***Slavery  
RO75-02***

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Please open your Bibles to a new section in Romans 6:15-18.

Let's have just a brief review of where we have come from thus far. You will remember that the apostle Paul has been answering in Romans 6 an objection to the doctrine of salvation by grace alone apart from human doing. Paul has taught that the grace of God super-abounds in the face of human evil. Human viewpoint, of course, hates the idea of the sufficiency of God's grace alone to provide justification for the believing sinner as a gift. Human viewpoint wants the sinner to do something to merit and to justify his receiving salvation from a holy God. That's what seems reasonable to the human mind. So, the spiritual rebel has smarted-off with this suggestion that the sin nature should be permitted to reign so that God's grace can be free to abound.

Well, Paul has shown that this is not possible, and that this is an ignorant statement indicating a lack of doctrinal understanding as to what God has done. He points out that the sin nature now is no longer in the position of a ruling authority in the soul of the believer. God's system of saving by grace rather than by human effort ensures that the sin nature can never again return to the position where it is a reigning authority, because God's work is never undone. What happens in salvation is that the sin nature is deposed from a place of ruling authority, and the Spirit of God is placed in charge of the believer's soul.

God, as Supreme Judge of the universe, has deposed the sin nature itself from this authority, and thus it can never be undone. God has done this by removing a believer from the position in Adam in which he was born, which placed him under the rule of the sin nature, and he has transferred him, because of his faith in Christ, into a position in Christ where God the Holy Spirit rules. This has been accomplished by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This is the reason for the baptism of the Holy Spirit – to take a person out of a position in Adam, and to place him into a position in Christ. God has acted with complete integrity in doing this, for has provided this position of sanctification in Christ on the basis of the death of Christ, which has paid for that believers sins.

Positional sanctification, I remind you, is the issue which is being discussed by the apostle Paul. He began discussing this at Romans 5:12, and he's going to discuss this all the way through Romans 7:6. A Christian is now in the position of the newness of life in Christ as the result of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. And he can never again be enslaved by the sin nature with its oldness of life in Adam.

Now, having completed that rebuttal of that first attack through the first 14 verses, first 15 now states another attack against the doctrine of salvation by grace alone. Paul now takes up another attack against positional sanctification provided as a judicial act of God, where God as judge simply provides and declares this to be the case on the basis of what Christ has done that has preserved God's integrity. Though a Christian is no longer enslaved to the sin nature, he can indeed still indulge in acts of evil. Ultimate sanctification, where you cannot engage in human good evil or sins evil awaits our entrance into heaven.

Now, since grace provides total freedom from God's divine wrath and judgment for all moral evil against our record. The argument here in verse 15 is that a Christian can therefore do all the evil he wants to, because he's not under law, but he's under grace. Therefore, he has nothing to worry about. So, the opponent of grace salvation brings up this second objection, which begins here in verse 15. So, that's where we pick it up today.

**Shall we Sin since we're not under Law?**

Here's the objection stated: "What then, shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace. God forbid." There the objection is stated. Let's just go ahead and go hog wild in sinning (in evil), because we're under grace, and we're not under law, so we're not under any restrictions. "What then?" This is a very important introductory phrase here. Let's look at it.

This introduces the second potential objection against justification by faith. This attack is directed toward Paul's teaching of personal salvation. It is introduced by the word "what," which is the Greek word "tis." This is a pronoun that indicates that a question is being asked. This question was prompted by Paul's final statement in Romans 6:14. You have to look at Romans 6:14 to see what led to this objection in the objectors mind.

Romans 6:14 says, "For sin (that is, the sin nature) shall not have dominion (shall not reign as king over you), for you are not under law." That means a system of rule-keeping. It's not the Mosaic Law: "But you're under grace." And because of that statement, the objector leaps from that, and says, "In that case, let's just go ahead and indulge sin within us. Let's just go and be free to exercise evil because we're not under rules. God's grace has made us free from the sin nature, and has made salvation permanent, so, what do we have to worry about?" Human trying makes nothing certain except hell. Only grace makes salvation certain. But since we've got it, then we can go ahead and sin. Now, human viewpoint is totally antagonistic to Paul's teaching of being under grace and not under law-keeping.

