***Wages vs. Grace  
RO82-01***

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Please turn to Romans 6:19-23. Our subject is "Two Kinds of Slavery."

**Grace**

The word "grace" is a biblical word, as you well know. It is a word which describes how a holy God saves a sinner from an eternity in hell. Grace is a method which totally excludes all human works or human efforts for salvation. Grace, thus, is not a method which depends in any way on what the sinner is, or what the sinner does. Grace, rather, is a method that is entirely dependent upon the character of God and what He does. The word "grace" conveys a basic biblical principle that perfect justice has only one target that it can bless, and that is God's absolute righteousness. Perfect justice never blesses all of the things that people do in trying to make it with God.

Consequently, we are in an impossible situation, as human beings, to try to receive blessing from God, because we have no grounds for being blessed until God comes along, and through the channel of grace, makes it possible for us to receive imputed absolute righteousness. That is the only reason God has blessed you this week. That is the only reason that He will prosper you in any way. That is the only reason He will bring stability and happiness and everything else that He wants to bring into your life. It's because to you has been imputed absolute righteousness. And God is constantly delivering great and monumental blessings to that absolute righteousness which is within you, until you foul-up in some way, and you clog up the channel of grace so that perfect justice cannot deliver maximum blessing to the absolute righteousness imputed to you. We are born-again (regenerated) into the family of God, and we now become the object of maximum blessing as we relate ourselves through doctrine to the purposes, the plans, and the ways that God works.

Grace is a method which totally excludes all of man's efforts, and totally depends entirely on God's efforts. Grace totally excludes what we are. It totally depends upon what God is.

**Salvation is a Free Gift**

Now, the grace method of salvation, therefore, indicates certain very important facts. In the first place, the salvation of the sinner must be given, and must be received, as a grace gift from a merciful God. If perfect justice can only bless absolute righteousness, then a sinner can only be saved on the basis of a gift. He cannot be saved on the basis of earning.

It also indicates that unsaved man is not under obligation to live up to some legal standard of human duty to gain God's favor. This is the principle that Paul has laid out here that has drawn the ire and the attack of the legalists and the antinomians that we've looked at. Unsaved man is not under obligation to live in any way in order to gain God's favor, because unsaved man could not live in any way to gain what perfect justice demands to bless. There is no way that we could draw the blessing of God. So, God simply bypasses that.

**Eternal Security**

Another principle is the fact that salvation given is eternally secure because it's provided by God alone. One of the great things about this principle of perfect justice blessing absolute righteousness is that, therefore, the blessing is secure. You never lose the blessings that God has given to you on this basis. Blessings which you've achieved by your hustling; by your efforts; and, by your conniving and maneuvering, and one thing and another are not blessings which will last. They will come, and they will go. That's why a person becomes rich by monumental efforts, and he thinks he has been blessed. And overnight, something happens, and bingo, his riches are gone, and the blessing has evaded him. Somehow it is completely dissipated. Well, if God has given you that blessing; if God has given you your wealth; and, if God has given you your prosperity, it will be permanent. It will not be something you lose. Any blessing that God gives has permanency – from the eternal life on down from there.

**God Receives the Glory**

Another principle that is indicated by the grace method is that only God receives the glory for man's salvation, because He alone is involved in the process. Also, salvation by grace cannot violate the holiness of God. So, the sinner's evil has to be paid for in some way. God does not save on a basis that violates His integrity. Jesus Christ, therefore, paid the penalty of death for the sins and the human good of all mankind on the cross, and thus provided the basis for grace salvation.

So, grace is a word which is not welcomed by the natural man. Grace is not a word that the average religious person, and the average church person, welcomes. He has a little tinge of resentment toward the idea of grace. He has a great deal of reservations toward the concept that God deals with him on the basis of who and what God Himself is, and not what that individual is. It is very hard for the average person to break through that barrier of forgetting about himself, and forgetting about what he is, and forgetting about what he does, and forgetting about what he can be, and look to God, and to God alone, to achieve what he needs to have done for him.

