

[Romans 6:13 – 23]

~ The United States is known around the world as the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave. Americans are very proud of their reputation for free enterprise and capitalism. Our first amendment alone guarantees freedom of religion, speech and press; as well as the right of assembly and petition. Even so, most Americans are in bondage to sin and Satan. Our Spiritual Safari has seen difficult reports in Romans; and three reports ago, we totally shut the door on the unbeliever. If you are an unbeliever, I have absolutely nothing to say to you in this section of Scripture, and you are literally wasting your time if you are seeking entertainment.

This report continues concerning the subject of the sanctification of the believer – the saint – because every believer is a saint. This means we are separated unto God to do His will and work. God sets us apart for Himself. Romans has gone from the salvation of the sinner to the sanctification of the saint. We have seen how sanctification is a potential state within the Federal Headship we have in Jesus Christ. In our previous report, we saw sanctification was *positional*, and we concluded by examining how sanctification is also *practical*. Because sanctification is *positional*, it means we have a responsibility to know something about it. We are to know God's method of taking a sinner and making them His child in the way He wants them to go. Remember, justification only *DECLARED* man righteous and removed the guilt of sin. Justification did *NOT* do anything to remove sin from the life or change anything in the character or personality of the believer. It merely provided a new nature.

So, that new nature has no power in and of itself. God wants the power of the Holy Spirit to work through our new nature to produce fruit. So, it is our responsibility to know that we were buried with Christ, and we were raised with Him in justification. Only God can save us, and only God can enable us to live for Him today. Jesus died two thousand years ago, but today we are joined to a Living Christ. We were told to count on that in our previous report. God saves us by faith, so we are to live by faith! There are a whole lot of people who have trusted Christ yesterday for salvation but aren't so

sure about later today or tomorrow. How tragic for them. Do we trust Christ enough to live for Him right now? That's exactly what He wants us to do....

13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

~ "Yield" is the same word as "present" coming up in chapter twelve. This means present ourselves for service. People talk about surrendering their lives to God, but then they pursue a "victorious life" at the same time! I guess they honestly do not realize they are a contradiction in terms. They want to empower the old nature. The reason most of us get into trouble is because we yield to our old nature regularly. By an equal act of the will, we could have yielded ourselves to the direct will of God through our new nature.

A little girl fell out of bed one night and began to cry. Her mother rushed into the bedroom and asked, "... what happened?" The little girl replied, "... I think I stayed too close to the place where I got in!" That's one big reason many of us fall. Most Christians never get very far from the place they got in the Bible. That will lead to sin every time. When we yield ourselves to the old nature, we will fall. The problem is: we never get rid of our old sin nature. We have to crucify it daily. That's why most of us are constantly in trouble. Here, we are told to yield ourselves unto God.

Christ has made it possible for us to yield our new nature to God. When we yield to Him, He can empower the new nature. We are alive in Christ as those who are raised from the dead; we have been born again. I believe Paul was speaking of a specific and particular sin in verse thirteen. These are the sins of our lives, my beloved. What is *your* real problem today? Just answer to yourself; I don't know what yours is, but I know what mine is. I don't want to know about yours, because I cannot help you with it; but God can if you will yield to Him. Whatever it is – talk to Him about it. What about immorality? Do you have lies going with family or friends? Sex is the social media disease of the hour. Yield yourself as righteous instruments to God today. The law was not given to Moses with any thought or

consideration for a new nature. Our new nature is to be yielded to Christ and presented to Him completely. This is the one glorious and wondrous thing a child of God can actually do! You *CAN* yield yourself and present yourself unto God as an instrument of righteousness....

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

~ The form of this question is different than presented in verse one. We have seen completely how God's method for sanctification is on the same basis as justification by faith; that is, it's by faith! Naturally, the natural man thinks there should be some laws or regulations given in connection with this. Well, the wisdom found in the Word of God is totally different from and diametrically opposed to this world's wisdom. Many groups have come up with long lists of rules and regulations for living a so-called Christian life. If you want to be a member of their church, you'll conform and obey to them – or you'll be out!

There were the Puritans, a group of people to whom we owe much American culture. They had a strict observance of the Sabbath. It was an unhealthy obsession with them. They called Sunday the Sabbath – which it isn't – but, either way, they placed themselves back under law. Today, we have many groups with those types of rules. Even Fundamental Christian groups have taken us from Ten Commandments to about forty! They think if they do this and don't do that then they are living a Christian life. Most of you readers know I am totally against some half-baked Bible course designed to make your life all new and shiny again. Many people get a spiritual high for a while in their lives, but then they spiral into depression and crash back to earth. That will happen every time we try to accomplish things in our life by rules and our will instead of letting Christ work it out for us.

A so called "*Christian life*" has nothing in the world to do with following rules; and it has nothing to do with being "*victorious.*" The Christian life is to be *obedient* unto Christ! You might want to write that down, friends. It means communication with Christ! Do you love the Lord Jesus Christ? Jesus said, "*if you love Me keep My commandments.*" So, identification with

Christ is *positional sanctification* for the believer! Love of Christ is the basis for it; but obedience to Christ is the experience of sanctification which means *practical* sanctification.

