

I Will Not Go Out Free



David Wilkerson March 15, 1984

God's ways seem like paradoxes to the human mind. He says, To live, you must die. To find your life, you must lose it. To become strong, you must first become weak.

One of the greatest paradoxes of all is this — to be truly free you must become bound. To gain the greatest liberty in God one must give up all rights and become a lifelong bondservant to the Lord Jesus Christ. There is a glorious love—slavery that leads to the highest form of freedom and liberty. It is a voluntary surrender born out of love and affection, causing one to consider servitude even greater than sonship.

In a time when God's people are so obsessed with claiming their rights, so taken with the Lord's blessings, benefits, and promises — it would profit us all to allow the Holy Spirit to open our eyes to a place in God beyond anything we've yet discovered. I will show you that it is in perfect divine order to receive all the good things from the hand of God — and that no child of the Lord should feel guilty about the blessings and benefits poured upon him.

The purpose of this message is to expand your spiritual mind to comprehend something better than blessings and prosperity. Something far more rewarding than healing of the body and all the other manifold benefits He daily loads us with. Something better than freedom itself.

A Bondservant is the Highest Calling of God in Christ Jesus!

A bondservant is one who has entered a sacrament of service with his master. It is beautifully outlined in Exodus 21, verses 2 through 6.

"If thou buy a Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. If he come in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master have given him a wife, and she have borne him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself.

"And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul [awl]; and he shall serve him forever."

This is much more than a picture of God's humane concern for slaves and servants. In type and shadow it clearly portrays the bondservant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ is the Master in this account, and we are the servants whose freedom has been purchased. The Cross is God's sabbath, the year of release for all prisoners, captives, slaves, and servants. We who were sold under the Law have been set free by grace.

We Are Talking About Freedom

"...He shall go out free for nothing..." (v.2). A Hebrew could be sold into slavery on two accounts: poverty or crime. If a thief was found breaking in, he had to make full restitution for all losses. If he could not pay, he became the chattel of the victim for six years to work off the debt. "He shall be sold for his theft" (Ex. 22:3).

More often it was poverty that led to servitude. As with the Hebrews, so with the Egyptians. During the last year of famine, Joseph 'bought' all the inhabitants of Egypt for Pharaoh in exchange for grain. "Then Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day...for Pharaoh....here is seed for you...And they said...we will be Pharaoh's servants..." (Gen.47:23–25).

Praise God forever! We who were once servants to sin, under bondage to the law of sin and death, have been purchased by the blood of the Lamb of God. Whom the Son sets free — is free indeed. We are free to "go out for nothing" — meaning, with no strings attached. Free to go forth without guilt or fear, to do whatever our hands find to do — hopefully in consultation with the Master.

The master was to release the servant without regrets. "It shall not seem hard to thee, when thou sendest him away from thee; for he hath been worth a double hired servant to thee..." (Deut. 15:18).

The emancipated servant was not to leave empty-handed. "And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty" (Deut. 15:13). He was to be furnished liberally with all his hands could carry, out of the flock, the granary, and the winepress. It was meant to be a stake sufficient to begin a new life. The Servant Who Chose to Go Out Free and Begin a New Life Is Not to Be Blamed.

It is most important to keep in mind that he had every right to leave. He was faithful, working better than two hired servants. To go out free was actually commendable. He could lawfully accept all the benefits heaped on him to help him enjoy his freedom. He was doing nothing wrong; he was to feel no guilt. And he could go forth happy and contented. He was now chargeable to no man, and at liberty to live the life he preferred. He was free to go where he wanted, when he wanted.

This is where a majority of God's people are today. I used to condemn servants of the Lord who "went out free," claiming their rights to prosperity and heaped-up blessings. I see now that some servants joyfully accumulate all that the Master offers. It's all in the Word — the blessings, the promises of daily benefits poured out, prosperity for those who seek it lawfully. Christians need not come under bondage or guilt because of the Lord's bounty they receive.

Christian, the truth is you are free in Christ. You are free to go and come as you please, within the bounds of Christian morality. You are not to condemn yourself if the Master sends you out with all the blessings your hands can carry. Perhaps the more He gives you, the more it testifies to His gratitude for your faithful service in the past. You have a right to enjoy every great and precious promise. You are told to ask largely that your joy may be full.

The emancipated servant is not required to go to some far-off mission field. You are not legally obligated to sacrifice or suffer, if you choose not to. And the Master will not condemn you for using your freedom and resources to provide for your future. Remember, the Master was not to regret the servant's going out free to serve his own needs.

