



"We are workers together with Him..." (2 Cor. 6:1)

DEAD TO SIN, ALIVE TO GOD

Tom Wacaster

A key verse in the last half of Romans chapter 6 contains the following words: "Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Rom. 6:13).

The wonderful grace of God had been discussed in the previous chapter. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound! That would raise an interesting question: "Ok, Paul! If grace abounds exceedingly when we sin, then should we go on sinning so that grace can go on abounding?" Paul would address that very question in Romans 16:15, and answer with a strong and bold, "God forbid!"

TWO CHOICES

The apostle gives a universally recognized fact: "Know ye not that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey?" (Rom. 6:16). When men obey a certain master, they are the slaves *to that master*. That same axiom applies when it comes to the spiritual man. If you habitually commit sin, willfully going in that direction, you are, in fact, serving sin. You have thus become the bondservant of sin. One can be servants of (1) sin unto death, or (2) obedience unto righteousness. Reese's illustration gets to the point:

In the early verses of chapter 6, the point was that a master can get slaving out of a slave only until the slave dies; once the slave has died, the master can go on giving orders to the corpse until he is blue in the face, but the corpse will pay no attention nor give any response. ... Now

the thing contemplated is that the slave has become someone else's property. When this happens, the former master has no further authority over the slave, nor can he get any more service out of his former slave. The slave must give all his time and energies to his new owner (Reese, 265).

Consider at least three things relative to our choices. First, it is "either...or." There is no middle ground. Second, we note that Paul places all men into one of two categories. They are either serving sin, or they are being obedient to the Father. Finally, our actions have consequences, thus naturally leading into our next point.

continued on page 7

SIN AND SALVATION: II

Dead to Sin, Alive to God	
<i>Tom Wacaster</i>	1
Jesus: The Sinless Sacrifice	
<i>Cody Westbrook</i>	2
The Joy of Forgiveness	
<i>Logan Summers</i>	3
Soberly, Righteously, Godly	
<i>Tim Ayers</i>	3
Heaven, the Home of the Saved	
<i>Mike Bonner</i>	4
Responding to Heaven's Invitation	
<i>Russell M. Kline</i>	5
To Seek and Save the Lost	
<i>John Grubb</i>	6

Editor

Cody Westbrook



"We are workers together with Him..." (2 Cor. 6:1)

JESUS: THE SINLESS SACRIFICE

Cody Westbrook

Imagine the horror of having to cut the throat of an innocent lamb, watching as its life's blood pours from its body, and knowing that you are the reason it had to die. This is precisely what was required of the Jew's living under the Law of Moses. The Old Testament is filled with the blood of innocent animals that died on the altar of sacrifice. This, of course, was not without cause. God said,

For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul (Lev. 17:11).

The Hebrews writer offers further insight by saying "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). Jehovah wanted His people to understand the seriousness of sin—that it came with a high cost. So, each sacrifice was to be "without blemish" (Lev. 1:3; etc.). A pure, spotless lamb was required to deal with sin under the law, but that arrangement was not intended to be permanent. It was but a shadow of what was to come. Hebrews 10:4 says, "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." The blood of a lamb was powerless to forgive sin. Ultimately, it was the blood of The Lamb that was needed.

Paul wrote,

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief (1 Tim. 1:15).

There is an ocean of meaning in that sentence. Sin is a violation of God's law (1 John. 3:4), and its penalty is death (Rom. 6:23). When we sin we separate ourselves from God (Isa. 59:1-2), and find ourselves in a hopeless position, destined for eternal destruction (Eph. 2:12). We have no ability to remedy the situation. We

stand guilty, and cannot provide a sacrifice powerful enough to remove that guilt. Sin has a high cost!

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (Eph. 2:4-5).

Motivated by His immeasurable love, Jehovah looked down upon us with grace and mercy and provided for us the sacrifice that was needed—Jesus, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John. 1:29).

