

## Law of the Love Slave

***Exodus 21:1-6*** “Now these are the ordinances which you are to set before them: <sup>2</sup> “If you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve for six years; but on the seventh he shall go out as a free man without payment. <sup>3</sup> “If he comes alone, he shall go out alone; if he is the husband of a wife, then his wife shall go out with him. <sup>4</sup> “If his master gives him a wife, and she bears him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall belong to her master, and he shall go out alone. <sup>5</sup> “But if the slave plainly says, ‘I love my master, my wife and my children; I will not go out as a free man,’ <sup>6</sup> then his master shall bring him to God, then he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost. And his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him permanently.

Let’s take a moment and consider what is happening in this text.

In the previous chapter (Exodus 20) God gave Moses the 10 commandments, which most of us are very familiar with.

However, after the giving of the 10 commandments, the following section of scripture, from Exodus 20:22-24:8, is called the “Book of the Covenant.”

... that is what it is called in Exodus 24:7.

This “Book of the Covenant” is a collection of moral ordinances and principles which explains living in obedience to God through these 10 commandments.

- For example, Idolatry is wrong because you cannot have a relationship with inanimate objects. God is unseen but he is not unheard. (Ex. 20:22-26)
- God is a just God; therefore, we should obey His laws because they are both righteous and just. (Exodus 21-23:19)

In this section of scripture (Ex. 20:22-24:8) Laws about

- slaves
- capital crimes
- kidnapping
- causing bodily injury during conflict,
- the injury of pregnant women
- injuries caused by animals

- property damage
- taking care of the animals you own
- stealing animals
- crops
- personal property
- rape
- sorcery ... and a lot more are discussed.

In all these things we see God's justice and righteousness ... this is important to remember.

... this is important to remember because in the Jewish economy God allowed for a certain kind of slavery.

In other words, a Jewish person could have Jewish slaves as a means of resolving financial debt.

This is quite different from the cattle slavery that was common in America prior to the Civil War.

... it went like this:

*If a Hebrew person got so deep in debt that they could no longer pay their bills they could choose to go either to the person he owed the money to, or someone else wealthy enough to pay off his debts, and the indebted man would become that person's slave in exchange for having his debts paid off completely.*

This thought is further developed in Prov. 22:7 where Solomon writes, "borrower is slave to the lender."

Here in Exodus 21 God gives us moral principles (rules) to guide this manner of debt resolution.

- The period of financial slavery could only last for six years. *(This protected the poor man.)*
- Upon release in that 7<sup>th</sup> year the slave could not demand extra compensation beyond the original agreement or earn money greater than his actual debt. *(This protected the rich man and prohibited slavery from becoming a "money making" business.)*
- If the man was single when he became a slave, when he was released from his obligation, he had to leave the same way, single. *(The slave couldn't use relationships, marriage, or*

*childbirth that occurred during those 6 years to penalize the man who had paid off his debt.)*

- If a man came into slavery with a wife and they already had children (or children are born during that 6 year period) when the man left he could take his wife and children with him.
- However, after 6 years of indentured slavery, when the time of being released came, a slave, instead of going free could say, *“I love my master, I don’t want to go free, I want to remain in his service and under his care.”*

**This is the law of the love slave.**

Now don’t let the word Law turn you off!

The gospel of salvation is not in opposition to the law.

In Matthew 5:17 Jesus makes it very clear that the purpose of His coming to earth and dying ...wasn’t to destroy the law—

*<sup>17</sup> "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. (Mat 5:17)*

The Apostle Paul elaborates on this in Romans 3:31:

*<sup>31</sup> Do we then nullify the Law through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Law. (Rom 3:31)*

The New Testament is not a change or reversal of Old Testament doctrine.

In truth, the New Testament is the obvious progression of the Old Testament.

The gospel of salvation is not in opposition to the law it is the fulfillment of it.

The Law of the Love Slave is a beautiful example of where our heavenly Father is trying to bring every one of us to.

... that you and I will serve Him for **one reason and one reason only** – simply because we love Him.”

Today I want to show you 3 powerful lessons in the law of the love slave.

## 1. Any Reason is a Good Reason to COME TO JESUS

Think for a moment of what kind of financial situation would have forced a person to sell their own self into slavery.

... in order that they and their family would be able to eat.

