

Romans 6 (Part 2) • Choose this day whom you will serve

Pastor Paul LeBoutillier · July 19, 2026

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

We're in Romans, so open your Bible to Romans chapter 6. Romans chapter 6. We're going to be finishing out the chapter. If you, by the way, forgot your Bible on the way here, you were in such a rush and you need one, the guys have some extras there coming down the aisles with those, so just put your hand up and they'll get a Bible to you so that you can follow along and keep up with what we're doing. It's always good to be seeing the Word while you're hearing the Word.

Romans chapter 6. We covered the first half of this chapter last time. We're going to finish out the chapter tonight, and let's go ahead and just read through these verses. It's actually not terribly long. Verse 15 is where we pick it up through the end of the chapter, so follow along with me.

Just a reminder, I'm reading out of the ESV, and it goes like this. What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means. Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?

But thanks be to God that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you are committed. And having been set free from sin, you have become slaves of righteousness. I'm speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, leading to sanctification. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free with regard to righteousness.

But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now that you've been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Let's pray.

Father, as we get into these verses tonight, we just really pray for your Holy Spirit to lead us. We ask you, Lord God, to fill us with grace and insight. Lord, we ask you to tune our hearts to your voice. Help us, Lord, to be on the same spiritual frequency that you're on here tonight, because we need to hear from you. We long to be filled up with wisdom and understanding, and we long for that nourishment that only the Word of God can bring.

So we ask you to guide us tonight, direct us, and lead us into all truth, and we ask it in Jesus' precious name, amen. There is a rather well-known passage in the Old Testament, it's found in the book of Joshua, where Joshua is very close to his homegoing, and I mean his death. He exhorted the people of Israel one last time about the tendency that they had to turn away from devotion to the Lord their God and to go toward pagan idols instead. And it's found in Joshua 24, and I want to put it up on the screen here tonight so we can look at it together, and it goes like this. Joshua said, Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness.

Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the river and Egypt, and serve the Lord. And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the river, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. Now the reason I wanted to start off this evening with that passage is because the latter half of Romans is the Apostle Paul voicing this same challenge. He's really saying the same thing to people that was said so many years before by Joshua, and the question is very simple, who are you going to serve?

Who will you serve? Will you serve the Lord, or will you serve other gods? And although the names and the faces of other gods have changed over the years, they still deserve the same title, and that is idols. They're still idols. And whether they were little idol figurines back in biblical times, or whether they are what they are today, they are still the same.

Joshua in that passage referred to them as the gods your fathers served, or the gods that are the gods of the Amorites in this land in which you now dwell, and he was basically telling them you're living in a land that's full of idolatry. We've come into a land that is just absolutely filled with idolatry, and you're going to be tempted. And so you need to make a choice. You need to make a choice about who you're going to serve. And last week we saw that the Apostle Paul had kind of a new name for the idols that we serve.

He called our idols the old self, or the old man. And that is essentially what, you know, we serve today as well. This has been going on for a long time. Our culture, you know, when you observe our culture, you see that the God of self has risen to a place of prominence in the hearts and minds of people, and of course

that has made its way into the body of Christ as well. And self remains the number one God, small g, of the people of our culture, and that is one of the reasons why it was prophesied by the Apostle Paul that this would increase as the latter days moved on.

Let me show you this statement from 2 Timothy, chapter 3, and it says, Paul writes to Timothy and says, but understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty for people will be lovers of self. And then in that passage he goes on to explain all of the outgrowth of what it means to be a lover of self and the consequences of that. And really that's, you know, when we look at 2 Timothy 3, 1 and 2, we're really looking at a mirror image of our culture today. That's what's happening. We're living this right now.

We're seeing this played out every single day. But what people are also discovering, I hope they're discovering, ultimately is that to serve self is to serve, interestingly enough, a very cruel master. And one wouldn't think so, because no one likes to think of themselves as cruel. But if you've ever been alone in a room with yourself and you sat and just listened to yourself all day long, you know what? You know the kind of torment that I'm talking about, you know?

