

Dear Friends and Family,

Have you ever heard people say that their relationship with God is just “fire insurance”? It seems like this phrase means, “I’m scared of Hell, but I really don’t want to change my life.” Consider this mentality in contrast to what Paul writes in Romans.

Throughout Romans 6, Paul makes these points and poses these questions:

- Are we to continue in sin? Romans 6:1
- How shall we who died to sin, continue in it? Romans 6: 2
- Our old self was crucified. Romans 6:6
- Consider yourselves to be dead to sin. Romans 6:11
- Do not let sin reign in your mortal body. Romans 6:12
- Sin shall not be master over you. Romans 6:14
- You have been freed from sin. Romans 6:18
- The wages of sin is death. Romans 6:23

The major thesis of this 6th chapter of Romans circles around the image of slavery. Paul contrasts living an old life of sin with living a new life of faith. Paul then teaches regarding baptism, that the change from living in sin to living in faith is symbolized through the act of baptism. To be clear, baptism is not salvation. It is an act of obedience to an ordinance given by Christ, after placing saving faith in Him.

Believing that baptism brings about salvation would be placing the cart before the horse. If you have not acknowledged Christ’s authority as Lord and savior, how could you obey His command to be baptized? It’s worth noting that Peter claims at least twice in scripture a connection between baptism and salvation. First, in his sermon in Acts 2:38, and later, in 1 Peter 3:20-22. Peter’s language is important in understanding his meaning, as he uses the same phrase Jesus uses when speaking to Peter in John 13:10. All of scripture states that faith comes first but that baptism is given pre-eminence as a first order act of obedience. Consider this truth regarding Baptism, and the contrast of “fire insurance” versus a relationship with Christ as you study Romans 6 this week.

### **Pastor’s Point of View**

The big idea: **Who do you serve?**

*“Therefore, we have been buried with Him through baptism  
Into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead  
Through the glory of the Father,*

*So we too may walk in newness of life.”*

**Day 1 - Oh, Sin! Read:Romans 6:1-7**

1. Consider the idea of grace increasing due to increased sin.
  - a. What do you understand about how many sins the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross covered?
  - b. If His sacrifice covered all sin, how could grace increase?
  - c. If grace could increase, what would that mean for Christ’s sacrifice?
  - d. READ 1 Peter 3:18
2. How can one still live in sin yet claim to be a believer?
3. Once we have the sacrifice of Christ as our personal ticket to heaven, does that mean we have a free ride to live however we want?
4. Is it possible to struggle against sin and still be a believer? What is the difference between this question and question 2?
5. Meditate on the significance of the symbolism between our baptism and the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.
6. What does it mean that we are no longer slaves to sin?
7. Verse 7 says we are “free from sin”. Does that mean you sin no longer? Read Galatians 5:13-15. Our struggle with sin will be a lifelong struggle. We will have seasons in our lives where sin seems defeated. Other seasons will reveal deep sins we may have been nurturing for a long time. Spirit and flesh are opposed to each other and constantly in battle. May you live by the spirit today!

**Day 2 - Death vs. Life. Read:Romans 6:8-14**

1. Meditate today on the promise that we will live with Christ eternally.
2. Note verse 10, Christ now lives **TO** God. Then read verse 11. How important is it in our daily walk with the Lord that we live **TO** God? What exactly does this mean?
3. We all live “to” something. Some popular themes you’ve probably seen are:  
I live to party.  
I live to sleep.  
I live to work.  
I live to drink.  
Fill it in for yourself. I live to \_\_\_\_\_.
4. What would living to God look like for you?
5. Are there areas of your life in which you are still a slave to sin?
6. Do you notice the contrast in this Scripture? Christ died to sin, but lives to God. Both acts are sacrificial. Christ died sacrificially for you and me, sacrificing his own will, to pay the penalty for our sin. Yet he also lives sacrificially, not as a slave to sin, but as a victor to God.

