the doctrine of justification,
    - God declares us to be righteous
    - through faith in Christ.
- Chapter 6 is a explanation of the reality of sanctification which is the inseparable twin of justification.
  - Whoever it is that God justifies, He sanctifies.
  - That is to say, whoever it is that God declares righteous, He also makes righteous. And that is the theme of chapter 6.
  - First 14 verses which we already looked at say that in Christ the power of sin is broken because we have a new life
    - We have died to sin,
    - we have been united with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection, and risen to newness of life.
    - We have a new life.
    - The penalty for sin is paid and the power of sin is broken and we walk in a new life.

## ROMANS 6:15-23

We will not go on sinning so that grace may abound because we can't.

- It is contrary to our new life.
- 15 to 23 he points up that we have a new Lord, or a new Master.
- We cannot go on sinning because we have a new Master and whoever is our Master, we obey.

### FREEDOM HAS THE POSSIBILITY OF ABUSE

But the legalists would shout, "it's all a gift of grace, then people are going to run amok." They will abuse the very freedom that is given."

If this This new life doesn't depend at all on what I do and if all my sins, past, present and future are covered, and if I now live in a condition of grace so that where my sin abounds, grace much more abounds, doesn't this set me free to do whatever I want?

If what I do makes no contribution to my salvation, then am I not free to do whatever I want?

If I cannot do anything to be justified. Why is it that if I do something does it detract from that justification?

Two reasons:

1. We have a new life and you're not going to go on sinning because you have a new life. 1-14
2. you're not going to go on sinning because you have a new Lord, you have a new Master, you have a new dominating force 15-23

Two reasons the same answer. May it never be.

**Carefully here:**

I would ask you, "Are you in Christ?"

You would say, "Yes."

"Are you a child of God?"

"Yes."

"Are you in the church, the body of Christ?" "Yes."

Then you will know this fact from [Col 3:1-3](#), "If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth." Why? Because you have died, "and your life is hidden with Christ in God."

**I ask you the question, "Did Christ die for you or just for your sins?"**

"Well," you say, "He died for me."

Then that's the end of you. You and I were the ones who should have been crucified. You and I were the ones who had transgressed against the law of God and broken the law. You and I were the sinners. "The wages of sin is death" ([Rom 6:23](#)).

**Salvation is not addition.**

Some people have the idea that you are who you are and when you get saved something gets added. I live and Jesus just comes into my heart and lives with me.

The Bible never teaches that. Never.

Salvation isn't addition, it doesn't leave the old unchanged, it is transformation.

- Internally you're a whole new being.
- In fact, in some ways when you die and go to heaven, that will be less of a change than your conversion was.
- You may well say, "That's hard to believe." But it's true.
  - You already have a new creation in you, created by God for righteousness.
  - It is debilitated by the presence of the flesh that incarcerates that new creation.
  - When you die, you don't need new creation, you just need to get rid of the flesh.
  - You're only waiting, Romans 8 says, for the redemption of your body.

- You have already been made completely new on the inside.
- You are now no longer the slave of sin, but you are the slave of righteousness.

So first part of the chapter, verses 1 to 14, we don't go on sinning because we have a new life. We have been united to Christ in His death and resurrection. We have died to sin. It has no power over us. We live in a new life

15-24

Paul here again is making a contrast. He uses the word **slave** NAS uses it nine times. And the phrase **set free** three times. As humans we find ourselves in a difficult position. The moment we become even remotely aware of our enslaved state in this world we long for liberation and freedom.

*The question here is what do you as a Christian want freedom from and secondly is what you are asking for is possible under the reign of God?*

The issue here is the only way human society and governments and masters have to restrain behavior, to control is to make more laws and with these laws penalties.

**What Paul is saying here there is no real freedom.** No ability to do whatever you want. There is always a context or limiting factor on our want. What we really yearn for is not freedom but Liberty.

WHY?

Every freedom is really constrained by something.

Prior to justification that constraining factor has been the grip of Sin. Remember three types of sin; Personal, Inherited and imputed.

Man will always become the moral subject of what he does. If he yields to sin that sin gets a grip upon them. Paul is saying you are a slave to either sin or God. There are two ways of going in this pursuit. It is a choice and there is no middle ground, no grey area. What Paul was talking about was liberty.

If you give yourself to any master, then you become the slave of that master. And when you commit to obey a master, then you go on obeying the master to whom you've made the commitment. Once you choose your master, you're bound to obey. The fact is if your master is sin, then you're going to obey sin. If your master is righteousness, then you're going to obey righteousness. This is a universal law. Everybody lives with a master.

Example of the difference between freedom and liberty.

