

ROMANS
6:20-23

Resisting Sin...
“in Christ Jesus
Our Lord!”

Part 3:

The Fruit of Slavery:
“Before” and “After” (20-22)
and
God’s Grace-Gift (23)

ROMANS

6:20-23



²⁰Indeed, for as long as you were slaves to sin, you were free [in regard] to righteousness. ²¹Therefore, what fruit were you having at the time? Upon which things you are now ashamed, for the outcome of those things is death. ²²But now after being freed from the [slavery] of sin and after being enslaved to God, you are having your fruit for sanctification, and the outcome is eternal life. ²³For the wages of sin is death, but the grace-gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

ROMANS

6:20



**FOR THERE
IS NOT A JUST
MAN ON EARTH
WHO DOES GOOD
AND DOES NOT
SIN.**

²⁰ *Indeed, for as long as you were slaves to sin, you were free [in regard] to righteousness.* Paul continues his “before” and “after” discussion in regard to slavery to sin as he had begun in vv. 17 & 19. Recall that we talked about slavery to sin as not being free and as Paul stated: “*slavery to unrighteousness.*”

In reality, it is a “*state*” of freedom, but freedom from God as a slave to unrighteousness, which is separation from God. Therefore, (self) excluded from the reign of His grace and mercy. Such people are free or independent of righteousness. This echoes Paul’s quotation of Eccl 7:20 in 3:10!

ROMANS

6:21



²¹Therefore what fruit were you having at the time? Upon which things you are now ashamed, for the outcome of those things is death.

Paul begins and ends v.21 by asserting what he demonstrated throughout 1:18 – 3:20 and will state, again, in vv.22 and 23. The outcome of “being slaves to sin,” which is an existence free from righteousness, will lead to “death” (v.23).

ROMANS

6:21



BUT THE FRUIT OF
THE SPIRIT IS
LOVE, JOY,
PEACE,
LONGSUFFERING,
KINDNESS,
GOODNESS,
FAITHFULNESS,
GENTLENESS,
SELF-CONTROL.

²¹Therefore what fruit were you having at the time? Upon which things you are now ashamed, for the outcome of those things is death.

Please note that Paul introduces another metaphor; “fruit” (καρπός). It’s a negative image in v.21, but will be expressed positively in v.22. It’s comparable to how Paul uses this term in Gal. 5:22-23a.

ROMANS

6:21

“Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.”

²¹Therefore what fruit were you having at the time? Upon which things you are now ashamed, for the outcome of those things is death.

Our Lord Jesus also speaks of fruit in both positive and negative terms in St. Matthew 12:33, 35. Our Lord's point is that a tree must be “*changed*” before it can produce good fruit and Paul follows the Lord's teaching to the letter!

ROMANS

6:22



²²But now after being freed from the [slavery] of sin and after being enslaved to God, you are having your fruit for sanctification, and the outcome is eternal life.

Once again, Paul uses the Greek adverb: *νῦν* along with the conjunction *δέ* (“But now...”). This signals that the gracious intervention of God has come and it is the reason for the present shame “*now*” (v.21) over prior conduct then (in one’s unrighteous past).

ROMANS

6:22



²²But now after being freed from the [slavery] of sin and after being enslaved to God, you are having your fruit for sanctification, and the outcome is eternal life.

This is the personal reception of the eschatological fulfillment of salvation accomplished for all by Christ Jesus (cf. v.19). It is expressed with the same two verbs v. 22 already used together in v.18: “... being freed ... and ... being enslaved ...”

Both of these aorist (past tense) participles are, again, Divine Passives!

ROMANS

6:22



²²But now after being freed from the [slavery] of sin and after being enslaved to God, you are having your fruit for sanctification, and the outcome is eternal life.

God freed you! And since God does the freeing, He has also graciously “enslaved” (δουλωθέντες) you to Himself!

ROMANS

6:22



²²But now after being freed from the [slavery] of sin and after being enslaved to God, you are having your fruit for sanctification, and the outcome is eternal life.

Being enslaved to God as “...a servant to Christ Jesus...” is what Paul rejoices in himself to be (Rom. 1:1). Therefore, in contrast with slavery to sin, which leads to eternal death, it is a blessed servitude which grants righteousness and results in eternal life!

ROMANS

6:22



²²But now after being freed from the [slavery] of sin and after being enslaved to God, you are having your fruit for sanctification, and the outcome is eternal life.

This brings us back to the fruit metaphor: “...you are having your fruit for sanctification, and the outcome is eternal life.” **A changed tree...a tree that is made good...will now produce good fruit that will yield a different result! However, you may have noticed that Paul doesn’t go into detail about the specific fruit which you now have.**

ROMANS

6:22

²²But now after being freed from the [slavery] of sin and after being enslaved to God, you are having your fruit for sanctification, and the outcome is eternal life.

While some of Paul's details could be filled in with the description of the fruits of faith in Gal. 5:22-23; here in Romans, Paul will wait to discuss this in chapters 12-15, which relates to us that this isn't Paul's purpose quite yet!

ROMANS

6:22



²²But now after being freed from the [slavery] of sin and after being enslaved to God, you are having your fruit for sanctification, and the outcome is eternal life.

Sanctification (ἁγιασμόν)! What is it?

Sanctified living is a consecrated or dedicated life made possible only by the freeing, hallowing, and enslaving work of God! What exactly does this entail? You may now realize that sanctification isn't a coerced or resentful servitude as with human slavery, but there is a...Divine compulsion! Let's read and discuss 2 Cor. 5:14-15.

