

## Lent Devotional March 30, 2019

### SCRIPTURE

#### Romans 6:12-23

<sup>12</sup>Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions. <sup>13</sup>No longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness. <sup>14</sup>For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. <sup>15</sup>What then? Should we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! <sup>16</sup>Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? <sup>17</sup>But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted, <sup>18</sup>and that you, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. <sup>19</sup>I am speaking in human terms because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness for sanctification. <sup>20</sup>When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. <sup>21</sup>So what advantage did you then get from the things of which you now are ashamed? The end of those things is death. <sup>22</sup>But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification. The end is eternal life. <sup>23</sup>For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### DEVOTIONAL

#### Victoria (Tor) Voller, M.Div. '18 / Calvert Memorial Presbyterian Church, Etna, Pa.

To this day I remember that, during my growing-up years, the price for receiving a favor from any one of my sisters was to be that sister's "slave for a week." This price meant that I was obligated to do anything asked of me; at the same time, the "favor" I received meant that, in some ways, I could take on elements of being the "master." I usually made this bargain with the sister who hated to clean—something I too despised but, for the right favor, was willing to obligate myself to.

In contrast, and fortunately for us Christians, we have a God who loves us so much that he gives us grace apart from such a bargain—apart from our following the Law. God's grace brings freedom. It unchains us from the sin and death that we, imperfect people, cannot overcome by perfectly following the Law. It unchains us *for* obedience to God according to the teachings of our faith. "But now that you have been freed from sin and enslaved to God, the advantage you get is sanctification." Sanctification is a refining process that sets us apart from the things of the world—from sin and death. God's grace gifts us with eternal life in Jesus Christ. Being my sister's "slave" only bought me the favor of 30 minutes of television time. Eternal life with Jesus . . . surely that is worth the "price" of the blessings received for our obedience to God.

### PRAYER

Gracious and Heavenly Lord, please watch over us today. Help us to avoid the temptations of this world, for we know that our obedience is to you and you alone. You know the plans for our lives; please help us to stay on the pathway to your plan. We pray all these things in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.