David even wrote about this in the Psalms. He said, how long, Lord, must I be, I'm going to paraphrase this, okay, because I don't remember the exact words, but he said, how long must I be, you know, alone or tormented by my thoughts? And that's that horrible reality of living with self. So as we look through these verses here in this latter part of Romans chapter 6, we're going to see that the Apostle Paul is going to talk to us about slavery. Not the kind of slavery that we typically think of when we hear the word slavery, but a slavery nonetheless.

And you might have noticed that as we started reading the verses here, starting in verse 15, that the Apostle Paul begins with some questions very similar to the ones he asked last time. But in the last study, you'll remember that the answer to those questions was more focused on one single reason why it is incompatible for believers in Jesus to yield to a life of sin. And the reason is because, we'll say it again, when you put your faith in Jesus, you actually shared in his death. We talked about this last week. And because you shared in his death, you have a result in your life.

The power of sin and its tyrannical grip on your life has now been loosed because you died. You died to sin just as Jesus died to sin. But you died to sin. You have also been raised now to live a new life. You've been raised and empowered to live a different life, no longer under sin's domination.

We talked all about the dynamics of that last week. But in this latter portion of Romans chapter six, Paul is making a bit of a different argument as it relates to sin and why you and I should not live in it. And the essence of the argument is in verse 16. So I want you to look with me in your Bible. We're gonna read that verse again.

It goes like this. Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, and then look at this phrase, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which of course is not going anywhere good, he says it leads to death, or of obedience. And of course, when he means obedience, he means obedience to the Lord. You present yourself to the Lord, and that leads to righteousness. So that's why I titled this message, Choose This Day Whom You Will Serve, because that's what Paul is saying here.

And you know, one of the things that I've shared with you, and you're probably getting tired of hearing this verse, but I've shared it several times already in our study of Romans, because it is so relevant to the message that Paul is giving. It's in Galatians 5.1 about freedom and slavery. And on the screen, I want to remind you, and I'm reading this out of the NIV. It says, it is for freedom. In other words, it is for the purpose of being free that Christ set you free, and he did that when you came to him.

And that's what we talked about last week. By sharing his death, he set you free from the tyranny of sin. So he goes on to say, stand firm then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. And when you look at that verse on the screen, I want you to notice one key word there, and it is the word again. That word is so important.

And of course, you all know what the word again means. It means once more, or back to a previous state. And that's what Paul is saying. You've been set free. You lived in the previous state of slavery and bondage to your flesh.

Jesus released you from that tyranny of the flesh when you came to him by faith. Don't go back. Don't go back. And of course, the reason Paul speaks of not going back to a place of slavery is because you've been set free. Right?

He set you free. I mean, I'd be bummed if I gave somebody something really nice and they just kind of threw it away. Wouldn't you? And Jesus gave us a wonderful, glorious gift. And it's, but Paul gave, and again, I want to remind you, the reason Paul gave that exhortation in Galatians 5.1 is because he's telling you and me, it's possible to throw away that gift.

I'm not talking about the gift of salvation. I'm talking about the gift of freedom. Freedom from the tyranny of sin. It is possible to go back. But he set you free.

And that's why Paul says what he says in verses 17 and 18, because this is all about the freedom that you and I have been given. He says here in verse 17, but thanks be to God that you were once slaves of sin, or excuse me, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed. And having been set free from sin, that's important, you've become slaves of righteousness. Now, I want to stop here for a moment, look at these two verses and talk about them for just a minute, because first of all, you'll notice that Paul offers a word of praise to God, and we ought to do that every day. You know, God, you've released me from the dominion of my sinful nature.

And I know that I still mess up. I know that I still choose to follow it from time to time. I know that. And I know that you know that. And I know that you knew ahead of time when you saved me that I was gonna mess up, and you loved me and saved me anyway.

And I know that I have forgiveness and I love you for it. But he is saying that God released us from the dominion of that sinful nature. And when we came to Jesus, and he says, you were once slaves, but he, you know, what happened to change that? Well, again, we talked about this last week, but, and I've already mentioned it, but I'm gonna show you the passage again, just as by way of reminder. Up on the screen, this was last week.

He says, all of us who've been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death. You guys remember? You guys that were here last week? He tells us we were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in the newness of life. And that's what Jesus did.

