

Text: Romans 6:23

Title: “Your ONE ... Why?”

Before I get started this morning I want to lead us in prayer for our sister church, Wedgwood Church. Twenty years ago today a deranged man burst into the church on Wednesday night when a great group of students had gathered for a concert. The gunman opened fire and killed seven people and injured many others. This morning as a church they are having a special Remembrance Service and I want to pray for Pastor Dale Braswell and our sister church. Let's pray.

Open your Bibles to Romans 6:23. Last week a question was put before us all that will hopefully result in many people coming to faith in Christ and becoming followers of Jesus. The question is “Who's your one?” It can be overwhelming when we think of the millions of people in Tarrant County and the billions around the world who need Christ. But that burden becomes manageable when we break it down to something simple. Lord, lay one person on my heart whom I can pray for, love and have the opportunity to show and tell the Gospel to them. The Gospel is that simple, but powerful message that God came to this earth in the person of His Son Jesus Christ who lived the life we are supposed to live, died the death we deserve, was raised from the dead to give us victory over sin and death and to make it possible for us to have a relationship with God.

Last week we focused on the “who.” Who is in your circle that needs Christ? And the response was tremendous. These steps were covered with cards you placed here with the name of the one God has put on your heart. In the seat backs there are book marks with Scriptures you can read and pray each day. If you didn't get to bring your card last week and you know who your one is, at the end of the service write just their first name on the tear-off and bring it to the altar. Our staff and prayer team will pray over them.

Today I want to focus on the “why.” Why would we be interested in introducing someone to Christ? Is it just because everyone else is doing it? Is it just because we want to get more people to our church? Is it because we want to win someone over to our cause or to our way of looking at things? Why? Well the true motivating factor for us as followers of Jesus is found in this single verse in Romans 6. **Read Romans 6:23.**

So this is the true motivating factor for why we would want to see another person come to Christ. In fact, it's the motivating factor for why we all need Jesus Christ. Maybe you have never come to a place in your life where you consciously put your

trust in Jesus to be your Savior and Lord. If I could sit down with you just one and one and show you why you need to receive Christ, here's how I would explain it from this one verse in Romans 6.

You see, there are three things that are true about all of us here today:

1. YOUR MASTER IS EITHER SIN OR GOD.

In Romans 6:23 circle the word “sin” and the word “God.” The one controlling your life today is either sin or God. If you back up a few pages to Romans 3:23 you read that, “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

So we are born with the sin gene in us. Before long we will act on that sin gene in us. We do things we shouldn't do, and we don't do things we should do. A child begins to tell a lie to keep themselves out of trouble. And they feel guilty for doing it because God has given each of us a conscience to know basically what is right and wrong. We are all created in God's image in that way. But that image has been marred by our sin. We fall short of the glory of God because we don't live for His glory. Our lives were created to orbit around God, but because of sin we want everything to orbit around our needs and our desires.

So in our natural condition we are all slaves to sin. And sin is an awful master. But we were created for God, to have a relationship with Him. We were never meant to serve sin. And so God sent His Son to rescue us from our sin and to claim us for Himself. It says in I Peter 3:18 that Christ died for our sins, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God ... to bring us back to God because we belong to Him.

ILLUSTRATION – There's a little story that powerfully illustrates what this means. There was a man who was a woodworker and his specialty was making model sailboats. He built one particularly beautiful sailboat, the best he had ever made. He took it to a small lake at a local park to make sure it floated. He put it in the water and it floated just fine. Suddenly there was a gust of wind that blew the boat away from the shore. The woodworker tried to grab it but it was just out of his reach and the water was too deep. All he could do was to watch the little boat drift farther and farther away. Finally it was lost and the man was very sad. Months later the woodworker was walking down the street of his town and he passed the window of a store that sold all kinds of used items, toys and appliances and instruments and such. There in the window was the little boat the man had made. How could it be? He went into the store to ask about it and the owner told him that

someone came into the store saying that they were walking along the shore of the lake at the city park and they found this little boat that had washed up on the shore. They didn't want a model boat so they brought to this shop and sold it to the owner. The woodworker said, "How much is it?" and the owner told him. The woodworker said, "I'll take it," and he paid the shop owner the money. As he was walking out the door some other customers heard the man say to the little boat, "You are mine twice. You are mine because I made you and you are mine because I bought you.

That's what God has done for us in Christ. We all serve sin, but actually we belong to God. He made us and by the death of His Son he bought us back. We come to God when we put our trust in Christ for the gift of eternal life. But there's something else that is true about each of us.

