

ROMANS From Wretchedness to Righteousness

Study 10
 Romans 6:15-23
 Slaves to Righteousness

Verse 15

Rom 6:15
 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means!

1) a) Comprehension question. Paraphrase the “objection question” in verse 15 in your own words or in the modern language.

Principle of Obedience (Romans 6:16-18)

Verse 16-18

Rom 6:16-18
 Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

2) a) Comprehension question. Summarize Paul’s argument in verse 16-18 which is against the idea that “Christians have the license to sin”.

b) Fill in the blanks. There are similarities in format between Romans 6:1-14 and 6:15-23, fill in the blanks on different points each passage highlights according to the video lecture.

	Romans 6:1-14	Romans 6:15-23
Shall we?	V1: go on sinning so that grace may increase	V15a sin because we are not under law but under grace?
By no means!	v2	v15b
Lengthy answer	v3-14	v16-23
Main point: Because of...		

Type of Freedom		
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c) Fill in the blanks. Verse 17 says that the Roman Christians “obey from their heart”. What other bible verses command obedience from the heart according to the video lecture?

Points	Bible Verse	Write and Read the verse
With heart and soul		
Not just lip service		
Even when serving people		

d) Objective question, choose the most appropriate answer. In verse 17, “pattern of teaching” means:

- A. Christian teaching very pattern
- B. The pattern of the way of life demanded by the gospel that Christians should follow

<p>Background information & Quick Verse Reference Romans 6:17 But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. “Obedience is the very essence of slavery” – John Stott</p>

e) Fill in the verses from these passages about Freedom.

Verse	Write down and read out the verses
John 8:31-32,36	
Galatians 5:1	

Purpose: Sanctification (Romans 6:19-20)

Verse 19-20

Rom 6:19-20

I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness. When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness.

3) a) Objective question, choose the answer(s), can be more than one. What of the following is true for “ I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations” in Verse 19 according to the video lecture?

- A. “I am using layman terms.”
- B. Paul is saying they are very dumb.
- C. The master-slavery relationship or imagery is used because it is the everyday life example to the audience at that time.
- D. Human nature produces a weakness in understanding that can be overcome in this life only by the use of (imperfect) analogies.
- E. Paul is apologizing for using the slavery imagery.

b) Comprehension question. Paraphrase verse 19b in your own words.

Verse 19 b	Paraphrasing in own words
“Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness.”	

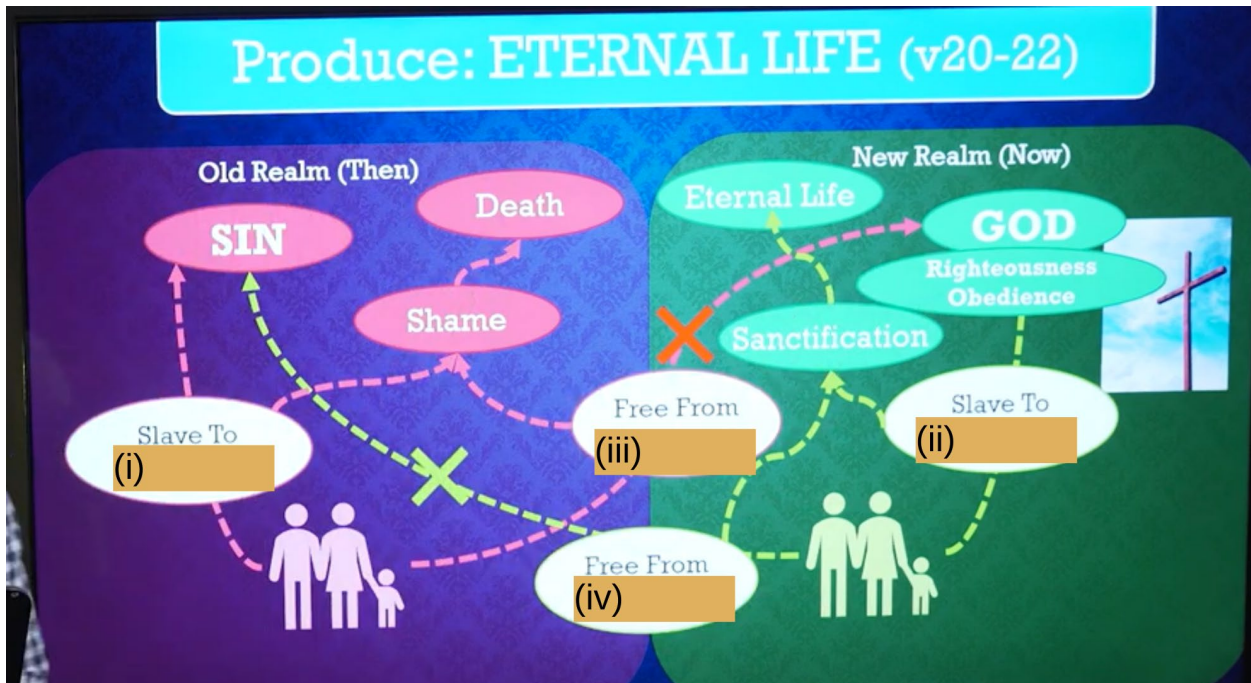
c) Reflection question. Go one round and reflect on periods in life where sin has been subtly allowed in your life and controlled your life where you spent your time, energy, passions "serving" it.