That we might walk in that newness, that we might live today free, you know? But there's something that we have to do daily. And it's what he goes on to say in this verse that we were looking at, verse 17. Notice where he says that they became obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching that they were committed. Did you catch that?

If that isn't underlined in your Bible, it probably should be, obedient from the heart. And here's why that's an important phrase. Why would Paul even mention it? Why did he say you've become obedient from the heart? Well, that's because that's where God deposited his law when you got saved.

That's where he put it. Do you remember he prophesied that that's where he was gonna put it? It's in Jeremiah. You guys know this. I'll put it up on the screen.

Jeremiah chapter 31, verse 33, the first part of the verse, God says through Jeremiah, this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord, I will put my law within them and I will write it on their hearts. That's, see, that's the gospel. God didn't just save us. That would have been enough, I mean, really. But he put his spirit in our heart and by doing so, wrote his law on our hearts.

And it went from becoming external carved in stone to being enfolded upon our very hearts. It now has become a part of us. Did you hear me? God's law, his righteous requirements and all that it says, it has become a part of us. It's no longer this external voice saying to me, thou shalt not.

It's an internal voice saying, I don't want to. I don't wanna commit adultery. I don't wanna cheat. I don't wanna steal. I don't wanna murder.

Because there's now this internal understanding of God's morality and the beauty of what he has revealed to us and so forth. It has been put within us. And so when we walk in obedience, we're basically walking in agreement with what the Lord has placed in our heart. And that's why Paul talks to the Romans here and to you and me about, he says, you've become obedient from the heart. In other words, you're responding to the Holy Spirit.

Let me show you how we say it in a New Testament concept. On the screen from Galatians 5.25, he says, if we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. See, when you walk in obedience to the Word of God, when you walk in obedience to the Spirit, you're keeping in step with the Spirit. And that's really important. And that's what obedience from the heart is.

It's not just obedience from the mind. And by the way, there's nothing wrong with obedience from the mind. I mean, just knowing that something's wrong and saying, you know, I know that that's wrong. Even if my heart hasn't really come to the party yet in respect to the obedience part of it. You know, maybe I still want to sin, you know, because that happens, even to believers.

But, you know, it's okay to be obedient, even from your mind. But ultimately, it comes from the heart. But did you notice in verse 17, Paul also commended the Romans for walking in step with the standard of teaching that they had received. And those are the words from the ESV, standard of teaching. The new King James says the form of doctrine to which you were delivered.

And it doesn't matter whether you're talking about teaching or doctrine. Both of those English words come from the same Greek word. And it's an important Greek word. It's didache, which means to instruct. It's where we get our word didactic, systematic instruction.

So Paul is saying that you are obedient from the heart and then he says, and this was backed up by this systematic didactic instruction that you received as well. And what he's saying here really just underscores and assumes that believers ought to be instructed through solid biblical teaching. That's what he's saying. Teaching should be a primary element of what happens in our churches. And that's one of the reasons why, you know, Jesus gave teachers to the church.

You know, I have benefited so much from men who had a gift to teach and it continues to bless. Let me show you Ephesians chapter 4 verse 11. It was he, Jesus, who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers. By the way, some people call this the fivefold ministry. It's really just four because pastor and teacher are meant to be one.

He goes on to say what these are all for, to prepare God's people for works of service. In other words, to equip so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God and ultimately become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. That's the function of teachers and that's why churches ought to have teaching. What's crazy is that we've gotten away from it in the body of Christ. That's the thing that blows my mind.

Do you know how rare it is to find a church that teaches through the whole Bible, Genesis to Revelation? Do you know how rare that is? Some of you guys who have been around, you know what I'm talking about. You know how rare it is. Sue and I have a YouTube channel that we hear from people from around the world daily and they're just blown away.

They're like, there's nobody in my town. There's no church that teaches through the Bible. You know, most and obviously when I first started getting serious about walking with the Lord, the church that Sue and I attended, we were living in Montana at the time, was a topical message church. The guy was not a teacher. He was a preacher and preaching means to exhort, teaching means to instruct.