The second part of this expression then, is this word "oun," which is a conjunction, and these two words together form an idiom. This is an idiom in the Greek language. "What then" is actually saying this: "In the light of the fact that we are not under law but under grace, what are we to conclude?" Therefore, we may translate this simply as: "What then are we to conclude?" An idiom is a way of saying things in the language where the literal meaning of the words is not what is at issue, but it is an idea which is conveyed by those words. So, whenever you see this expression in the Greek language, "tis oun," it is an idiom saying, "So what are we going to conclude?"

The next question is, as to what to conclude is relative to sin. He says, "What then should we conclude? Shall we sin?" The word "sin" looks like this in the Greek Bible "hamartano." "Hamartano" is the word that refers to personal acts of evil which fall short of God's standard of absolute righteousness – evil consisting of human good or sins. These acts of evil miss God's standard. This is in the aorist tense. The aorist tense in the Greek language means that it looks at the state of sinning as a whole. We would say "a lifestyle." He is saying, "What should we conclude? Shall we now move into a lifestyle of doing evil?" This is not just an individual act of sin here, and an individual act there, but a habitual style of living under evil. It's in the active voice, which tells us that this is your personal choice. This is a human being's decision that he's going to live for the devil. He's going to be devoted to evil.

This is in what we call the subjunctive mood, which means its potential. This subjunctive mood is used to raise a question. It doesn't really expect an answer. Grammarians call this a deliberative subjunctive. It's a rhetorical device to bring up an issue for clarification. And Paul is bringing this issue up: Should a born again, in-Christ, justified believer pursue a life of evil actions (a settled life of sin – not an occasional action)?

**1 John 3:8-9**

Now, you may remember that 1 John 3:8-9 refer to this kind of a lifestyle, and it tells us something about the person who is characterized by this kind of living: "He that commits sin is of the devil, for the devil sinned from the beginning. For this purpose, the Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin, for his seed remains in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God."

Now, if you read that in the English Bible, and then you proceed to interpret that from the English Bible, you're going to come out with the same concept that a lot of these books pathetic charismatic Pentecostal people have come out with when they take this verse (and a lot of others in that Holiness tradition), who say, "You see, a person who is really born again comes to sanctification, where he never sins again. He does no evil."

Well, that's surely what this verse sounds like. Verse 9 says, "Whosoever is born of God." That means whoever is a Christian – whoever is born-again, does not commit sin, for his seed (that is God's seed) remains within him. He cannot sin because he's born of God." Well, right now, on the basis of that interpretation, everybody in this auditorium is in a lot of trouble, because sin is quite evident with us. And here we have a verse that says, "If you sin, it's a sign you're not going to heaven. You're headed for hell."

However, when we come into the language of God the Holy Spirit used to say this, then we understand what verse 9 is saying. You'll never understand it from the English Bible. Complete understanding only comes when you look in the Greek text, and you discover that the tenses here are talking about sinning, not as an individual act of evil here and there, but as a lifestyle. Remember that God says, "He who is not born again is evil in God's eyes all the time." Why? Because everything in an unbeliever is dominated by the sin nature. And everything that a person does, whether he calls it good or bad, is evil with God. The only kind of good an unbeliever can perform is human good, and human good is vile with God. God chokes on it. He loathes it. He vomits it out of His mouth, Revelation tells us. Human good is something He rejects because it's evil.

If a person is an unbeliever, he is dominated, therefore, by the sin nature, and there is no good he can produce. He is totally evil. That is his lifestyle. And in the Greek you will find that beautiful present tense there, which gives you the indication that he's talking about a lifestyle.

This is exactly what Paul is talking about back here in Romans 6. He's saying, "What then shall we conclude? Shall we as Christians now live under a continual style of evil? Shall we have a pattern of life which is simply one expression of evil after another? Should we just be evil people because we're not under rules, but we're under the freedoms of grace?"