Unsaved people, by nature, are not receptive to salvation, by grace. They argue that if a man is not under a set of rules to earn God's favor, he can then abandon himself to evil living with impunity. If a person is once saved by grace, and therefore he is forever certain of going to heaven, no matter what he does, then the antagonist to grace says, "That person does not need to pursue a lifestyle of holiness."

This line of attack was expressed here in Romans 6:15. That's where we began. And Paul has been refuting this attack in verses 16-23. The person in verse 15 says, "Well, if a man is not under obligation to have to live a certain way in order to have salvation; in order to keep salvation; and, in order to secure God's favor, then he might as well live as if he were a slave of the sin nature. He might as well live under the authority of the sin nature. He might as well indulge in evil.

**Attacks on Grace**

Romans 6:23, which we look at today, now sums up the whole rebuttal which has been presented by Paul to the attack in verse 15. This whole chapter of Romans 6 is a pivotal chapter in this book of Romans because it clarifies the nature of salvation by grace by taking up these two attacks. The first attack was made in verse 1, where the opponent of grace said, "Let us continue under the authority of sin, because the more evil we do, the more grace can predominate. Than verse 15 says, "If we don't have to live by rules, let's just abandon ourselves to living in evil."

This whole chapter 6 has answered those two questions, which people still bring against grace salvation today. But Satan wants people to be very completely and totally ignorant of the information in Romans 6, so that they will seek salvation by good works; by religious rituals; and, by self-denial and emotional zeal for God. And I'll tell you something else. Satan is very determined to do anything he can to keep Christians ignorant of what is in Romans 6, because Christians who do not understand the principles laid out in Romans 6 will also fall into the habit of trying to gain divine blessings, and personal prosperity, and development in their spiritual lives by the same kind of human effort concepts, and the same kind of God-blessed-me-because-of-what-I-have-done ideas that the unbeliever does. So, without a grasp of the principles in Romans 6, there can actually be no peace or joy in reference to one's destiny after death.

So, let's begin in this famous verse that all of you know, and that all of you someplace along the line have memorized. Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." The word "for" looks like this in the Greek Bible. It's the conjunction "gar." And it is a word used here to indicate that a summary statement is now going to be introduced to summarize Paul's answer to the attack in verse 15, that a person who does not have to keep rules for living should just abandon himself to evil.

**Wages**

The next word is "wages," which looks like this in Greek: "opsonion." "Opsonion" is a noun. It comes from two words. It comes from "opson," and that means "meat." It also comes from the word "oneomai," and means "to buy." So, when you put these two together, you get "opsonion" which means "to buy meat." And the word signifies something which is bought as a provision. This was a word which was used of the supplies which are provided by an army, or it even meant "a soldier's pay."

For example, I can show you where it's used in the Bible elsewhere in Luke 3, which will give you an idea of what this word means. Luke 3:14: "And the soldiers likewise demanded of him (that is, of Jesus) saying, 'And what shall we do?' And He said to them, 'Do violence to no man. Neither accuse any falsely. And be content with your 'opsonion.''" "Be content with your wages."

Here it is specifically with your provisions; with your allotments; and, with your subsistent allotment. That is what the word means here. A soldier is to be satisfied with what he has been supplied with for his subsistence.

In 1 Corinthians 9:7, we have another place where this is used. 1 Corinthians 9:7: "Who goes to war at any time at his own charges?" And here the word "charges" is the Greek word "opsonion," which means "at his own subsistence." "At his own logistical provision" is the idea here. So, here is the word indicating a ration which is provided – a subsistence or a logistical provision.

It is also used in the Bible in a general way, simply for the idea of being paid for something that you have done – wages which you have earned. An example of that is in 2 Corinthians 11:8. Paul says, "I robbed other churches, taking wages of them to do you service." "I took gifts from other churches to support me in my ministry when I would not take it from you in the Corinthian churches because of your kind of carnal lifestyle. Other churches paid me for my services in your behalf." There it being used in terms of wages.

Here in Romans 6:23, it is also being used basically in this idea of wages in return for something that a person has done, and thus has earned. Paul is referring here to something gained in return for one's own efforts. It indicates a right which one can claim. Wages is something you have a right to know.

