

## “It’s better to ask for forgiveness than permission”

- What does it mean?
  - Do what you choose, even if you are not supposed to
  - And if/when you get caught, ask for forgiveness
- When is that a good idea?
- When is that not a good idea?
- Imagine a new bank account
  - Each Sunday morning, every unpaid bill will be paid off for you
  - How might you live?
- When is it bad to depend upon guaranteed forgiveness?
- How does that fit the central idea of Christianity: forgiveness??

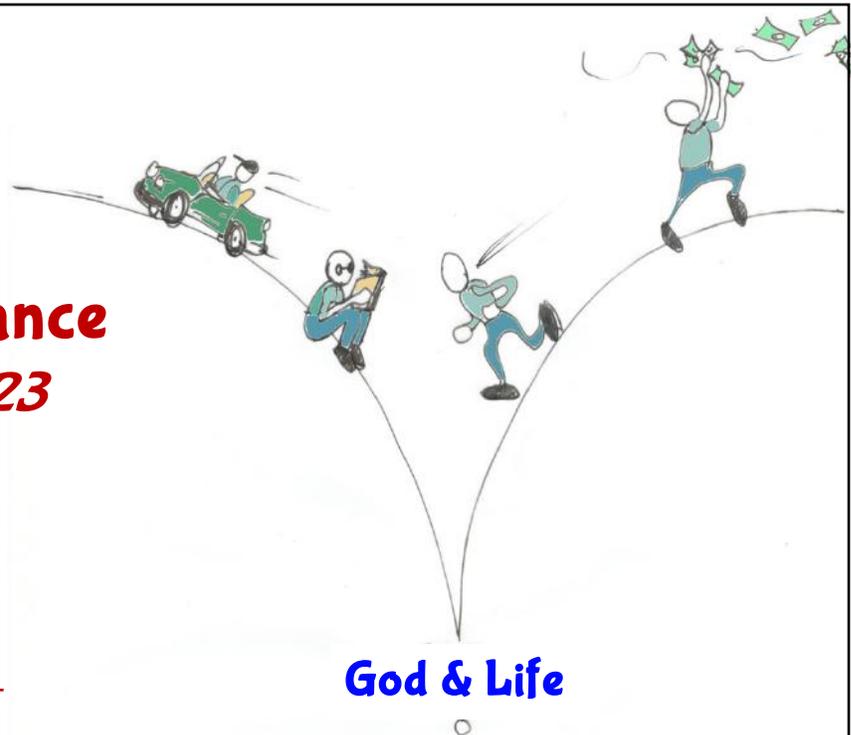
1

## A New Allegiance

*Romans 6:15–23*

[bib.ly/Ro6.NIV](https://bib.ly/Ro6.NIV)  
[tiny.cc/cmchandouts](https://tiny.cc/cmchandouts)

God & Life



2

“I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations.” *Romans 6:19a*

Trying to explain an idea from God that is hard to explain.

### *The Metaphor of “Slavery”*

One human ‘owning’ or having absolute authority over another human (slavery) is dreadful!

- Even if someone **claims** they are doing it well
- Even though the Bible didn’t explicitly reject it
- When based on race, it is even worse in its effects
- The US is still dealing with it individually AND as a society today!

Paul’s emphasis in using “slavery”: total control (good or bad)

- We are slaves to what controls us: **hurts, habits, hangups**
- Sometimes also by **good values and good relationships**

3

## Human choices

- Some ways to think about human choices

**Autonomous** I do what I choose to do

**Rebellious** I go against what people try to get me to do

**Shaped** I do what I was shaped to do (good or bad, based on family, culture, experiences, ideas, ...)

**“Under consideration”** I’ll listen to what others have to say before I make my own choice

**Submission** I follow the one in authority over me

- We may like to think we make free choices
- In reality: **we are all ‘mastered’ by something** (or more than 1)
  - Something is always shaping our “free” choices
  - And every time we follow it, it gets stronger