Freedom is about the lack of interference, lack of constraints, lack of rules, laws, chains, boundaries. Freedom is a negative. It takes away. It is a simple equation. It is a number. I have these specific rights. Freedom of religion. Freedom of speech. It is a matter of what you aren't prevented from doing. All doors are unlocked.

Liberty in contrast, is a matter of what you can actually do. All sorts of doors may be open, giving you a large amount of freedom, and yet you might find that there are still obstacles to taking full advantage of

your opportunities. Those obstacles are dictated by our willingness to submit again to an external. It is a question of 'Who is master?'

Slaves to Sin leads to death.

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Verse 17 is our WAAAAHOOOOO moment.

It all changed when you became obedient from the heart. Not a superficial thing, not an external thing, **not religiosity, but heart obedience**. When from deep down inside you began to obey God, this indicates a change in the nature, a change of the will, motivation. You became obedient from the heart. How? By the miracle of regeneration, the miracle of conversion through repentance and faith. And that obedience was launched when you responded obediently to that form of teaching to which you were committed.

There is a new pattern of life, a new shape of who you are. You have been melted down and poured out into a new life. Jesus called it being Born Again.

Either your life is characterized by sin as your master or it is characterized by a great desire to please God even though you may fail.

Again, we are getting right down to motives of the heart in the life of a Christian. If you are a real Christian, if you really have taken Christ as your Savior, even though you may be a failure and have weaknesses and so on, you will have a great yearning in your heart to do the things that are pleasing to God.

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### **"pattern of teaching"**

Obey

From these the servants of righteousness are distinguished not by their profession, garb, postures, ritual, and shibboleth of righteousness, but by their **obedience to the commands of righteousness**.

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He appeals to that practical knowledge which is common to us all.

- We all know that if we yield obedience to anyone, though not nominally their servant we *are* their servant practically.
- That is the case also in spiritual things, whether it be serving sin or God.
- Judged by this standard, we were without a question once the slaves of sin. But when the Gospel "form of doctrine" reached us we obeyed it,
- As a result we have been emancipated from the tyranny of sin, and have become servants of God and righteousness. Well then, being now servants of righteousness, we are to yield our members in detail so that God may have His way with us.

This yielding then is a tremendously important business.

One word here must be emphasized and underlined and highlighted. Patern. It means we conform to a mold. As this new life is poured into this mold it is constrained. Our lives are pushed into every corner of the image of God.

**It is a total pouring.**

A true understanding of sound doctrine related to the gospel is foundational, it is into that mold that we are poured and genuinely transformed. And once you come out, you come out totally different. You come out to live a life of obedience to your new master who is God, your new motivation which is to pursue holiness, your new desire, to be righteous, your new love, to love God and His Word and His people.

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Now it's a wonderful thing to be free in Christ, just as it's a wonderful thing to be free in the nation in which we live. But the question that comes to mind which we have to deal with is just exactly what does our Christian freedom mean. And how do we enjoy our Christian freedom without abusing it? How do we contain our Christian freedom within acceptable limitations so that when we say we're free in Christ we don't run amok in terms of unrighteousness? How do we control that? Well that's what Paul wants to deal with here. He's very concerned that having announced through these first five chapters that we are free, that people understand what that freedom means and how that freedom is controlled. For freedom that is out of control is going to be lost, it's going to be forfeited.

### **What is True Freedom?**

When you ask most people what they would define as freedom they will most likely answer something along the lines of: "Freedom is to be able to do whatever you want."

The reality is that this problem has perpetuated itself throughout history, and since the dawn of time. Every man and every woman in every culture has searched for freedom. But freedom from what? And freedom towards what? And most of all: what really is true freedom?

Have you ever stopped to think about this interpretation of freedom? If everyone really did whatever they wanted this would not truly be freedom – this would be chaos and anarchy. Why? Because everyone has a different idea of what they want in life, and while one thing might benefit another person, it might impair or completely destroy the life of another.

Calls for Freedom and Liberty have always been a part of the American lifestyle. We object to anyone that would want to limit our inalienable rights.

- Declaration of Independence "Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."
- First amendment: Religion, speech, press, assembly and petition.

But yet each of these have limitations. The state can limit or set boundaries to these rights. Your rights are limited by the rights of others.

Freedom is always open to abuse. My freedom to drive as fast as I want is more important than the red light at the corner. In the name of freedom in our own society today, women can now murder their unborn children, which is amazing since I read this week that there is a law in the United States imposing a \$4,000 fine on anyone who ships a pregnant lobster. In the name of freedom, the press attacks our leaders, attacks the principles of our nation, building distrust and fomenting a revolution against all authority. The very freedom of the first amendment includes a freedom of religion has become the freedom from religion.

There is a difference between Freedom and liberty.

- Freedom is the power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint.
- Liberty the state of being free **within** society from oppressive restrictions imposed by authority on one's way of life, behavior, or political views.