Candidly, friends, I'm not interested in what you're doing in your service to the Lord. But I am very interested *where* you are walking today. It's not how you walk but where you walk that is important. Are you walking in the light? Are you walking in continual fellowship with Christ? What do you do when you break fellowship with our Father by sinning? Jesus told Peter in the upper room, "*if I wash you not you have no part with Me!*" That means fellowship. If we are to have fellowship with God, there cannot be unconfessed sins in our lives. The most important thing you and I are to focus on is fellowship with our Father through the Lord Jesus Christ; and to obey Him! No man comes to the Father but by Him!

There is a subtle poison that can insinuate in the heart if we're unaware; even in the best Christian. That is the temptation to say, "*let us sin*" — not that grace may abound, but because it *does* abound. To adopt a mindset that we can sin because we are forgiven is spiritual suicide. Far too many Christian's today feel as if they can live any life they please and expect God to bless it; because they are saved by grace. Well, when we're saved by grace, we won't be doing whatever we please, because that would literally be impossible.

See, there are three ways we can live. Paul says we can live *by law*; we can live *by license*, or we can live *by liberty*. All civilizations have some principle or form of law by which they conduct society. We have mega-movie stars who go *way* out on a limb for some strange cause and become so narcissistically prideful of that entity that they become truly frightening individuals. They have their own wild philosophical ideologies they govern themselves by; world be damned. Well, irrespective of who you are, if you are living by law, you're living in your old nature....

15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

~ Verse sixteen strongly warns us against license. When Paul writes, “... know ye not....?” – you can write it down that *they didn't know* — but they needed to know. If you are a child of God, you can't just do whatever you desire to do and live any lifestyle according to the flesh. The child of God does as Christ desires for them to do. If there is no obedience in our life to the Lord Jesus Christ, then we haven't been saved, friends. Period. Full stop. We are to present ourselves unto Him.

This is very practical and very real; probably much more so than most Christians want it to be. Every person alive is a bondservant to someone or something. You could be a bondservant of Satan himself! Human hierarchy predisposes everyone as enslaved or indentured to somebody or some power. Whichever entity we obey — that's our master. If we obey sin, then sin will be our master. So many people say Christ is their master while they live in perpetual sin. I'm not sure who they think they're fooling? When the Son “*makes us free*” that means free to live for Him, friends! It means free to obey Him. Jesus said, “...*whoso committeth sin is a servant of sin.*” Is Christ really *YOUR* Master today? ~

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

~ Before we were saved, we obeyed sin continually. That was our natural default state. Some of us may have lived fine exemplary lives; while others, not so much. None of that means anything, though; trusting and obeying Christ is all that is important to us — it is what is all-important in our lives.

When we receive our new nature, we receive a nature that has the capacity to obey Christ. This is something we all have to experience for individually. In this epistle, Paul will teach there is no power in our new nature in and of itself. He says in chapter seven, “... *I know that within my flesh dwelleth no good thing.*” Sadly, many Christian's still have not discovered that truth. Some cannot admit it. There is no good in us, my beloved. God says so. The

old nature has no redeeming qualities – period. You can do a lot with the old nature, but you can't make it good.

The other startling fact in this passage is that there is no power in the new nature. People seem to think they will always walk on top of their circumstances while subduing the world because they are Christian's. It's a big mistake that leads to a shipwrecked faith on the lost isle of hopelessness. It also does irreparable apostate harm to the church body. Once you are saved, you are just as weak as anyone has ever been. Only by *faith* in the power of the Holy Spirit can we walk and grow, because only the Spirit of God living through us can produce fruit regarding our so-called Christian life....

18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

~ Only Christ can supply the things we need to live an acceptable life to our Father in Heaven. Only when we yield to the Holy Spirit and allow Christ to work *through* our lives and hearts can we become "*servants of righteousness.*" There is no other way. This does not mean sin has been

removed or eradicated – although it *may* mean that – but, either way, it does mean we can now live for God.

It seems Paul offers a half-hearted apology regarding the use of the terms “*slavery*” and “*bondservants*.” Slavery was common in the Roman Empire. The term terrified people. To be taken into slavery was a death sentence. Out of one hundred twenty million people, half were slaves. Most Christians were slaves. Freedom was a prize possession and very difficult to obtain. Paul says he is speaking to us in human terms in this section of Scripture. Paul is still speaking by Holy inspiration of God; but he tells us certain things in a manner in which we can understand. Well, believe me, they understood that they were, in actuality, slaves!

Of course, the religious rulers were insulted when Jesus suggested they were servants of sin. Jesus said, “*if ye continue on in My work then are ye My disciples, indeed; ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free!*” Are you a servant and slave to your sin, friends? It’s really time to be honest with yourself and the Lord. We have a tragedy amongst young people who have rebelled against all Godly rules and regulations and have now discovered they are destroyed!

Let’s keep this real, friends. Sex, drugs and alcohol alone mire every aspect of society. You may get away from one group, but if you don’t turn to Christ, you’re only crawling out of the frying pan and into the fire! So many people today are slaves of something down here on earth that they should be absolutely ashamed of. When you drop into sin, does it break your heart — or do you enjoy it there? Where is the first place you turn when you sin? The child of the devil loves doing what the devil wants done; and if you work for Satan, he may compensate you well ~