

Walking in Holiness (Romans 6:15–23 David Geldart October 12, 2025)

1. Welcome & Announcements – DC

- a. Get Connected
 - i. Connect Card
 - ii. Bonfire Concert at Wainwrights
 - iii. Chili Cookoff Next Sun
- b. Give
 - i. Fundraiser Update
 - ii. How to Give online & in person

[1] As you know we're studying Walking in Victory through the book of Romans

Today we're in Romans 6:15–23:

- [2] ¹⁵ What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means! ¹⁶ Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. ¹⁸ You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. ¹⁹ I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations.

[3] Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness. 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.

• Pray

[4] I. Introduction

- Have you ever noticed how every company wants your loyalty?
 - Your favorite coffee shop has a 'rewards' program,
 - Your phone chirps incessantly at you trying to get you to keep looking
 - and your calendar tells you when to breathe.
 - Every day, someone—or something—is trying to be your master.
- Every day, we all serve something. Every thought, every action, every habit—each one effectively bows to a master.

- Paul says in plainly Romans 6: we either serve sin, which leads to shame and death, or God, which leads to holiness and life.
- **For a lot of my life, I've served the master of control** – looking to try to keep my world together by being good enough, trying to keep others liking me, thinking I was capable, strong, respectable. If I could be in control, I could be accepted, loved, and safe.
 - And it only led to more insecurity, more sin, more shame.
- Paul uses an everyday example: *bond-slavery*.
 - This is **not** American chattel slavery but the ancient concept of **voluntary servitude**—where one offers loyalty to a master. One that would have been familiar 2000 yrs ago!
 - We Christians *used to be enslaved* to sin—its wages were shame and death.
 - [5] V22→ But through Jesus, we have been *set free* to choose a new master: obedience to God, which leads to righteousness, holiness, and eternal life.
- Believers are now free to choose whom they will serve—but not free to choose the consequences, the “payouts” the masters give:
 - Sin always pays shame and death.
 - God always gives goodness and eternal life.
 - Eternal life: *not just “going to heaven” later, but living the full life of godliness starting now and continuing forever!*
 - *Even through death*
- [6] So the effect of obedience to God—the benefit of serving this new Master— is holiness

II. What Is Holiness?

- Misconceptions:
 - “Holier-than-thou,” hypocrisy, judgmentalism.
 - Karen!
 - Celebrity preachers wearing \$2k tennis shoes
 - Or the Hollywood version: Charlton Heston in The 10 Commandments
 - A Holy God of thunder, fire, and stone tablets.
 - A cosmic divine voice booming. Earthquakes.
 - Rocks splitting and falling.
 - Totally OTHER
 - NOT SAFE! – It will unmake us if we get too close!
- Biblical holiness begins with **otherness**—God’s nature as holy, other, set apart.
 - But when God calls *us* to be holy, it means something more relational.
- [7] **Biblical definition of Holiness:** *To be holy is to be set apart for a special purpose.*
 - That purpose leads to *righteous living* and *godly character*—to become like Christ.

- John Wesley - the 1700s founder of what our Wesleyan Denomination stems from -- taught that holiness is the foundational call of Christian life.
 - We are set apart by God for His purpose—to image Him into the world, to be His hands and feet, and to bring blessing and the gospel to others.
 - Everything boils down to this divine call: “Be holy, for I am holy.”
 - [8] God originally calls the Israelites in Leviticus 19:2
 - And this original call is repeated by The Apostle Peter to Christians in 1 Peter 1:16!
 - God still calls his people to Be Holy, because He is Holy.
- [9] Holiness points us to **purpose** and **purity**, and both are expressed through **love**—love for God and love for others.
 - Biblical Holiness isn’t about withdrawing from the world, but engaging it with profound Love.
- A truly holy person is not primarily known for what they avoid, but for how they love.
 - **What are Christians primarily known for in our culture?**
- **Paul says before Christ: you were enslaved to sin, shame, and death.**
- After Christ: liberated to walk in holiness.
 - *Because we have been freed by Jesus’ death and resurrection, we no longer walk that hellish path.*
- Holiness leads to eternal life—the full life with God that begins now and extends forever.
- **Transition: But if holiness is freedom, why does it still feel like a fight?**
 - Why does temptation sometimes feel stronger than the Spirit’s power?
- [10] That’s where sanctification (**God’s transforming grace that makes us holy**) comes in.