The tragedy of the death of Christ is seen in the fact that He did not deserve to die—we did. Peter described Him as a lamb "without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:19). Hebrews 4:15 says,

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Hebrews 7:26 describes Jesus as "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." He "offered himself without spot to God" (Heb. 9:14), and, in perhaps the most sobering passage of all we learn, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). Though He did not deserve to die, he chose to do so, so that we may be right with God, through Him.

When we consider the sinless sacrifice of Jesus, it ought to move us at our very core. Undoubtedly, it was a difficult and sorrowful thing for those under Moses' law to sacrifice the innocent life of an animal, but that holds no comparison to the tragedy of sacrificing the spotless Lamb of God. He was innocent. Free from guilt and transgression, yet He stood in my place and suffered in my stead. As J.R. Baxter wrote, "My precious Savior

CHRISTIAN WORKER

(UPS 109-700)

Third-Class Postage Paid at Manchaca, Texas

Published on a Non-Profit basis by the

Southwest church of Christ, 8900 Manchaca Rd., Austin, TX 78748

E-mail: office@swcofc.org

Cody Westbrook ----- Editor

Editorial Address: 8900 Manchaca Rd., Austin, TX 78748

Single Subscriptions ----- \$6.00 per year

In Clubs of five or more ----- \$5.50 per year

Per family on the Congregation Plan ----- \$5.00 yearly

In a bundle to a congregation or individual ----- \$0.75 each

Foreign (Air Mail postage) ----- \$17.00 per year

FREE online subscription at www.swcofc.org

suffered pain and agony, He bore it all that I might live.”
How thankful we should be for Jesus, the sinless sacrifice.

CW

THE JOY OF FORGIVENESS

Logan Summers

Forgiveness is easy to understand, but not so easy to describe. Most people forgive each other when one is wronged. To cease feeling resentment for wrongs and offenses we will use words and phrases such as “don’t worry about it” or “it’s okay.” We are expressing that what was done against us no longer has a negative effect on what we think of the other. However, there is something so completely unique about the forgiveness that God gives through His Son that it adds a depth that can never be fully measured.

Mark 2:1-12 bears out the uniqueness of God’s forgiveness. At this point in Mark’s account, Jesus has already healed a man with an unclean spirit (Mark 1:21-28), Simon’s mother-in-law (Mark 1:29-31), and all in Capernaum who were sick and demon-possessed (Mark. 1:32-34), and continuing on throughout Galilee, He would preach and cast out demons (Mark 1:38-39). This is the kind of information that was being spread throughout all the region around Galilee (Mark 1:28, 45; cf. 2:1). When Jesus notices the faith of these men, to lower their friend down close to Him, a major shift occurs. With the man laying there unable to move, Jesus’ first reaction is a statement that so shocks the crowd that the scribes would call this miracle worker a blasphemer (v. 6). “Son, your sins are forgiven you” (Mark 2:5 NKJV). Jesus then showed that he was not “all talk” by healing the paralytic. The result - all were amazed and glorified God (v. 9-12). Jesus emphasized that which was most important and clearly demonstrated His reason for being on earth (cf. Mark 10:45). That man went away rejoicing, for his ability to walk again for sure, but even more, his sins were forgiven by God (cf. Luke 5:25). Understanding the results and blessings of God’s forgiveness paints for us a clear and beautiful picture of what it really means!

A Restored Relationship. All sin is a failure to love God and often one another (Mark 12:30-31). Isaiah 59:1-2 declares that the sin of God’s people had caused a separation between them and God. From Genesis 3 onward, a broken relationship between God and man has existed. We have all failed and none deserve to be in the presence of the all-holy, perfectly pure, and righteous

God (Rom. 3:23, 6:23). However, the same verses that declare our worthy sentence declares our blessed hope. Paul proclaims, “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace” (Eph. 1:7). Hebrews 10:16-22 declares that sin will be remembered no more, that we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, and draw near. There is a place of quiet rest near to the heart of God because of Jesus, our blest Redeemer!