ROMANS

6:22



²²But now after being freed from the [slavery] of sin and after being enslaved to God, you are having your fruit for sanctification, and the outcome is eternal life.

St. Paul has been moving his readers toward this ever since Romans 6:11. Sanctification, this Divine Compulsion, does not involve freeing ourselves from sin's rule or enslavement; rather, it's what God does for (to) us. However, it also means engaging in battle against what was once lording over you (cf. vv.12, 14).

ROMANS

6:22

²²But now after being freed from the [slavery] of sin and after being enslaved to God, you are having your fruit for sanctification, and the outcome is eternal life.

So, for now, we continue to struggle (“et peccator”) with sin in our daily life; even so, that permanent and complete victory will come on the Great Day of Resurrection (Judgment Day)!

ROMANS

6:22



²²But now after being freed from the [slavery] of sin and after being enslaved to God, you are having your fruit for sanctification, and the outcome is eternal life.

Dearly beloved, it also means endeavoring to present your bodily members to God as instruments of righteousness. It is not making yourself a good tree, but by the Tree of the Cross – baptized into our Lord's death and resurrection (6:3-6) – it does entail producing “...your fruit for sanctification...”

ROMANS

6:22



²²But now after being freed from the [slavery] of sin and after being enslaved to God, you are having your fruit for sanctification, and the outcome is eternal life.

So you can see that this verse expresses the entire Christian life in this way:

- + Being freed from the slavery of sin and becoming enslaved to God through justification, followed by;
- + Producing fruit in sanctified living, resulting in;
- + The ultimate end, goal, and outcome: eternal life!

ROMANS

6:23



²³For the wages of sin is death, but the grace-gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

As we consider this important verse, we must realize that Paul's consistent exhortations to resist sin and offer oneself to God are misapplied if they are misunderstood as some type of condition for gaining life with God. The ongoing necessity of resisting sin's attempts to regain its lordship in your daily life may also fall on deaf ears of the complacent.

ROMANS

6:23



²³For the wages of sin is death, but the grace-gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

As a result, Paul counters both improper conclusions with a conclusion of his own:

“For the wages of sin is death, but the grace-gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

ROMANS

6:23

²³For the wages of sin is death, but the grace-gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Paul now introduces another analogy: “wages (payment).” The Greek word that Paul uses is a word that refers to “ration-(money)” paid to a soldier. Later, it was used for wages paid to other kinds of workers. Therefore, it evokes a picture of reward for military service and the more general concept of financial compensation.

ROMANS

6:23



²³For the wages of sin is death, but the grace-gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Thus, belonging to the “army of sin” and engaging in the “work of sin” pays its due wage:

death!

Without doubt, all of humanity stands completely responsible for both being and doing what deserves its own condemnation.

ROMANS

6:23



²³For the wages of sin is death, but the grace-gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

You would do well to always remember: God is not the cause of sin, nor is He the cause of the punishment, the damnation. The only cause of man's condemnation is sin! Thus, the first half of v.23 declares what each of us deserves to be paid...death, spiritual death!

ROMANS

6:23



²³For the wages of sin is death, but the grace-gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

But now...for the rest of the story...

The Holy Gospel!

Here is the positive alternative:

"...the grace-gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." **Such a life is not obtained by producing fruit or through consecrated living of one's own work! It is, instead, the grace-gift of God; "...in Christ Jesus our Lord."**

ROMANS

6:23



²³For the wages of sin is death, but the grace-gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The lordship of sin and its reign have been disposed by Jesus Christ and now stand opposed by those in Him. In reality, you have been freed from slavery to sin and are now enslaved to a new Master and Lord! As a result, His life – eternal life – is yours!

ROMANS

6:23



²³For the wages of sin is death, but the grace-gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

So as Paul has already written:

+ As Jesus *“died to sin once for all”*
and now *“lives to God” (6:10), so*
you, a baptized believer in Him
are *“dead to sin”* **and** *“living to*
God in Christ Jesus” (6:11), who is
now further defined as *“our*
Lord!”

ROMANS

6:20-23



In Romans 6:1-11, Paul depicted you as a passive recipient of God's gracious bounty through Holy Baptism in Christ Jesus, your Lord!

And in 6:12-23, the dominant and only worker is God! Even though Paul uses active verbs and imperatives that punctuate this latter half of Romans 6.

**APPLICATION
TO YOUR
LIFE!**

ROMANS

6:20-23



APPLICATION
TO YOUR
LIFE!

Paul's exhortation makes no sense to unbelievers; they make no sense to those who are still slaves to sin, even if that slavery is cleverly masquerading itself as slavery to some supposed autonomous self!

This ongoing struggle also betrays the notion that holiness of living is somehow attainable, rather than a continual battle this side of eternity!

ROMANS

6:20-23



This ongoing struggle also makes no sense if your struggle against sin and your efforts to live for God are a matter of complete futility and, therefore, not to be energetically pursued! Such resignation to sin is an improper application of *simul justus et peccator*, which we have discussed.

APPLICATION
TO YOUR
LIFE!

ROMANS

6:20-23



There is also no comprehension of what Paul is teaching when one adopts a “*God-does-it-all-so-I-can-be-lazy*” attitude toward sanctified living!

Yes, God does it all in our justification! Yet, you must reject all moralism and legalism and at the same time confess that an slothful apathy is not what Paul teaches about sanctification!

APPLICATION
TO YOUR
LIFE!

ROMANS

7:1-6



**Next
Week**

The Lordship of the Law!

**An Illustration
And
Overview**

