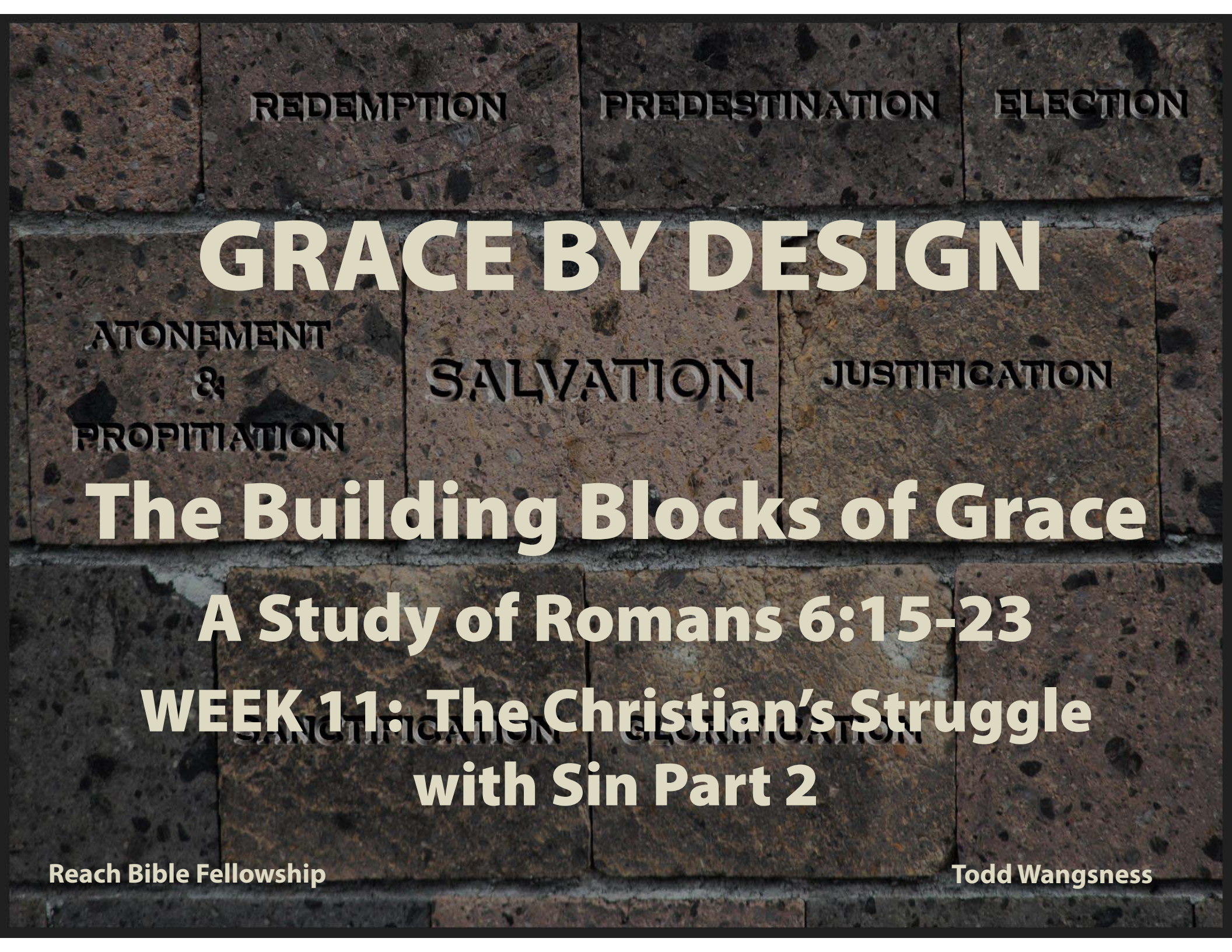


GRACE BY DESIGN

The Building Blocks of Grace

A Study of Romans 6:15-23

WEEK 11: The Christian's Struggle with Sin Part 2

Reach Bible Fellowship

Todd Wangsness

Grace By Design: Study Outline

Week 1:	Romans	Overview of Grace and Salvation
Week 2:	Rom 1:1 – 1:17	Introduction to Romans
Week 3:	Rom 1:18 – 2:16	Justification – Ignorance is not an Excuse
Week 4:	Rom 2:17 – 3:20	Justification – Knowledge isn't Good Enough
Week 5:	Rom. 3:21 – 3:24	Justification – Righteousness of God Revealed 1
Week 6:	Rom. 3:25 – 3:31	Justification – Righteousness of God Revealed 2
Week 7:	Rom. 4:1 – 4:25	Justification – Faith vs the Law
Week 8:	Rom. 5:1 – 5:11	Sanctification – Peace with God 1
Week 9:	Rom. 5:12 – 5:21	Sanctification – Peace with God 2
Week 10:	Rom. 6:1 – 6:14	Sanctification – The Christian's Struggle with Sin 1
Week 11:	**Rom. 6:15 – 6:23**	**Sanctification – The Christian's Struggle with Sin 2**
Week 12:	Rom. 7:1 – 7:25	Sanctification – The Law Can't Save (But the Spirit Can!)
Week 13:	Rom. 8:1 – 8:17	Sanctification – Life in the Spirit
Week 14:	Rom. 8:18 – 8:30	Glorification – From Suffering to Glory
Week 15:	Rom. 8:31 – 8:39	Glorification – God's Everlasting Love
Week 16:	Rom. 9:1 – 9:33	Israel's Rejection and God's Purpose
Week 17:	Rom. 10:1 – 10:13	Israel and the Mystery of the Church 1
Week 18:	Rom. 10:14 – 10:21	Israel and the Mystery of the Church 2
Week 19:	Rom. 11:1 – 11:36	The Salvation of the Jewish people
Week 20:	Rom. 12:1 – 12:2	Living the Transformed Life
Week 21:	Rom. 12:3– 12:8	Gifts of the Spirit
Week 22:	Rom. 12:9– 12:21	The Christian Walk
Week 23:	Rom. 13:1 – 13:14	Love Fulfills the Law
Week 24:	Rom. 14:1 – 14:21	Not Judging the Weak in Faith
Week 25:	Rom. 15:1 – 15:25	Bearing One Another's Burdens
Week 26:	Rom. 16:1 – 16:25	Conclusion and closing remarks

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Notable quotes:

"What else does this craving, and this helplessness, proclaim but that there was once in man a true happiness, of which all that now remains is the empty print and trace? This he tries in vain to fill with everything around him, seeking in things that are not there the help he cannot find in those that are, though none can help, since this infinite abyss can be filled only with an infinite and immutable object; in other words, by God himself."

- **Blaise Pascal**

"You cannot be a slave to two masters—you must serve either sin unto death or righteousness unto life. Oh, what a glorious emancipation is this—to be the servant of the living God, and no longer the drudge of sin and Satan!"

- **Charles Spurgeon**

"The wages of sin is death—not merely as a penalty, but as the inevitable outcome of a life lived in bondage to sin. In contrast, the free gift of God is eternal life, not earned but received through union with Christ Jesus our Lord."

