

EXPOSITION OF ROMANS

Message #23

Romans 6:15-23

There is another addiction that plagues humanity both the Christian and non-Christian world. It is called sin. We could call it the “Sin Crisis.”

The “sin crisis” is not something only for the lost world, for God knows many of His own people are enslaved to some vice.

Dabbling around with sin for a believer is not innocent child’s play and if the believer keeps persisting in sin, it can own them.

A BELIEVER UNDER GRACE IS NEVER TO BE A SLAVE OF SIN BUT SHOULD BECOME A SLAVE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

In these verses there are three main reasons why we should never be a slave to sin:

REASON #1 – We should not be a slave to sin but a slave to righteousness because this is consistent with God’s desire. **6:15**

In this verse we see the desire or wish of God is that we never allow sin to master us.

Now there is a very important difference between the question in this verse and the question in verse 1. The difference is the tense of the verb. In **verse 1** it is present tense meaning continuing in sin, and in **verse 15** it is an aorist tense meaning a specific moment of sin.

By using this tense we learn an important point and that is, a series of specific moments of sin are that which lead sin to have mastery over an individual.

Now the mood of the verb “may it never be” is Optative. It is a very rare mood in the Greek text. In fact it is only used 67 times in the entire New Testament. The optative mood is the mood of strong wish or desire.

According to Dana and Mantey, two esteemed New Testament Greek grammarians, when a negative is used with this mood, it completely negates or demolishes the previous statement or assertion. **In other words, in the mind of God and Paul, the strong desire or wish is that the kind of thinking that specific moments of sin are okay needs to be demolished.** The thought that someone can look at the grace of God and then purpose to have specific moments of sin is totally contrary to God’s Word and wish.

REASON #2 – We should not be a slave to sin but a slave to righteousness because this is consistent with our responsibility. **6:16**

The practical implication of this verse is that we will become a slave to whatever we are continually submitting ourselves to. Whatever we continually obey, that is to which we will become a slave.

The word “obey” is used three times in this verse and it means to respond favorably to something you hear, such as a knock at a door or a military command (G. Abbott-Smith, p. 456).

The word “present” is one that means to stand beside or to come alongside of. **Paul’s point here is, whatever we are continually coming alongside of and responding favorably to - it is that to which we are enslaved.**

Now when it comes to our Christian lives, we only have two options - we are either a slave to sin or a slave to righteousness. Neither the noun “sin” nor the noun “righteousness” have an article before it, so what Paul has in mind is the character and quality of our lifestyle. Either we are developing the character and quality of submitting ourselves to the path of sin or the path of righteousness.

This is an “either/or” proposition - either the habitual character of our lives is enslaved to sin or to righteousness. One or the other has us in its grasp.

REASON #3 – We should not be a slave to sin but a slave to righteousness because this is consistent with our position. **6:17-23**

The things which have positionally happened to us when we believed on Christ, are things that should prompt us to live a life of righteousness and not of sin.

Reminder #1 - What the believer has been made. **6:17-18**

Notice carefully what brings a person to salvation: teaching from God’s Word. Without Biblical instruction, people will not be delivered from sin.

Now in **verse 18**, Paul says that in the mind of God the believer has been set free from sin and has become a slave of righteousness.

The participles “having been” and “you became” are both passive. What this means is that we did not have anything to do with the action. The moment we believed on Jesus Christ, we were positionally made free from sin and we were made, by God, a servant of righteousness. This is how God sees us and this is what God made us.

The Grace of God that saved us has made us a servant of righteousness forever. We need to serve righteousness now.

Reminder #2 - What the believer once was . **6:19-21**

Prior to coming to faith in Christ, we were by God's classification "impure and lawless slaves to sin." We were not righteous, we were dead in sin. **Verse 21** graphically and accurately describes our condition before God as we came to faith - we were ashamed and we were dead .

Reminder #3 - What the believer is now . **6:22-23**

Here is one of the great contrasts between what we once were and what we now are. We are now free from sin and we are now enslaved to God . The wonderful benefit of this is that we are now set apart for eternal life.

Now we may notice that **verse 23** begins with a conjunction "for" which explains why it is we are free from sin and servants of God. It is because God has given us a free gift - He has given us eternal life in Jesus Christ.

The first part of **verse 23** gives some straight shooting truth concerning sin. No matter what the context, "the wages of sin is death." Sin brought us all spiritual death, physical death and apart from faith in Christ, eternal death. Sin will bring a paycheck of death to you in any context. It will kill your spiritual life, your marriage, your career, your effectiveness. It will kill your appetite for God's Word and will. Sin will always bring the same paycheck to your life, the paycheck of death.

In view of this reality why would we ever want to serve sin? In view of the great gift of God in saving us, wouldn't we rather be addicted to His righteousness?

It isn't easy to kick an addiction, but it starts with one saying, "I want out."
It starts with one choice. Will you make that choice today?