

Refrigerator Notes 02 July 2017

“We are Slaves to Sin”

Romans 6: 12-23

1. Everyone is a slave in the spiritual sense. We are either slaves to sin, which is our natural state, or we are slaves to Christ.
2. Paul opens his letter to the Romans by referring to himself as a “slave of Jesus Christ” (Romans 1:1) and his letter to Titus by calling himself a “slave of God” (Titus 1:1). James opens his epistle the same way, “James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ” (James 1:1).
3. In John 8:34 Jesus tells the unbelieving Pharisees, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.” He uses the analogy of a slave and his master to make the point that a slave obeys his master because he belongs to him.
4. But, by the power of Christ to overcome the power of sin, “You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness” (Romans 6:18).
5. Once we come to Christ in repentance and receive forgiveness for sin, we are empowered by the Holy Spirit who comes to live within us.
6. It is by the Holy Spirit’s power that we are able to resist sinning and become slaves of righteousness.
7. Romans 6:1–23 goes even further in this idea of a slave and his master. As Christians we aren’t to continue in habitual sin because we died to sin. Romans 6:4 says that since we have been buried and resurrected with Christ, we are now able to walk in that newness of life, unlike the unbeliever who is still a slave to sin. Romans 6:6 goes on to say that, since we know that our old self was crucified with Him so that our body of sin might be done away with, we should no longer be slaves to sin. And Romans 6:11 says that we are to consider ourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. “Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions.”
8. Here’s the rub; either you are a slave to Satan or you are a slave to Christ Jesus – there is no in between!
9. We are commanded by God to not let sin reign in our bodies, obeying its lusts, but instead we are to present ourselves to Him as instruments of righteousness (Romans 6:12–14).
10. We become slaves to the one we obey – Who do you obey?
11. We are to be enslaved to God from whom we receive our gifts of sanctification and eternal life. We do this because the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6:23).
12. The apostle Paul, the author of Romans, goes on to say that he knows how difficult it can be to not live in sin because he struggled with sin, even after he became a follower of Christ.
13. The key to understanding what it means to be slaves of righteousness is that we have first been set free from our slavery to sin. Earlier in the chapter, Paul asks his readers a pointed rhetorical question: “How shall we who died to sin still live in it?” (Romans 6:2).
14. In the moment of salvation, God breaks the power of sin in our lives as part of His work of regeneration (Ezekiel 36:26-27; Romans 6:6-7). But we are also instantaneously justified in God’s sight, free from the guilt and punishment of our sin. In effect, the slate is wiped clean.
15. If you say you have been saved, why do you sin?
16. Thus it becomes a process through which the Spirit refines us, killing off the remnants of our former selves—our sinful habits, tastes, and desires—and replacing them with godly affections

and inclinations. It's the active, ongoing transformation of your heart, mind, and entire self, beginning at the moment of salvation and continuing throughout the remainder of your life.

17. Remember, God hates sin - "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus."
18. When we commit ourselves as followers of Christ to grow and mature in our faith by reading and studying God's Word each day and spending time in prayer with Him, we will find ourselves more and more able to stand in the power of the Holy Spirit and resist sin!