



Lectionary Bible Study Our Savior Lutheran Church

Lectionary 13 Readings

Genesis 22:1 – 14, Psalm 89:1-4,15-18
Romans 6:12-23, Matthew 10:40-42

[Click here](#) to join Pastor Mark for a Live Zoom conversation each Wednesday at 10am.
Meeting ID: 868 8793 0554
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Or dial in for audio only: 1-301-715-8592

Romans 6:12-23 (NRSV)

Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. ¹³ No longer present your members to sin as instruments^[a] of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

¹⁵ What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! ¹⁶ Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted, ¹⁸ and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. ¹⁹ I am speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification.

²⁰ When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. ²¹ So what advantage did you then get from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death. ²² But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification. The end is eternal life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This passage is preceded by the idea of “dying to sin.” Just a few verses earlier we hear the words spoken to each of us at the sacrament of baptism and during our funeral service:

“DO you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we may too walk in newness of life.”

Romans 6:3-5

Paul’s insistence that the gift of salvation is a free gift led him being open to accusations of encouraging sin. Instead, Paul is showing us both death and the newness of life which is possible for us because of Christ’s resurrection. Which brings us to our passage this week. Paul says that “sin will have no power over you, since you are not under the law but under grace.” (v14).

1. *How do you define sin?*
2. *If sin is defined as “that which separates us from God,” do you think sin still has power?*

Next we are introduced to two slaveries: slaves to sin or slaves to righteousness. The Greek word for slave is δουλος (pronounced doulou, like the English word for doula). Slavery was a reality in the Roman Empire, and Paul is speaking to that cultural context. While each slave may have been in different situations, slavery always meant bondage of the will to the master’s will.

3. *How is our will bound to sin? What is the consequence of sin?*
4. *How is our will bound to Christ? What is the consequence of this?*

In verse 18 Paul says that we are bound to righteousness. Righteousness is one of those big churchy words that we use often but don’t necessarily define. My Bible dictionary defines righteousness as “the state of being in the right or being vindicated...Jesus is the “Righteous One” whose suffering and resurrection bring the unrighteous to God...”

5. *Does this match your definition of righteousness?*
6. *If we have become righteous, in light of the cross and the resurrection, then what does that mean for sinfulness?*
7. *Are we perfectly free from sin? Why or why not?*

This passage concludes by saying that we are now slaves to God. Honestly, every time I read the word “slave” in this passage it made me bristle. I don’t want to think of myself as a slave to anything – neither sin nor righteousness. And yet, daily I pray the words *“Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”* Being a slave to righteousness means to be bound to the will of God. And God’s will always brings life. God’s will is good. God is for us, not against us. Why wouldn’t I want to be bound to God’s will?

8. *Do you struggle with the idea of being bound? Why or why not?*
9. *This passage is full of the imagery of slavery. Is there a different image that you would like to see here? What is gained/lost with a different word?*