An Abundant Peace. Regret, disappointment, sleeplessness, anxiety, and depression are so abundant in our society that most ads seem to be about the latest pill to take those feelings away. Instead of repentance the world preaches “acceptance” of who you are, with the idea that you will never and can never change. Accept who you are (no matter how much it ruins your life) and enjoy it! It is no wonder there are so many people looking for peace! But it is not found in a prescription or at the bottom of the bottle. The reality is, sin destroys peace. In fact, there is no peace for the wicked (Isa. 48:22; 57:21), but for the contrite and lowly spirit, the one who mourns because of sin, shall be comforted (Matt. 5:4). Freedom from guilt comes through the forgiveness of God. A rest and a peace that passes understanding is available to all who would look to Him (Phil. 4:7; Matt. 11:28).

A Continuous Assurance. John writing to Christians says, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8). But for the honest, who confess sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (v. 9). The power in the blood does not stop with baptism (v. 7)! For those who are walking in the light, a continuous forgiveness from God occurs.

A continued relationship, a never-ending peace, and a bright hope for the future awaits us because of God’s forgiveness. His is truly unique.

CW

SOBERLY, RIGHTEOUSLY, AND GODLY

Tim Ayers

The Manifestation of God’s Grace, Titus 2:11

In the previous verses, Paul had been discussing how the lifestyle of Christians can make God’s doctrine attractive to the world. Our conduct as Christians can make or break our evangelistic efforts. So to further encourage correct living, the apostle reveals the motivation for the proper Christian behavior—the

grace of God. "Grace" is "unmerited favor." Mankind did nothing at all to be worthy of what God did in providing salvation through Christ Jesus (Rom. 5:8). But because of His love, our Heavenly Father provided that salvation anyway (1 John 4:9-10). The word for "appeared" is the Greek word that gives us "epiphany," which refers to the manifestation of deity. This is clearly a reference to the first coming of Jesus Christ to this world. Later in this same letter Paul connects the kindness, love, mercy and grace of God with the appearance of Jesus, a historical reality (Titus 3:4-7).

Paul also said that this grace has appeared "to all men" which here is the generic term for all people. And this grace brings "salvation," a term that refers to deliverance. One thing we must note from this verse: If the doctrine of salvation by grace alone is true, then all are saved because God's grace has appeared to all bringing salvation. Since we know that not all are saved (Matt. 7:21; et al.), then the doctrine of grace alone is proven false.

The Instruction of God's Grace, Titus 2:12

Here is the connection of the fact of grace with our lives as Christians. According to the apostle, God's grace teaches both negatively and positively, i.e. things we should not do and things we should do. Also, "teaching" is a present participle, which indicates that this is an ongoing process that never ends. The word "denying" means to contradict, reject, refuse or disavow. Christians must learn to say "No" to these things. The two things we are to deny are ungodliness and worldly lusts. "Ungodliness" is irreverence toward God and things holy. Our world today shows an irreverent attitude toward all things holy and good. Christians must fight the influence of the world and instead hallow God's name (Matt. 6:9). Also, we are to deny worldly lusts, which are evil desires connected with the sinful world. Lust refers to desire for the forbidden.

Next Paul tells us that God's grace teaches us how we should live. We cannot simply refrain from evil without filling the void with good. These three adverbs summarize quite well the life of a child of God. First, we are to live soberly, which means sensible, serious and under control. Then we are to live righteously which refers to conforming to God's word. No one is righteous who disobeys God. Finally we are to live godly lives, showing all reverence for God and His way. Paul says we are to live this way "in the present age." No matter what century we live in, we are to live God's way as taught by His grace.

The Expectation of the Blessed Hope, Titus 2:13

Here Paul speaks of the second coming of Jesus, when He appears "a second time, apart from sin, for

salvation" (Heb. 9:28). This is another motivation to live God's way. We will all stand before God in judgment (2 Cor. 5:10-11). We must live in view of the second coming and the judgment. Jesus exhorted us to "watch" (Mark 13:37).