I think it is commendable that God has so many who have "gone out free," who are "fruitful under their own vine and fig tree," and whose main concern is to "do justly and walk righteously" before the Lord. The church is filled with servants who are contented simply to enjoy their rightful blessings, receive answers to prayer, love the Master, and do the very best they can for Him. They are not living in sin, they are good and even faithful. And they are not under condemnation, but will stand before Christ and hear, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

For most, that is enough. What more could any child of God want, if he has happiness, success, health, heaven and eternal life in the end? What greater freedom can a released soul enjoy than to receive with gladness all the loving kindness of the Master? Has He not encouraged us to appropriate by faith all the glorious promises of His Word?

All of this is true, but there is still a more excellent way. It is a way that is not required by the Master. He cannot even ask that we take this peculiar way. He must stand aside and let us make our own decision, and if we choose to "go out free" — to our own way, He will not chide or hold it against us. He will send us forth with blessings and good will.

There is a Kind of Servant Who Will Not Go Out Free. He Chooses Bondservice As His Way to Something Greater Than Freedom.

"And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free..." (v. 5). To this servant there is no dilemma, no choice. His decision was never in doubt. His master was his whole world; he was bound to him with an eternal bond of love. He could not possibly leave his master or his house.

Like Paul, this servant considered all else as 'dung', that he might win the master. He was the kind who would be willing to be accursed if others could thereby come to know the love of his lord. His life revolved around his love for the master.

This servant valued intimacy with his master more than any earthly blessing. Who cared for flocks, for corn, or for wine and oil — when you could have endless communion and fellowship with the master? His heart overflowed with affection for him — it was home, it was heaven, just to be with him where he was. He made it very plain: "I love my master....I will not go out free."

Can you see this bondservant standing by as the master bestows gifts and benefits on all the servants who were going out free? His heart rejoices, yet grieves. He is thinking to himself, "Don't they know this is the best life, serving the master in total yieldedness? How can they be satisfied to run their own lives, to simply receive his benefits and be satisfied with life on a lower plane, living on a lesser level of intimacy with the master?" Do they not know that bondservants "shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of his house, and that he shall make them drink of the river of his pleasures. For with him is the fountain of life, and in his light shall one discover light and life..." (Ps. 36:8,9).

What this servant is saying to us is simply this — Christ is enough! He is saying there is nothing in this world worth losing the sense of his presence. All the wealth and prosperity of the entire earth is not to be compared to a single day spent with Him. The pleasures at His right hand far exceed any ecstasy known to man. To know Him, to be with Him where He is, seated together in heavenly places is more than life itself. To serve Him, to be led by Him, to come and go as He alone commands — that is life on the highest plane.

Would you remind me you are a son, and not a servant? Then I would kindly remind you that Jesus, a Son who "thought it not robbery to be equal with God, made himself of no reputation, and took on the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man..." (Phil. 2:5–7). He could have come as a powerful Prince of the Almighty, trampling every foe — yet Christ chose to come as a bondservant, fully committed to His Father's interests.

Paul said, "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself a servant unto all..." (1 Cor. 9:19). We also read, "Simon Peter, a servant; Jude, the servant of God; James, servant of Christ." All were sons who took on the form of a servant.

Jesus as a bondservant to His heavenly Father would say nothing, do nothing, without direction from above. He said, "My meat is to do the will of him who sent me, and to finish his work" (John 4:34). He said, "I do nothing of myself...I do always those things that please him..." (John 8: 28,29).

This dedicated bondservant believed he had one mission in life, and that was to serve his master. He was not in it for an inheritance, even though it is written, "A wise servant shall rule over a son that causeth shame...and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren..." (Prov. 17:2). From morning to night, every waking hour was given in willing servitude to his master. Love made it easy to obey. He was not driven by guilt or a sense of obligation — he was motivated by love only. No wonder Jesus could say, "If you love me, you will obey me."

Beloved, it is not that the bondservant belittles the master's benefits, nor that he despises his rights. It is simply that he is so affectionate toward his master he is fulfilled, needing nothing more. He draws from that intimacy all the richness and fullness to satisfy his deepest needs. It is his relationship to the master that gives meaning to his life. He can say, "My master is enough. His house is home to me. My security, my family's security, is in the hand of the one I love and trust. I commit my all to him."

The Bondservant Who Refused to Go Out Free Gave Himself As a Living Sacrifice to His Master

He stood before witnesses and had his ear pierced to his master's door post as a public sacrament of service. "Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul [awl]; and he shall serve him for ever" (Ex. 21:6).

The Hebrew word for "judges" is *elohim*, or "God's representative". I see this as the Holy Spirit who seals our commitments to the Lord Jesus.

