

Experiencing Freedom from Sin

The passages we are studying today and next week urge us to view the members of our bodies as “instruments” or “tools” that need to be used for the right purposes. As followers of Jesus we are to use the members of our bodies as tools to produce righteousness rather than unrighteousness. Our walks with God were never meant to be merely an internal, mental experience taking place between our ears, but rather something that is expressed through our bodies in beautiful and useful ways. Paul teaches that we really can use our bodies this way, because as we saw last week, we are dead to sin and alive to God in Jesus Christ.

Read Romans 6:12-14

1. What does “*Therefore*” at the start of verse 12 connect back to?
2. What does Paul say we should and should not do with our bodies?

Steve said:

Whether we realize it or not, many, many times each day you and I present the members of our bodies either to sin or to God. In effect, sometime we utilize many different members of our bodies in a prolonged sinful expression: “I am going to dwell upon all the ways I have been wronged by _____. I am going to use my feet and legs to walk over to that person. And then I’m going to use my mind to construct the harshest insults I can imagine. Then I’m going to speak those insults with my mouth and lips and tongue. And then I’m going to use my hands and face and body language to express anger.” Normally we’re not nearly that intentional. But I hope you see an “outburst of anger” involves presenting many different members of our bodies to sin as an instrument/tool that produces unrighteousness.

3. How does this example help you understand what presenting the members of our bodies to sin as instruments of unrighteousness means?

Steve said:

When we obey our bodily lusts, sin reigns in our lives. Paul commands us to not let sin reign in our mortal bodies because ***sin has been dethroned by the death and resurrection of Jesus***. Paul is telling us to engage our wills so that we might experience the freedom won for us by Christ.

4. In what ways do we need to engage our wills in order to walk in freedom?

5. Is the first part of verse 14 a command or a promise? Explain.

Steve said:

Somewhat unexpectedly . . . Paul supports this point [that we have been freed from the mastery of sin] by mentioning that believers are not “under law but under grace.” Why would Paul reintroduce the point that those who follow Jesus no longer live under the demands of the Law? His argument throughout Romans is that both the Law ***and*** grace achieve exactly the opposite of what his opponents claimed. They argued that the Law kept people from sinning whereas grace gave people permission to sin without consequences. Paul wrote that the opposite is true.

6. Why does grace achieve the opposite of what Paul’s opponents thought?

Application Questions:

7. What “lusts” (intense, sinful desires) do I commonly experience (Read Gal. 5:19-20 to help identify)?

8. In response to these lusts, what ways do I commonly “present the members of my body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness”?

9. Am I willing to learn to “present the members of my body to God as instruments of righteousness”?