

## Flesh or Spirit Which To Obey? – Romans 6.10-23

<sup>10</sup> *The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.*

<sup>11</sup> *In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.* <sup>12</sup> *Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.* <sup>13</sup> *Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.* <sup>14</sup> *For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.* <sup>15</sup> *What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means!* <sup>16</sup> *Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?* <sup>17</sup> *But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance.*

<sup>18</sup> *You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.* <sup>19</sup> *I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness.* <sup>20</sup> *When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness.* <sup>21</sup> *What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of?*

*Those things result in death!* <sup>22</sup> *But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.* <sup>23</sup> *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6.10-23).<sup>1</sup>*

**Memory Verse: For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6.23).**

As we discussed yesterday Christ died to sin for everyone, but the life He lives, He lives to God. Therefore, we can count ourselves dead to sin, but alive to God because of Christ Jesus (Romans 6.10-11, emphasis added). Christ died for each of us so we would be able to be alive to God, by the power of Jesus Christ's resurrection. If through what He did at the cross, why would we want to continue to live in sin?

We cannot allow sin to have control of our lives, we must allow Christ to be the Master in our lives. When we let sin take control then we find ourselves being overcome by its fleshly desires and falling into pits and traps we cannot find our way out of. The apostle James tells us, "No one, when tempted, should say, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil and he himself tempts no one. But one is tempted by one's own desire, being lured and enticed by it; then, when that desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and that sin, when it is fully grown, gives birth to death. Do not be deceived, my beloved" (James 1.13-16, NRSV).<sup>2</sup>

James tells us four specific things we all should take heed of; first, God does not tempt us with evil things. In other words, God does not send temptations into our lives which goes against His Word, He does send temptations, trials, or tribulations into our lives but they are all to help us become closer to Him, building our spiritual relationship with Him and increasing our faith (I Corinthians 10.13).

Second, when evil temptation comes, we have brought them upon ourselves. It is hard sometimes for us to understand this, but Paul warns us about "carrying out the desires of the flesh" (Galatians 5.16). The flesh is always at war with the spirit henceforth, we need to be on guard at all times ever watchful over our actions to make sure we are "walking in the spirit" (Romans 8.4; Galatians 5.16).

<sup>1</sup> *The New International Version*. (2011). (Ro 6:10–23). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

<sup>2</sup> *The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version*. (1989). (Jas 1:13–16). Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

It is from our own desires where the seed is planted for sin to be born. If we would but run to scripture, we could save ourselves a lot of trouble. This is why Jesus said, “Man shall not live by bread alone but by every Word of God” (Luke 4.4, KJV). (We will take this a little deeper a little later).

Third, when our desire has planted (conceived) its seed in our hearts and minds, “it gives birth to sin” (James 1.15). It is this sin which will get us into trouble, it is this sin which we will allow to grow and give life to. We allow it to hang around in our hearts or our minds as a thought, and before we know it, we are doing something we never thought possible.

Finally, “sin when it is fully grown, gives birth to death” (James 1.15). Imagine, here we are standing in a place wondering how we got here. Knowing we knew better and that we had no business being there, yet here we are. This is what happens when we allow the seed of sin to begin to plant in our hearts or minds. Once it starts it is like a weed, spreading everywhere and very difficult to get rid of.

Pastor MacArthur writes in his commentary on Romans, “Because of the incomprehensible truths about our relationship to God as believers we know with our minds and feeling deeply committed in our hearts, we therefore are able to exercise our will successfully against sin and, by God’s power, prevent its reign in our mortal body” (emphasis added).<sup>3</sup> Taking this advice and looking at what Paul wrote, “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace” (Romans 6.13-14, NIV).<sup>4</sup> We must walk by the spirit and not the flesh if we are ever going to move ahead in our spiritual relationship with our Holy, Righteous, Heavenly Father.

## Application

1. What is controlling your life, your flesh or the Spirit? Please explain.
2. The last time you sinned how did it come about? Think carefully from the beginning of the situation to the end. I mean from the moment the thought or ideal came into your head until you committed the act. How did you feel afterwards? Have you asked God for forgiveness of that sin or any other yet? Please explain.
3. **Deeper Thinking:** Read Galatians 5 and express your understanding of what it means to, “Walk by the Spirit.”
4. Make a commitment to share the gospel with at least one person today and begin to memorize Romans 6.23.

## Prayer

“Mighty God, Thy wondrous love Can make our nature clean, While Christ and grace prevail above The tempter, death and sin. The second Adam shall restore The ruins of the first, Hosanna to the sovereign power That new creates our dust!”<sup>5</sup> I thank You Oh, Lord for Your sovereign love, grace and mercy, You have extended Your righteousness to me a poor wretched person. Thank You for Your salvation, Your saving power, Your Son, Your Holy Spirit. Lord, give me strength to overcome my flesh, to follow Your will and walk in the Spirit. Lord, give me opportunities to share Your gospel today, all this I pray in Your Son Jesus Christ’s Name, Amen.

<sup>3</sup> MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1991). *Romans* (Vol. 1, pp. 336–337). Chicago: Moody Press.

<sup>4</sup> *The New International Version*. (2011). (Ro 6:12–14). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

<sup>5</sup> Spurgeon, C. H. (1883). *Our Own Hymn Book: A Collection of Psalms and Hymns for Public, Social and Private Worship*. London: Passmore & Alabaster.