What a beautiful picture of love. Many have gone out free, having left their master's full-time service. But here stands one up against the door post, not even whimpering as the master drills a hole in his ear, into the wooden post. His glowing eyes are fixed on his master, his heart wells with humility that the master would permit him to stay and become his lifelong servant. This was no light sacrament — it was a lifetime commitment.

What must have been the response of the master? What love is this, that a servant would be willing to give his very life for the one he loved? He could say with Christ, "No one forces me, I lay down my life willingly." And suppose that bondservant was one of his own sons? What love must the master have felt from such a commitment?

David, the psalmist, said, "Mine ear hast thou digged." In other words, "There is a hole in my ear that marks me for the Lord, for life and eternity."

Have You Allowed The Holy Spirit to Dig in Your Ear? Do You Want a Pierced Ear?

There is nothing mystical about this way of living. It is worked out practically in our everyday life. It begins with a commitment to give the Lord the best of our time! This is what marked the bondservant — he pledged himself to giving wholly of his time in service to his master.

This is not to suggest we should all quit jobs and careers to enter full-time ministry. Too many nowadays are getting out of God's will, leaving the responsibilities of raising a family and pulling up roots to 'go out by faith'. Most are going out presumptuously. The greater thing is to stay put and give the Lord more quality time where you are. It is a matter of putting Christ at the center of everything, so that family, job, and all things revolve around Him. Christ becomes the focus of our thoughts. It means that time is found to be often and long in His presence, hearing His voice, obeying His commands.

The bondservant is more a giving, rather than a taking soul. With Paul he can say, "I have determined to know nothing among us save Christ and Him crucified." This servant is not interested in serving for reward or personal gain. His wages are the glory and honor he bestows on his Master.

There is no need to seek out some deep and mysterious meaning in the pierced ear, or in the process itself. All we need to see in it is that true bondservant who is committed to lifelong service is marked by the Lord in some special way, You can't miss him — he bears in his body the marks of his Master.

What marks the bondservant in this day and age? It is clearly revealed in the Word, and is unmistakable. It is the mark of a broken, contrite spirit that sighs and weeps over the abominations done against his Lord. It is the mark of the reddened eye that is grieved that the honor of the Master has been trampled in the sanctuary. Our Master does not drill the ear with an aul [awl], but breaks the heart with His hammer. "...And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof" (Ezek. 9:3.4).

Another mark on this bondservant is a circumcision made without hands. This speaks of total separation from the world and unto Christ. It means that all self-made plans, schemes, and dreams are abandoned, and the concerns and burdens of the Lord become supreme.

Have you seen any such servants — those marked by a separated life, given completely to the glory of Christ, who weep and sigh because of the coldness, the deadness, the unconcern of those who once were His servants? You can be sure that kind of servant has found something in God beyond freedom — he has discovered supernal joy and peace in the Holy Ghost.

Do you yearn to become the bondservant of our Lord Jesus Christ? Does your heart tell you that there is something glorious and liberating if you could just go deeper in Christ? Do you desire to spend more time in His presence, and His service? Do you sigh and grieve over the shallowness and lightness you see in the lives of Christians all about you? Are you sick of the loose morals, the growing apathy among God's people?

Do you dare step out and say, "Let me be one who is fully given to the Lord! Let me not condemn the freedom of others, but let me be the Lord's bondservant! Let me be so filled with Him — so reflective of who He is — that when all is crumbling in the world, people may see one who stands unshakeable because of intimacy with Him."

I have just begun to discover the glory of such a life. I am convinced that the greatest joy a human soul can find is in total yieldedness to the Lordship of Christ. We need not worry about how this commitment works out in us in practical ways. It is His part to tell us what to do, how and when to do it. Our part is to simply love Him, stay with Him, and offer our bodies to Him as living sacrifices for now and eternity. He will respond to that kind of love. He will give us of Himself — He will guide us even through death.

I see a remnant arising made up of committed bondservants who share a growing affection for the Lord Jesus Christ. They are not mystics or fanatics — they are simply so absorbed in loving and serving the Lord, the things of this world lose their charm. They refuse to "go out free" because they have tasted of the glory known only by those who lean on the Master's bosom.

They refuse to "go out free" because they have discovered something so far beyond freedom — and that is ascension life in heavenly Zion. They have heard their Master say,

"Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice...And the heavens shall declare his righteousness..." (Ps. 50:5,6). How true! The Lord will reveal His holiness to all who have gathered to Him to be His bondservants.

Best of all, it is in the Master's house, in His presence, that the bondservant discovers beauty, glorious guidance, and rock foundations.

"One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me upon a rock" (Ps. 27:4,5).

"Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever" (Ps. 73:25,26).

"Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing..." (Ps. 92:13,14).

"Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart...Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live, and keep thy word. Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law" (Ps. 119:2,17,18).

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