

Equipping Pastors International  
Dr. Jack L. Arnold  
Winter Springs, Florida  
Lesson #6

DISCIPLESHIP  
**Are You a Slave to God or Sin?**

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The words slavery, commitment, submission and yieldedness are not popular among men today, even among many professing Christians. The whole concept of authority is being rejected or toned down.
- B. Many evangelical appeals today say, "Will you serve and follow Christ?" It is quite easy for men to get the idea that they are doing God a favor by becoming Christians, and this logically leads to the next step that men can serve Christ at their convenience. However, the Bible tells us that in a spiritual sense every Christian is a slave to God. The moment a person trusts in Jesus Christ as his personal Lord and Savior, he has crowned Jesus Christ; his new Master and is made a slave to God in Christ.

II. CHRISTIANS ARE SLAVES

- A. The Christian, according to the Bible, is one who has become a slave of Jesus Christ (Rom. 1:1). In Romans 6:17-22, Paul says that his readers were once "slaves of sin" (6:17) but are now the "slaves of righteousness" (6:18), and they are enslaved to God (6:22). NOTE: The Christian does not become a slave but he is a slave. He has been purchased to slavery by the death of Christ (I Cor. 6:19-20).
- B. The whole idea of being a slave seems rather offensive, for men do not like to be told what to do. Yet, the Scriptures teach slavery to Jesus Christ. NOTE: Christians are almost afraid to commit to Christ, fearing that this will take the excitement and fun out of life. This, of course, is the devil's lie. Actually, commitment and slavery to Christ is the only place of freedom, blessing, adventure and excitement.
- C. What are the characteristics of a bondsman? (1) No rights of his own; (2) No will of his own; (3) No opinions of his own; (4) Total submission and loyalty to his master; (5) No freedom until death; (6) Must take orders without hesitation, and (7) Faithful service without compensation. NOTE: The slave of Christ realizes that Jesus has the supreme authority absolutely. There must be an unquestioning loyalty to the plain commands of Christ.

When a man volunteers for the military he makes just one decision and from that time on the army makes all decisions for him — when to go to bed, when to rise, when to salute. The military may involve such unpleasant things as forced marches and K.P. duty.

- D. A slave must work like a slave and expect little or no glory, honor, praise or thanks, and when the labor is done he will still recognize that he is an unprofitable servant. NOTE: Much of

Christian service is done out of pure obedience to Jesus Christ whom the Christian loves. There are no Christian labor unions that regulate the hours of a man's service for Christ. NOTE: The final reward for the Christian will be full experience of eternal life and to hear the words, **"Well done, my good and faithful servant (slave)" (Matt. 25:21).**

### III. CHRISTIANS ARE SLAVES TO HOLINESS (Rom. 6:17-22)

- A. Unsaved Are Slaves to Sin (6:17): Before salvation, a person is a slave to sin. This slavery may involve gross immorality or it may be just plain self-centeredness. Before trusting in Christ, a person lives for himself, hates all rivals to himself and loves only those who cater to him. His god is ego.
- B. Saved Are Slaves of Righteousness (6:18): At the moment of salvation, the Christian became a servant of righteousness. Christ set the Christian free from the old master, sin, and the Christian became a slave to his new Master, Jesus Christ. The Christian is a slave to God and righteousness in Christ. The Christian has been set free from sin in a positional sense in that sin is no longer his master. Christ is now Lord, King and Master. What a Christian is positionally is much different from what he is experientially. Positionally we are slaves but experientially we are becoming slaves. There are degrees of slavery.
- C. Saved Are to Yield Themselves to God (6:19): Since all Christians are slaves to God in Christ positionally, then they cannot be holy, happy and joyful until they begin to yield and submit to God for the purpose of righteousness. Christians are created slaves and can only be spiritually happy when yielded in their experience as a slave to Christ, their new Master. With the same intensity that they had given themselves to sin before salvation, they are now to give themselves to God as slaves to righteousness. Presentation of one's life to God will produce experiential holiness (sanctification). NOTE: True freedom is found only in slavery to Christ. This is the highest and only freedom. Only those who know the truth and walk in it are free (John 8:31-36). There is no real freedom outside of Jesus Christ. Freedom outside of Christ is bondage to sin. NOTE: Today men boast of their freedom and independence from God. They glory in free thought, free government, free love and free will. In all of man's human freedom he will find only slavery to sin, and this sin will catch up with him. But the Christian seeks only to be a bondsman of Jesus Christ. NOTE: A Christian is free only to be a slave of God and righteousness, and that is true freedom.
- D. Saved Are Slaves to God (6:22): Christians are slaves to God because Christ is their new Master. The result of yielding to Christ as slaves is a holy life. This holy life brings the Christian into a progressive realization of the eternal life that is his in Christ Jesus.

### IV. CHRISTIANS ARE TO BE COMMITTED TO CHRIST (Rom. 12:1-2)

- A. Jesus Christ, who is the Christian's new Master, is full of

grace. He is no tyrant. Christians are slaves but His service is not slavery. The slave of Christ has no mean taskmaster standing over him. His Master is Christ who always deals in love.

- B. The Christian is to "present" his life to God. The aorist tense in the Greek may mean "once and for all" or it may be constantive and imply a whole life of yieldedness to God. NOTE: While every Christian is in bondage to Christ, he is free and unsupervised. Christ wants voluntary submission to Him out of pure love for Him. The Christian is free to serve (cf. Ex. 21:1-6).
- C. The motive for service is not fear but love. The Christian serves Christ not out of duty but out of desire to please Him. It is only fitting that the believer should serve Him, for He is his Lord.

#### V. CONCLUSION

- A. Slavery to Christ means that a person's mind, will, emotion and body are committed to Jesus Christ. This means that everything is judged by Christ's standards and not human standards.
- B. The Christian faith is a revolutionary faith, and it demands a complete change of attitude. Christians must know and do the will of God as it is found in the Bible.

There is one thing about which I am in dead earnest, and that is the Communist cause. It is my life, my business, my religion, my hobby, my sweetheart, my wife and mistress, and my bread and meat. I work at it in the daytime and dream about it at night. Its hold grows on me and does not lessen as time goes on. Therefore, I cannot carry on a friendship, a love affair, or even a conversation without relating it to this force which both drives and guides my life. I evaluate people, books, ideas, and actions according to how they affect the Communist cause and by their attitude towards it. I have already been in jail because of my ideas and am ready to go before a firing squad. (A Communist Youth)

- C. The teachings of spiritual slavery to Christ by the Apostle Paul are essentially the same teachings of Jesus Christ on discipleship, for a Christian and a disciple are synonymous (cf. Acts 11:26 – "**And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.**").