

GRACE GAZETTE

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Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

FREE SERVANTS

Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.--- For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. *Romans 6:18,20*

The common conception (actually a misconception), which is promoted by the purveyors of “free-will” and an “easy believe” gospel (so called) is that men are born in a neutral state wherein they can as easily choose to serve the LORD as to choose not to. With such a mindset they present man as possessing the ability to walk in paths of righteousness before Almighty GOD or to choose to walk in paths contrary to those commandments issued by the LORD, whenever and if ever they decide to. One does not have to be a deep-thinking Bible scholar to discover that such is clearly not the case.

The scripture abundantly declares that men will not choose the way of GOD and will at every opportunity run contrary to the way of GOD if left to themselves. *“As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes.”* (Rom 3:10-18) *“For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.”* (Ecc 7:20)

This is not a description of a few members of the human race, or even a majority, but rather the entirety of mankind. Paul says that Jew and Gentile, alike (see Rom. 3:9) are both “*under sin*”. If a man is deep enough under natural water, he will most certainly drown barring an unforeseen rescue. So too, are men in need of a deliverance which they cannot provide. For all men are “*under sin*” by reason of their natural birth as sinners. Even as David testified, *“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.”* (Psa 51:5)

Men are born “*under sin*” in the fact that they are under the curse and condemnation of the law (i.e.; *“the soul that sinneth, it shall die”*) *“For the wages of sin is death.”* (Rom 6:23) Men are “*under sin*” in that they are under its delusion from which they cannot escape by their own power. *“for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.”* (2Pet 2:19) The greatest delusion of the natural man is his belief that he can by some activity of his own, bring himself into a state of being accepted or received by the LORD. This delusion is promoted by religious teachers of all sorts who are as those “*blind guides*” spoken of by the LORD, who come saying *“peace peace when there is no peace”*. *“The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart.”* (Jer 14:14)

Men are “*under sin*” in that they desire to fulfil the lusts of their flesh and mind. All of these “lusts” are not necessarily “immoral”, as men would judge “morality”. In fact, many of them are the product of man’s belief that he can produce a righteousness of his own which will be somewhat acceptable in the sight of the LORD. Yet the grandest display of a man’s “righteousness”, is but as dung before the LORD, who will not even look upon sin, even when it is in the form of “righteousness”(as men

would consider it.) *"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." (Isa 64:6)*

Men are "under sin" as they willingly embrace the darkness into which they are born, quite content to continue therein. *"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."* (John 3:19-20) *"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."* (Rom 1:21-22) *"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."* (John 5:40)

Paul speaks of servitude and freedom in his letter to the Romans. No man, in his natural understanding, desires to be a "servant". Patrick Henry's words are used to stir up the natural mind of men in expressing this abhorrence of servitude, as he supposedly said; "Give me liberty or give me death." Yet men cannot escape being just such a servant because of the condemnation under which they are born. For Paul declares that these Roman Christians, were at one time (i.e.; before they were born again), *"the servants of sin."* They (as all men are by nature) were willingly in bondage and thus in servitude "to sin", from which they could not escape.

In this state of being, as he says, *"the servants of sin"* they were completely free *"from righteousness"*. By this he means that they were in no wise affected by true "RIGHTEOUSNESS". For they were in darkness and had neither any understanding of true "RIGHTEOUSNESS" nor any desire to walk in the precepts of "RIGHTEOUSNESS." So this "freedom" was actually their bondage, from which they had no desire to be set free. For in this state, they were quite content, *"Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."* (Eph 2:3)

Paul also declares that these same Roman Christians who were at one time, servants of sin and free from righteousness, have now miraculously been transformed into those who are *"free from sin"* (i.e.; its dominion and bondage) and now made the *"servants of righteousness"*. Thus, he exhorts them *"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."* (Rom 6:6-14)

The sons of GOD are made "new creatures" in CHRIST through no power or activity of their own, but rather by the same POWER that raised the LORD JESUS from the dead. This is that POWER of which HE spoke to Nicodemus, when HE told him, *"Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."* (John 3:7-8)

Paul wrote to the Corinthians saying, *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."* (2Cor 5:17) That which is become "new" (i.e.; heretofore unknown) is the clear understanding that JESUS CHRIST is become the RIGHTEOUSNESS of HIS people, by the shedding of HIS blood on Calvary's cross, HIS resurrection from the dead, and HIS ascension to the throne of GOD. All of their HOPE is here, and they have no confidence in their flesh nor expect that they can in any wise bring something of their own making to HIM for acceptance. They are free from sin by HIS work in their behalf and they have gladly become HIS servants. "I could not see; YOU gave me SIGHT. My life was dark, you gave me LIGHT. My way was wrong, YOU made it right. LORD let me serve you. I was alone; YOU befriended me. I was a slave; YOU set me free. I had no worth, but YOU wanted me. LORD let me serve you. My ship went down in a stormy sea, and it was YOU who rescued me. What kind of man would I be, if I didn't say, "LORD let me serve you."" (by Al Cloud, #184 GCSB) Are you HIS servant? mam