You can already have a doctrinal clue as to what the answer is that Paul is going to lay out from John. John says, "Forget it. If you're a born-again person, you cannot live a style that is evil. You cannot pursue a lifestyle of evil." But you can try it. You as a believer can try it. You still have the capacity to choose to do evil. But if you're in the family of God, and you try a stunt like that, that's one of the signs of the will of God that we talked about in a previous session. One of the first signs is that peace is gone. The soul is in turmoil. You're in agony. You're under misery because the Spirit of God is bearing in upon you, and He's slowly crushing you first. First, the hands of the Spirit of God are easy. They're gentle. And if you don't respond, He cracks it a little harder, and crack it a little harder. And if you persist, he'll snuff out your physical life. That's what's called the sin unto death. God will take you directly to heaven. It's a dangerous thing is a believer to try to live a lifestyle that you cannot indulge in, once you are a child of God.

The apostle Paul is going to indicate the same thing back here in Romans 6: why the question is foolish, because it's impossible for a person who is a believer to do this. "Shall we sin – not occasionally, but as a lifestyle?" That's the question.

He's going to explain why. He says, "Because." This is the Greek word "hoti." It means "seeing that." It introduces the reason that the spiritual rebel is suggesting a life of evil for a Christian. It introduces the reason. A false inference has been drawn from Paul said in verse 14 about the fact that we're not under rule-keeping, but we're under grace. Paul's statement has made it clear that a Christian is under no system of earning merit with God in order to go to heaven.

So, we can say: "Seeing that." Seeing what? "That we are" ("eimi"). There is the verb for "to be" – expressing status. It's present tense. This is a thing that is continually true. Present tense is a line idea. It's continually the case. It is active. It's something that you have chosen to do as an individual – a status that you actually hold. It's in indicative mood. That means that it's a statement of fact.

**We are not under Law**

"Seeing that," and then he adds a negative: "Seeing that we are not something, and he uses that strongest negative in the Greek language: "ou." And that "ou" also indicates "not on the one hand," because he's going to match it up, we'll see the moment, with something that's the opposite of this: "Because we are absolutely not, on the one hand, under." The word "under" is a preposition, "hupo," indicating authority. We are not under the authority of "law" ("nomos"). This is a noun for "law," but in the Greek language, it does not have this thing we call the definite article. It does not say, "We are not under *the* law," because then it would indicate a specific code of laws like the Mosaic code of laws. The Greek simply says, "We are not under law. And when it does that, it is speaking about the quality of law, which is rules. That's what laws are. Laws are rules. And he says, "We're not under the quality of a system which is characterized by rule-keeping. In other words, we are not under a salvation by human doing – earning divine favor by keeping rules of righteousness.

**We are under Grace**

"Seeing that, on the one hand, we are absolutely not under a system of rule-keeping, but." That's the Greek word "alla." It’s a conjunction. Now this is the opposite to this previous "not" – this word "ou" that we have that indicated "on the one hand." It ties in here to this word "alla" to indicate "on the other hand:" "But on the other hand, we are under." Again, this is the same preposition "hupo," indicating authority or control: "grace." We are under grace ("charis"). That refers to God's system of providing salvation by His efforts alone, so that He can give eternal life as a gift – not as a payment. A sinner receives justification as a gift from God – a gift which he in no way deserves, and in no way has earned. This gift is based upon the payment for human evil by Jesus Christ on the cross, which has preserved God's holiness, and thus permitted Him to justify sinners. Grace is greater than all our sins. It achieves the justification we need so desperately to escape hell.

So, the apostle Paul, in presenting this objector's attack, says, "What should we conclude then? Shall we sin (deliberately miss the mark of God's standard of righteousness), seeing that we are not under the authority of some set of rules, but we are under the freedom of grace?" And that's what grace indicates: freedom. What's his answer?

He uses a favorite expression. Paul loves this expression. When he wants to refute something, when he wants to express a strong abhorrence, and strong loathing, he says, "me genoito." This is a Greek idiom and it means "by no means." That's odd, isn't it? It's translated, "God forbid," and most of you know that the word for "God" is "theos." And that is not even there. So, right away you've got another idiom here. The literal words are not the words that are translated.