The picture the Paul has given us here is the picture of human slavery. And he has shown us how everybody in the world is a slave of God, or he is a slave of Satan through the sin nature. So, if you are a slave, your master gives you a ration; your master gives you a subsistence; or, your master gives you a provision, basically, in exchange for your services to the master. Or if you have hired yourself out between an employer and employee, again, this same word connotes the fact that you have a right to certain returns. You have earned this in a way. Even if you are a slave, the fact that you are a slave of that master gives you a certain security, and the master has a certain obligation to fulfill to you. He owes you this subsistence.

So, the concept here fits either way. If you are slave, you have a certain subsistence that you have a right to. If you are an employee, you have a certain wage that you have agreed to, and for your services you should have a service returned (a reward returned) to you – a remuneration for your efforts.

**The Sin Nature**

This employer is here described as sin. This is the word "hamartia." This is the word for "sin" that means to miss the mark of God's standard of absolute righteousness. The Greek Bible says it this way: "*the* sin," because it is indicating a certain specific kind of sin. In this case, it is what we call the old sin nature, which is what he has been talking about all through here. The old propensity to evil is another way that you can put it (the OPE) – the old propensity to evil with which every one of us is born.

Now, the unbeliever's sin nature (or propensity to evil) has a production which earns a wage for the sinner. This brings him, in other words, something that he deserves. Now this one factor that is important here is that the grammar here of this word "sin" is called the genitive case in the Greek language. This is what is called specifically a subjective genitive. It means that it is telling us something that sin, as the subject, is giving. The sin nature does this giving. Sometimes the genitive is used as an object genitive, which then makes sin the object for which you pay.

Paul is not talking about the wages that you pay because of your sins and because of your evil. He is talking about something that you get as a reward from the sin nature, because we can tell that from the grammar that this is a subjective genitive. That means that sin is giving you something. You are not paying something for your sin – toward sin as the object. The word "is" is not in the Greek language. It simply says, "For the remuneration of the sin nature death." We speak in this kind of abbreviated language, even in English. We might say, "Eternal death earned" or "eternal life gratuitous." It's a way of speaking so that the concepts are emphasized. But if you are going to make it a proper sentence, you'd have to say, "Eternal death is earned, and eternal life is gratuitous." But if you take the verb out in English, it makes the facts stand out. And the same thing is what is being done here in the Greek language.

**Death**

What is remunerated he calls "death" ("thanatos"). This is a noun which basically, as you know, means separation. In this case, this is separation on the physical level and the spiritual level and on the eternal level, which the Bible calls "the second death." This word is opposed to the word that comes in the next phrase – the word "life." The word "life" means communion with God. "Thanatos" means the opposite: non-communion with God. But "thanatos" never means nonexistence. "Thanatos" connotes conscious existence in conscious separation from God.

So, this eternal death is viewed as the remuneration to the unbeliever for the services that he has performed as a slave of the sin nature. The slave of the sin nature produces sins and human good, and for that, the sin nature rewards you. The sin nature gives you remuneration. And God sees to it that the sin nature pays up. And what it pays is death – summarized in that word. God's justice always demands that what has been earned from service to the sin nature should be paid.

In the case of you and me as believers, Jesus Christ on the cross receive the wages of death which our sin nature has paid out. Death is the inevitable consequence of enslavement to the sin nature. You can pretend all you want to the contrary, but that is a fact of life. If you have someone in your circle of your family (your relatives) who is an unbeliever, when that person dies, I don't care what you want to say about that person – if that person has died as a slave of the sin nature, then he is receiving a remuneration summarized by the word "death." And whatever you may get that preacher to say about that individual to soften the blow, you might as well not kid yourself. That person is burning and screaming in the torments of hell. I don't care if it's your father; if it's your wife; if it's your child; or, if it's somebody else who is very dear to you, that is a fact of life. And it is this side of the grave that those facts have to be realized and faced up to.

If you are a servant (a slave) of the sin nature, you will receive a reward. Indeed you will. And that reward will be death in the form of eternal separation from God and the lake of fire. Whatever comfort somebody tries to give the survivors at your funeral, the bottom line for you is still death.

Then Paul, in his summary, swings to the contrast. He introduces it by the word "but." The word "but" is the conjunction "de," which indicates a contrast. We could translate this as "on the other hand: "On the other hand, for the remuneration of the sin nature, death. But, on the other hand, the gift" (the "charisma"). "Charisma" means "free gift" or "the gift of grace." This is the opposite of the word "wage" that we have just had. The opposite of "free gift" was "wage." Now we have something that the recipient neither deserves, nor has he earned, but it is a benefit, nevertheless, which comes to him. And again, the Greek language makes it very specific. It says, "*the* gift" – the specific gift, in order to match this up as the opposite to "*the* wage," which we just had. The gift and the wage are put one against another. This is what everybody in the human race experiences. Either you get a wage that you have earned from the sin nature, or else you get a gift which you have not earned.

**The Holiness of God**

When you have, in the Greek language, a noun which ends in these letters "ma," it indicates to us that we are talking about a result, rather than something that is in the process of being done. This is the result of a divine action rather than the divine action as such. And the result here is a free grace gift that God has produced, and which He is now handing over to certain members of the human race. The method of blessing man, which can give him a grace gift, however, remember, is always based upon the preservation of the integrity of God, or, as the Bible calls it, the holiness of God. And the holiness of God is the perfect justice of God plus the absolute righteousness of God.

So, everything that God does, in terms of giving away a free grace gift that a person did not earn, is based upon His integrity so that God is indeed free to give it. He is not giving something that he should not give. And it is specifically the gift of God ("theos"). The Greek is saying "*the* God," indicating God the Father here. This is God as the source of this grace gift. And again, the word is omitted for emphasis.

**Eternal Life**

What does He give? He gives something that he calls "eternal," which is "aionios." "Aionios" is an adjective, which means "continuous duration." There is no stopping. It just goes on and on and on. And what it is that is continuous is the "zoe," and that is life. Eternal life is the present actual possession of a believer as the gift of God. It is eternal because it is without end in duration.

Why is this true? Why can God give a grace gift of eternal life? Because He has made it possible for a sinner to enter a relationship with the person of the Son of God. In John 5:24, we read, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that hears My Word and believes on Him that sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life. Here is a quality of life which a person who has trusted in Christ has as of this moment. Eternal life is not only something you get in the future, but it is something that you possess right now.

**We Have Eternal Life Now**

In 1 John 3:40, we read, "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. He that doesn't love his brother abides in death." The quality of mental attitude love, which a Christian has, is indicative of the fact that he has eternal life now.

So, a wrong relationship to Jesus Christ will doom a follower of any other religious groups. God has eternal life, and He has it because of His Son. This eternal life, after the rapture, is going to be parlayed into eternal life for our physical bodies. In 2 Corinthians 5:4, we're told this: "For we that are in this tabernacle (that is, in these physical bodies) do groan, being burdened, not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up in life." And that is exactly what is going to happen.

2 Timothy 1:10 adds to this: "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death, and has brought life and immortality to life through the gospel." So, when we are told that we have "aionios zoe" as a gift from God, it not only means that we have total compatibility in the presence of God for all eternity in heaven, but it means that your body as well has a life which is going to go on forever and will never cease.

This gift of eternal life, we are told, is given through Jesus Christ, but the road "through" is different than the word "through" that we have been having. Previously, for example, at the end of Romans 5:21, Paul summarized that by saying that "As the sin nature has reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life *by* Jesus Christ." And there the Greek word is "dia," which means "through:" "through Jesus Christ our Lord." Eternal life there is explained as being by means of Jesus Christ our Lord. But, here in Romans 6:23, when he says, "Through Jesus Christ," he used a different word. He uses this word "en," which means "in." So, what he is emphasizing here is position. He is emphasizing the positional truth of the fact that this grace gift of eternal life comes to you and me as the result of the fact that we have been placed, in God's sight, in Christ. And that is accomplished, as you know, by the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the point of your salvation.

This is why the devil tries to confuse the doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit so much. That's why the charismatic movement has been completely deflected from reality, and from what God thinks, and from scriptural truth – completely deflected on the fact that they missed it at one critical point on the doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. A Christian cannot be wrong on the ministry of God's Holy Spirit in the church age, and survive with blessing, because that's where it's all at. He is the key person. And, of course, that's why the devil confuses that.

