

Life in the Spirit

TEACHING NOTES

KEY VERSES

Romans 6:15-23

KEY THEMES

God is our owner
Life in the Spirit

The context

Freedom to choose (Romans 6:15-18)

Legalism

Freedom from rules

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. – Colossians 2:6-7

The walk of faith (1 Corinthians 5:6-7)

 Satan, the Accuser (1 Peter 5:8)

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing! – Galatians 2:20-21

Know, Consider, Surrender**We are all slaves (Romans 6:19-23)****Setting our minds on things above (Colossians 3:1-3)****Becoming Christ like**

Transformed

Conformed

Renewed

Lesson Objective:*To further contrast the choice we have between slavery to sin and being slaves to righteous living*

PERSONAL STUDY**Study 1****Prepare your heart and mind**

Open your time with God by asking Him to help you focus on what He has for you.

Who will you serve?

“But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord.” –Joshua 24:15

Joshua led Israel until the end of his life, just like Moses before him. Through Joshua’s leadership, the Lord brought Israel into the Promised Land. God kept His promise yet again in Joshua’s time. Now at the end of his life, Joshua is challenging Israel. He knows the temptations they will face. There are always temptations to serve other gods. In his final act as a leader, Joshua helps the people of Israel remember how God has been with them. He reminds them how gracious the Lord has been to them. He describes again how God stretched out His hand to save them from slavery in Egypt. And with this history fresh in their minds, Joshua asks them “Who will you serve?”

There is a choice to be made. God created humans to serve Him, but He gives us the choice to do so. Our lives are a reflection of who we choose to serve.

My yoke is easy to bear

Hundreds of years after Joshua, Jesus acknowledges that we still have a choice. He says, *“Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.”* (Matthew 11:28-30) Sin has a heavy yoke and it comes with an unmanageable burden. It promises the world but cannot deliver. Our choice is between sin and the One who delivers on every promise.

**God is our owner****Read Romans 6:15-23**

This passage reinforces the idea that we were made to serve. We were not made to be our own lords. Maybe this is difficult for you to accept. Use the space below to write out why you struggle with this idea.

What does this passage have to say about God's ownership? Write down everything you can find.

God is our owner. This truth affects all of life. Use the space below to reflect on the difference God's lordship over you can make in: your closest relationships, your deepest fears, the difficult situations in your life, your worries about the future, etc.

This week, what is one specific way your life could be different if you wholeheartedly embraced God's lordship over you?

Key verse

Put to memory Romans 6:23.

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Prayer time

Give thanks to the Lord for being gracious to you. Ask Him to help you see clearly when you are being tempted to serve your sinful nature. Ask for His protection from the deceitful promises of sin. Thank Jesus for giving His life for your sins, so that you could live yours for the glory of God.

Study 2

How to grow and be conformed to Christ

In Romans 6, Paul is trying to help us clearly see the truth that we have new life in Christ. If we fail to understand this truth before we apply it, we can drift into various forms of legalism as we move forward towards growth. Just like we did nothing to earn our salvation, we can do nothing to earn our ongoing position with God. We are loved perfectly. There is nothing we can do to make God love us more. And there is nothing we can do to make God love us less. This is an incredible and profound truth! Let's look at the key posture we need to pursue as we walk out our faith and grow to become more like Christ.



Read Romans 6:19-23

Christ purchased our freedom from the sin nature so we could turn away from our natural desires and give ourselves to God. Verse 19 gives us an insight on how we should go about becoming more like God. "...*you must give yourselves to be slaves to righteous living...*" The word that comes to mind is surrender.

Think about a time when you were encouraged and motivated by a message to become more like Christ. What were some of the things that came to mind? Our natural tendency is to roll up our sleeves and try harder. This is where Paul's teaching is counter-intuitive. Yes, we will still be doing things that help us grow like studying God's Word, praying and other spiritual practices. But *how* we go about them is key. Instead of setting out in our own strength, we need to surrender to God's Holy Spirit and ask for His help and guidance as we do these spiritual practices.

