



Written by [Staff](#) on October 27, 2020

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Letters To The Editor

What the Bible Says About Slavery

In William Grigg's otherwise excellent article "The Great Emancipation" (August 24 issue), he quotes the chief justice of the King's Bench as saying, "Slavery was sanctioned by the Bible." On the contrary, biblically, men stealing (involuntary servitude through kidnapping) was punishable by death (Ex. 21:16; Deut. 24:7, cf. I Tim. 1:10). Slaves were freed every seven years (Ex. 21:2; Deut. 15:12f). Jesus was the fulfillment of the year of Jubilee, which had as a major goal the freeing of the slaves (Luke 4:1f).

We are all slaves to sin, and Jesus frees us from that condition. A warning of the Bible that desperately needs to be heeded today is the reminder that the borrower is a slave to the lender (Proverbs 22:7). Slavery is not a desirable circumstance, but many things are less than ideal in a fallen creation. ☐ God does not endorse or encourage slavery.

The apostle Paul is often criticized for urging slaves to obey their masters and serve them as they would the Lord. Yet, this does not imply approval of slavery. The slave rebellion of Spartacus approximately a century earlier was very fresh in the minds of the Romans. A new religion that already garnered much hostility from Jews and Romans alike would have faced much greater persecution and opposition if associated with a slave rebellion.

Christianity recognizes that social changes are better wrought through changing hearts rather than trying to force social change through violence or coercion. Quiet persuasion is always the best.

Abraham had slaves, but it is clear from Scripture that they were regarded as being like his children. They were circumcised, as Abraham did his own sons. An aspect of ancient slavery that is often overlooked is the fact that there was no social safety net in that world. If a person or family could not be supported from his/their own efforts, there was no welfare office where one could apply for government assistance and food stamps. Slavery presented a merciful means of providing for those who could not provide for themselves. Indentured servanthood offered the means whereby needed skills could be acquired. It was like a tuition-free trade school. So this whole subject is much more complex than simply saying the Bible sanctioned slavery.

Since Jesus came to set us free, clearly freedom, and not slavery, is God's ultimate purpose for mankind.

Steven M. Schlei
Dunnellon, Florida

Corrupt Poverty Organizations

Your discussion on foreign aid by governments and the UN is much-needed (September 7 issue). Many years ago my priest friend from Uganda told me a story. A friend of his from Kenya spent years driving a truck from Kenya to Sudan for the World Health Organization. The trucks contained food and were sealed. His job was simply to deliver the needed supplies. One day he and his companion were driving the truck and were extremely hungry themselves. They decided to open the back. What a shock to see the truck loaded not with food, but with arms. He quit the job and joined the seminary.

Rhonda Dehn



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Sent via e-mail

Where Are the Political Giants?

A simple question concerning an Article V Convention:

Is there anyone of the politicians backing the convention or a possible member of it who are even close to being the equal of George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, or, of course, James Madison?

This question makes clear the damage a constitutional convention would do to the Constitution. Anyone who thinks damage would not be done to the best document ever written by man is a fool at best.

Howard Last
Cheyenne, Wyoming



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