What's the word? Well, first of all, in the Greek, you'll find the negative "me." You'll find this verb "ginomai." "Ginomai" means to become. You have the words: "not to become." And what they come out meaning as an idiom is simply "by no means." The negative strongly rejects the statement. This is in the aorist sense. It's making a point action declaration. It's active voice, in effect. It is Paul declaring something. It's in a mood called the optative mood, which is very rare in the New Testament, but it is used here to express a strong possibility.

What these words come out meaning is simply, "May it never be;" "by no means;" or, we might say, "perish the thought." This is Paul's usual way of expressing strong rejection. This expression is used 15 times in the New Testament. Do you know how many times the apostle Paul uses it? 14. He just about dominates it, you might say. It is characteristic of him, when he wants to express loathing, to say, "Me genoito."

So you know that you're hearing something strong. What he is doing is rejecting the suggestion that our position under grace and freedom from law produces acts of evil living. And he simply dismisses this idea. He uses strong language because he wants to impress his readers with the falseness of the idea expressed.

Now, does this seem plausible to you? Does this actually trouble you? "I am saved; I can never be lost; I am under the freedoms of grace; and, I have no rules to keep in order to go to heaven. I have indeed rules to keep for godly living. And God will discipline me for not keeping His rules. And there are a lot of those. But I have no rules to keep in order to go to heaven. I have no rules to keep in order to gain God's favor relative to eternity." You should just be completely at ease with that statement and with that concept. You should understand this doctrine, and that it in no way suggests that now you can go out and live an evil life. And you may still be a little uncomfortable saying, "Well, I don't like to say that. That makes it sound like people can go and live like the devil," because that's what this man is saying. And Paul is saying, "God forbid. Perish the thought. That is not the case at all."

There are two major types who will oppose the concept of grace salvation. Here they are.

**The Legalists**

The first are the legalists. The legalist is always basically a moralist. He equates morality with justification. He equates good living with going to heaven. He holds the false idea that laws actually make people behave themselves. He believes that laws produce morality and restrain evil acts because they are condemned. And that's not true. The only thing that laws do is provide the basis for punishment of the law-breaker. Laws never restrain people from doing evil. Something else within a person is what restrains a person from doing evil – not some rule against it.

The legalists makes that mistake of thinking that his rules keep people from doing evil. He thinks that a man is able to earn merit with God by his own efforts. So, the legalist is always exhorting people to stop doing this, and stop doing that, so that they may gain God's favor. The legalist holds that society cannot be controlled and cannot be improved unless men are under some kind of a system of laws in order to try to please God. The legalist thinks that unless you have these rules that people keep for the idea that this is the way they will escape God's punishment, you won't be able to control society.

So, what have they done? Well, the legalists makes Christianity no more than the system of ethics. It's just a system of how to behave. They ignore, however, the fact that there is a restraint and a guidance by conscience within man, and in the believer, there is the indwelling Holy Spirit, and that is the thing that restrains man against evil in society – not the making of rules. And the making of rules does not gain divine favor.

**The Antinomians**

The other group of people who oppose salvation by grace are the antinomians. Antinomians are people who don't want any rules. Since a person is saved, and he can't be lost again, it doesn't matter what he does as a Christian, so why have any rules? Jude 4 says that these people who talk like that have turned the grace of God into lasciviousness; that is, sensuality. They fail to recognize again the doctrine of divine discipline that God imposes. He'll take that to the point of taking a person's life. For the believer, it always involves the loss of reward and heaven, and it always involves a loss of happiness on earth. The antinomians are wrong when they suggest that we don't need to worry about any rules.

In a church like this, where we understand the grace of God, and understand that that's God's way of dealing with us in the age of grace, and we stress grace, you realize that you are an infinitesimal minority. You realize that out there, throughout the city and this metroplex area, the overwhelming number of preachers would recoil in horror from what this church says concerning the freedoms of grace. They would just completely be horrified. Therefore, anybody who comes from instruction under those people is immediately hardened and on-guard against the concept of the freedoms of grace, because they are saying, "You are antinomians. You are falling in the category of saying that you don't have to keep any rules."

