**Sermon Title: Liberated From Sin, Enslaved to God**

**Sermon Text: Romans 6:15-23**

**Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to understand the only two oppositions of enslavement.**

**Sermon Proposition: There are 3 concepts related to freedom from sin, and enslavement to God.**

**I. You obey the master you present yourself to. V.16a**

**II. You testify of the master you obey. V.17-19**

**III. You transform into the master you obey. V.20-23**

**I. You obey the master you present yourself to. V.16a**

A. The choice of two **masters**. V.16a

1. Presenting one’s self to the slave master of **sin** resulting in **death**.

People in the ancient world would often sell themselves into slavery as a way of avoiding financial disaster.

John 8:34 “Every person who is committing sin is a slave to sin.”

2. Presenting one’s self to the slave master of **obedience** to God resulting in moral **righteousness**.

Christians, who are no longer slaves of sin, or slaves to sin, must no longer live as slaves of sin, related not just to the legal status (positional), but also in their living out the Christian life (practical).

B. The two **consequences**. V.16b

1. We are slaves to sin resulting in death.

2. We are slaves to obedience resulting in righteousness.

Paul sees God’s grace not only as a liberating power but a constraining power as well: the constraint of willing obedience that comes from a renewed heart and mind, and ultimately the impulse and leading of God’s Spirit.

**Galatians 5:17** For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 24 And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

**Romans 8:4** that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

[The New International Commentary of the New Testament: The Epistle to the Romans; Douglass J. Moo; p. 398]

**II. You testify of the master you obey. V.17-19**

A. We obey from the **heart**. V.17a

There has for the believer, been a transfer of spiritual allegiance from one master to a new master, and this manifested in obedience. Allegiance is made evident by obedience. The phrase “You have obeyed” points to the time of one’s conversion, when the Roman Christians first bowed the knee to Jesus as Lord.

Paul uses “obey” because he wants to underscore the aspect of submission to Christ as Lord of life.

B. Obedience to a “**form**” or “**pattern**” of teaching. V.17b

The Greek for “form” or “pattern” is a word used for a mold, such as a pattern a craftsman would use to cast molten metal. Paul’s point is that God pours His new creations and children into a mold of divine truth.

**Romans 12:2** And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

**Titus 2:1** But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine:

The new believer has and continues to have an innate and compelling desire to know and obey God’s Word.

**1 Peter 2:2** as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,

C. You were **transferred** to this. V.17c

The verb “transferred” or “handed over” might connote the transfer of a slave from one master to another master. (Ibid. page 401)

In this verse, it is not the teaching that is handed down to the believer, but the believer himself who has been handed or transferred. So it is the new convert’s “obedience” to this teaching of transfer, which the outgrowth of God’s action in justifying the sinners.

D. You have already been **liberated** from sin’s slavery.

Paul’s concept of freedom is not that of autonomous self-direction but of deliverance from those enslaving powers that would prevent the human being from becoming what God intended (Ibid. p. 402). (**John 8:31-36**)

Being bound to God and His will enables the person to become free – to be what God wants that person to be in Christ Jesus.

E. You became enslaved to **righteousness**. V.18b

You are under a new power of right conduct. Puritan confession of faith put it this way, “The liberating which Christ hath purchased for believers under the gospel consists in the yielding obedience unto Him, not out of slavish fear, but a child-like love, and a willing mind.”

(Quote by Kevan, Grace of Law, p. 249)

F. The use of human analogy due to man’s spiritual condition. V.19

“Just as we presented our members as slaves of uncleanness, so now present.” Paul makes clear that Christians should now serve righteousness morally with all the single-minded dedication that characterized their pre-Christian service of such “idols, as self, money, lust, pleasure, and power.”

The imperative, clearly stated, “Would that we pursue holiness with the zeal that we once pursued sin. We as slaves to God are now enslaved to doing what is right before God, resulting in a habitual lifestyle of attitude, actions, and activities that are increasingly God-centered and world renouncing.

**III. You transform into the master you obey. V.20-23**

A. The master that is served – **sin** versus **God**

1) vv. 20-21 When you were slaves of sin, you were free from righteousness.

B. The outcome of that service – **death** versus **life**

2) v.22 Having been freed from sin, you become a slave to God.

C. The means by which the outcome is attained – a “**wage**” earned versus a “**gift**” received. V.23

1) Spiritual, physical, and eternal death is the paycheck for every man’s slavery to sin

2) Spiritual, physical, and eternal life is the free gift God gives undeserving sinners who believe in the Son of God.

**Ephesians 2:8** For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, **9** not of works, lest anyone should boast.