2. YOUR HOPE IS EITHER IN WAGES YOU EARN OR A GIFT YOU RECEIVE.

In Romans 6:23 circle the word "wages" and the word "gift." So we are either controlled by sin or by God. It says that sin pays wages, but God gives a gift. Wages are paid to you according to what you deserve. But gift is given to you which you do not deserve.

And sin makes promises to us that we will be happy doing what we want to do, living with God. But when we serve sin we only discover that sin pays wages that don't make our lives better but worse. In fact sin doesn't give anything; it only takes from us something really valuable ... our soul.

Many people, when they realize they are separated from God think that they can just solve the problem themselves. Try to be a really good person. Go to church. Be kind to people. They think that eternal life can be earned like wages. But the Bible explains that all the good stuff we could do can never outweigh our sin. So we're stuck. But Christ came, lived, died and rose again to give us the gift of salvation that we receive by faith.

If you continue to live for sin sooner or later you will get the wages that sin pays. But when you surrender to God you receive a gift. So that brings me to the next thing this verse says we all have in common.

3. YOUR DESTINY IS EITHER ETERNAL DEATH OR ETERNAL LIFE.

In Romans 6:23 circle the word “death” and the words “eternal life.” So what are the wages we earn from being controlled by sin? The Bible says “death.” The Bible says that because the first people Adam and Eve sinned the experience of physical death came into the world. But there’s a death even worse than that ... spiritual death. As long as we are controlled by sin the life of God is not in us; we are spiritually dead. And that ultimately results in another kind of death ... eternal death. That is to be judged for our sin and to be separated from God for eternity in a place called hell. Those are the wages we deserve because we are sinners.

But the good news is that God offers us something we *don’t* deserve. He is holy and just and He must punish our sin, but He loves us so much that He made a way for us to come home to Him and to no longer be controlled by sin.

John 3:16 - “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

So the wages of sin is death; that’s what Jesus means by “perish.” But the gift of God is “eternal life.” So what is eternal life? It’s the very life of God. And it starts the moment you receive Christ. Jesus said, “I have come that you may have life and have it to the full.” And it starts the moment you receive Christ. But it doesn’t stop there. We have the promise of spending eternity, not separated from God, but in the very presence of God in a beautiful, glorious place called heaven.

But look at the last words of Romans 6:23 ... “in Christ Jesus our Lord.” This eternal life that God offers to us as a gift comes in the person of Jesus Christ. We have to be in Christ to have this eternal life.

ILLUSTRATION – Again, a very simple illustration helps us. Suppose I needed to get to Japan across the great Pacific Ocean. Humanly speaking it isn’t possible. I can’t walk there because it’s thousands of miles of water. And I couldn’t swim there, even if I was a great swimmer. So it’s impossible for me to get there on my own unless I have some help. So I can get on an airplane or on a ship. I can stand out on the runway at the airport and flap my wings and try to fly or I can get “in” the airplane and trust it to take me to Japan. I can stand on the dock and move my arms like I’m swimming or I can get “in” the ship and trust it to take me to Japan.

You can’t save yourself. Jesus came to live the life you were supposed to live and to die the death you deserved to die for your sins. He was raised from the dead to give you power over sin and death and to have a relationship with God. Let me

explain to you how you can be “in Christ” today. I’m asking you today to believe something with all your heart.

BELIEVE THAT GOD LOVES YOU MORE THAN YOU KNOW.

John 3:16 says that God loves you so much that he gave up His very own Son to die for your sins so that you might come to Him. That’s amazing love, isn’t it.

BELIEVE THAT WE ALL HAVE A PROBLEM CALLED SIN.

The Bible says in Romans 3:23 that all of us have sinned ... all of us. We have broken God’s rules and we deserve to be separated from Him forever. The Bible says we are to repent of our sin; turn our back on our old way of life.

BELIEVE THAT CHRIST CAME TO SAVE US FROM OUR SIN.

The Bible says in Romans 5:8 that God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Jesus died in our place so we could have a relationship with God and be with Him forever.

RECEIVE THIS GIFT BY FAITH.

John 1:12 - To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—

So by believing this with all your heart you receive this gift of eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. LEAD IN SINNERS PRAYER

If you prayed that prayer with me would you just lift your hand? At the end of the service will you stop by the Next Steps area and tell one of our friends there. We’ll explain the next steps for you in following Christ. Boys and girls, you can talk to your parents after church about what that means. Now we’re going to remember what Christ did to make it possible for us to come to God. The Lord’s Supper is the way Jesus wants us to always remember how He died for our sins to make it possible for us to come to God.

LORD’S SUPPER – Read Matthew 26:26-28.