

## Romans Chapter 6:14 – 7:6

### *Slaves of Christ*

We are made righteous by what Christ has done but we are not righteous yet and how do we actually live righteously which is basically the focus of Christian life. There is a lot of movement in the modern church today and so many things, we get excited about gifts, we get excited about prophesy, we get excited of so many things and blessing but we fail to understand that the most important thing this side of justification is actually making holy and that is the part that we are losing out on. So we need to correct that. Now these are metaphors of achieving righteousness or sanctification as it called.

So sanctification is a process where you grow in righteousness to be like the righteousness which Christ has. So now these are four pictures in Romans 6 the first half, the metaphors are basically death than crucifixion (we have been crucified with Christ), we have died with Christ to sin), so it is a negative aspect. So what is the meaning of being made holy, dying to the sin, dying to the power and effect of sin. Then we are united with Christ. So it is another picture of baptism where you are united with Christ in his death and we are united with him in his resurrection, so that is negative side. Today we look at the positive side, we are slaves of Christ, slaves of righteousness and also we are married to righteousness. So there is a positive and then there is a negative.

Now how do we live our Christian lives and become sanctified. We believe we are died to sin, we believe we are united to Christ, we believe we are slaves of righteousness. We believe we are married to Christ, so therefore because you believe then you take action. Because we believe that we can walk on water because Christ calls us to walk on water then we have action and we step up. So the process of now growing our faith in our beliefs is very-very important because that is how we become holy. So here today we will deal with slaves of righteousness in the last half of romans chapter 6 and chapter 7 will be talking about being married to Christ. These are two pictures.

**13 Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. 14 For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.**

It means we do not live and earn credit through the law, we are actually under grace. If we that we are not under the law it means that we do not have to obey law and the tendency will be to sin like crazy. So how is it that you can be under grace and yet not sin like crazy, actually live a righteous life as it were. Now under grace means being slave of Christ. Here it says

**15 What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! 16 Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?**

So basically we are slaves to the one you obey. So under grace means you are slave of Christ. There is no neutral ground. There is nobody who can say that I am absolutely free, I do not have to do anything. It is just an illusion. Some people think should I give up my

freedom so that I can submit to God. We think as if we have a choice because if we don't surrender to him we are actually surrendering to sin.

Mauritania abolished slavery in 1991 and very interesting story in CNN of Moulkheir Mint Yarba, she escaped slavery in 2010 and she tells of a story on her escape where one day just before she escaped that she came back from her work in the fields and found her daughter (few months old) dead and the daughter was actually brought onto her by her slave owner who raped her, got a daughter whom she loved and had total control of her body and the slave owner killed the daughter because the daughter took up her time. So less work and less productivity and daughter lay sprawl blooded on the side of the road and she proceeded to cry and try to give her a decent burial, her master pulled her aside and say you get back to work. She was not even allowed to bury her daughter. Now that underscores the tyranny of slavery.

The picture of slavery in ancient times is a little bit different from today. Those days the slaves are like today's migrant workers unfortunately, 30% of the Roman are Greek society, 16-33% are made of slaves. Our idea of slavery comes from the American slavery when they all were in chains and all beaten half to death but actually in those days they form just like our migrant workers, a significant proportion of the family and the word, do you not you are slaves is not really well translated. If we look at the word 'Duolos', ASV says

**16 Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?**

So there is a translation problem. A lot of bibles will translate it as servants and there are couple of reasons why you translate it as servants because there is a stigma because of this American slavery. So if you are a person who live today, you translate slave, most of us will think about black slave. So that is a wrong thing. So a lot of people don't want to use that word then the word 'Duolos' was often translated to Latin and that word Latin is 'servus' and hence it was directly translated to 'servus' to English is called servant. In 16<sup>th</sup> Century England slave was also someone in chains. So because of all of these are reasons some of our Bibles will not translate it as slave, they will translate it as servant. But if we are slave we are owned by our master, you are paid with a price, complete constant availability and obedience, you cannot say no, completely in control. You are subject to an alien will, singular devotion to one person. That is what when the Bible says, you cannot have two masters, you cannot serve two masters, the world and Christ. He is basically using this idea and servant and slave. When you are slave you only get one master. They are no two people sharing one slave. There is complete dependence on the master, you are only protected by your master or abuse by your master, and everything depends on your master. If the master wants you to die today, you die. He holds your life that is what slavery is. All discipline and reward comes from one master. So picture of slavery is edged inside the New Testament. We have a difficulty of understanding that because we only understand servant, but there is a problem, what is the difference between servant and slave. Servant got off time, servant can negotiate but slaves have no such luxuries in life. Euripides which was a famous Greek philosopher says,

*Freedom is a priceless name, the man who enjoys it though poor has great possession. He wants it, I would rather die on my feet and live on my knees but no one is truly free. They are all slave to wealth, fortune, the law, other people restraining them from acting according to their will"*

At least Euripides understood that in the world today, freedom is an illusion, everybody is not a slave. There is nobody is really free in the world today, you are enslaved to something and Paul says, we are slave to what we obey.

