Sermon Highlights

Slaves to Righteousness: The Gift of Freedom in Christ

Summary:

Drawing from Romans 6:15-23, this sermon explores the tension between slavery to sin and slavery to righteousness, using the backdrop of Roman society to illuminate the spiritual condition of every human being. Pastor Bruce Gordon argues that every person is under the control of either sin or Christ, and that the process of yielding oneself to either leads progressively deeper into that master's domain. The sermon emphasizes that grace does not abolish the moral law of God but rather frees believers from the burden of the law while calling them to holy living. It concludes with a powerful contrast between the wages of sin, which is death, and the charisma of God, which is eternal life in Christ Jesus, a gift unearned and undeserved, given freely to all who trust in the finished work of Christ.

Key Points:

- Every person is a slave to either sin or Christ; there is no neutral ground, regardless of one's sense of personal freedom

- Grace does not abolish God's moral law; believers are not law keepers under burden, but neither should they be law breakers

- Slavery to sin or to righteousness is a gradual process of yielding oneself, not an immediate transformation in either direction

- The believer is called to present his members as instruments of righteousness, pursuing holiness in speech, dress, conduct, and daily habits

- Sound doctrine matters; the church must return to the Bible as the absolute authority for faith and practice rather than accommodating a culture of doctrinal compromise

- How a believer lives in this life has real and lasting consequences for eternity; this life is not merely a parenthesis before heaven

- The wages of sin is death, something earned and deserved, while eternal life is the charisma of God, a gift given freely and not to be doubted or treated as temporary

- The gift of eternal life, once received through faith in Christ, is secure and should be cherished rather than constantly questioned

Scripture Reference:

- Romans 6:15-23, which addresses the contrast between slavery to sin leading to death and slavery to righteousness leading to holiness and eternal life

Stories:

- Pastor Bruce Gordon shared a personal remembrance of his father on what would have been his 97th birthday, noting the hope of reunion that believers share

- An illustration of drug addiction was used to explain how yielding oneself to sin is a gradual process, each small step drawing a person deeper into bondage until the sin becomes a controlling master

- A practical illustration about developing a Bible reading habit was offered, encouraging believers to start small with the book of Proverbs and build gradually, comparing the hunger for Scripture to the physical hunger felt when breakfast is skipped

- A reference was made to holiness churches of an earlier generation, using their distinctive dress as a cultural illustration of the pursuit of holiness, while noting that outward dress alone does not produce inward holiness

- A viral video of a CEO caught in an inappropriate moment at a ball game was mentioned as a contemporary example of how sin produces shame

- The Roman soldier's wages and the Caesar's charisma gift were used to illustrate the contrast between death as something earned by sin and eternal life as an unearned, freely given gift from God