

Romans 6: Freedom through Obedience.

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I. Introduction

1. Our passage today is from Romans chapter 6, verses 1-8 and 12-18.
2. *Read Romans 6:1-8, 12-18.*

II. Our big question today is “what is our motivation for Christian living?”

1. My own story
2. But if I'm justified through Christ, why not continue in sin?
 - a. As Paul says in verse 15, "Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace?"
3. Romans 6 talks a lot about freedom vs. slavery and death vs. life.

III. Freedom

Justified

1. Paul opens with "What shall we say then?" (v. 1)
2. In the opening sections of Romans, Paul lays out why God's judgment is righteous and how we can obtain righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ.
3. Look back at *Romans 5:1-2* with me.
4. **Justification** through Jesus means we have a righteous standing with God.
5. **If we are found in Him**, when God looks at us, He sees what His son did in our place.
6. NBA example.
 - a. Picture me receiving the NBA championship + finals MVP trophies
 - b. I didn't work for it.
 - c. Crazy to picture me receiving the identity and glory from LeBron's work
 - d. That's what we have, on the scale of eternity!

7. **Justification means God looking at us, as broken as we are, as incapable of holiness as we are, and seeing Jesus' perfect life and sacrifice in our place.**
 - a. If you know Him, THIS is how God sees you!
 - b. Think about how radical that is.
 - c. This is your identity.
8. Back to our text, if we are freed from sin, what reason do we have to live a "good Christian life?"
 - a. Paraphrasing Paul in verse 15, are we to keep sinning because we know we're covered by grace?
 - b. Paul answers his own question about continuing to live in sin in the very next verse (6:16):
 - c. *"Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness."*
9. From this line of reasoning, we're bound to follow something as slaves.
 - a. We can submit ourselves to obedience or submit ourselves to things of this world.
 1. Example: **Consumerism isn't freedom.**
 2. Often, what appears to be freedom is anything but. (Matthew 6:24)
 3. **Tithing as example of freedom** through obedience.

Dead to Sin, Alive to God

1. Let's look at Romans 6:5-8 and 13-14 again.
 - a. What does it mean for us to be alive as slaves of righteousness?
 1. It means we commit ourselves to a life that is pleasing to God.
 2. 6:13 says, "...present yourselves to God as those **who have been brought from death to life...**" We've been brought from death to life—shouldn't we live like it?
 4. **Picture a slave that was freed in the 1800's.**

1. Wouldn't it be weird if he just continued living the exact same way after he found out he was free?
2. Doing this would suggest he didn't know he was free.
3. He didn't understand his new identity!

Let's summarize what we've seen up to this point:

1. Receiving the free gift of grace by believing in Jesus's death on the cross and resurrection means that we are no longer slaves to sin. Sin no longer has dominion over us.
2. We are left with a choice of how to continue living in light of this. We can choose to continue living under our old (now false) identity, who we were as slaves of sin, or *we can fully embrace our new identity* as God's forgiven sons and daughters.

IV. The Holy Spirit.

1. **At this point, you may be thinking**, "Yes Tyler, that's all well and good, but I accepted Christ a long time ago and I just can't bring myself to stop sinning."
 - a. You're right! You can't keep yourself from sinning so long as it's up to you alone. Truth be told, we'll always battle our sin nature, but there's hope.
 - b. **No one seeks God on their own.** He calls us.
 - c. **So if God is willing to call us, he's with us. But how?**

2. Jesus preparing the disciples:

- a. Before Jesus was about to leave his disciples he prepared them for how things would soon be.
- b. John 14:15-16: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another **Helper**, to be with you forever..."

c. John 16:7: "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: *it is to your advantage that I go away*, for if I do not go away, the **Helper** will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you."

d. **Jesus says the apostles are better off without him** because of the work of this Helper!

1. I often think I'd be super Godly if Jesus were here...

2. Jesus is saying here that we're better off having the Holy Spirit

3. Who is this Helper that Jesus keeps referring to? It's the Holy Spirit.

a. **We have trouble understanding** the role of the Holy Spirit

b. The role of the Spirit is to **guide us through sanctification**.

c. **Helper in these verses can also be translated as Advocate or Counselor**. The Spirit is an advocate, with Jesus, between us and God. He's also our counselor, providing God's wisdom.

4. **Did you ever think about the "fruit" part of the fruit of the Spirit?**

a. The fruit of the spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Gal. 5:22-23).

b. I thought fruit of the spirit were the result of a Christian who was trying really, really hard on their own. They were working apart from God, so that God would see their good character.

c. But is that how fruit is grown? Does a tree separate itself from its soil and try really, really hard to make an apple on its own?

d. Dietrich Bonhoeffer says this in his book, *The Cost of Discipleship*:

"There are many *works* of the flesh, but only one *fruit* of the Spirit. Works are done by human hands, fruit thrusts upward and *grows* all unbeknown to the tree which bears it. **Works are dead, fruit is alive**, and bears the seed which will bring forth more fruit. Works can subsist on their own, fruit cannot exist apart from the tree. Fruit is always the miraculous, the created; it is never the result of willing, but always a growth. The fruit of the Spirit is a gift of God, and only he can produce it."

e. Therefore, our ability to wake up each morning and live a better life is a gift from God, the result is the fruit of the Spirit.

f. This fruit is only produced when we give our lives fully to Jesus, presenting our lives as a living sacrifice.

g. It's a natural result of following Jesus, not something we can work to produce on our own.

V. Summary & Closing

1. We receive our justification as a free gift through believing in Christ's work on the cross and resurrection. When God looks at us, He sees Jesus.

2. Once justified, we are dead to sin (sin no longer has dominion over us) and we are alive to God. **We are given a new identity.**

3. The choice of how we live at this point is ours. We can live in a way that honors God, fully committing our lives to Him, *fully embracing our new name* as a son of God, or we can choose to remain in slavery to things of this world, like a freed slave who continues to wake up each morning and work in the fields, not knowing his true identity.

4. Fortunately for us, **we're not alone** as we try to live out this commitment. *The Holy Spirit enters us*, acting as a Helper, an Advocate between us and God, and a Counselor--transforming us through the renewal of our minds.