We have gone over that doctrine in great detail in one of the tapes in the series on Philippians, where we have shown you how many rules the New Testament requires Christians to keep. We are not a lawless people because we are under grace. We are not without rules to keep because we are under grace. We're just not trying to get to heaven by keeping rules. And we're not trying to be spiritual by keeping rules.

Many a fundamentalist church has fallen into the trap of thinking that you're spiritual if you don't do things: if you don't drink wine; if you don't drink beer; and, if you don't drink whiskey, you're spiritual. You're going to get the feeling of spirits, but not the right kind. The antinomians are wrong. We as believers do not say that we have no guidelines. We have plenty of them.

So, the legalist sees grace as removing restraints against sinning, while the antinomians sees grace as an excuse to sin. But both legalism and antinomianism are distortions of the grace of God because God's grace was never designed to cause people to do evil.

These distortions of the grace of God can only be corrected by a knowledge of doctrine – a knowledge of God's basis for preserving His Holiness while offering the gift of salvation apart from human doing. Neither legalism nor antinomianism can't break away from the controlling authority and the expression of the sin nature. A legalist is controlled by the sin nature. The antinomianism is controlled by the sin nature. Only grace can break you free of that dominating control within you. Acts of sinning, as we say, not ignored by the grace of God. They're rather punished.

So, being under the protection of divine grace does not produce evil in Christians, but rather carries them to spiritual maturity. That's what grace does for you. And through doctrine, it carries you to stability and to the power of the Holy Spirit. Grace takes you into maturity. Grace takes you to the place where you can take doctrine into your soul. Grace, through doctrine in your soul, takes you to a spiritual maturity structure, and on to super-grace living. Grace is the product of divine justice, so it cannot cause evil. It's an insult to the character of God to suggest it.

However, anytime you teach grace, it raises these two objections against the teacher. Any preacher, incidentally, who never has this attack brought against him by the legalists on one side and the antinomians on the other side can suspect something about his teaching. He can suspect something about the kind of preaching he's putting out. Otherwise, the attack would be there. These preachers who do not receive such attacks are actually perverting the Bible into a system of respectability; cultured manners; and, good deeds. They've transformed Christianity into a system of ethics, and into a system of what you do that's right. They devolve into systems of doing to please God. And they talk about the Christian ethics, but they have no way of achieving those standards. Preaching justification by grace alone, in other words, sounds very dangerous to human viewpoint mentalities. But the true believers in divine grace in action is neither a legalist nor an antinomian. He is a Holy Spirit-controlled trophy of God's grace and holy living.

So, we translate verse 15 in this way: "What then are we to conclude? Shall we sin as a lifestyle, seeing that we are not under a system of rules, but under grace? By no means."

**Slavery**

Verse 15 proceeds now to answer this objection. And the first way that Paul does this is by presenting the principle of slavery: "Do you not know that to whom you yield yourself servants to obey, you are his servants whom you obey?" Here is a self-evident principle. "Do you not know" looks like this in the Greek. It's the word "oida." This is a word for knowledge which is gained from information or by intuition. It is not something to gain from experience. That's a different word. This verb basically means "to perceive." It also connotes fully understanding a fact – not just getting to know something. This is something you already know.

You know the line in the song: "Getting to know you." Well, "getting to know you" would be "getting to 'ginosko' you," because that's the word for getting gradually to learn about you. But you would not say, "Getting to 'oida' you," because "oida" means, "I know all about you," but it is very significant here that God is not talking about something that you're developing and you're getting into. He says, "You're there." "Oida" means that you have the picture. You're not just getting the pieces and the details yet.