4

**“There is no such thing as human ‘autonomy,’  
a freedom from all outside powers and influences.  
Either people are under the power of sin (not–God),  
or they are under the power of God.”**

**Christianity says: Since God is the source of all goodness,  
anything that is not God is not good: “sin”**

**And being under the power of sin separates us  
from goodness and life and people and God**

5

### *The Letter to the Church in Rome*

A central idea of this letter:

“The gospel [the good news of Jesus Christ]...  
is the **power of God that brings salvation**

**[rescue from the destruction that comes through sin]  
to everyone who believes:**

first to the Jew, then to the Gentile [everyone else].  
For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed  
—a righteousness that is **by faith...**”

*Romans 1:16-17*

6

*Romans 6:15*

What then? Shall we sin because we are not **under the law** but **under grace**? By no means!

**The key idea in earlier verses: The Gospel**

**Being loved by God does NOT come by good behavior**

**In other words, we are no longer UNDER law (moral requirements)**

**We don't HAVE TO DO what it says in order to be loved by God (under grace=forgiven and loved by God as a gift)**

**So...what motivation is there to do what God says??**

**→ Because now we are "UNDER grace". What does that mean?**

7

*Romans 6:16-18*

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? 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**. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. **"Handed over"**

**Everyone has a master**

**Everyone starts with a master other than God**

**Christians now have God as their master**

8

*Romans 6:19*

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**.

**Having a master other than God accelerates decay**

**Having God as your master leads to sharing more and more in the glorious goodness of God**

**The only command in this passage: **make God your master****

9

*Romans 6:20-23*

When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! 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.

**There is no good apart from God  
So sin is anything other than God**

	<b>Means</b>	<b>Master</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
For	the wages	of <b>sin</b>	is death,
but	the gift	of God	is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

10

## The Big Idea

**Either we are being shaped by God**  
 leading to increasing goodness and glory,  
 and eventually to eternal life,

**or we are being shaped by something other than God (sin)**  
 leading to greater chaos and decay,  
 and eventually to death

**And mixing the two is shameful and destructive**  
 for it feeds the power of sin  
 and it attacks the heart of God

11

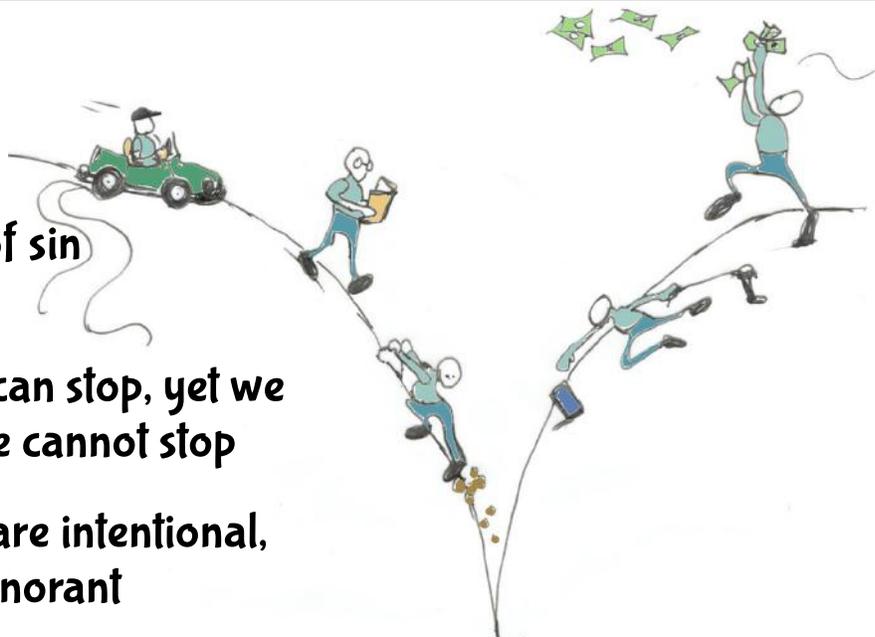
Each step toward sin  
**increases the power** of sin  
 for the next step

