

BIBLE STUDY NOTES (II)

Romans 6:15-23

Introduction. Romans 6:15.

Verse 15.-- In this section Paul clarifies what "not under law, but under grace" means. Some thought it meant lawlessness (antinomianism), but the apostle shows that "under grace" institutes a new kind of service.

I. Our obligation. Romans 6:16-18.

The pattern of the argument is as follows:

A. Major proposition (verse 16).

When we render ourselves to the service of a master, we are bound to obey the master, regardless of his character.

B. Minor proposition (verse 17).

As Christians, we have turned from sin and obeyed the Gospel.

C. Conclusion (verse 18).

This obedience freed us from sin and caused us to become servants of a new master, namely, righteousness.

Note: You may ask, "Where, then, is freedom if we go from one bondage to another?" Paul speaks of our freedom in other passages, e.g. Galatians 5:1, Romans 8:2, etc. See also John 8:32, 36; I Peter 2:16. Freedom means many things to many people. It can mean (1) not subject to authority or obligation; (2) not determined by anything outside ourselves (self-determination); or (3) liberation from slavery or restraint.

The concept of freedom is presented throughout the Bible. Perhaps one of the most vivid pictures of the Biblical idea of freedom is the exodus from Egypt. God delivered His people from Egyptian servitude, He gave them freedom to found their own nation in their own land, and He freed them from their enemies by granting them victory after victory. However, the maintenance of Israel's freedom depended upon her obedience to Jehovah. When Israel defied the Lord she found herself back in bondage. When she obeyed she enjoyed a glorious liberty.

Biblical freedom means "on the one hand, deliverance from all created forces that would prevent men from serving and enjoying their Creator, and on the other, the positive happiness of living in fellowship with God in the place where He is pleased to bless." (James I. Packer)

We are, then, freed from sin that we might become the servants of God, a state in which man can find true happiness and accomplishment. However, like Israel, we are under obligation to obey our Master if we are to enjoy the benefits of our new relationship.

II. Our duties. Romans 6:19,20.

Our duties center in the yielding of our members to the service of Righteousness. Here righteousness is personified. Christ is our Righteousness, and to serve Righteousness means to serve Christ.

Verse 19 could be represented grafically as follows:

