

## Slaves Forever Deuteronomy 15:12-18

### Background on Loving God

- The Greatest Commandment, see Deuteronomy 6:4-9.
- Loving Obedience, see Deuteronomy 10:12-13.

### Background on Slavery in the Bible

- Very unlike American slavery
- Regarding kidnapping, see Exodus 21:16.
- Regarding escaped slaves, see Deuteronomy 23:15-16.
  
- Kidnapping punishable by death.
- Escaped slaves must be protected.
- Today's passage: Deuteronomy 15:12-18

### Service as an Expression of Love

- 15:12 Mandatory freedom
- 15:13-14 Mandatory provision
- 15:15 Remembrance of past slavery
  - Remembrance of God's redemption
  
- 15:16-18 The choice of service or freedom
- The commandments were written on the doorpost in Deuteronomy 6.
- The household was under the authority of God.
- The slave's ear was pierced at the door.
- He or she now belonged to the household.
  
- The choices were:
  - Freedom with separation
  - Love with continuing slavery
- Such service was perfect freedom.
- It was motivated by devotion – an expression of love.

### The Loving Service of Jesus

- See Philippians 2:7-8
- The Loving Service of Jesus
  - *Jesus could have gone out free. He owed no debt of sin; he was no sinner. He had no penalty to pay. But he loved us and gave himself for us.*

▪ J. Vernon McGee

- See also Psalm 40:6-8
- Literally, “ears you have dug for me”
- NKJV = “My ears you have opened.”
  
- Hebrews 10:5-7 takes this passage from a different translation and applies it to Christ.
- Also see Isaiah 50:5-6.
  
- Jesus took on a human nature with a human body.
- And it led to his crucifixion for you and me.
- This was all done in loving, willing obedience.
- See Hebrews 5:8.
  - *“We are to remember that we are debtors to Divine justice, and have nothing to pay with. That we are slaves, poor, and perishing. “But the Lord Jesus Christ, by becoming poor, and by shedding his blood, has made a full and free provision for the payment of our debts, the ransom of our souls, and the supply of all our wants.”*
    - Matthew Henry (1662 – 1714)

### **Our Response: Slaves Forever**

- Let’s listen to Peter, speaking on behalf of the Twelve.
- See John 6:66-69
  
- Bible commentator R.M. Edgar, on Deuteronomy 15:16,
- *“We are the Lord’s slaves after having become the Lord’s freemen. He delivers us from the slavery of sin, and then he introduces us to his service ... And lo, we find it so blessed that we insist on our ears being bored, and our being made his slaves forever. Now obedience is the slavery of love.”*
  
- John Gill (1697 – 1771) on the same verse said,
- *“This is an emblem of the cheerful and constant obedience of the people of Christ to him their master, flowing from love to him; whom they love above all persons and things, with all their heart and soul.”*
  
- Consider also,
  - Paul in Romans 1:1
  - James in James 1:1
  - Peter in 2 Peter 1:1
  - Jude in Jude 1:1
  - John in Revelation 1:1

Characteristics of lifelong service:

- Our lives are not our own. We belong to the Master and have chosen to stay.
  - Our primary motivation needs to be love for the Master, not our own needs or desires.
  - Our primary task is obedience to the Master. Our ears are open to him.
  - Our success will not be determined by standards that we set for ourselves or that the world sets for us.
  - We will trust the Master for provision and protection.
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- As with the master in Deuteronomy 15, Jesus offers us our complete freedom.
  - His servants do not serve under compulsion.
  - We are not forced to stay.
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- But then we must ask ourselves, "To whom shall we go?"
  - Do we not love our master and his household?
  - Are we not well off with him?
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- See Revelation 22:1-5.
  - The most sensible response we can give to Christ is to make ourselves his slaves forever.