The Intention of God's Redemptive Plan, Titus 2:14

Paul reminds us here that Jesus Christ died in our place. We deserved the punishment but He took it for us. In His sacrifice He loosed us from our sins and purified us so that we could be His special people. Then we are told what kind of people we should be: zealous for good works. We should be seeking out ways to do good every day, always giving God the praise (Matt. 5:16).

CW

HEAVEN, THE HOME OF THE SAVED

Mike Bonner

“Let not your heart be troubled, you believe in God, believe also in Me, in My Father's house are many mansions..." are the words directly from our Lord to His disciples of a prepared place called heaven (John 14:2). It is a place where He would return and receive them unto Himself that they may forever be with Him (John 14:3; 1 Thess. 4:17). Heaven will be a place of eternal joy. It is where our God resides, a place where the faithful who have left this world will be after the Judgment Day (Matt. 25:21; Matt. 6:9; Rev. 21:1-3). It is definitely the home of the Saved.

This prepared place is nothing like the earth we live on now, for this place has righteousness dwelling within it (2 Pet. 3:13). The faithful Christian is looking for this place in which Peter calls a "New Heaven and New Earth" (2 Pet. 3:13). Jesus when speaking to John by vision (Rev. 9:17) showed him a New Heaven and New Earth, for the first heaven and first earth had passed (past tense) away (Rev. 21:1). Peter wrote by inspiration concerning the first heaven and earth that will (future) pass away with a great noise and the elements will (future) melt with fervent heat (2 Pet. 3:10-11). The Christian has the pleasure of looking forward to a home of a different kind and not something refurbished or renovated.

The joy and blessing of heaven is that it has and will have structure we need and desire. Our Lord Jesus Christ when teaching His disciples how to approach God said this, "... *Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven*"

(Matt. 6:10). Unlike earth at times when things are chaotic and unpleasant because of sin and temptation, the heavenly realm will always be a place of joy and blessing. Furthermore, our joy will permeate in heaven because of four blessings, **1. Water of Life 2. No Curse, 3. Tree of Life, 4. No Sin** (Rev. 22:1, 3, 14, 15). Outside of glory will be those who are defiled, corrupt and any other who have practiced sin, therefore the faithful will never have to be concerned with this behavior (Rev. 22:15). A glimpse of this is demonstrated with the true story of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:9ff).

Heaven is something marvelous to look forward to because of the water of life, which is most likely, the Word in our presence at all times. Jesus told that woman at the well about living water (John 4). Jesus told her it would be like a well springing up INTO everlasting life (John 4). This water as described as a fountain that refreshes and keeps the soul alive allegorically (Rev. 21:6; 22:1). In essence, the influence of God will saturate the soul of those who have the pleasure of hearing well done thy good and faithful servant (Matt. 25:21).

Heaven is worthy of looking forward to because of the curse being lifted (Rev. 22:3). Remember when Adam sinned, bringing in death (Rom. 5:12), God cursed the serpent, the woman and the man (Gen. 3:14-19). Jesus became a curse for mankind and hung on a tree for the sin of the world (Deut. 21:22-23; Gal. 3:13; John 1:29; 2 Cor. 5:20-21). Therefore, the faithful in heaven will never have to be concerned with dying, (2 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 20:14). Shouldn't we long for this beautiful home where death and trouble will never infiltrate?

Heaven is a place worth longing for because of the Tree of Life. Adam and Eve could have lived forever partaking of that wonderful Tree, but they forfeited the blessing (Gen. 3). Jesus again as stated before had to hang on a tree for our sin problem (Gal. 3). However, God has given great exhortation and thus granting individuals a RIGHT to the tree of Life, and therefore entering through the gates into the city (Rev. 22:14). What a blessing to have the pleasure of actually seeing God (Rev. 22:4). Being shined upon continually by the Lord God (Rev. 22:5). God will grant us the privilege and honor of continuing our service to Him in the heavenly arena (Rev. 22:3). Are you looking forward to this?