Okay. That's the word that we have here in Romans chapter six. You were obedient to the teaching that you received and yet, you know, and Jesus both taught and preached. He did both. And they're two different words in the Greek, completely different words.

So why is it that we've gotten so far away from teaching? Why is it that you can go to a church and never ever learn about some books of the Bible? Why is it that some churches never touch the book of

Revelation? When's the last time you heard a study through Leviticus or Job? I know you guys went through Job on a Sunday morning.

I thought Troy was pretty brave to do that, honestly. I did it on a Wednesday night. But you know, it's a tough book. It's a tough book to get through, but it's good. There's good stuff.

But you know, the vast, I will say this, the vast majority of Christians have no idea what those books are about. They've never read through Job, or if they've read it, they've never studied it. They don't know what 1st and 2nd Samuel are about and why 1st and 2nd Kings is so similar to 1st and 2nd Chronicles. They have no idea because we've gotten away from teaching in the body of Christ. I'm sorry, I'm on my soapbox.

I'll step down now. But you guys, I mean, you know, I'm passionate about this, and this is really, really important. And that's why Paul said, in that verse we just looked at in Ephesians, that's why God gave pastor teachers to the church. Verse 19, look with me in your Bible again. He says, I'm speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations.

By the way, that's a really slight slap in the face. But that's kind of Paul's way of saying, I'm using the human analogy of slavery to make sure that you get my meaning. That's what he's saying there. And, you know, he's kind of almost like apologizing for it because, you know, slavery is something that a lot of people don't really like to talk about or think about. But I've got to tell you something, it's very accurate in terms of the picture that it conveys of our state before we knew Christ and the state that we can choose to go back into.

Slavery provides a very good picture. And so Paul then goes on to exhort us, we're still in verse 19, he says, for just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, that's the thing about sin, it never gets enough. He says, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification. And by the way, don't let the word members mess you up there. It's a little strange.

I wouldn't use the word members if I were talking to you in our day-to-day common vernacular. I would say bodies. And that's what Paul is saying. He's saying, just as you used to present your bodies to sin and you literally would invite sin into your life, now present your bodies to the Lord in obedience and so forth as slaves to righteousness. And so that's what he's kind of saying there.

So he's saying you're now free and so in the same way that you used to give your body to sin, now give your body to Jesus. Have you ever thought about living your life like that? Have you ever thought about

waking up in the morning saying, I'm going to give my body to Jesus today? You know, I'm going to give my mouth to him so that the things I say encourage and build up. I'm going to give my arms to him today.

Instead of doing unrighteousness, they're going to help others, encourage others, help lift the burden that others are dealing with. I'm going to give my legs today to Jesus and I'm going to let him take me where he wants me to go instead of where I want to go. When Paul was in charge and Lord of his own life, small I, he says in the same way you used to give your body to sin, wake up each day and give it to Jesus. Offer it to him. Offer it to him as a sacrifice.

Isn't that a cool thought? Lord, I want to be yours today. I want to do your will today. I'm tired of doing my own thing. Tired of living my own way.

And then this is where Paul gives his final reason for offering yourself to the Lord instead of offering yourself to sin. He says in verse 20, for when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. Now, stop there. That is an entirely awkward sentence, I have to admit, but that's Paul. He's the king of the awkward sentences.

He's also the king of the run-on sentence. He's the king of the interrupted thought. He actually gets the award in several places, but let me just tell you here. What Paul is basically telling us is that submitting to sin and submitting to God are opposite things. They don't have anything to do with the other.

When you submit yourself to God, you're not submitting yourself to sin. And when you submit yourself to sin, you're not submitting yourself to God. That's why he uses the term, when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness, but some freedom. It actually puts you into bondage, right? So that's his way of kind of setting up his point.

The point that he wants to make here in this latter half of Romans 6, and what he's saying to you and me is that there are tangible and measurable consequences to either being a slave to sin or being a slave to God, and you need to know that. It's always good to know the consequences. God wants you to be informed about how living your life is going to turn out. And then there's no big, you know, secret or mystery to it. And so he's basically saying, listen, if you're going to live a life of slavery to sin, there are things you can expect.