... they had gotten so deep in debt they were about to lose their family's land.

... couldn't provide for their children

[In 2 Kings 4 during the ministry of the prophet Elisha a woman with 2 sons was about to have her sons taken into slavery in order to pay a debt—a miraculous cruse of oil.]

There are many different reasons why a person in those days might end up in slavery

In this same way different people come to Christ for different reasons.

### **REALIZE IT NOW!**

You are going to spend your life as a spiritual slave to something.

**Either to sin** – “he that commits sin is the slave of sin.” Or to **Jesus** – “You can't serve two masters.” It must be one or the other.

Some people are so enslaved to sin they can't get away.

*Just like everyone else, I to was once a slave to sin, but in the fall of 1981 I made a choice to change masters, and the worst day I ever had serving Jesus Christ, is still better than the best day I ever had serving sin and Satan.*

## **Different sinners Come to Christ for different reasons**

### **Some people come to Jesus because they have a Guilty Conscience**

Some people come to Christ because their guilty conscience convicts them.

In Jesus' day the Pharisees were about to stone the woman caught in adultery, but they couldn't do it because when Jesus said, *'he that is without sin cast the first stone'* their guilty conscience condemned them.

I too had a guilty conscience, but when I changed masters ... I discovered the wonderful peace of what the bible means when it talks about having a *"conscience void of offense toward God and and man."*

### **Some people come to Christ because they are Fearful**

The epistle of Jude says this, "...some save with fear, pulling them out of the fire..."

I was afraid. Many were the nights as a boy that I awoke from sleep trembling in fear because I knew I was lost and without Christ.

### **Some people come to Christ because of their Circumstances**

*Years ago, I heard of a family I believe from Chadbourn NC, I think their names were Leonard and Edna Carter, they had three daughters.*

*One weekend night their home caught on fire, it burned to the ground and one of their daughters died in the fire ... the rest got out alive.*

*As a result of that tragedy, two days later that whole family walked the aisle in church and accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.*

I know what you are thinking. *"Nathan you ought not to play on the emotions of people and take advantage in those circumstances."*

Hear me today. People don't get saved with the head, they get saved with their heart. *"With the heart man believeth unto righteousness."*

And while our faith is supported by the greatest intellect of the universe, there must be something that:

- Touches the heart
- Moves you to the point where you get tired of your sin
- Make you realize what a hard task master the devil is.

And as you turn to change masters, you can hear the savior say:

***“Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest for your souls, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”***

Let me ask you today, are tired of the hard task master you are following?

If you are, then repent, ask God to forgive you, and put your trust in Jesus Christ alone.

So, the Law of the Love Slave tells us that different sinners come to Christ for different reasons, but any reason is a good reason to come to Jesus.

## **2. The Victory of the Believer is dependent upon his/her own willingness to ABIDE**

At the end of 6 years, the slave was brought to the gate and shown the open road and the master would say, “*You are free to go.*”

### Lesson is obvious

Although people come to Christ for many reasons, the Lord never forces anyone to be obedient or remain in service.

When I see the slave standing at the open gate, in that moment all the commands of the Bible for spiritual victory are reduced to one simple invitation ...

Jesus says, “**Abide in Me.**”

Your spiritual victory, as a child of God, is totally dependent upon your own willingness to abide in the Lord Jesus Christ.

*(John 15:4) <sup>4</sup> "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.*

*(John 15:7) <sup>7</sup> "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.*

No fruit – No power in prayer – No victory to overcome the world and Satan– EXCEPT YOU ABIDE!

The victory of the believer is totally dependent upon your own willingness to abide in the Lord Jesus Christ.

One of the saddest moments in the life and ministry of our Lord is recorded in **John 6:66**

*As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore. (Jn. 6:66)*

There is nothing sadder than for a child of God to willfully chose to live outside of fellowship with God.

Every child of God is safe in Jesus, no man can pluck you out of the Father’s hand ...

But, if you choose to:

- weaken your prayer life
- get slack in you living
- start looking back down the road of sin
- and go back down the road that you came in by

Then, all the promises of God's Word made to the victorious believer are null & void to you

... and those promises will remain that way, until you leave the mud of the pig pen and return back to the Father's house.

**[And may I give you a warning??** In the course of your wanderings from God, sin will bring untold havoc on your life and on your family ... it will even bring embarrassment to the name of Jesus.]