Bob Dylan took a song from this chapter and he actually sang,

*You may be an ambassador to England or France  
You may like to gamble, you might like to dance  
You may be the heavyweight champion of the world  
You may be a socialite with a long string of pearls.*

*Might be a rock'n' roll addict prancing on the stage  
Might have money and drugs at your commands, women in a cage  
You may be a business man or some high degree thief  
They may call you Doctor or they may call you Chief.*

*You may be a preacher with your spiritual pride  
You may be a city councilman taking bribes on the side  
You may be working in a barbershop, you may know how to cut hair  
You may be somebody's mistress, may be somebody's heir.*

*But you're gonna have to serve somebody, yes  
You're gonna have to serve somebody,  
Well, it may be the devil or it may be the Lord  
But you're gonna have to serve somebody.*

Bob Dylan clever man as he was understands that we have to serve somebody, nobody is actually free. It is like no neutral ground. If you were Israelite following Charlton Heston or is it Moses at that time you either cross the Red Sea or you don't cross the Red Sea, you know, why, because at the back of you is the Egyptian Army, the front of you is the Red Sea, you die either way and so therefore if you did not cross that means you made a decision to go back. If you cross you made a decision. So whatever way you feel there is no neutral ground and I think for Christians here today we are taking about sanctification you cannot say today that I will decide to be holy, I will decide to grow in my Christian life, because if you don't decide to grow your Christian life, there is no neutral. It is like driving a car, when put in neutral it will slide back. So you are either slave to righteousness or you are slave to Christ and what happens to you will depend on your master.

So if you got a good master life is good, if you got a bad master life is bad. So you are slave to the one we obey, either of sin which leads to death or obedience which lead to righteousness. So the master determines your faith. So if you have a good master you will prosper, if you have a bad master you will be beaten. So that is the picture of Paul. So the consequences to our slavery, yes today you can decide I do not want to go in Christ, I do not mind sliding back but there will be consequences because in the end if you are a Christian it goes backwards and don't progress in your righteousness you will wind up in death.

Can we lose our salvation?

May be you never had salvation in the first place because a true Christian person gets justification, embarks on the road and becomes a slave of righteousness. If you are a slave and you are proven to be slave of sin then you have never been a slave of righteousness.

There are no two ways. There is either slave of righteousness or slave of sin. Paul is trying to tell you there is no neutral ground. Now the obedience is related to the word,

**17 But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, 18 and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.**

By The Law we will be going to be obedient to the standard of teaching to which we are committed. So actually here you are set free from sin you become slaves of righteousness, when you are slaves of righteousness you actually obey the law; obedience is related to the law. So this is the pathway of sanctification, you believe, you become a slave of righteousness then you are obedient to the word.

When we go to examination hall, we go under the law, we either pass or fail you can go to this way. So if you live under the way, means you obey the law, you read the bible, you study in order to be righteous and in order to be saved. But if we are under grace, it is like exam papers. The law is not something for you to pass, fail or be accepted under the eyes of God. That is already done, Jesus sat the exam for us. So what is the law for? The law is to chart your progress, because you want to live up to the image of Christ who lived and died for you. So again you are not under the law, you are under grace because grace is what Jesus pass the exam for you. Jesus gave you salvation, it is free, you reciprocate by becoming like Jesus and you will only be like Jesus you got to obey the law. So in one hand free of the law and on the other hand you are not free of the law. You are free of the law in so far, you are free of the law in its requirements for you to be saved. You are free. For example, we accidentally lied to somebody tomorrow; you are not going to lose your salvation. David woke up one morning and saw Bathsheba showering and then had sex with her, had baby. That is a terrible sin and he is still a man after God's own heart. I am not downplaying the sin, it doesn't affect you salvation in that sense. But what happens is that the law brings you closer to Christ. So you approximate the image of Christ but if you are someone who takes it the other way around, I say the sinner's prayer. People think that by praying sinner's prayer they are saved. Becoming Christian is basically a journey, it starts with your sinner's prayer but it is a journey and if there is no journey then there is no salvation. A true Christian is justified and sanctified. So we can say we have been saved, we are being saved and we shall be saved. So it spans all of time.

