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Beginning with the “therefore” in Romans 6:12, there is a focus on “yielding” to God rather than to sin. Whatever we continue to yield to becomes our master. Do we choose God or sin? (Those who would respond that ‘they are their own master’ are choosing sin by violating the First Commandment.)

In Romans, it has already been established that every person has a sinful nature. Even after we are saved and indwelt with the Holy Spirit, we have a choice – will we yield to the Spirit, or to the sin nature. The sin nature is still there, but we must not allow it to “reign” over us by obeying its sinful desires (v. 12).

Yielding is a willful act based on the knowledge that God has revealed to us through His word. To yield is to offer as a sacrifice. Romans 12:1 says that the believer’s body should be presented to the Lord as a living sacrifice for His glory.

The Lord wants us to live for Him. If indeed He is our Lord, we will submit and yield to Him. Christ said that no one can serve two masters (*Matthew 6:24*). We cannot serve both God and sin.

The verb tense in verse 13 (as in Romans 12:1) means a ‘once and for all’ surrender to God. For sure we must surrender afresh daily to Him, but even that is based on a permanent commitment.

What we do matters, and our choices have consequences that are very real. The Lord wants our bodies. The believer’s body is a temple of God (*1Cor. 6:19*). Verse 13 says that God can use our bodies as tools to build His kingdom and fight His enemies.

The Bible reminds us of instances where someone’s body was used for God’s glory, and other instances where someone’s body was yielded to sin. God used the sling in David’s hand to defeat Goliath and the Philistines. But another time, David yielded his eyes, his mind and his body to sin with Bathsheba (*Psalms 51*).

Sin does not have dominion over us (v. 14). To yield to sin is to submit to a defeated foe. Christ has won the victory over sin. Being saved by grace does not give us an excuse to sin. It gives us a reason to obey. We should be motivated by our love for God and what He has done for us.

We are free from the law, but that not mean we are lawless. The freedom we have by God’s grace is not a freedom and license to sin against Him.

Verse 16 reminds us that when we submit to someone as a master, we become their servant. If we submit to sin, we are enslaved by it and eternal death awaits (v. 23). Slaves of sin are bound by guilt, fear and shame, but God’s servants are free to do what the new nature loves.

The Prodigal Son (*Luke 15:11-24*) is a good example of this contrast of bondage and freedom. He left his father with the rebellious desire for sin that he believed represented freedom. But, his rebellion only led him into slavery. It was only when he went home and yielded to his father that he found real freedom.

Correct doctrine grounded in truth should lead to correct behavior. Like the Roman believers, as we respond to the truth that we have been freed from sin as our master, we become slaves of righteousness (v. 18). Being “free from sin” does not mean we no longer have a sinful nature to fight. And of course, it does not mean that we never commit sin. But in context, it means that sin is no longer the dominant power in our lives.

Although in verse 18 Paul uses the term “slaves of righteousness”, in verse 19 he clarifies that those who live righteously are not actually in bondage. We choose to submit to God through love, not by force. The truth has set us free (*John 8:32*). Truth is found in a Person, the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ (*John 14:6*).

In verse 21, we are challenged to list the fruits of sin. They now bring shame to the believer. The ultimate fruit of a life of slavery to sin is eternal death – an eternity of separation from God who the sinner chose to reject.

But, new life in Christ changes a person’s position completely. He is freed from sin as his master, and becomes a willing servant to God (v. 22). This results in a holy (set apart) life for now, and eternal life with God at the end of this earthly journey. Our eternal life has already begun. Freed from sin, we have the freedom to enjoy that life in its fullness when we submit to God.

If you serve a master, you may expect to receive the wages you have earned. Sin pays wages too – the wages of death!

There are applications of verse 23 for both the unsaved and for the believer. For the unsaved, there is eternal spiritual death. But there is a warning for the believer as well. Yielding to sin rather than God results in dire consequences, and sometimes even physical death. Paul told the Corinthians “for this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep (*meaning death*).”

For example, Samson would not yield to God. He preferred to yield to the lusts of the flesh, and the result was death (*Judges 16*). If the believer chooses to use his body for sinful purposes, he is subject to God’s discipline, which could even mean death.

Romans 6 calls us to *know* that we have been crucified with Christ, to *reckon* this fact to be true in our own lives, and to *yield* ourselves to the Lord to be used for His glory!

## Romans 6

## Dead to Sin, Alive to God

**6** What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin so that grace may abound?

<sup>2</sup>Certainly not! How can we who died to sin continue to live any longer in it?

<sup>3</sup>Do you not know that those of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

<sup>4</sup>Therefore we have been buried with Him by baptism into death, so that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we also might walk in newness of life.

<sup>5</sup>For if we have been united with Him like this in His death, we will also certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His.

<sup>6</sup>For we know that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

<sup>7</sup>For he who has died has been freed from sin.

<sup>8</sup>Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him.

<sup>9</sup>For we know that Christ was raised from the dead, and He cannot die again. Death no longer has dominion over Him.

<sup>10</sup>For the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

<sup>11</sup>Likewise you also must reckon yourselves dead to sin, and alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

<sup>12</sup>Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body and cause you to obey its lusts.

<sup>13</sup>And do not go on yielding the members of your body as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but yield yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

<sup>14</sup>For sin will not have dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

## From Slaves of Sin to Slaves of God

<sup>15</sup>What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!

<sup>16</sup>Do you not know that if you yield yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are the slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, that leads to righteousness?

<sup>17</sup>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.

<sup>18</sup>And having been set free from sin, you have become slaves of righteousness.

<sup>19</sup>I am speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once yielded your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now yield your members as slaves of righteousness which leads to holiness.

<sup>20</sup>For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.

<sup>21</sup>What benefit did you reap at the time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

<sup>22</sup>But now that you have been set free from sin, and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness and its end, everlasting life.

<sup>23</sup>For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## Memory Verses for the Week

John 8:32 - *You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.*

John 14:6 - *I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father but by Me.*