Romans 6:15-7:6

Chapter 6

Intro:

--Paul has begun his doctrinal teaching on our life in Christ and our sanctification in that life. He began by making it clear that we are now to see ourselves ***dead to sin*** and ***walk in newness of life*** as is pictured outwardly in our baptism.

--So if we don't *live* in sin, does any *act* of sin matter? Do sins matter at all?

--Paul's answer—Of course! He is going to show:

1) There are only two Masters: God or sin
2) There are two presentations: Our service rendered depends upon the master served.
3) There are two harvests: Uncleanness & Death or Holiness & Eternal Life

Verses 15-16:

--***What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?***

--There is an important transition here. We have the freedom to consider our sin nature, or old man, dead and to ***reckon*** or *consider* ourselves alive to God. But even in this, we do not carelessly allow freedom from law to make us lawless before God.

--Our actions matter because by them we are serving someone. We are free, but no man is free in terms of absolute independence. No one is *the* boss. We are simply free to choose our master, and God has set us free to willingly serve Him.

--God has placed us ***under grace*** that we may freely live in and for Christ.

Galatians 5:18:** ***But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.*

--We are to obediently present ourselves to Him, and in doing so, it will lead to righteousness, which we are also to be seeking and hungering after.

Matthew 6:33:** ***But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

Verses 17-18:

--***But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.***

--Wonderfully, Paul sees the reality of new life in Christ as true of these Roman believers. Thanking God who set them free from the bondage of slavery to the old man and has given them grace to obey ***from the heart*** a new form of doctrine.

--In the past (was true of them then, but not now), they were slaves of sin. *So are all who sin! Sin starts so small, but ensnares us so that we cannot break free.*

--***You were. . .*** tells us that something has fundamentally changed in them. *Newly saved girl to old unsaved friends: "This establishment is under entirely new management!"*
--The great change in them is seen in a heart reality—inner—which is then made evident in a new master and public service—outer. And God is not looking for one without the other! He does not want the correct religious rites or ceremonies or actions without the new heart that can only come from being ***alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.***
--Particularly, they obeyed ***that form of doctrine to which you were delivered*** or to which you were *handed over*. They were not trying to grasp it. They were given to it. The language gives the picture of hot metal being poured into a mould and taking on its shape (the commands of Christ in the Great Commission, the apostle's doctrine, and the pattern of teaching Paul had given to so many). *New Covenant & New Wineskin*
--The life of God looks like something. I believe Paul was saying something similar in comparing the life of unsaved Gentiles (***you should no longer walk***) with that of the saved Ephesians:
Ephesians 4:20-24:** ***But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.*
--Now we do what God pleases, not what pleases our old man.
*Augustine: *"Love God and do what you please!"**

Verse 19:
--***I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.***
--Paul admits he is using something of a crude illustration in that of a slave and master. This truth is so important and powerful because it is very likely that many of those Paul was writing to in Rome were actual slaves. The very word would bring up all types of emotions.
--Unlike most slaves, we get to pick our master. We choose sin as a master by giving our bodies over to sin, and sin as a master repays us with death. We choose Jesus as a master by giving our bodies over to obedience, and as a Master, He gives us righteousness.
--Paul warns against the abuse of liberty as believers ***under grace***. He wants to make it clear that there are only two masters—God or sin.

Verses 20-23:
--**(20-21)** ***For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.***

--Paul reminds them of what it was like before they were saved. Describing all our lives as slaves to sin, free of righteousness, and fruitless.
--He wants them to see: What good was their service to sin? What did it bring? Only shame!
*Augustine Pear Story: *"So when they say, 'let's go, let's do it,' we are ashamed not to be shameless."**
--How does all this work out in the end? Well, sinful life produces sinful fruit, but true obedience produces sanctified and eternal fruit. Now and eternally.
--Is there growth in this? Most certainly!
--What if there is no evident Christian growth? To say it simply: *Questionable sanctification produces questionable justification.* *The Bible warns believers against unfruitfulness!*
*Scroogie: "*There cannot be fruit where there is no root, but the proof of the root is the fruit."**
--**(22-23)** ***But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.***
--Instead of an outward law being forced on us, God graciously gives us ***obedience from the heart***. It is such a wonderful thing to *want* to serve and obey! The desire to obey is one of the rewards of obedience.
Psalms 40:8: *I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is within my heart.*
--It all plays out eternally! Sin brings shame, it bears bad fruit, and ultimately brings death. There are a number of ways the Bible speaks of sin, but they all come to the same end: Death.
-Is sin a way?—It leads to death.
-Is sin a work?—Its wages are death.
-Is sin a conception or birth?—Its child is death.
-Is sin a seed?—Its harvest is death.
-Is sin a king?—Its reign is death.
--Should we sin freely because we are under grace and not the law? Certainly not!
*Trapp (Romans): *"Indeed there is no little sin, because there is no little God to sin against."**
--Sin stings men in death. Death becomes ***the king of terrors*** to ***those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*** *We will all find death ultimately in that last moment, where no friend can help you die but Christ!*
Romans 14:8: *For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.*
--Death has its wages to pay for those that serve sin, but God has a gift to give in Christ Jesus. A costly gift—paid for by the Giver.

