

# WEEK 12 | ROMANS 6:15-23

## ROMANS | THE GOSPEL OF GOD'S POWER

### OTHER HELPFUL PASSAGES.

The following passages may be helpful to you as you consider this text.

- Luke 9:23-25
- John 8:33-34
- Romans 6:22-23

### THEMES.

The overarching theme of Romans is the gospel—salvation through Jesus Christ. That is important to remember and keep in front of your group, because the letter is a theological masterpiece. But as with any work of art, each brush stroke's true beauty is best seen when the piece as a whole is realized. To that end, we will deal with many sub-themes, but remember that each one weaves together to give the “fullest, plainest and grandest statement of the gospel in the New Testament.”<sup>1</sup>

1. Those in Christ are no longer under the weight of the law, but under costly grace.
2. Being under grace is not an excuse to sin.
3. While sin is a trap leading to destruction, obedience to God is a pathway to freedom.
4. Those who are slaves of God experience a growing sense of abundant and eternal life.

### QUESTIONS.

Feel free use any, all, or none of these questions as you facilitate your group. Their purpose is to be an aid to you as you consider how to teach the implications of the week's Scriptures.

1. Did the Holy Spirit use last week's passage or sermon to convict, challenge, or encourage you in any way? Did he use it to confirm or answer a prayer in any way? If you're willing, share with the group.
2. Read Verse 15. It sounds similar to 6:1-2. Observe the differences, however.<sup>2</sup>
  - Vv. 3-14 explain how we have been united to Christ. What are some of the ways that has been done for us?
  - Vv. 16-23 explain how we are now enslaved to God. What does this response look like?
3. In considering verse 15, what fundamental misconceptions might be present for a person to squander God's grace? (How do we tend to live out a distorted view of grace?)
4. In verse 16, Paul draws on a then familiar and common social norm; he references “obedient slaves” knowing the connection it would make to much of his audience. On applying this to our lives, one commentator says, “Recognizing that we will by nature be obedient slaves to whatever is most compelling to use (work, image, position, possessions, relationships, approval, etc...), he compares the end results of what a person has been obedient to.”<sup>3</sup>
  - What are some common examples of things we are naturally compelled to be slaves to?
  - What is the desire behind each of those compulsions and how is that desire actually realized through obedience to Christ?

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<sup>1</sup> John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Romans: God's good news for the world*. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 19.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 182.

<sup>3</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Romans: Righteousness from Heaven (Preaching the Word)*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 130, 132.

5. Read vv. 17-18 and consider the following:
  - If you are in Christ, what did “slavery to sin” look like for you before you were saved (what were you essentially seeking)?
  - How did Christ set you free?
  - What do you think it means to “become obedient from the heart”?
6. In considering the role of obedience in the Christian life, R.C. Sproul quotes G.C. Berkouwer in saying, “the essence of Christian Theology is grace, and the essence of Christian ethics is gratitude.” Sproul follows the statement by saying, “What draws us to obedience and righteousness is not duty but love. It is gratitude.”
  - What does the connection between gratitude and obedience look like in your own life?
7. Read verse 19. The ESV says to “present your members.” The NIV says, “offer yourselves” and the NLT says, “give yourselves.” Other translations use the word “yield.” What do you think this means- practically speaking? How does it set us up to grow into maturity rather than merely obey begrudgingly?
8. According to vv. 20-23, what might have felt like freedom—pursuing our own compulsions at will—wasn’t actually freedom at all. In becoming a slave to God, however, we are set on a new trajectory that leads to healing, wholeness, hope, and abundant life. How can you testify to this slavery paradox in your own life?

## PRAY TO CLOSE.

Here are a few prayer points to posture your heart as you close.

- Ask for requests from the group.
  - May want to break up and share in gender-specific groups.
- Ask God to locate your heart and remind you of the power and significance of your union with Christ.
- Present yourselves to God and ask him to lead you to righteousness.