

## Grace to You :: *esp Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

### **Redeemed, How I Love to Proclaim It!**

Scripture: Exodus 6:6; Exodus 15:13; Matthew 11:28–29; Romans 6:6–22; Romans 8:22; Galatians 1:4; Ephesians 2:4–5; Colossians 1:13; 1 Peter 1:18–19

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As much as we'd like to abolish slavery in practice, and even from our memories, the Bible demands that we remember. Slavery has everything to do with our relationship Christ. We are His slaves, and our slavery to Him is the guarantee of our eternal security.

Historically, nearly every society on earth has practiced human slavery. In the Roman Empire, during the time the New Testament was written, slaves accounted for roughly one-fifth of the population. Slaves were of all ages, ethnicities, and both men and women. Some slaves engaged in hard labor, while others had an easier, domestic existence, serving in a household.

No matter what kind of slave labor they performed, every slave was *owned* by a master. Slaves did not have personal rights. They *had* to obey their master. Disobedience guaranteed severe punishment; more serious offenses could result in death.

### **Slaves from Birth**

Not many today know what it's like to be treated a piece of property, forced to serve a human master. But the Bible tells us in Romans 6:17, "we were slaves to sin." The verse before that says "we obeyed sin." Sin was our master and we had no choice but to obey.

John MacArthur, in his recent book appropriately entitled [Slave](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2010), gives us a picture of sin as a domineering master,

Sin is a cruel tyrant. It is the most devastating and degenerating power ever to afflict the human race, such that the entire creation "groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now" (Romans 8:22). It corrupts the entire person – infecting the soul, polluting the mind, defiling the conscience, contaminating the affections, and poisoning the will. It is the life-destroying, soul-condemning cancer that festers and grows in every unredeemed human heart like an incurable gangrene. (pp. 120-21)

The Bible tells us the truth: we were not only infected by sin, owned us. Sin was our master and we had no choice but to serve.

But we didn't think of ourselves as "enslaved to sin," did we? No, we thought we were free! And in a warped, twisted, perverted sense, we really were free: "For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness" (Romans 6:20). But our pride deceived us about our true condition, making us think we were free when we were wrapped in the chains of our depravity.

We had no resources to free ourselves, just as a human slave can't buy freedom from his human master. The only hope we had was if someone would purchase our freedom.

## Redeemed by Christ

And that's the good news: *Jesus* redeemed us from the slave market of sin—that's the doctrine of *redemption*. Redemption is Jesus Christ paying a price we could never pay to deliver us from our bondage to sin through His death on the cross.

Redemption has its roots in the Book of Exodus where we read of God liberating His people, Israel, from their bondage as slaves in Egypt (Exodus 6:6; 15:13). The picture of redemption became clearer, more specific, and more profound when Christ came to die on our behalf. His death ransomed us, purchasing us from the slave market of sin so that now we are slaves to *Him* (Romans 6:18, 22). When He died, we died too, which is what Romans 6 tells us: "Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should *no longer be slaves to sin*. For he who has died has been freed from sin" (Romans 6:6-7).

## Paid in Full

When we consider Romans 6, (along with other passages in the New Testament), the truth of our redemption will not only fill our hearts with joy that we have been ransomed from but also strengthen the confidence in our eternal security.

**Our redemption has a divine origin.** God is the one who initiated our redemption. "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ" (Ephesians 2:4-5). We did nothing to earn it. We could no more contribute anything to our redemption by God than an impoverished slave could contribute to his purchase by a human master.

**Our redemption delivered us.** Paul writes in Galatians 1:4 that we are "delivered from this evil world" and in Colossians 1:13, "He delivered us from the power of darkness." Before we were Christians we were slaves to sin, free from Christ; now we are slaves to Christ, free from sin. "For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under , but under grace" (Romans 6:14).

**Our redemption is complete and certain.** Peter writes in 1 Peter 1:18-19: "Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible [or perishable] things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

God did not purchase our freedom with gold or silver, the typical currency for buying human slaves, but with the blood of His beloved Son. Christ paid full price to secure our ransom from slavery to sin, to seal our salvation. He paid the price of His own precious blood, which is *incorruptible*.

Christ's redemption signals an eternal change in our relationship to Him.

- God did it, so it can't be undone.
- Christ delivered us—we are under a new Master now, and our old master can't get us back.
- God paid the full price of the precious blood of His Son. There's no person, there's nothing in existence that can pay a higher price to buy us back.

He bought us with His life. We are His slaves. He is our Lord.

### **Jesus Christ, Lord of All**

Let me draw this to a conclusion by delivering what I promised. How does slavery to Christ guarantee the security of our salvation? Historically, slaves didn't leave their human masters at will—if they tried, they were hunted down, captured, severely punished, or killed. we don't have the liberty to walk away from our masters in the spiritual realm. It requires the power of God to part us from slave-master Sin, and once His redemption is accomplished and applied, there is no power that can break the hold our Master has over us. We belong to Christ. We are His slaves, His precious possessions *forever*.

Unlike the slave-owners throughout human history—from the cruel to the benevolent, and everyone in between—Jesus Christ is the greatest, most tender Master. Here are His words to all who would surrender to His lordship: “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls” (Matthew 11:28-29).

Jesus Christ is the only Master worthy of our devotion. It is He who cements the connection between slavery, redemption, and eternal security. His redemption is perfect, final, and forever, and those who are *His* slaves, though they prone to wander, can never walk away.

Fred Butler  
Volunteer Ministries Coordinator

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