- **F. F. Bruce**

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:15-16 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! 16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?

- **Scripture clearly maintains there is no option for neutrality**
  - **We are either "for God" … or we're against Him and allied with the evil one**
  - ***Mat 12:30 "He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.***

- **When we yield ourselves to the devil, we become death-producing machines**
  - **We can still go to church, give offerings and quote scripture, but still be a death-producing machine**
  - ***2 Pet 2:19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage.***
  - ***Mat 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other …"***

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- **When we yield ourselves to God, we become His bondservants**
  - **This is beautiful and good because He is NOT a tyrant!**
  - **We were created for the purpose of glorifying God**
    - ***Mat 22:37 "… You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and great commandment."***
  - **He – in His Love for us – desires the BEST for every one of His children**
  - **Our words and actions can either produce death or life in others around us**
    - **Are we a death-producing machine or life-producing machine to others through our interactions (words and deeds) with them?**
- **Satan desires to steal, kill and destroy**
  - ***Joh 8:44 "… He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it."***
  - ***Joh 10:10 "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."***

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:17-18 But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. 18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

- **Our slavery to sin is broken by the truth of the gospel, specifically when we "obeyed" that truth (or *form of doctrine*)**
  - ***Jam 1:22-25 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; 24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.***
  - ***Rom 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.***
  - ***Gal 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.***
- **In God's sight, when you were justified, you were freed from the power of sin and you became a servant of righteousness**
  - **Now He says, "Live this way!"**
  - **Living "righteously" requires a conscious choice – moment by moment**

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- We need to keep in mind that our greatest "natural" talent may have nothing to do with our greatest usefulness to God
  - It may be so, but it also may not be so
  - If our natural talent is to be able to speak eloquently to 1000's of people, God may demand that you to die to self and be willing to not speak to 1000's of people!