And if you're going to live a life of slavery to God, and I know that's a weird thought, I know that. People don't like, you know, to hear that. When I say, you know, we need to be slaves of God, they don't like really hearing it because to most people today, there's no positive connotation to the word. slave or slavery, but Paul is unapologetically using it to describe walking in unreserved obedience to God, and the

reason he's doing that is because he's speaking of it as the ultimate definition of freedom. When Paul says, a slave to God, he means you are so free.

I mean, he's saying that's the way to really, truly be free, to be a slave of God. And it sounds a little bit weird to you and me, but that's really what he's saying. And then this is where he goes on to speak of those consequences, verse 21. He says, but what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you're now ashamed? For the end or result or consequences of those things is death.

And Paul's just reminding us that before we were saved, when we were, you know, living to serve the flesh, to please ourselves and so forth, the end result of that sinful lifestyle is death. And, you know, he says that, but I wonder sometimes if we really believe it. I really do. I, you know, the Bible is really clear about how dangerous it is to live a life of unreserved sin and not really care. And you know, as Christians, we can fall into that same predicament.

It sounds crazy. We ought to be the people who like are going, whoa, Lord, you know, save me from this lifestyle. But I, listen, before we got into a place, and now I'm talking about guys and men and women who are now, they're Christians, I'm talking about believers, okay? Born again believers who are now caught in sin once again. They were set free when they came to Jesus, but they just, they played with sin.

And now they're in slavery again. They're back in the slave quarters. Put the chains back on, put them on themselves. And they're now sitting there in bondage. And I've had people ask me, Pastor Paul, how did this happen?

And you know, you never want to kick somebody when they're down. That's like, you know, coming up to somebody who's just in a car accident, walking up to him and say, do you know what you did wrong? You know, gee, thank you, you know. What I want to say is Jesus set you free, and then he told you that sin leads to bondage, and you just didn't believe it. And the bottom line is, you just didn't fear God.

You didn't fear God. And you got yourself back in to where, you know, now you're literally in that bondage again. You didn't fear God. Wow. And that's so hard.

That is so hard. Now there is freedom for somebody who gets walked back into bondage. There is. They can get free again. It's going to be hard.

It's probably going to be a hard, you know, and I mean, I've seen God set people free instantaneously, but that's extremely rare. Usually he'll let them experience the hard road because it's kind of like, you

know, it took you a long time to get here, and it's probably going to take you a while to get out again, and you're going to have to cry out every day to the Lord, and he'll help you. And it's not like he's punishing you, but he does want you to know and understand you can't play with this stuff. You can't play with this stuff. That's why Jesus, you know, we talked about this last week.

That's why Jesus said, if your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out. Yikes! You know? Does that sound like, you know, playing around with sin? No, it means taking drastic action to make sure it doesn't dominate your life.

Because sin brings death, and I have watched, and it's heartbreaking, but I've watched born-again Christians experience death in sin. And again, I have strong feelings about the whole issue of sin as it relates to losing your salvation, and I don't believe you can sin your way out of the kingdom, okay? But that doesn't mean that as a Christian, the wages of sin is no longer death. I've watched marriages die. I've watched as marriages died because of sin from two born-again believers who just didn't take the word of God seriously.

I've watched dreams die. I've watched job opportunities fade on the vine. I've watched things die. God told you, he told me, the end result of this is going to be a death of some kind. Now, okay, Jesus saved you from eternal death, wonderful, but that doesn't mean there aren't other elements and aspects of dying.

Because there are. And I'm sorry to say it, it's not something people like to hear, you know? But it's a reality. And we've all seen people who have suffered the death of something in their life as born-again Christians because they messed around with sin. Think of it kind of like the analogy of marriage.

And I don't do this to be funny, because the Apostle Paul is actually going to do this in chapter 7. He's going to use marriage as an analogy. And this is what he's going to say, that when you join yourself to sin, it's like you become wedded with sin. And as there is with most marriages, there's offspring, and the offspring is death. And that's actually the analogy he's going to use next chapter.

Stay tuned. And it's a dark picture, but it's meant to be a dark picture. It's meant to rattle our cage, you know? And to get our attention. To say, this is dangerous stuff, and I don't want to go here.