7. Consider this contrast in your own life. What must you sacrifice that you need to stop doing so that you may sacrificially live in a way pleasing to God?
8. List out some areas where sin may be reigning.
9. Look at your list each day and pray over it. Specifically ask that the Spirit frees you from the bondage of sin so that you may live to God.
10. Memorize verse 14 and recite it at the end of your prayer.

### **Day 3 - A slave to what? Read: Romans 6:15-19**

Once again Paul opens with a rhetorical question. Just because we are under grace and all of our sins are forgiven, that does not grant us a free pass to go on sinning. The law still pertains to us. The law is not that we must keep it perfectly or risk losing our salvation. Instead, we strive to live according to it, in obedience to God, for God is holy. God's word does not change. Therefore, we don't throw out the law when we are saved.

1. Read Psalm 119:9-16. What does the Psalmist say about the importance of God's word in our daily life?
2. Consider Paul's next statement in verse 16 along with the idea of bond service discussed in Exodus 21:5-6. What is he saying as it regards to us presenting ourselves to God as slaves?
3. Consider the choice Paul presents in Romans 6:16. He presents 2 choices and 2 consequences. Have you ever narrowed your life down to just these 2 choices? Have you ever thought out these 2 consequences?
4. What is the result of offering yourself as a slave to sin? Romans 6:19
5. What is the result of offering yourself as a slave to Christ? Romans 6:19
6. Sanctification is the process by which we become more Christ-like. It is a process that begins with our salvation but does not end until we are in eternity with Him. Presenting ourselves as slaves of righteousness results in the furtherance of this process.

### **Day 4 - What kind of fruit? Read: Romans 6:20-23**

Verse 20 may be one of the more profound statements in all of scripture. Why? Read it and for a moment reflect on the meaning of the word "free".

There are several meanings associated with the word "free".

- We can be given something for no cost, as in a free gift.
- We can be personally free, having the ability to do as we please.
- We can be free from something, as in it is absent from us. Example: "My house is free from termites."

As you read verse 20, understand that it is this third meaning of "free". While a slave to sin, you are completely free from the control of righteousness. That means there is no righteousness found in you, it is completely absent. While no one wants to hear that he is a "slave", certainly worse is hearing that there is not one single bit of good in him.

1. Remember the choice we studied yesterday? We may choose to be a slave to Christ or a slave to sin. This passage further explains where each choice leads. Detail the consequences of each choice.
2. Consider verse 21. The original Greek translated directly to English states the verse as such: “What therefore fruit had you then in the things of which now you are ashamed? For the end of those things is death.” What does this mean to you?
3. Paul, throughout this entire passage, uses slavery as an analogy for how to live. You can be a slave to sin or a slave to Christ. Paul clarifies that fruit comes from either choice. Yet, the quality of the fruit differs dramatically. How have you seen this in your own life?
4. Romans 6:22 presents a starkly different type of fruit that results from being a slave to Christ. What is the tone of this verse? What is the end result?
5. Verse 23 is one of the most well known evangelistic verses in the Bible. Understanding the context that comes before it, do you have a new found joy in knowing that eternal life is the result of the free gift of God’s grace?

This passage in Romans delves into some heavy topics, but the best summary would be this question, “Who do you serve?” A slave cannot have two masters. Man cannot serve both God and self. As you live and make daily choices, ask yourself, “Is this serving God or is this serving self/ sin?” Remember where each master will lead you. God leads you to holiness, righteousness, and eternal life. Sin leads to shame, destruction, increasing wickedness and death. May you choose life this week!

Deuteronomy 30:15-16, 19-20

“See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity;  
 in that I command you today to love the Lord your God,  
 to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments,  
 that you may live and multiply,  
 and that the Lord your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it.  
 I call heaven and earth to witness against you today,  
 that I have set before you life and death,  
 the blessing and the curse.  
 So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants,  
 by loving the Lord your God,  
 by obeying His voice,  
 and by holding fast to Him;  
 for this is your life and the length of your days,  
 that you may live in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers,  
 to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.”

Choose life,  
 Pastor Matt

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*Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us **RUN** with endurance the race that is set before us -- Hebrews 12:1*