- It is only after we die to self that we're ready to be alive and useful in God's service

- The bible never suggests that we will ever "die to self" once and for all
  - Our calling is for this present moment ONLY! The calling is not for tomorrow!
  - But life is a succession of moments
  - We are to die to self on a moment-by-moment basis

- Do you want to enjoy (live the abundant) life here and now?
  - Dying to self and living for God is the ONLY way!
  - It is not death for death's sake … it is death for life's sake!

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:19 I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.

- **Holiness is not just a lofty ideal … it is a COMMAND!**
- **We fail as Christian's if we do not (and teach the necessity of) consciously *present* (yield) ourselves to the Holy Spirit**
  - **Our yielding is a command … a privilege … a calling**
  - **It is our JOY and path to the Abundant Life!**
- **We are to "examine" ourselves … Do our words/actions show that we are truly saved?**
  - *2 Cor 13:5 Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.*
  - *1 Joh 2:3-6 Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. 6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.*

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:20-21 ***For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. 21 What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.***

- **Before we came to faith in Christ, we were free from all righteousness**
  - **The end result of this "freedom" is absolute death**
    - ***Jam 1:14-15 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.***

- **Before you were saved, righteousness had NO CLAIM upon you at all!**
  - **We may have had comparative 'goodnesses', but no true righteousness**
    - ***Isa 64:6 But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away.***
    - ***Gal 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.***

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:22-23 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. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- **In order to bear fruit to 'holiness', we must ABIDE in the vine of Jesus Christ**
  - *Joh 15:5-6 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered …"*
  - *Joh 8:32-24 Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. 33 "And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. 34 "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.*
- **After we are justified … we are totally free from sin … if we CHOOSE to be!**
  - *Heb 12:1 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us*
  - **Our guilt is gone**
  - **We have become slaves to God**
  - **Our "fruit" now is holiness and EVERLASTING LIFE!**
  - *Gal 6:8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.*

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- **The loader below can lift 400 tons of ore!**
- **There is NO way – in our own strength – we can lift that heavy load!**
- **However, if we crawl up into the cab and flip a tiny lever, its powerful 4,023 horsepower MTU 20V4000 C23 engine supplies the power to lift it with ease!**
- **Then the Law of Fluid Dynamics supersedes the Law of Gravity and lifts the bucket!**
- **Likewise, we cannot in our own strength battle the temptation to sin**
- **But the Holy Spirit within us can "do all things through Christ who strengthens me!**
- **But – WE MUST CHOOSE TO FLIP THAT LEVER!**
- **Then the Law of the Spirit of Life supersedes the Law of Sin and Death and gives us deliverance!**



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Class of Mankind	Characteristic
From Creation Until Adam's Fall	Perfect – But able to sin
From the Fall to the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit	Imperfect – And not able to not sin
From Indwelling of the Holy Spirit to Our Glorification	Imperfect – But able to not sin
After Our Glorification into Eternity	Perfect – And not able to sin

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- **OUR DESTINY! The retirement benefits are out of this world!**

- ***1 Pet 1:3-9***

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, 8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.

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- **Does the following passage sound like the words of a tyrant?**
  - **This is Jesus' high-priestly prayer that He prayed just before He was betrayed and crucified**
  - **An intimate look at the heart of Jesus!**

- ***Joh 17:20-26***

20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: 23 I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

24 "Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. 25 O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. 26 And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

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<u>Questions to ponder …</u>

- **Let's discuss the neutrality issue … Do you agree with the concept that we are enslaved either to evil or righteousness with no option for the middle ground of neutrality?**
  - **Common perception: "I am a pretty good person … I don't sleep around. I don't steal things. I haven't killed anybody. How can you say that I'm enslaved to evil?"**
  - **What does it mean to be a slave of God?**
    - **How should this affect our behavior?**
    - **Rhetorical question: If you were to appear in court to be accused of being a Christian, would your words and deeds provide enough evidence to convict you?**
  - **What observations can we make about Rev 20:7-9 and mankind's propensity to rebel?**
- **How do we reconcile the idea of being enslaved to God with *"If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed."* (Joh 8:34)?**
- **Do we – as Christians – need to embrace "delayed gratification"?**
  - **If we do, does this make us "joyful"?**
  - **Does being joyful equate to being happy?**
- **"Be holy as I am holy" (1 Pet 1:16) - What does this mean? How do we do it?**