



For Further Study

Read and meditate on the passage below:

²⁰ When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. ²¹ What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! ²² But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:20-23)

This passage comes from a letter that Paul wrote to the believers in the capitol of the Roman Empire. He speaks of being enslaved by sinful practices that harm God, ourselves and others. Conversely, being liberated from this kind of life redirects us to do what is right (righteousness), good, and helpful. In hindsight, we can look back at the harm that we caused with regret because we know that these things were hurtful (result in death or deadly and destructive outcomes) to ourselves and others.

Paul says in verse 22 that our liberation from causing harm leads us to be “slaves to God,” but this is an entirely different type of servitude. God is good (tov) and wants us to experience the very best life. Holiness then is not moral perfection but rather living in such a way that we experience and share God’s goodness. The benefit that we reap is a joyous, purposeful and meaningful life that centers on the eternal values of a God who exists beyond our limits of time and space.

In sum, the outcome (wages) of sin is a harm filled life that leads us down a path towards self-destruction (death) but the gift we experience from a loving and gracious God is an eternally-minded life that is fruitful and joy-filled as we walk in relationship with Jesus, the Messiah (Christ) and our Master (Lord).

PRACTICE:
Spend time studying
slavery and
comparing it to sin.

