

(6:19) - *“I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh.”* - Like children, we who have been brought to faith in Christ and are children of God here on earth, sometimes we have to be “talked down to,” not in the sense of condescension but in the way of simplifying truth for our understanding. *“For as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity;”* - While we were in an unregenerate, unbelieving state, we were *“servants to uncleanness”* and submitted our *“members”* (our mental and physical faculties) *“to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity.”* Keep in mind that this describes the *“natural man” (1 Cor. 2:14)* in all of his natural desires and endeavors, religious and irreligious. Those who are sincerely and diligently seeking to *“establish their own righteousness”* before God (*Rom. 10:1-3*) are *“servants of sin” (Rom. 6:20)* and bring forth *“fruit unto death” (Rom. 7:5)*. This is because all that the natural man can produce, even in his best and noblest efforts, is *“iniquity unto iniquity”* and deserves death. Anything that falls short of the perfection of righteousness that can only be found in Christ is *“iniquity.”*

“Even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness” - As true children of God, it stands to reason that we should submit our faculties as *“servants to righteousness unto holiness” (sanctification, set apart by and for God)*. We who are sinners saved by grace stand before God in Christ, based on His righteousness imputed to us. We have been brought by God to believe, trust in, follow, and serve Christ. This separates us from the rest of fallen and unregenerate humanity. This separation was not brought about by our works or our decisions. It was (and is) totally a matter of God’s free and sovereign grace in Christ Jesus. Now, we are called upon to be diligent to conduct ourselves as willing, loving bondslaves of Christ Who is the Lord our Righteousness.

(6:20) - *“For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness”* - It is easy for us to observe people who are openly immoral and irreligious, as judged by most people, and see them as *“servants of sin.”* But what we do not know and will not by nature believe is that this term describes the whole human race as fallen in Adam, born spiritually dead, and as unregenerate and sinful people. It describes those who are moral and religious in the eyes of men but who have not been born again by the Holy Spirit and brought to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. A *“servant [slave] of sin”* is an unbeliever. Paul is telling the Roman Christians that when they were unbelievers, in an unregenerate state, they were *“free from (or “to”) righteousness.”* Since no one can serve two masters (*Matt. 6:24*), while being *“servants of sin”* (in an unregenerate state), we were in no way servants of *“righteousness.”* Many who are *“the servants of sin”* vainly and falsely imagine themselves to be servants of *“righteousness” (cf. Rom. 9:31–10:3)*. But they are *“free from”* (any service to) *“righteousness”* as to their grounds, goals, and thoughts of salvation and a right relationship with God.

(6:21) - *“What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death”* - Unless the Lord brings us to faith in Christ and to be submitted to Him as the Lord our Righteousness, the only *“fruit”* that can come from unbelief is *“fruit unto death” (Rom. 7:5)*, because the only result that can come from such *“fruit”* is *“death.”* Consider, to be a *“servant of sin”* is believing that we can in some way produce or appropriate the righteousness of the law. The fact is that our efforts in this area always fall short of the standard of perfect righteousness required by God. It is all, therefore, iniquity and sin which

deserves death. Only righteousness can bring eternal life. To be a **“servant of righteousness”** is to be a servant of Christ Who is our only righteousness before God.

Consider the phrase, **“those things whereof ye are NOW ashamed.”** This shows that whatever Paul means here, it is things that sinners by nature (unregenerate and in unbelief) are NOT ashamed. It includes things of which the natural man is proud and highly esteems as making him right with God. When God the Holy Spirit brings sinners to faith in Christ, they highly esteem Him and His righteousness as their only ground of salvation. What they held in high esteem before this, they are now ashamed. They are brought by God to repent of them as dead works and works of idolatry (**Luke 16:15; Php. 3:3-9**). This is the language of faith and repentance, both of which are gifts of God (**Matt. 3:7-9; Eph. 2:8-9**).

(6:22) - “But now being made free from sin” - As having been born again by the Spirit and brought to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we are **“NOW”** no longer enslaved to sin. We are **“free from sin,”** NOT that we are no longer sinners, but sin no longer rules and deceives us with the darkness and deception of sin that keeps us from faith in Christ and repentance of dead works. We are free to serve Christ as we are sinners saved by grace and motivated in obedience by grace, love, and gratitude. By God’s grace in Christ, we have **“become servants to God”** - A servant of God is not one who no longer has sin in his life. He is one who looks to and follows God as revealed in Christ by Whose blood our sins are purged and by Whose righteousness imputed to us we are justified before God and given life from God.

Now, as sinners saved by grace, as those who believe and rest in Christ for all righteousness, **“ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”** **“Fruit unto holiness”** describes the fruit of God’s grace in Christ that sets true Christians apart from the unregenerate, unbelieving world. Therefore, this cannot be mere human morality and religious activity and service. It is walking by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ Who produces within us **“fruit unto holiness”** which is **“fruit unto God”** (**Rom. 7:4**), the **“fruit of the Spirit”** (**Gal. 5:22-23**), and the **“peaceable fruit of righteousness”** (**Heb. 12:11**). The assured goal of this **“fruit”** is **“everlasting life”** because it is produced by Christ, the Vine, Who is life and Who gives life to His people (**cf. John 15:1-8**). This **“fruit”** is the fruit of faith in Christ, true repentance, and obedience to Him and His Word motivated by grace, love, and gratitude. This **“fruit”** is NOT for our glory, but for the glory of God (**Rom. 7:4**). This **“fruit”** is NOT mere human morality, sincerity, or religious acts and dedication. It is a believer looking to and resting in Christ as the Author and Finisher of our faith. This **“fruit”** is NOT our righteousness, or any part of our righteousness, by which we are justified before God. Christ is our righteousness before God, and we are the fruit of His obedience unto death. This **“fruit”** is not works by which we earn or merit salvation, rewards, or any of the blessings of God’s grace which are all ours in Christ (**Rom. 8:32; Eph. 1:3**).

(6:23) - “For the wages of sin is death” - Death is what we are able to EARN from God due to our sinfulness. Even as sinners saved by grace, we still have no earning power with God except that which is **“the wages of sin.”** Anything short of perfect righteousness that can only be found in Christ is sin and brings **“death.”** **“But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord”** - Salvation and all blessings of salvation are the free gift of God to sinners based solely upon the merit (earning power) found only in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ imputed to them. Grace cancels every notion of obedience motivated by legal fear of punishment and/or mercenary promises of earned rewards. It is all totally free to sinners based on the righteousness of Christ (**Rom. 5:21; Eph. 2:8-10**).