And by the way, if you're hearing this and you're caught in sin, there's some area of sin in your life, the absolute best thing you can do is call out to the Lord and tell Him that you can't get over this thing, that you're not strong enough. That's the best thing you can do. That's what I tell people. Pastor Paul, I've been trying, I've been trying, I've been trying to get free from this area of sin in my life. What do I do?

Get weak. Tell the Lord you can't do it. That's where His power begins to really, truly be made manifest in our lives. Like he said to Paul, my power is made perfect in your weakness. So you want the power of God to be free from sin?

Get weak. Tell the Lord, I can't do this. You can. I choose you. I choose your power to set me free.

But now that you've come to Jesus, he says in verse 22, look with me in your Bible. He says, but now that you've been set free from sin, you've become slaves of God, again, no negative implications to this kind of slavery, because he says it's the fruit that you get from that that leads to sanctification, or as the new King James says, leads to holiness. And I want to remind you of the best description I think that I've ever heard of holiness. Because you know, we think of holiness as perfection or the ultimate purity. But you know that the essence of holiness basically means being other.

You know, when the angels, and we know this, that the angels cry, holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. They're constantly saying this before the throne of God. You know what they're saying? They're saying other, other, other, you Lord God are other, there's none like you. You are holy, you are set apart.

And that's why God says, now that you've come to faith in my son, I want you to be like I am. I want you to be set apart. In other words, I want you to be other. Other than what? The world.

Other than the way the world thinks, the way the world acts, the way the world talks. I want you to be other. And that's what Paul says is the byproduct of being a slave to God. There is this increasing work of the power of God's Holy Spirit to make you other. And I hope that you've noticed that about yourself.

I hope that when you look back on the person you were before you knew Jesus, you can say, I don't really recognize that person anymore. That person doesn't, you know, we bear a slight resemblance in the mirror, but man, are we different. What is that? That's sanctification. That's progressive sanctification, or holiness, or otherness.

God is making you other, other than what you were. You are other. I've always liked that. I felt like that was always a clear definition of what it is to be holy. Lord, I want to live a holy life.

That means I want to live differently than the world around me, you know? The essence of holiness. Paul finishes verse 22 to say, and its end, or result, is eternal life from this otherness that God is working in your life. So slavery to sin leads to ultimate bondage and death. Slavery of God leads to holiness.

The power to live differently in this world and life. And then the final verse of the chapter is really just Paul's summary. It's really interesting. You know, this is our memory verse. Most Christians, you know,

have memorized this because this is often a verse that is used, you know, when you're sharing the four spiritual laws or just sharing the gospel with someone.

We usually quote this, or we'll read it to them. Verse 23, for the wages of sin is death. And that word wages is another way of just saying result. The end product. The end product of sin is death.

And again, even for believers. There can still be a dying. You're, you know, you're not gonna lose your salvation, but things will die. Opportunities will die. Relationships can die because of sin.

We've seen it happen. We know it happens. He says, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus, our Lord. You'll notice that Paul didn't use the word wages twice. He didn't say the wages of sin is death, but the wages of God is eternal life because it's not wages on the second one.

It's a free gift. We receive life freely. We earn death and loss of, you know, life, but we receive freely what God has to give us. And this final verse is really, this is the explanation of all the analogies and all of the explanations that Paul has been giving here in the latter part of chapter six. This is it right here.

So you could underline or highlight this verse in your Bible around your electronic device because this is it. This explains everything Paul's been saying in this latter half of the chapter. The wages of sin is death. The free gift of God is life. There you go.

So choose, choose this day who you're gonna serve. If it seems evil in your sight to follow and be devoted to the Lord God, okay, fine. But just know this, the wages of sin is death. But as for me and my house, we're gonna serve the Lord. Not perfectly.

My expectation on myself is not to live perfectly for Jesus. I've been a pastor for over 40 years and I still don't think of, you know, I mean, like the Apostle Paul, I can say to you, I have not arrived. I've not been made perfect, but this one thing I do, right? Setting aside all of the distractions and all of the challenges, I try my best every day to keep my vision, my sight forward for the prize to which I've been called heavenward in Christ Jesus. And that's all we can do.