IV. Entire and Progressive Sanctification

- We are *holy in Christ*—set apart by His choosing.
 - “Saints” literally means *holy ones*.
 - *We are saints – even though we still struggle with sin! -- That’s a key part of the Gospel!*
- [11] So, Holiness ≠ moral perfection or complete strength or knowledge
 - **It’s about the *orientation of the heart*—our intentions – a posture of love and surrender**
- Wesley taught sanctification as both an **event** and a **process** (we see both in scripture):
 1. [12] **Entire (or instantaneous) sanctification:**
 - A moment of full surrender, when a believer consecrates their life wholly to God, as best and fully as they’re consciously aware.

- I think ENTIRE might perhaps be an unhelpful term for us in this regard:
- Not sinless perfection, but *perfect love*: a conscious decision to say “yes” to God in all known areas.
 - The ENTIRE is the entirety of our conscious selves (which is certainly yet incomplete!)

2. **Progressive sanctification:**

- Ongoing growth in Christlikeness over a lifetime.
- Small steps forward in grace; daily transformation through habits, trials, and obedience.
- Both are biblical and experiential.
 - Some moments are *decisive breakthroughs*; the rest is a slow and gradual walk down the path of sanctification (growth in holiness).
- Paul’s words support both:
 - [13] “Obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has claimed your allegiance.”*
 - *The pattern of teaching they’re now following is THE GOSPEL*
 - *True holiness is about a heart orientation to obey and follow wherever Christ leads*

V. Holiness in the Real World – Addiction, Anxiety, and Strongholds

- But, if you’re like me, this raises an uncomfortable yet critical question in your heart
 - **[14] What about addictions, and things like anxiety & depression?**
 - How can someone be holy and still battle addictions?
 - What of the alcoholic, the porn addict, the workaholic?
 - How can a believer enslaved by anxiety or depression be truly free?
- The reality:
 - Some struggles don’t vanish overnight, apart from rare miracles.
 - Most require prolonged journey of healing.
- **Addiction** isn’t just a “bad habit.” Though it started as sinful choices, it eventually becomes something beyond our control. Something that enslaves us.
- **Truly, addiction is a rewired brain and body.**
 - The will is weakened, and the pathways of pleasure and pain are reshaped
 - Eventually past the point of conscious choice.
 - The fight-or-flight limbic unconscious part of our brain hijacks our responses and no matter what our prefrontal cortex – the choosing part of our brain – chooses, the limbic system overwhelms and wins every time.
 - **Science confirms:** the brains of addicts literally change structure.
 - Recovery is not mere willpower—it’s the *Spirit’s power guiding rewiring and renewal*.

- ***Still the power of God exercised by faith***
- **Anxiety** isn't simply lack of faith; often it's a nervous system stuck in alarm.
 - And contrary to what you may have been told, **Depression** isn't something to "repent of"; it's a real wound needing healing.
- **Romans 6 still stands true for the Believer:**
 - *"Sin shall no longer have dominion over you."*
 - The old master has been overthrown, but the damage remains to be healed.
- **Illustration: Freed, Wounded Slave**
 - A freed slave still carries scars from abuse.
 - Often carries significant injuries and trauma that aren't healed when the shackles are broken.
 - The freedom is real—but the healing takes time and significant work.
- ***The science of Neuroplasticity show us that we know minds can be rewired.***
 - The Spirit partners with us in this holy process—grace working through therapy, accountability, prayer, and community.
- This is the **path of holiness in the real world**: God's grace sets us free instantly from sin and death, and His Spirit retrains us gradually, empowering miraculous change in Christlikeness over time.
 - Science is confirming to us what God's known from the beginning: the battleground of the holy life begins in the mind!
 - **[15] Romans 12:2 – "Be transformed by the renewing of your mind."**
 - In fact, MRI scans show us that we really can choose to do this.
 - Through conscious choices about what we'll think and do, we can literally rewire our brains. Change what was previously hardwired.
 - This is what it looks like to walk the path of Holiness
- **Entire sanctification and progressive sanctification are two sides of the same grace**
 - instant big events of cleansing, lifelong training and healing.
- **[16] It's not a lack of faith to enter recovery; it's an exercise of faith to walk it out.**
 - **With little miracles every day!**

VI. Walking the Path of Renewal

- The Spirit Himself empowers every step of recovery and renewal.
 - **[17] Counseling, community, prayer, recovery groups—these are *means of God's grace*.**
- Holiness is not instant escape from brokenness; it is Christ's presence within it.
 - And his POWER to continue to take the next step down the path of healing.
- Freedom isn't the absence of struggle—it's the presence of a new Master.

