

1. Introduction: Key Verses from Romans 1-5:

- (1.) **1:16-17**: *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith,[e] as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”*
- (2.) **1:18**: *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.*
- (3.) **2:11**: *For God shows no partiality.*
- (4.) **3:9a, 10-11**: *What then? Are we Jews any better off?¹⁰ As it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one;¹¹ no one understands; no one seeks for God.*
- (5.) **3:21**: *But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it.*
- (6.) **3:23**: *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*
- (7.) **4:3b**: *“Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.”*
- (8.) **4:6b-8**: *David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works:⁷ “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered;⁸ blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.”*
- (9.) **5:1-2**: *Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.² Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*
- (10.) **5:8**: *But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*
- (11.) **5:18**: *Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.*

2. Continuing with Chapter 6: Paul said, believers are united with Christ by faith through grace (God’s benevolent acts of love). “In Christ” believers receive a new nature designed to live to God. God declares their old nature to be legally dead to sin.

- The new nature is alive to God in Christ. Although legally dead, their old sin-nature continues to exist. Its strength and influence will be constantly reduced as sanctification proceeds. The “legally dead” sin-nature’s continuing influence is seen in the “do nots” of 6:12-14.
- The sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit gradually decreases the sin-nature’s power. The remaining sin-nature must be vigilantly opposed until it is eliminated at glorification.
- When we stand before Christ, the old nature will be gone, and our new nature in Christ will be glorified (made holy and free from sin with no inclination to sin), all through God’s grace.

- It is not surprising that many misinterpreted Paul's presentation on Law and grace. Critics used their misinterpretation to design questions intended to show that Paul's "justification by faith alone through grace alone" is a ridiculous concept.
 - Major points of misunderstanding were based on failing to recognize that God's grace not only justifies, but it also sanctifies.
 - In chapter 5 Paul said that at one point in the history of Israel, God gave the Law to clearly expose sin and increase the people of Israel's awareness of their sins.
 - Righteousness before God could theoretically be achieved by perfectly obeying the Law all the time.
 - But no one was able to do that, so God provided a way through Jesus to achieve righteousness before God apart from the Law.
 - Paul now transitions to focus on sanctification. The transition begins in 6:11 with his exhortation to "count" on receiving all the salvation benefits he has thus far mentioned.
 - In the first half of chapter 6, Paul emphasized that by faith believers are united to Jesus Christ and baptized into His life, death, and resurrection.
 - The "therefore" in 6:12 means "because of what has been said or done."
3. ***NIV Romans 6:12-14: Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.*** ¹³ ***Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather 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.*** ¹⁴ ***For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.***
- A human person is composed of a human nature (includes mind and body) controlled by an "I" which is the "mission control center." From Scripture we can deduce that the spiritual heart is our "mission control center." Our spiritual heart is the source of thoughts, beliefs, and actions.
 - The "mission control center" controls the "volunteer" actions of our body. Internal and external things can affect the mission control center. Evil desires can be triggered directly by thoughts or indirectly by bodily actions that stimulate thoughts.
 - Our sin-nature can plant or stimulate improper thoughts that if pursued will lead to sin. The coupling between our body and mission control center can lead us to sin when we even tentatively put any part of our body or mind in a situation conducive to sin.
 - If we offer every part of ourselves to God as an instrument of righteousness, God's grace will keep sin from being our master.
4. ***Romans 12:1-2: I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.*** ² ***Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.***

- The key for believers to live in a way in which sin is not their master is to be transformed to God's way of thinking by the renewal of our minds.
- That requires dedicated effort to determine and learn how God enables a believer to live in a world filled with sin without being controlled by sin.

5. **Romans 6:15-18:** *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.*

- The question Paul considers is – shall believers continue to deliberately sin after they have, through grace been justified by Christ's righteousness, and as a result their live under grace.
- Paul says, ***“By no means!”*** He introduces the analogy of slaves to illustrate the obedience required of believers from their union with Christ.
- The specific variety of slavery he has in mind is called “voluntary slavery.” At first that sounds contradictory, but it was a fact of life in Paul's world.
- There were indeed many involuntary slaves, some were war captives, and some purchased from other owners. But there were some people in great need who voluntarily became someone's slave simply to have food and shelter. They sold themselves to be able to survive.
- Such people would attempt to choose a desirable master. They would present themselves to their chosen potential master offering to become their slave. Once they became a slave, they had no choice except to obey their master.
- Believers owe Christ obedience. They belong to Him. He paid the price for them with His life and death. Obedience to Christ is required because of their relationship.
- Paul personifies “sin” saying that sin is like a slave owner who commands his slaves to disobey God. In Adam all are fallen, controlled by sin, and is therefore a slave to sin.
- Paul says a person who voluntarily becomes a slave is as much a slave as those who are captured or purchased. All slaves are obligated to obey.
- A person who voluntarily becomes a slave to sin has chosen a path that leads to death.
- There are times when a slave is transferred to a new master. When that happens, their obligation to obey the old master ends and their obedience must shift to the new master.
- Through God's grace, the gospel offers to free “slaves to sin” who will believe in the salvation work of Christ and commit in faith to be obedient to Christ.

- New believers move from sin as their master to Christ as their master. Their new master paid an enormous price to enable them to be freed from slavery to sin, a price that only He could pay.
 - Sinners who “present” themselves to Christ and accept Him by faith as their new Master are committing to be obedient to Him.
 - In that sense, they become slaves to Christ and His righteousness.
 - The immediate reward from their new Master is to be “justified” (declared legally righteous before God) based on the righteousness of their new Master.
 - Their new Master sends the Holy Spirit to indwell them, working to transform the new slaves of Christ into a likeness of their Master.
 - The slave analogy is valuable but has obvious limits.
 - Paul recognizes such limitations by saying that he is *“speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations.”*
 - The key idea in a believer’s slavery to Christ is their voluntary commitment to obedience.
6. **Slave to Sin or Slave to Righteousness:** Whether a person is a slave to sin or a slave to righteousness, their life conditions continually change.
- As slaves to sin, repeated sinning leads deeper and deeper into sinful reality and ultimately to eternal death and separation from God.
 - A slave to sin is free from any constraints imposed by righteousness but at an enormous cost. The wages (you get what you deserve) of sin is death.
 - As slaves to righteousness, there are no wages. What you get is the free gift of God that leads to sanctification and eternal life with God (that is, you get what you are unable to deserve – grace, not justice).
7. **Next:** Romans 6:20-23.