"Do you not know?" It's perfect in tense, but this is a peculiar word. Perfect here means present. So, it's a continual, full understanding. It is active voice. It means that you personally possess it. It is indicative – a statement of fact. He uses the word "ou" again, the strong negative: "Do you not know?" This is another one of those favorite expressions of the apostle Paul. It's used here to indicate an intellectual reason fully understood for the reputation he's about to give. Paul is going to present a line of logic, in other words, based on facts – but facts apart from Bible doctrine, interestingly enough.

Paul says, "Let's just forget about the Bible for a moment." This is the way he often talks to unbelievers, which is a good way to talk to unbelievers. Take them on their own grounds first. Dealing with unbelievers and salvation, it isn't always best to quote John 3:16 to them. When you come up against an unbeliever, it is often best to say, "Do you have any standards of what you'll do and won't do?" He'll say, "Yes, everybody has standards." You say, "Do you violate those standards?" He'll say, "Well, yes." You say, "So, in other words, you don't live up to your own standards, do you?" He'll say, "No." You'll say, "Well, you do have trouble with God, don't you, even by your own standards?" And he'll say, "Yes."

Now you go to the Bible and quote verses about his being a sinner and all that, but he's already seeing something very important: "I go around and say, 'I believe that certain things are right and certain things are wrong,' and I do the things that I think are wrong. There's something wrong with me. I've got a problem."

Here, Paul is doing the same thing. He's not talking about the Bible. He says, "I'm going to point out something to you on the basis of logic." Paul isn't saying to them, "Just trust me." No, he's not saying, "Just trust me." He says, "I'm going to talk to you on the basis of logic. The objection against grace reveals a defect in logical thought for which there is no excuse.

"You know that ('hoti')." This is a conjunction introducing something that logically they should have perceived. "You know that to whom." That looks like this in Greek. It's "hos." It's a relative pronoun, indicating some person to whom you yield. And the word "yield" is "paristano." "Paristano" means "to put at someone's disposal for the purpose of service." "To put under someone's authority" is the idea here. It is present tense. So, it means a continual status that you enter of handing yourself over to someone. It is active voice. You chose to put yourself under this authority. It's indicative. It's a statement of fact.

**Slave**

Then Paul emphasizes that he's talking about you as an individual: "Don't you logically realize that to whom you yield yourselves." And he throws in this word "heautou." "Heautou" is a reflexive pronoun, and it stresses the fact that the action of yielding (the action of placing yourself under authority) is done to yourself. You have placed yourself under someone's authority as a "doulos." Now get this word. Our translation here says "servant." That is a bad translation. That gives you a completely wrong idea, because this word does not mean "servant." This word is a whole lot stronger. It means slave. You have put yourself under someone's authority as a slave. And this word "doulos" in the Greek language, incidentally, at one time, used to be used to describe the lowest level of servitude – complete control under another.

The word "servant" implies a choice. Some people work as "servant." Some people go out, and they work as maids, or they work as butlers. They work as servants. But they do that because it's a choice. And when they get tired of being a maid, they quit. When they get tired of being a butler, they quit. A slave can never quit. It is very important that you understand that this word is "slave." Paul is speaking about absolute subjection to an authority; that is, to a slave master. And it is in the nature of slavery that subjection is absolute and continual. There is no appeal from what your master says to do, and there is no time off from your duties as a slave. A slave does not obey his own will. He obeys only his master's will. He has no will of his own.

So, Paul is saying, "Don't you logically know that to whomsoever you place yourself under authority as a slave?" And then he says to do what as a slave? "To obey." The Greek has two words. "Eis" is a preposition indicating purpose. And the purpose is "to obey," which looks like this: "hupakoe." This comes from "hupo," a preposition which means "under;" and "akouo," which is a verb that means "to hear," which means "to hear in the sense of obey." So, this word comes out meaning "obedience." We translate these two together then as "unto obedience."

You have placed yourself under authority as a slave for the purpose of obedience. Don't you realize that, in general, when you can place yourself under authority as a slave to obey another person, that means: "I have no will of my own; I have no decisions that I can make; and, I completely respond to what I am told to do." . . . This is the issue with every human being. There are things in life to which you as a human being can place yourself as a slave. It can be money; it can be sex; it can be fame; it can be pursuits of all kinds of ambitions; and, it can be any number of things that you have committed yourself to. And you are a slave, and you are helpless to it. And no matter what you think; what you do; or, what you desire, you can't do anything else but pursue that. You have enslaved yourself to something for the purpose of obeying. And that is a totalitarian relationship.