- Every act of obedience, confession, and perseverance is holiness lived out.
- The Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead is renewing your mind, body, and desires—one faithful step at a time.
- **Illustration: The Forest Path**
 - Years of walking the same trail through sin and fear carve deep ruts.
 - One can imagine the ruts eventually getting so deep, we can't scale the sides!
 - But Christ offers us the ability to head a different direction
 - Walking a new path feels awkward at first.
 - Each time you choose righteousness, the new path grows clearer, and the old path fades.
 - MRI scans even show this process—*grace rewiring the brain!*
 - Holiness looks like that: walking with the Spirit until the new way becomes your natural walk.

[18] VII. Responding to the Call – WALKING IN HOLINESS

- Some of you here are not free to walk in holiness, because you're still chained to your Master: Death and Sin
 - Come to Jesus, don't wait
 - Even with the chains still on.
 - Don't wait to get free or clean up yourself first
 - Call out to Jesus, and trust him to set you free
- Some here are freed, yet still walk as if the chains are on.
- Others are finding their footing on the new path.
 - Romans 6's call is the same for both: *"Present yourselves to God."*
 - Let His Spirit finish what He's begun.
- The effect of obedience to Jesus—your new Master—is holiness.
 - Pure simple.
 - Sure as the sun!
 - Holiness is both your calling and your daily practice.
- Big moments of surrender and slow, steady growth both belong.
 - **While addictions and struggles with anxiety and depression have physiological roots,**
 - **the hope and call of holiness means that *no sin or wound is final***
 - The Spirit's renewal can reach even the body's habits.
 - No one is too far gone.
 - There's no sin, addiction, or stronghold that can withstand the awesome power of Christ forever.

- Even when you can't imagine or see the way.
- Even when hope seems lost.
- **And I know this to be true, not only because the Bible teaches it, but because I've lived it.**
 - This is my story
 - For so long I tried to overcome my own addictions by myself
 - And it never really worked.
 - Like Paul talks about in the next chapter 7, the good I decide to do, I find that I cannot do, and the bad I decide not to do, I find myself doing.
 - So that even when I desire to do good, I find myself unable to follow through
 - I remember distinctly in high school sitting in a youth service, having been a follower of Jesus since my childhood, and yet thinking:
 - **I'll never be free. And so I'll always be two people:**
 - The me that others see, that I show them, who is a leader and looks like his life is together
 - And the secret me that's hopelessly bound up in addiction.
 - In depression and anxiety
 - But by God's great grace, I'm free.
 - By God's grace and power
 - And with the help of other believers who I finally let in, let them see the full me, and let them walk with me.
 - And now my mind is renewed, brain rewired
 - There were some big stake in the ground moments, and a long gradual process of sanctification.
 - And though there's certainly more to come, I can say with confidence
 - I'm not And I'm not where I used to be.
 - The shame is gone.
 - And I'm freed to actually obey God and his way like never before.

VIII. Holiness That Looks Like Jesus

- That can be your story too, if you want it.
- But you won't find healing, hope, freedom, righteousness, or eternal life apart from the Way of Jesus alone
- Cultural antithesis:
 - The world preaches self-actualization; holiness preaches self-surrender.
 - Our culture says "follow your truth"; holiness says "follow the Truth."

