

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Theme: Sin's Stranglehold

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Free the Slaves

Bill Brinkworth

When speaking of slavery, most immediately think of those taken against their will from Africa and other countries in the early-to-mid 1800s. However, forced labor continues today and is more prevalent than in the 1800s.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates today 49.6 million men, women, and children around the world are “forced to work for little or no pay and at the complete mercy of their ‘employer’” (www.antislavery.org). Those statistics have drastically increased since 2013!

The numbers forced to work in mental or physical slavery or owned or controlled by an “employer” are not close to those in bondage of a different, less obvious way. Those in that type of slavery outnumber the 49+ million many times over. To make matters worse, those in that popular type of bondage may not even know they have lost their freedoms!

The Bible has much to say about that type of oppression:

- There are two choices in this world. One can serve oneself and selfish desires, which are often sin and sometimes the devil's destructive enticements, or one can serve and live for God. There are only those two choices, if man realizes it or not. One's decision can enslave one to sin or free one from its strangling, controlling grasp!

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon [the self-serving desires of our flesh]."
Matthew 6:24 Also: Luke 16:13.

- Although sin is always an individual's choice, it soon becomes "addictive" and leads to more iniquity. Soon, sin controls one's thoughts and is a decisive force in one's life.

Lying and deceitfulness lead to more lies and alienation from others as one becomes mistrusted. Bitterness, unforgiveness, resentment, and jealousy rob many of peace and good relationships. Drinking, drugs, pornography, and most sins never fulfill one's lust and often lead one to commit more sin hoping their cravings will be satisfied. Sexual sins ruin lives and families, wreck relationships, but still leave the committer with a feeling of loneliness and failure.

On and on goes the list of the consequences of iniquity. Transgression against God's commandments leave

one's life changed, and often physically damaged from its commission. No one gets away without paying the horrible cost of sin.

Iniquity does nothing but rob and destroy what could be good in one's life. Sin's grasp steals one of joy and enslaves. The committer of sin is led by one's desires and loses freedoms.

- When one chooses to “do his own thing” and ignores the life God desires one to have, one will not only reap the terrible consequence of sin but will alienate himself from God.

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” 1 John 2:15

“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” James 4:4

“For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.” Gal. 1:10

- Jesus addressed a group of saved Jews and told them they could be free (John 8:31-32). They replied they were not in bondage. The Jews thought they were free. *“They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?” John 8:33*

Then Jesus pointed out to them they were indeed slaves to the sins they had committed.

“Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.” John 8:34

- Those given over to sin have no permanent desire to live a life that pleases the Lord.

“For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.” Rom. 6:20

- Trusting Christ’s payment for all our iniquities is the only way to be free of sin’s control and from the ultimate cost for sinning — Hell!

“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” John 8:36

“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” Rom. 8:2

- The choice is always up to the individual! One does not have to serve sin, although many, even the saved, often freely choose to continue doing wrong. We have the opportunity not to be forced to serve iniquity. We have the liberty to do right.

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” Gal. 5:1

“For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord’s freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ’s servant.” I Cor. 7:22

When free from the desire to sin, one will want to live righteously. However, the longer one is involved in doing wrong, the harder the battle will be against the temptations it will bring. Sinful lifestyles can be changed to one that is pleasing to God.

“Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.” Rom. 6:18

“But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.” Rom. 6:22

“Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.” Mat. 12:18

- One freed from the desire to sin can freely serve God and will get their sights off themselves and desire to serve others.

“And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.” Mark 10:44

- Although one may choose to serve God, it is servitude out of gratitude and love, not out of forced control. When one surrenders control of selfish desires and lives the way God commands, one will have a life blessed and honored by Him! God looks at his servant not as a bound slave, but with special love — as a friend.

“Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.” John 15:15

“If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.” John 12:26

- Jesus, our example, was that type of servant also.

“But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:” Philipians 2:7

- Ultimately, God rewards those who choose to live the way He commands.

“His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.” Mat. 25:21 Also: Mat. 25:23.

The most dangerous and ever-present threat to anyone, even a saved person, is the commission of sin. It always has a price tag that no one ever dreamed would come with the commission of iniquity. The charge for the sin usually continues for longer than anyone would ever want to pay. Its cost often comes due at a time that the sin's commission is forgotten, but there is always a payday for doing wrong. No one avoids its cost.

When a believer sins, he can always pray to the Father, seek forgiveness, and plead with God for strength not to commit the trespass again. The guilt may be gone, and he will not have to answer for the sin. However, iniquity's temptation will often appear in one's life again and be a future difficulty one must battle to avoid.

An unsaved person can also go to God in prayer. However, unless one realizes and admits one's sin and fully trusts that Christ's death on the cross is the only payment God will recognize to cover one's wrongdoings, the eternal payment

for sin will not be removed. All the good intentions and halting of sin's commission will not eliminate its expensive cost. Without God's help, one will still be a slave to sin. You must be born again (John 3:3) to have the free pardon from all transgressions committed.

Do you realize that your sin is against what God desires for your life? Confess it to God (He knows about it already but wants you to humble yourself and admit it), and seek to live the way God commands in His Word, the Bible. Serving God, and living the way He desires you to live, will break the chains of sin that are keeping you in bondage to it. You can be free. There is hope!

“The way to keep the heart quiet is to keep ourselves in the love of God and to do nothing to offend him.”

— Henry

Sin's Damage

Keach

Sin is composed of naught but subtle wiles,
It fawns and flatters and betrays by smiles;
'Tis like the panther, or the crocodile,
It seems to love and promises no wile.
It hides the soul and hates when it vows most love.
It plays the tyrant most by gilded pills (*unpleasant people*),
It secretly ensnares the souls it kills.
Sin's promises they all deceitful be,
Does promise wealth but pays us poverty;
Does promise pleasure, but doth pay us sorrow;
Does promise life today; pays death tomorrow.
No thief so vile, nor treacherous as sin,
Whom fools do hug and tame much pleasure in.

“Sin will keep you from the Bible. The Bible will keep you from sin.” — D. L. Moody