

“Grace & Peace to You”

A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS

Voice of China and Asia

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ROMANS LESSON 39 PART 1: “WHOSE SLAVE WILL YOU BE?”

Romans 6:15-23 *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.*

“SLAVES... REALLY?”

In our current **Western** (European / American) **Culture** the terms “*slave / slavery*” would seldom be used as a comparison... **especially one that includes both a positive as well as negative application**. But in the New Testament era, it was a common reality in society. [Roman Empire over 50% were / had been, slaves]. Paul in no way disregards the cruelty of slavery, but he must communicate “*spiritual truth*” in a way that relates to his recipients. In differing circumstances, he used analogies that would be the most applicable to the “*truth*” he was presenting.

The **CHURCH AT ROME** was made up of **Jew & Gentile; Roman and Barbarian; Noble and Working class; Educated and Un-educated**; and, of course, **Free-born and Slave** (both present and former).

Most of Paul’s writing / teaching, up to now, has been regarding God’s work of grace as contrasted with **THE LAW** – for the Jews and Proselytes. But, there is also a great percentage of the Church that has NO reference at all to the **JEWISH LAW**. TO THEM, this reference to “*Slavery*” is definitely more understandable. Paul leaves the imagery of “**THE LAW**” to speak more directly regarding “*Slavery*.”

THE ARROGANT QUESTION & THE “NATURE OF A SLAVE”

ROM 6:15-16 *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?*

➤ Beyond Ignorant...

To a certain type of mind, the Doctrine of Free Grace is always a temptation to say: “If forgiveness is as easy and as inevitable as all that, if God’s one desire is to forgive, and if his grace is wide enough

to cover every spot and stain, why worry about sin? Why not do as we like? It will be all the same in the end – right?”

As before Paul once again issues his castigating response: *“THAT is so ignorant as to not even be worthy of detailed objection. Anyone who can argue like that,”* says Paul, *“shows that he has not begun to understand the GOSPEL.”*

Verse 14 has been the latest statement of Paul to bring attention back to their ignorance:

Sin will no longer be your master. Why? Two related reasons:

(1) Negatively, *“you are not under the binding authority of the MOSAIC LAW – which even the Jews could NOT fulfill;*

(2) Positively, *you are under a NEW COVENANT of “grace”*

ROMANS LESSON 39 PART 2: “WHOSE SLAVE WILL YOU BE?”

(JOHN 1:17 For THE LAW was given through Moses; GRACE and TRUTH came through JESUS CHRIST.)

➤ An “Exclusive Possession”

Vs 16) *Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey...*

- When we think of those who are employed to work for others, we think of people who give a certain agreed part of their time to their employer and who receive a certain agreed wage for doing so.
 - *Within that agreed time, they are at the disposal and under the orders of their employer.*
 - *But, when that time ends, they are free to do as they like.*
- But, in Paul’s time, the status of slaves was quite different. Literally, they had no time which belonged to themselves.
 - **Doulos** ... - *“one whose will is swallowed up in the will of another.”* These are bands so strong that only death can break them.
 - **Hupakoe** ... – *to be under the voice of another... obedient to the command – the verb reveals a “willful obedience” – NOT occasional...*
 - They were their master’s absolutely exclusive possession...

NOW Paul makes the application:

Either to sin... which leads to death... –

- *Willful Obedient Slaves To Sin – the Old Self – Nature of Adam –*
- *Before salvation, a person's will was swallowed-up in the will of Satan – they had NO ability to resist his “commands”*
- *The Unbeliever serves Satan to the disregard of their own best interests. They do so because they are compelled...*

EPH 2:1-3 *And you were dead in the trespasses and sins² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in*

the sons of disobedience—³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

- **The Result:** They get Sin and Death...Sorrow and Suffering... *it is the Pre-Determined outcome...*

Or of Obedience (to Christ)... which leads to righteousness... -

- *Willful Obedient Slaves To [Christ] – We **Died** IN Him... We were **Raised** To Life IN Him...” We Now **Live** IN Him... – BUT we are free to CHOOSE Obedience – subordination to His words...*
- *The Believer's identification with the Lord Jesus in His death, broke the bands which bound him to Satan. Now, he is bound to the Lord Jesus in bands so strong that only death can break them.*
- *Since Christ IS the Believer's life and will never die again, the Believer is bound to Him forever.*
- *The Believer, with his own will and determination, is to serve the Lord Jesus with a passionate submission that says; **"Nothing matters about me, just so long as the Lord Jesus is glorified."***
- *THIS leads to a life of “[Demonstrated] Righteousness ... **Observable... Tangible... Outward...** – there IS an “Inward Righteousness” which is the “New Creation” – But we are commanded to make it “Outwardly Apparent...”*

*EPH 4:22-24 ”... **put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires,**²³ **and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds,**²⁴ **and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.”***

RIGHTEOUSNESS LEADING TO SANCTIFICATION - Introduction

ROM 6:17-19 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.

As Paul progresses through this subject, he is helping the Believers to advance from the “**Inward work which God HAS done**” to the “**Outward work which is OUR responsibility.**”

This will be the subject through to the end of Chapter 8.

Here is a Chart to help to visualize the distinction between **JUSTIFICATION** and **SANCTIFICATION**:

Comparison of:	JUSTIFICATION	SANCTIFICATION (Made Holy)
Quality:	Instantly Declared Righteous OBJECTIVE: Judicial; Legal; Positional From an External Source Christ’s Righteousness Imputed Instantly Removes Guilt and Penalty Does NOT Change Our Character	Gradually Made Holy SUBJECTIVE: Experiential; Progressive; Temporal (Daily) From an Internal Source Christ’s Holiness Imparted (Worked-out) Gradually Removes Sin’s Pollution and Control Gradually Transforms Our Character

Application:	ALL Believers Share the SAME Legal Standing	EVERY Believer IS at Varying Stage of Growth
Duration:	A SINGLE instantaneous once-for-all Act; NEVER Repeated	A Continual Process Gradually Transforming, Maturing, and Producing Testimony