As the church of Christ, let's purify ourselves just as He is pure (1 John 3:1-3). Let us position ourselves worthy of resurrection by departing from iniquity (2 Tim. 2:19). Let us allow the God of peace to sanctify us completely, that is spirit, soul and body (1 Thess.

5:23). Let's keep our heavenly citizenship in mind continually, that when He returns our vile bodies can be conformed to His glorious body (Phil. 3:20-21). Living heavenly will afford us incorruption, in preparation for our HOME in Heaven (1 Cor. 15:50ff).

CW

RESPONDING TO HEAVEN'S INVITATION

Russell M. Kline

Heaven is the place where God and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ live. In the Bible, God is described as sitting on a throne, in Heaven (Rev. 4:2). Jesus is described as standing on the right hand of God (Acts 7:55,56). From Heaven, there is issued an invitation for all of humanity to come there and live with God in eternity (Rev. 21:3; 22:17). But, **how** can we respond to Heaven's invitation, and **why** we should accept it?

Responding to Heaven's invitation is simple enough. If you wish to accept it, then you must simply obey the Gospel (2 Thess. 1:6-9). Obedience is what God requires of everyone who wants to enter into Heaven (Matt. 7:21). The first step in the process of obeying the Gospel of Christ is to **hear** the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). This means that we must study the Bible and listen carefully to its message for humanity (Luke 8:18a). Doing so shall create faith in our hearts, without which we cannot hope to please God (Heb. 11:6). The development of **faith** in our hearts is the second step in the process of obeying the Gospel (John 8:24). The third step in the process is to **repent** of all our past sins (Luke 13:3,5). When we repent, we realize the truth about sin and commit ourselves to changing the course of our lives, so that sin will no longer be part of who we are (2 Cor. 7:10). The fourth step is **confession**. We are not talking about confession of our sins, but rather confession of our faith in Jesus Christ (Rom. 10:9,10). If we are not willing to admit our faith in Him, when we cannot be saved from our sins (Matt. 10:32,33). The fifth step, which puts us into Christ—making us Christians—is **baptism**. The Bible describes baptism as immersion in water (Matt. 3:16; Acts 8:38,39). The Bible further describes baptism as being for the remission of our sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38). According to the Word of God, one is not saved until one has been baptized, according to the teaching of the Scriptures (1 Pet. 3:21)! Once we have done these things, Heaven will be our eternal home, as long as we remain faithful to the Lord for the rest of our lives on Earth (Rev. 2:10).

If you do not wish to accept Heaven's invitation, all that

you have to do is fail to obey God. When it comes to the question of what one must do to be lost, the answer is that there is, quite literally, nothing to it! Romans 6:16 tells us that every human being has a choice to make, while living on Earth: either obey God and be saved from your sins or fail to obey God and be lost in your sins (cf. Rom. 6:23). One does not have to be a prolific, or exceptionally egregious sinner to abide in Hell in eternity. Failure to obey the Gospel is all that it takes (2 Thess. 1:6-9).

But, since we all have a choice in the matter, I would like to strongly suggest that you accept Heaven's invitation, for a few compelling reasons. First of all, every human being should accept Heaven's invitation, because Heaven is such a wonderful place. It defies description, since it is unlike any place on Earth (Rev. 21:4). I have always been persuaded that, if people really understood what Heaven is like, then they would do whatever it takes to make sure that they go there, in eternity!

Second, every human being should accept Heaven's invitation, because Hell is such a terrible place. It also defies description, since it is so unlike any place on Earth (Rev. 20:14,15). I have always been persuaded that, if people really understood what Hell is like, then they would do whatever it takes to make sure that they do not go there, in eternity!

