

Romans

PART 10

SERVANTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Overcoming Sin

Being united to Christ and having freedom from sin, Romans 6 will continue to address how our practices and lifestyle are to be transformed day to day. We are no longer to live for worldliness and self, but for God's purposes. Godly living isn't just a list of do's and don'ts, but it's having a new identity and walking in the newness of life with Christ through the power of the holy spirit. The basis of our choice to be servants of righteousness is a powerful new relationship through Jesus Christ. There are many amazing miracles we see God do through the working of the spirit, but one of the most powerful evidences of the holy spirit in the life of a Christian is a life that is lived free from the crippling bondage of sin, bearing fruit to God's glory.

This I say then, walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

GALATIANS 5:16

A Foundation Of Forgiveness

We cannot do this by our flesh. The free gift of grace and forgiveness before a holy God must be the solid foundation of our thinking, so that we aren't tempted to rely on our own goodness. Otherwise, talking about sin will make us feel bad about ourselves and cause us to turn away from addressing it. Having a deep security in the righteousness of Christ is being able to see our failures, but more importantly look at the Savior from sin and turn to God with repentance. Reading these verses is not to make us spiral into shame, but to help us increase in living holy lives useful for our master's work.

Chapter Highlights

VS 12

In light of what we saw earlier in chapter 6 about being alive from the dead with Christ as a new humanity, we are not to let sin have authority in our bodies to the end that we obey its lusts. To run back to sin after we've been freed from it is unthinkable when we see through God's view. Jesus made the body of sin inactive so that we don't have to be a slave to it anymore.

VS 12 CONT.

Though sin may feel inescapable when I'm entangled in it, Jesus' work can be bigger to me than the temptations of sin. I can resist through the working of the holy spirit and the equipping of the Word of God. We cannot avoid temptation, but temptation itself is not sin. Just because we're tempted doesn't mean we must give in. We can say no and resist as Jesus Christ did: with faith in God. The old man would have you think you must follow through on out of bounds desires, but that's a lie. At his greatest hour of temptation, Jesus prayed and was strengthened by God. **Pray and see how God responds to a heart resolved to do His will rather than its own.**

VS 13-15

We are not to use our body parts for unrighteousness, such as using our mouths for wicked words. Instead, we can use our members as instruments useful for God's righteousness as those alive from the dead. We do this by remembering who we are, not yielding to sin, and offering ourselves to God.

We are under grace, not the law. Acknowledging the law and trying to keep it by our own strength is not enough - we will always fail. Acknowledging grace is recognizing Christ's sinlessness, and knowing that his righteousness will keep us. By grace, we live in newness through HIS goodness. We have freedom from the law's demands, but not freedom for lawlessness. Grace empowers us to become servants of righteousness unto God, a freedom to do what is right. We are not without law, but under the new and better law of the Lordship of Jesus and the law of the spirit of life.

2 Wrong Ways to Respond to Grace

*Using grace as a "free-for-all" to do whatever they want, people will not repent from sin.
This will lead to **LICENTIOUSNESS**.*

*Worrying that freedom is too radical, people will put in place unnecessary parameters to act as fence laws protecting them from "slippery slopes."
This will lead to **PHARISAICAL LEGALISM**.*

VS 16-19

Paul uses the analogy of slavery, being that slavery was common in Rome and something humans in the limitations of our flesh can understand. He explains that people will always be servants to something, whether serving sin unto unrighteousness and death or serving God unto righteousness through obedience.

VS 16-19 CONT.

So who will we yield ourselves in service to? Something we have died to? Or what we've been made alive unto? As we have (in the past) yielded ourselves servants to uncleanness, so now we can be servants of righteousness. This will lead to sanctification in our lifestyle, where we are separated from sin and reflecting God's holiness. We see the process of sanctification in our lives by making one choice that honors God at a time. Each choice draws us away from sin and worldliness and towards living for God, until that sin doesn't allure us or capture our eye as it once did.

VS 20-22

Being a servant of righteousness does not restrict real freedom. Actually, when we were servants of sin the only thing we were free from was righteousness! The flesh would have you to think you had it better before, but it was a life apart from God and the end is death. Yes, there are clear commandments and expectations of us in the gospel, but God isn't holding us back from having fun. It is true freedom to know God's goodness; his way brings fruit unto holiness and the end is eternal life. In eternity, it will be all about God's righteousness and holiness dwelling in all of heaven and earth. When we walk in newness of life now, it is a foretaste of eternal days when we will be living separate from sin, rejoicing in the presence of God's righteousness and holiness.

VS 23

Slavery to sin will pay the wages of what we deserved: death. But God's free gift of grace gives us what we didn't deserve: eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

As we appreciate these truths from Chapter 6, there are steps we can take to promote practical sanctification in our lives.

VERSES 1-10

We must **KNOW** we are united to Christ in his death and resurrection, and are therefore free from the authority of sin. The old man is dead.

VERSES 11

We must **RECKON** these facts to be true of us personally.

VERSES 12-14

We must **PRESENT** ourselves to God in dedication as his servants to perform righteousness.

VERSES 15-23

We must **OBEY** God, choosing his ways of righteousness.

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