Now, when you do that, here's something that Paul says is the result that you must recognize. You place yourself as a slave to that person for the purpose of obedience. And again, you have the same word "doulos" or "slave:" "You are." This is the Greek verb "eimi," meaning again the verb "to be" – your status. It is present tense. You continually are. It is active. It is by your own choice. It is indicative – a statement of fact. "You are the slaves of whom." Again that is referring to that same individual slave-master word "hos:" "You obey."

You have the verb for "obey:" "hupakouo." You had the noun just a while ago. This means "to listen under" or "to submit." If you choose to place yourself under somebody as a slave for the purpose of obedience, that person becomes your master. To him, you are a slave for the purpose, again, of obeying. You have placed yourself under that person as a slave.

This word "hupakouo" is used in the Bible in a variety of places. I'll just run through some, and you can maybe look those up later. This word "to obey" means that you place yourself in absolute subjection, and that is obeying as a slave. You have this used to God in Hebrews 11:8; to Jesus Christ in Matthew 8:27 and Mark 1:27; and, to the disciples of Jesus Christ in Luke 17:6. You have the word obey to the faith in Acts 6:7; to the gospel in Romans 10:16; to Christian doctrine in Romans 6:17; and, to apostolic injunctions in Philippians 2:12. You had this used to Abraham by Sarah in 1 Peter 3:6; to parents by their children Ephesians 6:1; to masters slaves in Ephesians 6:5 (the way we're using it here); to the sin nature in Romans 6:12; and, in general in Romans 6:16. Again and again, this word "hupakouo" is used to indicate abject slavery. So, a person is a slave of whatever authority he submits to – continually by choice.

So, we would translate this first part of verse 16 in this way: "You most certainly know that to whom you keep presenting yourselves as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of him whom you are obeying." Now, this is a principle about slavery. That's clear enough thus far.

Now, Paul applies it. We have two alternatives: "Whoever," and he uses this word "etoi." In a moment, he's going to match it against this word "or:" "whether; or." Whether, on the one hand, for sin, and its "hamartia." Here again (very important) it does not say "*the* sin." Now you know that, therefore, it does not mean the old sin nature. It means the quality of living under evil. What he is saying is" whether, on the one hand, you choose to live under the quality of evil as a habitual lifestyle."

You might look up John 8:34. It says that a life of evil indicates a condition of enslavement to evil. Sin here is actually personified. It's made like a person. If you subject yourself to the person of an evil lifestyle "unto death." The word "unto" here is the preposition "eis," and here it means "resulting in." If you place yourself as a slave for obedience, on the one hand, under sin as a lifestyle, resulting in death, what he has said is true. Or (now he comes to this other side), on the other hand, obedience. And the word "obedience" is "hupakoe." On the other hand, obedience. This refers to positive volition to doctrine. This again is personified as the other slave master.

**Righteousness**

The first slave master was sin. The other slave master is obedience. We have two slave masters – a lifestyle that is devoted to obeying God. You have no choice but to obey God. And again: "unto." It uses this word "eis," meaning "resulting in:" "righteousness." And the word "righteousness" is "dikaiosune." "Dikaiosune" refers to a spiritual maturity structure built in your soul. The result of obedience to doctrine builds a structure of spiritual maturity in your soul – personal holiness, which then is expressed in godly living.

**Every One of us is a Slave**

So, we translate the last part of this as: "Whether you are slaves to sin, resulting in death; or, slaves to obedience, resulting in righteousness." The last verse of Romans 6 clarifies this issue. For it says, "For the wages of sin is death. But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ." It is not the obedience on the part of the believer that brings eternal life in the terms in which he is talking about here, based on the principle that is inherent in the concept of slavery. Every one of us here today is a slave. The issue is to sin; or, to obedience of doctrine.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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