

LEADER NOTES – Romans 6:11-23 – 4/29/07

Remember **OASIS** this Wednesday!!

6:11- 14 – What a paradox! The Christian is dead and alive at the same time. We once were dead IN sin, but now we are dead TO sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. We are to give no more response to sin than a dead man can give and yet all the potential that redeemed life makes possible is to be directed toward God.

To “count (or reckon) yourself” as dead to sin is not a matter of wishful thinking or self-deception. God wouldn’t command it if it He could bring it into reality. Secondly, this is psychologically sound for the way we think impacts the way we act. Third, we must truly desire to live responsibly in Christ if we are going to diligently pursue the means of transformation that God graciously offers.

To be “under grace” does not sound like wild freedom. It sounds like a new and willing “bondage” to God in Jesus Christ that replaces the mastery of sin in our lives. As in Jesus’ words (Matt. 11:28-30) we choose to be “yoked” to Christ and the result is rest for our souls.

15-18 – Those who are under grace should possess a holiness that exceeds those who are under law. The heart and practice of righteousness should result from the gift of grace more than it would from being constrained by the law. There was a “form” or consistent pattern to the grace that was taught in the early church. Paul apparently had reason for confidence that the Roman church had been taught well with respect to the results of slavery – whether the death and shame that results from sin or the holiness, righteousness and eternal life that results from our free submission to Christ. He also makes it clear that there is no middle ground: we are slaves of whomever we serve – we become what we chase after! The Puritans used to say: “God hasn’t taken away our ability to sin, He gives us the power NOT to sin.”

19 - 23 – It is an undesirable freedom to be liberated from the control of righteousness. Every person – sinner and saint – has an obligation to righteousness and one cannot serve two masters. If our old master (sin) had most of our attention before, then our New Master is worthy of at least equal loyalty and devotion! Our pre-Christian state leaves behind memories that produce shame while serving God produces a harvest of holiness. All kinds of death - physical, eternal, emotional, relational, psychological – result from sin. Eternal and spiritually productive LIFE results from righteousness.

Leaders Notes:

Everett F. Harrison, The Expositor’s Bible commentary, Zondervan Publishing

John Stott, Encountering the Gospel’s Power, Intervarsity Press

D. Stuart Briscoe, The Communicator’s Commentary

Devotional/Group Questions:

Who We Really Are, Romans 1-7, Serendipity House

Romans, Life Change Series, NavPress

Find Freedom, Romans, Bill Hybels, Willow Creek Resources

John Stott, encountering the Gospel’s Power, Intervarsity Press

Romans 6:11-23 Weekend Message: *iLiving*

Group Leader Guide

Important preliminary details:

- Update your **roster** and return a copy to Kirsten@cvcwired.com. – make sure everybody in the group has a way to contact you and vice versa, so that you can share leadership and know who is coming or who needs help/prayer.
- Pray for and encourage your group to grow spiritually and numerically (you may have to become two groups – so begin to develop an apprentice leader).
 - **KNOW** - help people know each other better and more personally, but don't rush this.
 - **CHALLENGE** - give people permission to raise the bar of commitment for each other, without judgment.
 - **ENCOURAGE** - Help each other adopt spiritual habits that will strengthen your faith. Be creative, encourage manageable next steps and consistency, not perfectionism.
- **Don't** feel you need to discuss every question for the week in your Life Team gathering. Cover the ones you consider most important, including some of the application questions. Allow questions and be willing to research the questions you can't answer.
- **Pray** – as a group with simplicity, honesty and no pressure to perform.
- Have fun – laugh and be relaxed as well as disciplined. Plan something social as the group needs it.

Pray each day, before you **Dive In** to God's word, that God the Holy Spirit, will be the teacher of your mind and heart. Pray for the **friends** in your Life Team to be faithful to study and receive God's truth for themselves today.

ICEBREAKERS – Don't feel you have to use them all. Using at least one helps people get comfortable with each other and opens them up to sharing.

- **What chores did you have to do as a kid? How willingly did you do them?**
- **What TV commercial deserves an "Oscar" for making sin look beautiful?**

DAY ONE

"Ya gotta serve somebody!" Bob Dylan (remember him?) didn't write those words first. The Apostle Paul penned them to make it clear that a change in ownership has taken place in the life of the Christian. There is no riding on the fence. These two lives are totally opposed to each other. Jesus portrayed them as the "broad road that leads to destruction and the narrow road that leads to life." You will become whatever you chase after and there is no place of neutrality. Bondage to, and pursuit of, God yields the precious fruit of increasing holiness and results in eternal life – God's gift!

1. Read Romans 6:11 - 23 – In this passage, what different forms of slavery and freedom do you see described here?
2. In what sense is sin no longer our "master" even though we do succumb to it sometimes?

3. In 6:15-23 list all the ways that Paul describes being "under grace." 6:16,18,22

DAY TWO

4. What is the attitude that is to accompany our obedience to our new Master? Vs. 17

5. What benefits do people often think they harvest from self serving behavior?

6. Why is it so impossible to be our own master – enslaved neither to sin nor to God?

DAY THREE

7. What wage is earned by a person enslaved by sin? Vs. 16,21,23

8. What is the "progression" that results from choosing to be a slave to obedience?

- Vs. 16 Obedience leads to _____
- Which leads to (Vs 19) _____
- Which leads to (vs. 22) _____

9. What evidence can you offer to support or refute Paul's claim in 6:21 that sin has no benefits which outweigh its costs? (see Ecclesiastes 5:10,15-17; 11:9 – 12:8)

DAY FOUR

10. How does a person break free from the bondage of sin?

11. Sin non longer has controlling power in the life of the Christian? How have you experienced freedom and transformation in one of these areas of your life since becoming a Christ-follower?

- In the way you care for your physical body
- In the way you treat those who are different than you
- In the way you view money and material things
- In the way you treat family and friends
- In some other area of your life

12. Why are many people afraid to release themselves, their teenage children or other people from rules and penalties? Why is it essential for them that they do release them?

DAY FIVE

14. What do you need to do this week to reclaim your freedom in Christ and break free from bondage to sin?

15. In Christ's death and resurrection we are immediately set free. Yet the process of "becoming" free takes time. What are some of the spiritual habits or disciplines that have helped (or could help) you continue to grow in freedom and be released from slavery to sin?

- **Pray for the Giving Hope Campaign – How will God call you to a new sense of ownership of the vision of your church.**