As we change our mindset from trying harder to surrendering to the Spirit, it will become easier to live in and experience the love and grace that has always been there for us. The other huge benefit a posture of surrender provides for us is helping to safeguard against pride and self-righteousness. When we realize it is God's Spirit at work in us, not our disciplined efforts, we have a better chance of remaining humble and grateful to God.

Think for a moment about times when you have felt motivated or convicted to get more serious about your spiritual growth. What did you do? What changes did you make in your life? What fueled this effort?

Some of you might be thinking, “So you’re telling me to stop trying and not put effort into growing spiritually.” Not exactly. There needs to be a shift from our total self-reliance to a dependence on the Holy Spirit. We still need to discipline ourselves to set time aside for God. But when we do, let’s ask God to guide us and then surrender to what He has for us. We want to give God more and more control in our life and surrendering to Him is the only way to get there.

When you think about surrendering more to God, what comes to mind? What will make this difficult for you?

None of us likes to give up control in our lives. But wouldn’t that be the very best place we could put ourselves? Into the hands of a God who loves us completely, knows everything, and has the power to transform us into Christlikeness.

Key verse

Continue working to memorize Romans 6:23. Attempt to write it out from memory here.

Prayer time

Thank God for this new life He has given you. Ask Him to teach you how to surrender to the Holy Spirit in all aspects of your life. Be honest with God about what might be holding you back from surrendering to Him. We can trust that wherever the Spirit leads us is meant for our good.

PARENT GUIDE

As the study of Romans 6 wraps up we hope you have uncovered some deep truths for yourself. We also hope you will take the time to work through some of these truths with your family. Here are a few discussion questions to get you started:

What does it mean to be controlled by something?

What are some things you believe have the power to control you?

What does it mean to be a slave? Do you have any examples?

Read Romans 6:15-18 out loud as a family.

Go back and break down these verses for understanding:

Verse 16

Who does this verse say we are and how did we get there? (*It says we are slaves and we got there by what we choose to obey.*) Do you agree or disagree and why?

What are the two things this verse says we can be a slave to? (*Sin & God*)

Be sure to explain the idea that we are all slaves because we all choose to obey something. We either choose to obey our sin nature or we choose to obey God. Lots of people fight this idea because they don't like the label of slave. But if we are honest with ourselves we know it to be true.

What do each of these things lead to and why are they a big deal? (*Sin leads to death and God leads to righteous living.*)

Verses 17-18

What is the hope found in these verses? (*We don't have to be slaves to sin, we can be slaves to God.*)

What do you think it means to "wholeheartedly" follow the teaching you have been given?

How can we make sure that we are being slaves to God and not to our sinful nature? Are there any signs or signals we can watch for to make sure we are walking in the right direction?

How can we be praying and supporting one another through all of this?

Take time to pray together as a family. This is a great opportunity to pray out loud for one another. Just take turns praying simple one-sentence prayers for one another. One-sentence prayers are a great way to help your child practice prayer. They are meant to be simple, not overwhelming.

ADDITIONAL STUDY

Since this is the last Additional Study of Course 5, here is a challenge to work through during the off-season before Romans picks back up in Course 6: spend time reading Romans chapters 7-16. Use the **Observation, Interpretation, Application** method outlined below to help guide your study.

The break between Courses 5 and 6 would also be a great time to go back through previous lessons to review. Whether there are some Personal Studies you never got to that you could go through or a teaching you enjoyed and could benefit from watching again, there are plenty of *Equipping the Church* resources you can take advantage of during the break.



Read Romans 7-16

Observation

(Who? When? Where? Why? What does it say? What do I notice?)

Interpretation

(What are the key themes or truths? What is the writer's intended meaning? What is the context? What questions do I have?)

Application

(How do I apply it? What does this mean for me?)