So, here our relationship of grace salvation comes because we are in Christ as the result of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Those who are apart from Jesus Christ (those who are not in Christ) have no hope. And I don't care if they're zealots like the Muslims, with their zeal that they're demonstrating in the world today toward God. Every one of those people is headed for the lake of fire. Every single one of them is doomed. Why? Because they do not have the simple position that the Bible calls "in Christ" as the result of trusting Him as personal Savior, and receiving the blessing of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

**"Christ Jesus"**

This eternal life is for those who are in Jesus Christ. The word "Jesus" is stressing His humanity, and the word "Christ" is stressing His Messiahship. And in the Greek language it's reversed. It's not "Jesus Christ," but the Greek says, "Christ Jesus." The apostle Paul had a way of sort of keeping these two separated. When he said, "Christ Jesus," it was His way of stressing specifically that He was talking about the second person of the Trinity Who was the exalted one, but Who emptied Himself and humbled Himself to the death of the cross. Philippians 2:5 describes that condition. So, when he uses the words "Christ Jesus," he's testifying to the fact that this One existed in eternity past, and he is stressing the grace of God. The term "Christ Jesus" in Paul's writings generally stresses the grace of God in operation.

**"Jesus Christ"**

When Paul does use it the other way, when he says, "Jesus Christ," then he's describing the second person of the Trinity as the One who was rejected, and was then afterward glorified. Philippians 2:11 describes that. Consequently, "Jesus Christ" is the word that Paul uses when he's stressing the resurrection of Christ, and thus when he is emphasizing the glory of Jesus Christ. So, it is fitting that here, in the Greek, Paul says, "Christ Jesus," because what Paul wants to stress at this point is specifically the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. It's a grace gift given to us by a Savior of grace in whom we are placed.

**Lord**

Paul says, "Who is our Lord." The word "Lord" is "kurios". "Kurios" is the word that indicates deity. James 1:5 uses the word "God," and then two verses later, in James 1:7, he refers to this same person by the word "Lord." So, "Lord" meant "deity." This is why the early Christians refused to take an allegiance to the emperor as "Lord Caesar," because that was stating that they believed that Caesar was deity, which was the point of that oath. So, many Christians were killed because they would not attach the word "kurios" to the name of Caesar.

Christians have Jesus Christ as their Lord. Now, please don't permit some poor, sincere, but deluded preacher to catch you in a service, and try to get you to take some kind of an emotional action to make Christ Lord of your life, because the Word of God makes it very clear that the resurrection of Jesus Christ has established Him as the Lord. And the moment you were born again, He was the Lord of your life.

Now, you may have a problem of permitting him to function as the Lord of your life. That requires confession of known sins, and maintaining a position of personal fellowship, but He is the Lord of your life. Anytime you hear a preacher get up and say to: "Make Jesus Christ Savior and Lord of your life," red flags ought to fly up all over your mind, and you ought to pull yourself back and say, "Wait a minute. That is a dangerous man. He is disoriented to the relationship of Jesus Chris, to human beings." And that can cost you something very, very serious. And you better back-off and start backpedaling from somebody like that.

In Acts 2:36, Peter, on the day of Pentecost, is speaking to a group of Jews and he says, "Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly hat God has made that same Jesus, Whom you have crucified, both Lord and Christ." You crucified Him, but He is resurrected. He is now Lord and Christ.

In Romans 14:9, we may add: "For to this end, Christ both died and rose and revived, that He might be Lord, both of the dead and living." His resurrection is the thing that has made him the Lord.

Psalm 34:8 uses the term "Jehovah." 1 Peter 2:3 quotes that verse, and uses the word "Lord" in place of the word "Jehovah." And the verse in Peter is applied to Jesus Christ. The word "Lord" simply means "Jehovah," the sacred name of deity. And Jesus Christ is the Lord.

So, let's bring all this together that we have found in this famous verse. Verse 23 says, "For the remuneration of the sin nature: death. But, on the other hand, the free grace gift from God as the source: eternal life – life without end, in all aspects, including the body, for those in Christ Jesus, our God. He is our Lord."