We tell ourselves we can stop, yet we  
 discover a pull that we cannot stop

Sometimes our steps are intentional,  
 sometimes they are ignorant

Either way, **there is a great cost**

**sin & death**



12

Each step toward God  
increases the influence of God  
for the next step

Each step toward God  
takes us deeper into life and joy

To have an allegiance to God,  
yet not move toward Him is destructive,  
and it attacks the heart of God

sin & death

sin & death

God & Life

13

### The Big Idea

**Either we are being shaped by God**

leading to increasing goodness and glory,  
and eventually to eternal life,

**or we are being shaped by something other than God (sin)**

leading to greater chaos and decay,  
and eventually to death

**And mixing the two is shameful and destructive**

for it feeds the power of sin  
and it attacks the heart of God

14

**Application**    **trust, loyalty, commitment**

**Receive the gift of grace: forgiveness and a new allegiance**

- We all start with “not God” (sin) as our master, and it destroys
- Grace is **being forgiven**: washing away all that decays & destroys
  - All the things that brought us shame before God  
Jesus takes away from us as if they were His own
- Grace is **being adopted by a new and glorious Master**
  - We are adopted by God to be His child forever (**a new allegiance**)
  - As adopted children, we must grow into our new identity
- This is **the gift of God in Christ Jesus our Lord**
  - Jesus has claimed our **allegiance** to Him alone
  - And we willingly accept that **allegiance**

15

**Application**

**Receive the gift of grace: forgiveness and a new allegiance**

**Recognize the disaster of each step away from God (sin)**

- For both Christians and non–Christians...
  - Not following God’s ways **always brings harm** to self and others
  - It also **feeds sin’s power**: we are slaves of what controls us
    - Gravity’s strength increases exponentially as we move closer
- For Christians...
  - It also attacks the heart of God
  - To use a human example...
    - To date two people at once is deeply problematic
    - It is far worse when one of them is your spouse!
  - Sinning as a Christian is even more problematic!
  - **It is disgusting for a Christian to use forgiveness to tolerate sin**

16

## Application

Receive the gift of grace: forgiveness and a new allegiance

Recognize the disaster of each step away from God (sin)

**Submit each step of your life to the ways of God**

- We do “give up” our autonomy (which we never had anyway)
- Yet it is \*not\* becoming a robot
- Rather, it is **the start of true freedom**
  - Like being the student of the greatest artist in the world
  - Gaining these skills, knowledge, disciplines, and abilities opens the door to **the best and greatest creativity**
- Our call is to a never–ending journey to learn the ways of God and to make them automatic in our hearts

17

## The Big Idea

**Either we are being shaped by God**

leading to increasing goodness and glory,  
and eventually to eternal life,

**or we are being shaped by something other than God (sin)**

leading to greater chaos and decay,  
and eventually to death

**And mixing the two is shameful and destructive**

for it feeds the power of sin  
and it attacks the heart of God

18

*What we naturally do with our sin...*

We try to **normalize it**

“I’m just being human”

We try to **minimize it**

“At least I’m not like \_\_\_\_...”

We try to **distract ourselves from it**

(generally with more sin...)

We may **despair in it**

“Why try to change...”

We may **decide to apologize later**

Thinking we can have the best of both worlds...

19

*What we should do with our sin...*

- **Confess:** agree with God with genuine sorrow
  - Sin (not-God) is ugly and destructive
  - Sin is mastering me
- **Claim His promise in Jesus** to forgive as we confess
  - For the first time: put your trust in Jesus as Savior and Master
- **Seek help:**
  - from **the Holy Spirit**
- **Repent:** take action
  - immediately take steps **away from sin** and **toward God**
  - **to stop further harm, and to repair the damage**
- **One essential action:**
  - Seek help from **the people of God**

20