

Romans Summary
Week 11, Wednesday November 23, 2016
Romans 6:15-23

In our last section Paul stated that the Christian is not under Law (putting Torah on the Adam side of the diagram) but under grace. This leads to a hypothetical question around status again. For the Jewish person to come out from under the Law is to become a 'sinner'. Shall we be a sinner and live in a sinful lifestyle? Again, NO!

It makes no sense to think of Christians being in the sin sphere. What would be produced if we did that is death, but Christ's obedience brought righteousness. Again, through baptism we have been committed to the gospel (form of teaching). The result of being freed from the Power of Sin through baptism is that we have now become slaves to obedience — we are Messiah people, obeying God as Jesus did.

Paul realizes how silly his language is, that somehow this true freedom is a slavery, but he needs to put it into the simplest terms possible so everyone will get it. You belong to the master whom you obey, so obey God in Christ with the same vim and vigour you once obeyed Sin. Lawlessness led to more lawlessness, now move from justification (being incorporated into the people/family of God) to sanctification (the cleansing which allows us to come into God's presence).

It makes no sense to live under Sin's dominion — remember back (again drawing on Exodus motif) — we were under bondage to sin and what was the result? Shame is more than feeling of embarrassment. Shame is attached to actions of sin which lead to death — the ultimate dehumanizer. But, being enslaved to God in Christ we have sanctification which leads to life.

All this is summed up in this well known verse, "the wages of sin is death," one leads naturally to the other. But, again, the greater act is God's. His gift goes against the grain of the natural and produces eternal life in Christ Jesus.

“Divine Love Meets the Strongest Animal” reflection and discussion questions:

1. Why is it important to recognize the immense power of death?
2. Why did Jesus share our flesh and blood?
3. How was Christ's defeat of death different to 'normal' ways of thinking?
4. What is the implication of that for us, the church?
5. Why are the Hymn and Liturgy important for us to participate in?