obeyed) **unto righteousness** (with righteousness as its result; not imputed merely,  
nor implanted merely, but RIGHTEOUSNESS  
in its most general sense, as the contrast  
to *death*,—the state of blessedness induced  
by holiness, and involving in it, as a less  
in a greater, *eternal life*: and so throughout this passage)

**17, 18.**] The dilemma is solved for them  
by reference to the matter of fact: *that  
they were once servants of sin, but on  
receiving the gospel, obeyed its teaching:  
and consequently were freed from the  
service of sin, and became the servants  
of righteousness*:—and this in the form  
of a thanksgiving to God (1 Cor. i. 14),  
whose work in them it was.—There is a  
stress on **were**, as referring to a state *past*.  
So Eph. v. 8.

**17.**] **ye obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine** (the  
expression is most probably used of the practical rule of life accompanying the doctrine of the gospel. De Wette thinks  
it is the Pauline form of teaching, of justification by faith, distinguished from the  
Judaistic) **to which ye were delivered**(not, as A. V., *which was delivered you*.  
The inversion to the passive agrees admirably with the figure used. The **form**  
of doctrine is regarded as a mould, exemplar, or pattern after which they were to  
be fashioned: and the best commentators  
remark, that they, the disciples taught,  
are regarded as being as it were pressed into  
the mould and conformed to its shape: the  
words **ye were delivered** implying a superior Power, by whose agency this transformation was to be wrought).

**18.**] **And** (this verse is closely united with  
the foregoing; Meyer and others think  
that it might be stated as a syllogistic  
conclusion, of which the dilemma is the  
major, and the *fact* of ver. 17 the minor)  
**being made free from sin, ye were made  
servants** (see on the next verse) **to righteousness**.

**19.**] For the expression,  
**made servants** (brought under bondage)  
the Apostle apologizes: ‘it is not literally  
so; the servant of righteousness is *no   
slave*, under no yoke of bondage; but in   
order to set the contrast between the former and the new state before you, I have  
used this word:’ **I speak after the manner  
of men** (according to the requirements of  
rhetorical antithesis) **on account of the**  
(intellectual, not moral) **weakness of your  
flesh** (i. e. ‘because you are carnal and not  
spiritual, and want such figures to set the  
truth before you’): **for** (explanatory of  
*brought under bondage*) **as ye** (once) **yielded  
your members** (**as**) **servants to uncleanness  
and to iniquity** (lawlessness, two divisions of  
sin—impurity, against a man’s self,—lawlessness, against God) **unto iniquity** (lawlessness, both which, *impurity* and *lawlessness*, *lead to lawlessness*, *result* in it), **so now yield your members as servants to  
righteousness** (see ver. 16) **unto** (leading  
to, having as its result, perfect) **sanctification**—(contrast to *lawlessness*, and both  
embracing their respective consequences).

**20—23.**] As a *further urging of the  
above exhortations*, the Apostle *contrasts  
the end of their former life* with that of