**Two Destinies – Hell or Heaven**

You'll notice that there are some basic concepts that Paul has laid out here. One is that there are two possible destinies after death. A person either goes to eternal death in the lake of fire or to eternal life in heaven. That's all. There is no purgatory, and there are no other alternatives. There is no gradual transfer from hell to heaven. There is no change of destiny gradually. There is no second chance. The change of destiny from hell to heaven is instantaneous. Each slavery has a definite end. Slaves of the sin nature end only an eternal death. Slaves of absolute righteousness end only with eternal life.

**Two Masters – The Sin Nature or God**

Then there are some great contrasts. There are two masters. Everybody in the world has the sin nature as a master, or God. You cannot be enslaved to both at the same time, and no human being is excluded from this enslavement. The issue in life, therefore, is not your morality; not your human compassion; not your refined manners; not your personal sacrifices; and, not your good reputation. The only issue in life is: who is your master? God, through the Holy Spirit; or, Satan through the sin nature? The vital question is which of the two masters you serve.

Leading personalities in American society today are basically slaves of the sin nature. God has no esteem for them whatsoever. God has no respect for them whatsoever. All of their culture; all of their devotion; and, all their human good – God places no value upon that whatsoever. God's perfect justice could not bless that. God's perfect justice can only bless that which is compatible with absolute righteousness. The leading personalities, the opinion makers of our society, are men and women who are slaves of the sin nature. These people can appear to be actually representatives of God at times. They can be purportedly sources of divine viewpoint enlightenment.

I had to smile when I saw Reverend Sloane Coffin of Yale University as one of the men who was visiting our hostages in Tehran, because here is a man who, on all indications, is a reverend who is headed for the lake of fire. The Watergate defendants were ultimately pressed and asked, "What in the world did you think about when you did the things you did? What was the basis on which you felt you were free to do these things that you did?" Ultimately, several of them said, "Well, we were functioning on what we thought was a moral basis as expressed by Chaplain Coffin of Yale." He, as you know, had been one of the great leaders of the Vietnam anti-war movement. And a set of principles of morality, as he laid them out, were, interestingly enough, what brought the Watergate defendants to their disastrous end. And yet, this man, purportedly a representative of God of spiritual enlightenment, is now going over there and talking with the hostages – an angel of Satan, purportedly representing himself as an angel of light. You cannot judge a person by the good he does or by the character he possesses. You can only judge him by: who is his master?

**Two Returns – Wages or a Gift**

There are two returns. Wages or a gift. A slave of the sin nature is earning services. A slave of God receives a gift apart from services performed. There is no other alternative. The only wage a sin nature can pay is eternal death. The only provision God's grace can provide is eternal life as a free gift. A grace gift from God is not governed by whether the believing slave deserves it or not.

**Two Final Destinies – Eternal Death or Eternal Life**

Then there is a difference of final destiny, eternal death or eternal life. A life of enslavement to the sin nature has the kiss of death upon all it does. A life of enslavement to God has the breath of life upon all that it does. The issue is to have your name written in the Lamb's book of life when you cross over into eternity. Eternal death is the permanent separation from the presence of God in conscious suffering, covered with your moral guilt – wreaking in your moral guilt. Eternal life is knowing God and being forever in His presence and ultimate sanctification.

The word "eternal" means that the destiny never changes.

**The Role of Jesus Christ**

Then there is a third point that this verse brings out: the role of Jesus Christ. He's the key to the whole thing. Everyone who rejects Jesus Christ as the God-man sacrifice for the sins of the world is doomed to hell. The baptism of the Holy Spirit places the believer into Christ, and thereby we possess His absolute righteousness; we are justified before God; and, perfect justice can now bless us. Those in Christ Jesus by grace are enslaved to absolute righteousness. They cannot abandon themselves to a life of evil as the man in verse 15 suggested. God's grace is designed to bring believers to glory – not to encourage them into a life of evil.

**Paul's Answer to this Attack on Grace**

We may summarize Paul's answer to the attack in verse 15, in closing, with these statements. Here are the summary principles that we may draw from these verses in this pivotal chapter of the Bible.