Third, every human being should accept Heaven's invitation, because a life lived in obedience to God is a better life than a life lived in rebellion against God. Jesus calls humanity to live an "abundant" life (John 10:10b). That does not mean that Christians are promised a life that is free from anxiety and suffering, but it does mean that Christians are promised a life that is free from the guilt and regret that goes along with a life that is lived in sin (Gal. 6:7,8). A godly life is a better way of life on Earth!

Finally, every human being should accept Heaven's invitation, because time is running out. None of us know how long we will live on the Earth. If we procrastinate and put off obeying the Lord, we may find out that we waited too long and our last chance to make our hearts right with God has already come and gone (Jas. 4:13-15). Besides that, none of us knows when Jesus shall return to bring the world to its ultimate end (Matt. 24:36). We know that the Lord is coming back, but we are not meant to know when that end will be (Matt. 24:42-44). Therefore, it is up to all of us to obey the Lord while we still have the chance to do so, and not to put it off for some other time.

Dear reader, Heaven's invitation goes out to you, right now! If you wish to accept it, then obey the Gospel plan of salvation, which was described earlier. If you do not wish

to accept it, then do nothing, and continue on your own path through life. But, it is my sincere hope and fervent prayer that you will decide to accept Heaven's invitation today and begin now to live a life that is righteous, as you look forward to the endless bliss that eternity in Heaven promises us all. Remember that time is running out!

CW

TO SEEK AND SAVE THE LOST

John Grubb

There are many passages emphasizing the purpose of Jesus coming to earth, such as Matthew 1:18-25, John 1:29, and Luke 19:10. God knew "before the foundation of the world" that people would need a Savior and He sent His Son to provide that salvation (1 Pet. 1:18-21; Acts 20:28). The reason people need a Savior is because of the entrance of sin into the world (Gen. 2:16-17; 3:1-6). In this article, we will discuss the mission of Christ – to seek and save the lost. We will see the only hope for eternal salvation is in Christ (John 14:6; Heb. 5:8-9).

In order to understand the importance of this salvation, it is needful that we understand the significance of sin. We need to know the meaning, and the consequence of sin. All sin is against God (Gen. 39:1-9). We can sin against ourselves and/or against someone else, but it is always against God. Sin is lawlessness (1 John 3:4), and sin separates us from God (Isa. 59:1-2). Jesus came to save the world from the horror of sin.

Paul explains this fact in the first three chapters of Romans (Rom. 1:16-17; 2:11-12; 3:9,23). In chapter one, he explains why Gentiles are in need of salvation. In chapter two, Paul goes on to tell why Jews need to be saved. Then, in chapter three, he comes to the conclusion that all people need to be saved. Through Adam sin entered the world. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12). As a consequence, every human being is born into the world where sin and death reign.

One tragic consequence of sin is condemnation. The Law of Moses emphasized condemnation. Remission of sins is only possible through Christ (Acts 2:38; Rom. 8:1). Another tragic consequence is hopelessness. The only hope we have is in Christ (Eph. 1:3; Heb. 6:19). The ultimate tragic consequence of sin is death – separation from God (Rom. 6:23; John 5:28-29; 1 Cor.15: 55-58).

God sent Jesus to die for us. His grace has been

provided for all (Titus 2:11). However, we have the responsibility to obey His will. That includes believing the gospel, repenting of our sins, confessing our faith in Christ, and then being baptized into Christ (1 Cor. 15:1-2; Acts 17:30-31; Acts 8:37; Rom. 6:3-4).

Please remember: sin is terrible. It will eventually affect every person. Jesus came to save us from the guilt, practice, and tragic consequences of sin. It is still up to us to decide if we will take advantage of the gift God has provided for us (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 2:11-12). In order to avoid these dangers, we must obey Christ and His Will (Matt. 7:21-23; Heb. 5:8-9; 1 John 1:7-2:3).