There is nothing sadder than to see a man or woman, who have come to Christ, put their hand in the nail-scarred hand...

... only then to begin to shorten their prayer life,

... start living on the edge

... looking back at the leaks, garlic and onions of Egypt and fall back into sin

... there is nothing sadder but, you and I know people who have done that.

You see the victory of the believer is totally dependent on his/her own willingness to abide in Christ.

Are you drifting?

That is what is so dangerous about so much of the world in which we live.

... we are surrounded by sin on every side AND we should be resisting it but we're not.

We're living too close to the gate.

We're looking back down the road we came in by.

DO YOU HEAR ME?

ARE YOU LISTENING TO WHAT I'M SAYING?

Believers are languishing in carnality, mediocrity and worldliness.

The modern church has so long been without victory, we've finally redefined the Word.

Victory used to mean. "Overcoming the World."

... Now "victory" means excitement and worldly success.

VICTORY, TRUE VICTORY, BIBLICAL VICTORY IS TOTALLY DEPENDENT UPON THE BELIEVER'S WILLINGNESS TO "ABIDE IN CHRIST."

**Jesus said,** *"No man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God."*

*In 1519, Captain Hernán Cortés landed in Veracruz to begin his great conquest*

*After arriving Cortes commanded his men to burn their ships thereby removing and preventing any possible return to the old world.*

Do you know what it means to have victory in Christ?

It means: You turn you back on the world you left behind, you burn the boats and all the things you connect you to that life of sin.

- You put your hand to the plow, and you don't look back.
- You set your face like a flint toward the goal, and you never turn around
- You let the dead bury their dead – And you come, and you follow HIM!

I want to ask you – Are you in close relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, OR ARE you hanging out close to the gate where you came in?

... Are you looking back longingly at the life of sin you left behind?

It is time to get away from the gate and get close to Jesus.

### **3. The Only True Motive for Service is LOVE.**

Now at the end of 6 years the slave was brought to the gate, and he is told, *“There’s the open road – you’re free to go.”*

**At that moment the slave may say,**

*“When I came to my master, I was in trouble, and he got me out*

*... I was in debt, and he paid it all*

*... I’m better off now than I ever was before I met the master*

*... I don’t want to go out free, I want to stay with my master forever.”*

Then the master would bring him to the door and place his earlobe to the door post

... the master would take a sharp awl and drive that awl through the earlobe into the door post.

From that day on, the **blood on the doorpost** and the **hole in his ear lobe** told everybody ---

“I am a LOVE SLAVE, I’m serving my master, not because I have to, not because I have an obligation, I am serving my master simply because I love Him.

MY ONLY MOTIVE FOR SERVICE IS LOVE.”

That is where God is trying to bring every one of us.

I ask you, what is your motive for serving God?

**Do you know why churches do have workers?**

It's not because of the lack of people who could work.

It is because we are not motivated by love.

**Do you know why the church is full of hurt feelings, jealous spirits, pity parties, unforgiveness and bitterness?**

It is because we are not motivated by love.

... But Nathan, you don't know what they said/did/ how they acted.

WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE IF OUR ONLY MOTIVE IS LOVE?!

Allow me to show you this principle of the "Law of the Love Slave" in the New Testament:

The New Testament application of the Law of the Love Slave is:

***1 Corinthians 13:1-8: If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup> If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup> And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. <sup>4</sup> Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, <sup>5</sup> does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, <sup>6</sup> does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; <sup>7</sup> bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. <sup>8</sup> Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away.***

Do you know what all your work and giving for God is worth if it isn't done out of love? ... **Nothing! Nothing! Nothing!**

When God judges our work He will be not looking for **quantity** He will only be looking for one thing—**quality**.

What you do is not nearly as important, as why you do it –  **motive**.

ONLY ONE TRUE MOTIVE FOR SERVICE – LOVE!

If we could get a hold of this principle –

... there would be more than enough workers from the nursery to Celebrate Recovery ...

... It would settle a thousand petty disagreements and put us on the road to revival!

... It would bring such a spirit of love and unity in the church that **the devil would be defeated,** and **Christ would be exalted as never before.**

God wants to bring you to the place where you can say ...

**I am not in chains, but there are shackles of love on my heart, and I am serving Jesus for one reason, and one reason only, simply because I love Him.**