Produce: Eternal Life (Romans 6:21-23)

Verse 21-23

Rom 6:21-23

What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.



Set#1/ before	Negative results (-)	Set#2/ after	Positive results (+)
i) Slave to sin	Degrading	ii) Slave to God	Ennobling
iii) Free from God	Spurious (fake news!)	iv) Free from sin	Authentic

b) Fill in the blanks. Verse 23 can be categorized in a Master-Outcome-Means of attainment type of relationship. According to the video lecture, fill in the blanks below.

Master (who is served)	Sin	vs	God
Outcome (of the service)	Death	vs	Eternal Life
Means (by which outcome is attained)	Wages earned	vs	Gift received

Sanctification is ACTION too!

V11: **“Count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God”**

V12: **“Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires”**

V13a: **“Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness”**

V13b: **“..Offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness”**

V19b: **“..Offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness”**

c) Discussion question. The video lecture declares that “Sanctification is ACTION too!” meaning it is ACTIVE-ly done and not PASSIVE-ly waiting for God to change us. How do we balance the fact that Sanctification is both “the FREE GIFT of God” and “our CHOICE and ACTION”?

Background information and Quick Verse Reference

“Your doing is the gift of God. Your choosing is the gift of God. Your preferring God over sin is the gift of God. God’s gift is your doing and choosing and preferring God.”

– John Piper

Philippians 2:12-13

Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

Case Studies

Case 1

Ryan Lee had just heard the gospel and accepted Jesus as Lord and Saviour with great enthusiasm. However his Christian friends noticed that after a year of going to church there was not much change in his behavior. He still lied at the drop of a hat and was still living with his girlfriend totally unashamed of his sexual indiscretions.

When they confronted him, he exclaimed: “Holiness is just an ideal, that holy living isn’t attainable.” He went on to explain that not only was God’s command to be holy not actually intended to be obeyed but also, since our sins are covered by Jesus’ death on the cross, we needed to not be so worried about trying to obey everything He commanded us. “Life was to be fun, not burdensome,” he said. “Whatever habitual sins each of us dealt with—the idols, the pride, the attitude, the addictions—they were bound to get the best of us. Why always be fighting what was going to inevitably happen when you’ve already been forgiven for it? When God has got you covered?”

“Who are you to come and judge me? As long as I confess my sins every day I see no problem in continuing my current lifestyle.” He then challenged them in retaliation and said to them: “Let he who has no sin please cast the first stone”

His friends were shocked and did not know how to respond.

5) a) If you were one of Ryan’s friends how would you respond? Would you use the slavery metaphors in Romans 6:15-23 to explain to him that his current attitude is in error? You may summarize the model answer below.

Model Answer

Paul’s Point #1

Paul says first that no one is free, that everyone is a slave to something or someone! Everyone is offering themselves to “someone.” Everyone lives for something, we “offer” ourselves as sacrifices on some altar, we are all serving some cause, some “bottom line,” and that something becomes a master and we its slaves.

“Whatever controls us is our lord. The person who seeks power is controlled by power. The person who seeks acceptance is controlled by acceptance. We do not control ourselves. We are controlled by the lord of our lives.”

– Rebecca Pippert, Out of the Saltshaker

Paraphrasing Rebecca Pippert’s quote, in terms of our text, we say we “offer ourselves” whatever we “seek” as our highest good in life, whether power or acceptance or some cause. Then we become “slaves” of whatever that may be. Thus, no one is in control of his or her life — we are controlled by that to which we have offered ourselves.

Paul is showing how the theology of chapter 1 works itself out in practical, personal experience. Every human being is involved in “covenant service” with something; we are all bond-servants to some god, we all worship something. We all feel “pulled” and “controlled” by directives and orders coming deep from within. We are all yielding our bodies to some inner lord which then works its will out in the world through our bodies.

Paul's Point #2

Beyond that, Paul says that there are fundamentally only two kinds of masters or categories of slavery; we either are slaves of God or slaves of sin. To be a slave of sin is truly slavery indeed, for it leads to death. To be a slave of God leads to righteousness — love, joy, peace, self-control, kindness.

So Paul's main argument is this: Anyone who wonders if a Christian can now sin is ignorant about the enslaving nature of sin. Put another way: a Christian does not have to obey the 10 commandments in order to be saved, but a Christian does have to obey the 10 commandments in order to be a free (and thus godly) human being. If you don't obey the law of God, you become a slave to selfishness, sin.

But you say, "I'm not religious." ...but everybody's religious. What is your religion? Well, your religion is what you rely upon... Your religion... is what you live for, is what you hope for... Your god is that to which you give yourself, you give your time, attention, your greatest thought, your money — you live for it. It is the thing that keeps you going... It is what you turn to when life gets so hard. Everybody has a religion. But the question is — what is your religion?"

— D.M. Lloyd-Jones, A sermon on Jer. 2 "Fake Religion"

b) Reflection question. The question in verse 15 : "Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace?" is targeting this issue: "What now is a Christian's motivation and understanding of obligation in day to day living?"

For example,

"Are Christians obligated to have a "quiet time" (daily devotions)?"

"Why does a Christian get up in the morning to pray?"

"What is the inner motivation that leads to self control now that we aren't "under law," not afraid that God will cast us off because of moral failure?"

Go one round and share what are your personal motivations for obeying God day to day? Or do you feel that there is no need to obey any of the laws?