Say, Lord, guide my steps, strengthen me, empower me every single day to live for you. I wanna live for you. I'm tired of sin. Help me to be free. Help me to walk with you.

Help me to keep in step with the Spirit. Help me to go along with the law of God that has been written now on my heart through your Spirit to live in conjunction and harmony with what the Spirit wants to do and is urging me to do. You know, when I, so many times people will ask me as a pastor, and I know they do to a lot of pastors, they'll bring a situation up that, you know, needs to be prayed about and needs to be

addressed by the Holy Spirit, but they'll come to other people. They'll come to pastors like me. Pastor, what should I do?

Do you know, I've learned over the years that I shortchange people when I answer their question or try to say, well, if it was me, I would. What am I doing when I say that to people? And some of you who have a gift of wisdom and counseling, you gotta be careful not to give people the answers that belong to the Holy Spirit. And so I've learned to say to people, what's the Holy Spirit telling you? What's he saying to you?

And you know, they'll inevitably come back and say, well, I really believe the Lord's telling me to, da da da da da. I say, well, that's what you ought to do then. But you know, it is such a easy convenience for us to bypass listening to the Holy Spirit. He has literally imprinted his law on our hearts. The Holy Spirit himself in all of his grace and glory lives in your heart and he is an infinite wellspring of knowledge and information if we would just seek his face.

He wants to speak to you. He wants to talk to you. He'll talk to you through the word. He'll talk to you through other people saying things. Good grief, you can read something on a billboard and the Holy Spirit can talk to you.

He's not limited in any way. You know, when I was a young kid, I told you that I came to the Lord when I was about 15 years old and I was interested. I didn't start walking with the Lord for several years after that, but I was interested. You know what really drew me to the Lord? The rock opera Jesus Christ Superstar that I think came out in like 72 or 73, something like that.

That's how old I am. Yeah, the earth's crust was still cooling when I was a kid. But God used that to speak to my life. And you know, back in the 70s, people, you know, the religious establishment was condemning Jesus Christ Superstar and probably for a good reason. Because there was definitely some irreverence that went along with it.

You know what, God used it in my life. The Holy Spirit is not without options, you know, to draw people's hearts, to speak to them, and to say, get to know me. And you know, when I listened to that, I sent away for the double album. You guys remember records? And I put that album on in my bedroom and I listened all the way through.

And you know what it caused me to do? Open my Bible to see if it was true. I heard these songs talking, you know, where Jesus is talking and these other people. And I thought, oh, that's interesting. I'm gonna see if that's true.

So I opened up the Bible and started reading it. Isn't that crazy what God can do? All kinds of ways the Lord can speak to you. Don't shortchange that. Don't go find wisdom from some other place if you haven't sought the face of God.

He wants to speak, amen? Let's pray. Father God, we've seen here in your word today some pretty strong and serious statements about the consequences of living a life to the flesh. And I pray, my Father God, that we would take you seriously. And I ask, Father, that as we come to you humbly and confess our sin, that you would be the strength of our lives to stand in victory over the power of the flesh and to walk in that freedom.

Lord, I pray tonight for those who have been recaptured in a life of sin. And I ask in Jesus' name that you would give them the grace to truly be broken before you, to come to you in all humility and say, Lord, I'm stuck. I need you to set me free once again. And Lord, I know that you're faithful and you'll do it. So I pray, my Father God, that they would cry out to you for all their worth.

And I pray, Father God, that you'd keep us safe, that you'd keep us, Lord God, in the place of walking with the Spirit, keeping in step with the Spirit, because you've written your word on our hearts. And it's a living word now. And I pray, Father God, that we would hear you, that we would respond to you, that we would take heed, and we'd fear the Lord. Keep us safe, Lord God. And bring about that sanctification you talk about in the scriptures, Father.

We want to be changed. We don't want to be the same people we used to be. We want to live for you, and we want to glorify your name. We want people to see Jesus in our lives. And so we pray and ask, God, that you'd keep us safe and help us, we pray, to walk uprightly, to humble ourselves, to live for you.

We thank you, we praise you, we worship you. In the authority of the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and our King, and all God's people said together, amen. Amen.