Chapter 7
Verses 1-3:
--***Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man.***
--***Or*** connects us back to the current discussion, particularly that of **6:14**.
--We have an illustration in **1-3,** and an application in **4-6**.
--Paul wants to explain how those under the law are released from it by sharing in the death of Christ. He illustrates this freedom by the reality of death breaking the legal bond of a marriage. Once that happens, a new legal bond is possible.
--He uses the word ***brethren*** here and again in **4** because this was a huge step in their sanctification for both Jew and Gentile.
--To the Jew, one would be accused of spiritual adultery by leaving the covenant under the law. This was the teaching of Christ: **Luke 16:16** and the clear form of doctrine in the New Testament church as seen in: **2 Cor. 3:7-13; Eph. 2:14-15; Col. 2:13-14; Heb. 7:12;** etc.
--So this became a powerful argument for the saved Jew seeking to be sanctified in Christ Jesus and "mould" into this new ***form of doctrine***.
--To the Gentile, this was also important because there was a constant push to put them back under the law in one form or another. Legalism and works-based salvation were some of Paul's main problems in the churches he planted.
--Some people think conformity to an outward law is the only way to bring about holiness or sanctification, but Paul (who had lived that legalistic life) knew there was a better way.
--The answer was the new birth and surrender to God in humble obedience through the life of the Spirit! This was ultimately vindicated over time, but Paul himself had to carry the burden of them in love as he said in **Galatians 4:19-20:** ***My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ be formed in you. . . for I have doubts about you!***
*Mackintosh (Short Papers): *"Surely a divine end can only be gained by pursuing a divine way. Now God's way of giving us deliverance from the dominion of sin is by delivering us from under law; and hence all those who teach that Christians are under law are plainly at issue with God. Tremendous consideration for all who desire to be teachers of the law!"**
--Paul gives a simple illustration of common marriage law that they would all understand, even the Romans with their skewed sexual morals of the day.
--The simple fact is that death breaks the law that binds the married couple. People get this, which is why there are so many seasons of Dateline and 48 Hours! *Watch out if your wife takes out a large life insurance plan against you!*

Verses 4-6:

--**(4)** ***Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.***

--The husband is not the law, as verse **1** tells us the law is ***over a man*** and not the man, particularly. Also, we are never told in the Bible that the law itself is dead—notice *we* are dead to the law: ***you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ.***

Galatians 3:13:** ***Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree).*

--In Christ we died to sin and to the law. These are facts. Now we are brought into a New Covenant—a new marriage! One that bears fruit that is acceptable to God.

--**(5)** ***For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death.***

--In our past, our flesh wanted one thing, but the law demanded the opposite. Yet the flesh was too strong! And still is, without the work of the Spirit.

--This battle becomes a basis for the coming struggle.

--**(6)** ***But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.***

--We have been ***delivered***—same Greek word Paul uses in **6:6** & **7:2**.

--Paul loved this deliverance! His old life was an external submission to a written code, but now He lived life in the Spirit from within.

--Paul's pre-Christian life was one of submission to an external code with no corresponding inward life from God. Now, that has changed with life in ***the newness of the Spirit.*** God desires fruit that comes from the heart and not from religious obligation. This is the: *I have to* Vs. *I want to.* Now, our very Spirit should be the center of our motives and not just a command someone else demands.

--This new inward life was the ultimate promise of the New Covenant! ***Jeremiah 31:31-34***