**19 I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.**

When he uses this analogy of slaves there is a problem he realizes. Thomas Jefferson had a slave called Sally Hemings and he treated her very well. He treated her so well they had six children together. All the children were treated nicely. Not all slave owners were bad. George Washington was very good to some of the slaves and when his wife died then he released a lot of them. When they were released instead of throwing them out into the economy he looked after them, he provided for them, they had healthcare, they had roof over the head and something to eat. So not all slave owners were bad but notwithstanding the fact that he was fairly decent to her.

Even in the best of slavery situation it is still that, you are still a slave. So therefore when Paul uses this slavery metaphor he realizes it is a very nasty metaphor and if I tell all the Christians here to become slaves of Christ, half of the people will run away.

So the only idea of slavery we have is this picture of a bad situation or American slave or something like that, but imagine if you were a slave to the most beautiful person in the entire world who actually give up his life for his slaves. So therefore being a slave of that kind of person is completely different. So what Paul is doing is taking a broken down flawed picture and using that to depict a Christian. So must not take this slavery metaphor all the way to the end. Our master does not force us but draws us to himself.

**19** ..... For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.

There is a decision that you make. Just as you presented yourself to lawlessness, the same kind of gusto, you wake up in the morning and thinking I got to make so much money, I have got to spend so much money, I go to party, and I worship this dollar. He is telling you that just as you presented yourself a slave to impurity and lawlessness so now present your members. So we are same kind of enthusiasm you wake up in the morning, now you grab your bible, you read it, you examine it, you go to your church or bible study and you have God speak to you and it will be a wonderful experience. Now some of you may not come to a stage in life where that happens to you, some of you read Bible half fall to sleep, it is a fact. Before you get to two pages you feel tired.

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde was actually a book written by Robert Louis Stevenson, who actually is a Christian and he took it from Romans chapter 7 second half and he was struggling with the fact that there is some part of it who want to do good and when he finds that he cannot do good he wants to do bad he feels very-very conflicted. So he wish he could divide his body completely apart so that the good can do all the good and feel happy about it and bad can do all bad and be happy about it. So therefore he took this portion.

**20** For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.

**21** But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

**22** But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.

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

So here you are free, when you were slaves of sin you were free in regard to righteousness. So when you are actually slave to sin you never think about doing good things. Doesn't that matter, you go and lie and cheat has no effect on you at all, because you are free with regard to that, but then the end of those things is death. So the free of righteousness is slave to sin, free of sin is enslaved to righteousness. So here you are free of sin and because you are free of sin you are being enslaved to righteousness. It is like basically training flees. We put them in a jar and then they jump in it, they continue to jump to the point where they are tired

and there is no more urge for them to jump. So one day when you open the jar they are free, they will not jump out. That is the problem like Christians, you are free from the power of sin but you still don't act in righteousness because you are still enslaved in our hearts, exactly like those flees. So freedom from sin so that you can have freedom to basically slaves of righteousness, but the slaves of righteousness is a different story.

When we are talking about righteousness and slaves to righteousness, Jesus Christ comes in the world, gives his life and says, come and give me a hug, we have to turn from sin in order to give Jesus a hug and by turning from sin you are removed from the danger and you hug your lord Jesus Christ and he holds you in his arms and then you are saved. That is the best picture of being slaves of righteousness that you could find. Turning away from evil voluntarily and running to hug the one you love. That is how you live a sanctified life.

We are now slaves of righteousness, we turn around to serve God and the other thing is being married to Christ.

## Romans 7

**1** Or do you not know, brothers — for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives?

**2** For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage.

**3** Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.

Now death savours the marital bond, but if your wife dies then you are free to do whatever you want. So that is what Paul is saying.

**4** Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God.

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

**6** But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

So here the law cannot save us, because our sinful passions are always aroused by the law. There is a saying "Rules are made to be broken". If you make rules you actually force people to break them because they somehow arouse your passion. There are large number of people in the United States like Donald Trump, he is breaking all the rules. You cannot call Hispanics bad word, he is breaking every single rule of civility because deep inside there are lot of Americans who are just like us who really want to go and break all those rules. That is why he has got an appeal for some people; all you have to do is just challenge people. There is an advertisement for Chips, "Bet you cannot just eat one". Once you bet somebody, somebody will purposely break it. So the law cannot save us because Paul says the Law

arouses in us sinful passions. C.H. Spurgeon says, “Free will I have often heard of, but I have never seen it. I have always met with will, and plenty of it, but it has either been led captive by sin or held in the blessed bonds of grace. While I regarded God as a tyrant I thought my sin a trifle; But when I knew Him to be my Father, then I mourned that I could ever have kicked against Him. When I thought God was hard, I found it easy to sin; but when I found God so kind, so good, so overflowing with compassion, I smote upon my breast to think that I could ever have rebelled against One who loved me so, and sought my good.”

