

## THOUGHTS FROM CHAPLAIN RICHARD

I've been working at a men's rehab a few days a week, meeting all sorts of men with 'life controlling issues' who've come in desperate for help. I find it humorous that those of us, who are not in rehab, often think that we don't have life controlling issues!

God says in the bible that we are a slave to whatever has control over us 2 Peter 2:19, and in Romans 6:16 *'Don't you realise that you become the slave of whatever you choose to obey?'*

Here's the whole passage:

Romans 6:15-23

### **Slaves to righteousness**

*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. 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.*

The heading for the passage is 'Slaves to righteousness', but sometimes I wonder about whether I am really obeying the Lord or just doing whatever I think is ok for me at the time.

Tim Keller told his New York congregation that many of them like to think of Jesus as Lord, but really just use him as a consultant. They get his opinion on something, think it over, and then decide to do what they want - this sounded eerily familiar to me.

In Matthew 7/21 Jesus says:

*'Not everyone who says to me 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven'*

God's will is for us to believe in the One he has sent - Jesus. This is neither irrational nor unreasonable. Jesus is our creator and the only source of life, both here and eternally. His salvation is a free gift - we don't have to 'earn our way in!' (unlike all other religions).

'The wages of sin is death, but the GIFT of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord' Let's receive His gift anew today, His love towards us is 'new every morning'

Bless you all,  
Your friend  
Richard