

Romans 6... 7... 8

DEVOTIONAL STUDIES FROM THE
MEN'S MORNING FELLOWSHIP

Romans 6:21 What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things *is* death.

Romans 6:22 But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I despised taking inventory at my dad's auto parts store. There were literally thousands of part numbers and many more thousands of tiny parts! It was before the era of computers and bar codes. Everything was handwritten on a ledger/filing system of cards. It was a nightmare!

Paul wants you to take an inventory of **fruit**. But it's not the fruit of the Spirit. It's an inventory of the **fruit of the things of which you are now ashamed**.

Testimonies are wonderful. Have you noticed, though, that public testimonies always tend toward the most sensational? If that's your testimony, fine. But it should be shared with an attitude you are **ashamed** of yourself for ever acting that way.

Having said that... Think about **the things of which you are now ashamed**. For me a biggie is the way I hated my wife. It was my hatred for Pam, and my selfishness, that led me to salvation. One day the Lord showed me, in an instant, my heart towards Pam. It was the first time in my life I was ever truly ashamed. It was the first time in my life I understood I was a sinner. It frightened me. I wasn't sure if Hell was a real place but, if it was, I knew I was going there!

Paul was speaking to folks who had converted to Christ later in life. If you converted to Christ later in life you, too, have fruit from your former life to be ashamed of.

Don't dwell on it. Just realize that **the end of those things is death**. Death is a trinity in the Bible:

1. There is physical death – the expiring of our physical bodies.
2. There is spiritual death. Because of Adam and Eve’s sin we are born spiritually dead. We have physical life, and soulish activity; but we are not in relationship to God.
3. If we die physically while yet dead spiritually we will be eternally “dead” – physically & soulishly alive but separated from God in the Lake of Fire.

When you put it like that, why would a person choose to yield their body back to the sin from which they have been delivered? They wouldn’t – or at least they shouldn’t.

Romans 6:22 But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

Again Paul stresses you have **been set free from sin**. It is something that has already been accomplished. You’re not working towards it; it was done for you on the Cross.

Likewise we have **become slaves of God**. Have you ever started a new job that you were super happy and excited about? You really got into it! It should be like that only to the infinite power when you get saved.

You are now a willing **slave of God**. You can’t wait for Him to tell you what to do. He tells you to forgive people you’ve held grudges against for years and you do it. He tells you to remain patient in your troubles and you settle in to them. He tells you to serve others and you roll up your sleeves.

You have real fruit, spiritual fruit, **fruit to holiness**. It means that **holiness** is the **fruit** you produce. **Holiness** is simply being set apart for God’s use. It is the theological counterpart to calling you a slave. You are a slave eager to do His master’s will. His will is for you to be holy – set apart for His use.

Keep with this illustration. What would a slave do? Seems to me we need to first keep ourselves ready. God can’t use us if we are in an unusable state.

Then we need to obey. We're not in a partnership with God.

Faithfulness in the serving is also a good idea. All of that contributes to **holiness** in our everyday walk.

And the end, everlasting life. Your voluntary slavery, which produces holiness, will one day terminate in **everlasting life**.

This stands in contrast with the word **death** in Romans 6:21 and shows its reality. One is just as long in duration as the other; and if the one is limited, the other is. If those who are saved shall be blessed with life forever, those who remain lost will be cursed with death forever.

Everyone will live forever. If it were up to me nonbelievers would be annihilated at death. It's not up to me. God sends no one to Hell; but many will end up there.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The word translated here **wages** describes the pay of the Roman soldier. **Sin** is represented as a king, a mighty monarch, a tyrannical prince; sinners are his subjects and vassals, his servants and soldiers, who fight under him, and for him, and all the wages they must expect from him is **death**.

Death is what **sin** deserves; what will be its proper reward. Not a pain will be inflicted on the sinner which he does not deserve. Not a sinner will die who ought not to die. Sinners even in Hell will be treated just as they deserve to be treated; and there is not to man a more fearful and terrible consideration than this. No man can conceive a more dreadful doom than for himself to be treated forever just as he deserves to be.

Death is the wages of sin, because, like the pay of the soldier, it is just what was threatened. God told Adam and Eve that, in the day they ate of the forbidden fruit, they would die. It was clearly spelled out. Ever since then what Ezekiel said is true: **the soul that sinneth, it**

shall die (Ezekiel18:4). God will not inflict anything more than was warned.

But the gift of God stands in stark contrast to our natural wages. We earn death; we must be given eternal life as a gift.

The night of His crucifixion Jesus pleaded with His Father about the Cross. If there were any other way to accomplish the saving of the human race than by His death He wanted to implement it. Break out Plan B! There was no Plan B; no other way. There must be death for sin. Either I die as my wages; or Jesus dies for me.

Salvation can only be by grace through faith. There are not many ways, each valid; Jesus is the way, the only way.

In Christ Jesus our Lord brings us back to a major theme in Romans six. It's not just through Him that we are saved, although that is true. We are seen by heaven as being in Him. What happened to Him happened to us. He died on the Cross; we died in Him on the Cross. He rose from the dead in newness of life; we have risen in Him with newness of life.

It can be a complicated theological exercise to understand all of this. But it is simply illustrated in terms a child can comprehend. As believers, we have experienced a change of ownership. Sin is no longer my master. God is!

The Christian is to fight against even occasional sin because we need to work for and under our new Master. It isn't appropriate for us to work for our old master.