

Introduction:

- In Romans 6:1-14 Paul responds to an accusation that the abundance of grace in Christ encourages sin, when in fact, it sets believers free from sin.
- In Romans 6:15-23 Paul responds to a similar accusation by putting the focus on slavery to God and to righteousness.
  - Slavery imagery is dominating language in this paragraph. Paul also speaks of freedom but not as much here.
  - Paul uses *doulas* (slave) and *doulo* (enslave) eight times and in every verse but 15.
  - *upakoe* obedience and *upakouo* obey occur three times
- The emphasis on Christian's slavery to Christ is not the whole picture. Paul admits this in vs 19 where he speaks of the concept as an illustration to show that we are freed 'from sin' not 'to sin.'
- Paul now begins to stress that we are under obligation to our new 'Master' God and righteousness.
- He insists that "You will have a master." The choice is yours...sin or righteousness.
- Again, the section begins with a question as in 6:1 and verse 16 serves to remind us that sin has serious consequences.

## I. The Question

- A. Same question, same answer, different focus.
1. *"Well then, since God's grace has set us free from the law, does that mean we can go on sinning? Of course not!"* (Romans 6:15, NLT) Paul is asking whether the grace of God should lead to sinning.
  2. Meganoita - no way! By no means! vs. 2,15.
  3. In verse 1, it is a question of whether we should sin to gain more grace.
  4. In verse 15, it is a question of whether we should sin because of grace. The argument is this: To not be under the law (from Jew perspective) assumes you are in a situation to be sinning. Paul sees the condition of not be under the law as both...
    - a) a liberating power because of grace
    - b) and a constraining power because of grace that comes from a renewed heart and mind, therefore the constant of willing obedience.
- B. Christians who are no longer slaves to sin must no longer live as slaves to sin. vs 16.
1. Christians must realize that if they constantly yield to sin they essentially becomes slaves of sin again.
  2. Jesus made the same point: *"Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave of sin."* (John 8:34, NLT)
  3. Paul making sure his readers understand that 'slavery' to God is not just a legal status but a living experience. This freedom is to lead to *righteous living* (the end of verse 16).

4. The last part of the verse is to bring the reader to place that they must choose one of the two options:
  - a) Master - sin
  - b) Master - obedience
  - c) The choice has serious consequences. "The freedom of the Christian is not freedom to do what one wants, but freedom to obey God—willingly, joyfully, naturally." Moo, D. J. (1996). NICNT Romans (p. 399). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
  - d) You can be a slave to sin which leads to death or a slave to righteousness which leads to life.

## II. The Decision Has Been Made vss 17, 18.

- A. Paul gives thanks for the decision they have made. "...you were...but now are whole heartedly obeying.
  1. You have obeyed points to a time of conversion. Paul view faith in Christ and commitment to Him as impossible to separate.
  2. He uses the word 'obey' to underscore the fact that is part of what it means to be a Christian. We live for Christ our Master.
- B. The object of our obedience. *"Thank God! Once you were slaves of sin, but now you wholeheartedly obey this teaching we have given you."* (Romans 6:17, NLT)
  1. Note: It is not the teaching that is handed down but the believers that we handed over to the teaching. That is how the literal translation reads.
  2. Becoming a Christian is being handed over to the 'christian teaching.'
  3. 'this teaching' - Gr. typon - pattern. It is a pattern that molds others to it. It causes the teaching to shape the new believers life/or those handed over to it.
- C. To say again what has been said. vs 18 restates what 6:1-14 has spoken.
  1. There is one new addition...the introduction of the word 'freedom.' This is Pauls first use of the word freedom to describe the Christian.
  2. The freedom is not to be self governing but what we experience as slaves to God!
  3. Sin is the power from which we have been freed. Paul reminds them that they are now slaves to righteousness.
  4. The Christian is called to obey out of this new and living relationship that has been entered into in Christ.

## III. Whose Slave are You? vss 29-23

- A. Paul uses the the slavery language to communicate his point: We have been put into a right relationship with God through faith.
  1. You were slave to sin and unholy living.
  2. Now you are slaves to righteous living. This is the central theme of the paragraph.
  3. Imperatives: do not present NKJV, and present NKJV your bodies.
  4. Just as you presented now present your bodies to God to be holy.
- B. You were slaves to sin.

1. Therefore you were free from the obligation to do right. And the result was you became ashamed of what you had done, those things that led to death.
2. Being a sinner has 'freedom'...freedom from righteousness.
- C. Paul summarizes and repeats. *"But now you are free from the power of sin and have become slaves of God. Now you do those things that lead to holiness and result in eternal life."* (Romans 6:22, NLT)
  1. Free from the power of sin and now slaves to God.
  2. This new life now leads to holiness and right living in God.
  3. *"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord."* (Romans 6:23, NLT)
    - a) This verse brings us to the outcomes of these two ways of life.
    - b) This verse brings us to the climax of Paul thoughts here.
    - c) wage- what we deserve. Earned.
    - d) gift- what God freely gives. Unearned.
  4. Summary: Sin vs Righteousness, death vs. life, wage vs. gift. Your choice.

#### Supplement:

"Paul's use of σύν to describe the relation between Christ and the Christian is an important and controversial aspect of his Christology and soteriology. Paul brings Christ and believers together with the preposition σύν 32 times; they can be put into nine categories:

1. The believer's "dying with" (σύν-ἀποθνῆσκω) Christ (Rom. 6:8; Col. 2:20; 2 Tim. 2:11; cf. Rom. 6:5);
2. The believer's "being crucified with" (συσταυρόω) Christ (Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20a);
3. The believer's being "buried" with" (συντάφω) Christ (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12);
4. The believer's being "raised with" (συνεγείρω) Christ in the past (Col. 2:12<sup>1</sup>; Col. 3:1; Eph. 2:6);
5. The believer's "coming to life with" (συνζωοποιέω) Christ (Col. 2:13; Eph. 2:5);
6. The believer's being "seated with" (συγκαθίζω) Christ in "the heavenlies" (Eph. 2:6);
7. The believer's being "with" Christ (various verbs) in this life (Rom. 8:17a, 17b, 29; Phil. 3:10; Col. 3:3; 2 Cor. 13:4b<sup>2</sup>);
8. The believer's eventual deliverance "with" Christ (various verbs) (Rom. 6:5b, 8b; 8:17b, 32b; 2 Cor. 4:14; Phil. 3:21; Col. 3:4; 1 Thess. 4:14b; 5:10b; 2 Tim. 2:11b<sup>3</sup>);
9. The believer's being "with" Christ after death/parousia (1 Thess. 4:17; Phil. 1:23)"

NICNT Romans Moo.