- The world prizes comfort that ultimately rings hollow; holiness invites transformation—even pain—for love’s sake.
- Today, hear afresh the orienting purpose of your life from your Creator: *Be holy as I am holy.*
 - Love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.
 - Love your neighbor as yourself.
- As the Bible and John Wesley both show clearly: True holiness overflows in love.
 - It’s not a stale, joyless moralism that judges others. And pulls back.
 - **It’s Christlikeness—love embodied.**
 - That moves toward brokenness with courageous engagement
- **[19] Jesus is our model of holiness:**
 - Deeply connected with the Father.
 - Committed to righteousness and truth.
 - Yet beloved by sinners, gracious and kind, unafraid to enter messy spaces.
 - Secure in His identity and holiness, He lived a victorious life even amid suffering.
 - And poured out his life in the loving service of others
 - Like you. And me.
- Holiness shines—it stands out.
 - Some recoil from the light – that will always be true, but others are drawn to it like moths to a flame.
 - The holy life both convicts and attracts.
 - It burns us up, only to change and resurrect us into something brand new
 - Holy People, finally made free. Finally become their true selves.
- Our world desperately needs holy people again—people of integrity, grace, courage, and love.
 - Who walk in holiness like Jesus did
 - The people of Saint George, MHK, Wamego desperately need you to walk in holiness
 - So desperately need holy feet to walk down their street.

IX. Conclusion – The Call to Step Into Freedom

- God’s invitation today is simple and consistent: *“Walk in holiness.”*
- Holiness is not about being better than others—it’s about being wholly devoted to God.
- It’s the life of freedom, purpose, and love for which you were made.
- **So what’s your next step in response to this sermon?**
 - **Maybe to surrender fully to Jesus as Lord for the first time.**
 - To take the first step of walking in Holiness.
 - **Maybe to recommit yourself to walking the path of recovery.**
 - You need to follow Jesus into your addiction, depression, anxiety

- And let him begin healing, in the deep places where the old wound still bleeds.
- Open up to another trusted brother or sister in Christ, and let them walk with you
- Get connected
 - The opposite of addiction isn't sobriety, its connection!
- Talk to me or the person who brought you
 - Take that step to call a counselor (I've got suggestions)
- **[20] CONQUER SERIES – 10 week equipping opportunity for men on understanding the nature of sexual addiction and how to conquer it.**
 - **Not only for those who struggle** with unwanted behaviors themselves,
 - **But for all men who want to understand** the reality of addiction from both a biblical and neurological perspective, and what it looks like to walk in recovery and freedom in a way that actually works.
 - **So they can help others.**
 - Encourage you to come.
 - Both men and women struggle with this, but men have to go first!
 - **Tuesday evenings, here at Tru. 7-830pm. Highschool on up.**
 - **contact me to sign up:** david.geldart@tru.church or 913-484-6084.
- **Maybe to offer your body, your habits, your mind anew to righteousness.**
 - Means of grace
 - Both **to delight in God & to overflow in loving engagement** with your neighbors, coworkers, fellow students, friends, family
- You've been set free from sin by Jesus Himself.
 - The door is open. The chains are broken.
 - Step out into the freedom you've already been given.
 - Present yourself to God—and let His Spirit finish what He's begun.
- Friends, the world doesn't need louder Christians.
 - It needs holier ones—people whose love, righteousness, and peace bear witness to the Holy One living in them.
 - That's what it means to walk in holiness.
 - And our world needs it!
- So the call today remains the same: from Ancient Israelites to Midwest Kansans:
 - **Walk in Holiness – and see what God does!**
- **Pray**
- **[21] Communion**
 - Jesus has set us free because of his death and resurrection
 - And we get to share in that together – so lets celebrate holy communion together!



WALKING IN **V**ICTORY
THROUGH ROMANS

ROMANS 6:15-23

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- **Means of grace** = counseling, community, prayer, recovery groups...



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- **What's your next step in response to this sermon?**
- **CONQUER SERIES for Men**
 - Tuesdays 7-8:30pm, starting Oct 21 at Tru, 10 Weeks



A watercolor illustration showing the lower legs and feet of several people walking. The style is artistic and painterly, with visible brushstrokes and a soft, blended color palette. The people are wearing various styles of shoes: white sneakers, light-colored sneakers, purple sneakers, dark blue sneakers, and brown leather shoes. The background is a mix of warm and cool tones, suggesting an outdoor setting. The text is overlaid on the bottom half of the image.

WALKING IN VICTORY
THROUGH ROMANS
COMMUNION