

Abide in Me

John 15:4
*Bible studies for disciples
who make disciples*



Volume 9 - Number 21

The Week of April 14, 2024

Dying to Live
A Slave to God
Romans 6:15-23

Welcome to week two in our series, *Dying to Live*. The next section of Romans 6 may seem like a repetition of verses 1-14. There is, however, an important difference. Paul's point in the first fourteen verses is that by our union with Christ, we have been set free from the power of sin. In verses 15-23, his point is that as we devote ourselves to God through obedience, we become slaves to God. All people are either slaves to sin or slaves to God. Paradoxically, slavery to God is perfect freedom. Therefore, grace has accomplished what the law never could.

OBSERVATION (*What does the passage say?*)

Before meeting with your Growth Group, read through the passage at least twice and perform the following prompts:

- Circle all eight occurrences of the word *slaves*.
- Double underline the phrase *slaves of sin* (v. 17) and *slaves of righteousness* (v. 18) and slaves of God (v. 22).
- In the right margin, create a sketch of the two life directions described in Romans 6:16-19.
- Place brackets around the word *for* and label each one an *explanation*.
- Place a box around the word *sanctification* (v. 19) and in the margin define it.

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? 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. 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.

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.

Icebreaker: *What quality of freedom do you most enjoy?*

INTERPRETATION (*What does the passage mean?*)

1. What is the difference between the two questions that begin each section in Romans 6, verses 1 and 15?
2. What is the essential difference between being under the law or under grace?
3. What was necessary to become free from sin (Romans 6:17-18)?
4. Our obedience to God is measured by our obedience to a standard of teaching. What does this mean?
5. What command is so important that Paul repeats it twice (Romans 6:13, 19)? Compare the two commands.
6. What are the obvious ways that people become slaves of sin? Can you think of less obvious ways.
7. What is the result of presenting your members as slaves to righteousness (Romans 6:19)?

8. Describe the three steps that lead to eternal life (Romans 6:22)?

9. What are the contrasts that make God's salvation so incredible (Romans 6:23)?

APPLICATION *(How does the passage apply to our lives?)*

10. How would you use this passage to answer someone who says to you: "Why do you bother to obey God, if He already accepts you?"

11. Can you think of examples from your own past, or in the lives of those you know, of how slavery to sin is a kind of death? What lessons can you draw from those examples?

12. How would you use this passage to answer someone who says to you: "I don't like Christianity because it restricts my freedom?"

13. Romans 6:23 describes eternal life as the free gift of God. After we have received this gift, why do we still struggle to live righteously?

14. How is being a slave to God a delight?