1. **One is a Slave of the Power He Yields to**

One is the slave of whatever power he yields his will to. That is true in all areas of life. A student is a slave to his teacher in the class, because the teacher's will is predominant. A husband is predominant in his will over the wife. His wife is his slave. An employer exercises his will over that of his employer. The employee is his slave.

**"Authority"**

Now, for those who are weak Christians, for those who are not mature people, you can't use the word "slave." You have to use the word "authority" or some other code word in order to cover that, because they get flashes of various kinds if you use the word "slave." But the word "slave" simply means that somebody has control over your will. And if you don't like the word "slave," then use the word "authority" or whatever enables you, at your particular weak stage of spiritual development, to be able to take the word.

1. **Two Authorities: Satan; and, God**

There are only two authorities in the world ruling as slave masters over all mankind: Satan; and, God.

1. **Absolute Authority**

The nature of slave ownership is absolute authority over the will of the slave not.

1. **A Slave of Satan or a Slave of God**

Every human being is either a slave of Satan through the sin nature or a slave of God through the Holy Spirit.

1. **We are Born as Slaves to the Sin Nature**

A person is born into the human race as a slave of the sin nature – never as a slave of God.

1. **Freedom from the Sin Nature by Grace Salvation**

A person is emancipated from the ownership of the sin nature by being poured into the mold of grace salvation. You remember that that's how Paul described it – being poured into the mold of grace salvation, and out popped a freeborn regenerated Christian.

1. **Believers Become Slaves of God**

A believer in Jesus Christ becomes a slave of God.

1. **A Lifestyle of Death or a Lifestyle of Absolute Righteousness**

The consequence of enslavement to the sin nature is a lifestyle of death, while enslavement to God results in a lifestyle of absolute righteousness.

1. **Freedom from the Sin Nature is Always Permanent**

Emancipation from slavery to the sin nature through regeneration is always permanence. You never return to enslavement to the sin nature.

1. **Slaves of the Sin Nature Constitute Filthiness and Lawlessness**

The slaves of the sin nature place their physical bodies at the disposal of filthiness and lawlessness in their rebellion against God.

1. **Enslavement to the Sin Nature is Loathsome**

Enslavement to the sin nature is expressed through nonviolent, cultured living as well as through loathsome and degrading acts.

1. **Enslavement to God is Experiential Sanctification**

The slaves of God placed their bodies at the disposal of absolute righteousness for a life of experiential sanctification.

1. **Slaves of the Sin Nature think that they are Free**

The sin nature slaves are totally devoid of absolute righteousness, and characterize this as freedom.

1. **Enslavement to the Sin Nature has no Benefits for Christians**

Christians had no benefits whatever while enslaved to the sin nature.

1. **Shame**

Christians look back with great shame on their lifestyle as slaves of the sin nature.

1. **Death**

The end result of life under the sin nature is summed up by the word "death."

1. **Eternal Life in Eternity**

Believers, as slaves of God, now possess the benefit of experiential or sanctification, which will climax in eternal life in eternity.

1. **Eternal Death in Hell**

The wages earned from slavery to the sin nature is eternal death in hell.

1. **Eternal Life in Heaven**

The return from slavery to God is eternal life in heaven.

1. **"In Christ" through the Baptism of the Holy Spirit**

The basis for securing eternal life is one's position in Christ through the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

1. **Remuneration vs. Grace**

Remuneration is the principle by which a person becomes the heir of death, while grace is the principle for receiving eternal life.

1. **Filthiness and Lawlessness**

Slaves of God cannot hand their wills over to the sin nature to live a life of filthiness and lawlessness. That, you remember, is what verse 15 opponents suggested: "Hand your life over to filthiness and lawlessness." Slaves of God cannot hand their wills over to the sin nature (the old slave master) again for a life of filthiness and lawlessness.

1. **Legalistic Rules vs. Grace Treatment**

Legalistic rules do not restrain evil, and grace treatment does not produce evil living.

These are the basic concepts, in one way or another, that the apostle Paul has incorporated in these verses (15-23) in meeting this attack. And the whole impression is a deep sigh of relief. God has already made it for you.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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