So Spurgeon is telling us, when you regard God as a tyrant then sin is diminished, when I knew him to be my father then actually mourn the fact that I actually sinned. When I thought God was hard I found it easy to sin but when I found God so kind then I smote my breast that I could ever rebelled against him. That is a difference between a legalist and someone who is a Christian. Someone who is a Christian will think that the father is so loving and so kind that the sin that you commit against him actually hurts you more that you actually disappointed the father. That is love and grace.

What does bearing fruit for God mean in this particular context? Is It:

- A. Righteous living
- B. Sharing gospel and bringing others to Christ
- C. Exercising spiritual gifts
- D. Serving the church

We have to look at the context of this word.

**4 Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God.**

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

There are two kinds of fruit, one brings life and one brings death. So if we translate this as serving the church, this passage does not take about serving.

Exercise spiritual gifts, so you go back here and look there is nothing there but there are other passages in the Bible. So if we talk about bearing fruit for God in terms of rest of the bible, John 15 talks about I am the vine you are the branch. In that passage you can actually go further and talk about growing your character and then your spiritual gifts and serving Christ. This could probably make a case but in this particular passage, do we have any room to have spiritual gift there.

Sharing gospel and bringing others to Christ:

This entire passage of Romans chapter 6 and 7 does not talk about sharing gospel and evangelising. It talks about righteousness.

So therefore the reason to the fruit for God in this particular context is **righteous living**. So the purpose of life for Paul is from wretchedness to righteousness. So Christ provides legal

position, justification, you live up to the legal position which you have gotten by ethical living. Christ made you completely righteous but you have to live up to that label.

How do we bear fruit? Okay, we bear fruit in this new way;

6 But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

Now the secret to growing in Christ is not only the belief there is a new way. So here we actually we have two things that come out, new way of the spirit and old way of the written code.

What is the old way of written code?

Again same word comes up but in different forms and it is The Law. It looks as if Paul is like by grace against the law, now spirit against the law that means law is bad. So what does he mean? We are released from the law. He is saying is that under grace, we have grace that means we don't follow the law in order to be saved. We are given salvation by free gift of grace. Same thing here, we serve in the new way of the spirit, not the old way of the law, which means we obey the law with our own strength. That is the difference. So it is a free gift we don't use our own strength. Jesus said in Matthew 19:28

28 Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

When he used the word, new world, it is only about twice used in the New Testament, it is called palingenesis which basically means rebirth of a new world. This is a stoic idea. The stoic philosophers believe there is a rebirth in the New World. Jesus talks about a New World where God will rebirth the entire universe, palin is again, birth is origin which is basically re-genesis. This word is used in Titus 3:5-7

5 he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

6 whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

7 so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

This renewal is palingenesis which means it refers to the rebirth of the New World. It is a new power; everything will come alive again one day. So therefore he is saying the absolute power of the world of God to reinvent the world, to rebirth the world is now inside us. The Holy Spirit renewal of a person is a foretaste of a cosmic renewal that is going to happen and the reason why I explained this to you is that you have got to see your sanctification, you are growing close to Christ in a cosmic context. It is not just me trying to be good, so that I can please Jesus, it is the actual power to remake the entire universe to renew the entire universe. That power is actually inside every single one of our souls and that power is renewing us day by day by day. So if you really want to walk with Christ and walk in righteousness, you

cannot do it alone. You have to learn the part into that power, because that is the only difference. This is promised in the New Covenant

Ezekiel 36:

**25** I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you.

**26** And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

**27** And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

**28** You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.

So many people think that if they will get Holy Spirit to speak in tongues, so that they can look very good, I prophesize and I will look even better, I can cause healing. So basically what does the spirit do, the spirit is not given to you for blessing and for all sorts of miracles, spirit is given so that we can walk in God's statutes, that we will be righteous. If anybody tells us the Holy Spirit is for all other things then they are absolutely moving us to the wrong track. So Christ provides justification, you live up the ethical living but the power is given by the Holy Spirit.

So the metaphor for sanctification is you are dead to sin, united with Christ, slave of righteousness, married to Jesus Christ. We return to righteousness by believing these things. Once we believe then we will prompt action and motivated by grace and powered by the spirit. The more we believe then we can take action but the trouble is we cannot take action until we are powered by the spirit and motivated by grace. When we meditate on the grace which is shaped in a cross and the more we delve into what it cost Jesus Christ to die for us, the more it motivates us to love him back. That is why we read more about the cross; we read more about why he died for us. That is where it motivates us and then we are empowered, we step out like Peter stepping out on water. To step out in the power of Holy spirit takes over for action.

Romans 1:17

**17** For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

This is the theme verse it runs through the entire theme of Romans.