CW

Please join us for the
Southwest School of Bible Studies
40th Graduation Weekend
Graduation Banquet
Friday at 7:00 pm
Graduation Sunday
Guest Speaker: Carl McCann

continued from page 1

TWO CONSEQUENCES

Two gates open the way to one of two roads; and each road leads to one or the other of two eternal destinies (Matt. 7:13-14). The two choices represent the two gates, and the two roads are the focus of this our second point. One road is a life of sin; the other a life of righteousness. I see no other conclusion, nor do I see some kind of a back-road that takes the scenic route to hell. "The way of the transgressor is hard" (Pro. 15:13). The road of sin is spiritual death and separation from God. If continued therein the wages will be paid at the end of the journey fitting to the journey itself. If we are obedient we will obtain righteousness, or justification in the sight of God. Moses Lard held the view that "righteousness" here speaks of obedience rather than the "state" of righteousness attained by obedience. But it seems to me that Paul is arguing that righteousness IS attained by obedience. That is the gist of this letter on the very surface of it. But while the English word "righteousness" means "right living," the Greek has the idea

of "equity, justification: righteousness" (Strong, E-Sword). In the context, the contrast is between the *consequence* of sin as compared with that of obedience. The former is "unto" death, the later "unto" righteousness. While Paul had in mind the state of justification, we cannot help but think he never lost sight of the life of righteousness demanded by that state of justification. But please notice carefully that the consequence of either of the choices we make is played out in *this life* as well as what each shall receive at the end of the journey. If we choose to serve sin, then our decisions will reflect our submission to sin. Chose to serve God, and we "love life and see good days" (1 Pet. 3:10).

TWO COSTS

The two costs are expressed in the words "gift" and "wages" (Rom. 6:23). The "gift" of serving righteousness is eternal life through Jesus Christ; the "wages" of sin is death. Thus Paul would draw the chapter to a close by reminding us that our fruit is to be "unto sanctification, and the end eternal life" (vs. 22). The fruit of the Spirit, reflected in the life of the Christian, is unto *sanctification*. It achieves a worthwhile end. And what is the "end"? It is "eternal life." Here is the "end" by which all things should be measured. What is the "later end" of the profligate life? Where does it lead? What is the end of hedonism, alcoholism, materialism, sensualism, secularism, and the whole gamut of "isms"? Do these things better the human life? Do they provide happiness, peace, and joy? And is there any hope in the philosophies of men? The true value of any "way of life" is measured by where it leads those who follow its path.

The alternative to serving righteous is serving sin. In fact, that is the *only* alternative, for if one refuses to serve righteousness he, by default, is serving self, sin and Satan.

CONCLUSION

Someone once noted, "To be in Christ is the source of the Christian's life; to be like Christ is the sum of His excellence; to be with Christ is the fullness of His joy." Can you think of a better way to summarize the message presented in Romans chapter six?

Bibliography and Sources

American Standard Version of the Holy Bible in all references and quotes.

Lard, Moses, Commentary on Paul's Letter To The Romans (Delight, AR: Gospel Light Publishing Company), 1981

Reese, Gareth, A Critical And Exegetical Commentary On Paul's Epistle To The Romans (Moberly, MO: Scripture Exposition Books), 1996.

CW



SOUTHWEST

Southwest School of Bible Studies

FACULTY

Don Walker
director

Clay Bond

Kyle Holt

Wayne Jones

Trent Kennedy

Steven Lloyd

Cody Westbrook

Southwest graduates serve as preachers, authors, campus directors, missionaries, and school leaders on five continents. Whatever your passion, with strong academics and hands-on training, our collegiate program will empower you to serve Christ and His church.

- **Two year full-time program for men and women**
- **Well-respected Bible faculty**
- **Verse-by-verse study of the entire Bible**
- **Training in expository preaching**
- **No tuition**
- **Living expense assistance available**
- **Studies in Biblical languages**



swsbs.edu

*“To know Jesus and...
make Him known”*

Southwest church of Christ
Christian Worker
8900 Manchaca Road
Austin, TX 78748

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Manchaca, Texas
Permit No. 85