

# Holy Bondage: Refusing to Sell Our Souls to the Love of This World

It has been said that liberty to your spirit is a bondage to your flesh, while liberty to your flesh is a bondage to your spirit. This is true, but let us uncover a deeper truth. There is a holy bondage.

“Now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what shall befall me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. But none of these things deter me. Nor do I count my life of value to myself ... ” (Acts 20:22-24).

Notice how this same verse reads in the Amplified.

“And now, you see, I am going to Jerusalem, bound by the (Holy) Spirit, and obligated and compelled by the [convictions of my own] spirit, not knowing what will befall me there; except that the Holy Spirit clearly and emphatically affirms to me in city after city that imprisonment and suffering await me. But none of these things move me; neither do I esteem my life dear to myself, if only I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have obtained [entrusted to me by] the Lord Jesus ... ” (Acts 20:22-24, AMP).

Many professing Christians today are walking in a false liberty—living in ease and doing as they please. A liberty that does not produce a holy bondage, however, is a false liberty.

How can you say that you're more than a conqueror (Rom. 8:37) when you won't even deny yourself? How can you declare that Christ is your righteousness (1 Cor. 1:30) when you don't even walk in righteousness? How can you say you love God when you

don't even love your neighbor? Who can boast of dying for Jesus when they're not even living for Him?

With all the teaching we have on grace today, some good and some bad, the grace of God has been greatly hindered for lack of the fear of God.

Without the fear of God the grace of God will be received in vain (2 Cor. 6:1; 2 Cor. 7:1). The fear of God is birthed and nurtured through the knowledge of eternal judgment and the eternal consequences of living in sin and as we please, independently of God.

There are certain often-repeated phrases in the church world today that create soft loose attitudes in believers if not tempered with a fuller truth. One is this: "God loves you the way you are." That is a true statement, but it often produces a false liberty void of the fear of the Lord. Of course God loves you unconditionally the way you are, but He loves you too much to leave you the way you are. God's will is for each of us to be more and more transformed into the image of His Son Jesus Christ.

Here's another one: "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life." That is absolutely true. But again, we must ask ourselves, what is a wonderful plan? Is it the American dream of wealth and happiness? Is it the safe and secure life within the comforts of our luxurious homes?

The apostle Paul was told early on from the time of his conversion that he would suffer greatly for the cause of Christ (Acts 9:15-16). Peter was told that he would die a martyr's death (John 21:18). Jesus promised persecution to His other followers as well (Matt. 10:17-22). Was this God's wonderful plan for their lives?

Today when some believers don't get the provision or blessing they want from God they are so quick to doubt His love for them. With all the trials and opposition they had, I often

wonder how in the world these early martyrs even knew that God loved them. For them, the cross of Jesus Christ was enough. God had already proven His love there. The cross was a symbol of liberty for them, but also a symbol of the debt they owed. True liberty for them meant a holy bondage.

The above statements are true, but they often create a liberty in the flesh instead of a holy bondage to God's complete will.

Joseph was sold into Egypt as a slave thousands of years ago. Today there are still some places where slaves are bought and sold, and used for cheap hard labor or for sex. But a holy slave cannot be bought or sold. He belongs to His Supreme Master. A holy slave is not hired but is a willing volunteer. He does not do cheap labor, but it is the costly kind that he embraces—the kind that sometimes costs much toil, blood and tears, the kind that comes with great service and noble sacrifice.

Holy slaves are the only ones who are truly free. Nothing in this world binds them. No man owns them. Holy slaves are wholly bound to one certain sound. They live each day to hear their Master say, "You are my son (or daughter) in whom I am well pleased." They live with eternity in full view. They're running in a race. They're picking up the pace. They're pressing for the prize. They know the end is near when they will look into His eyes. This hope keeps them pure (1 John 3:2-3), and so their entrance is sure.

Are you a holy slave?

**Bert M. Farias**, revivalist and founder of Holy Fire Ministries, is the author of several books including *The Real Spirit of Revival* and the newly released *My Son, My Son—a beautiful father-son memoir co-written with his son Daniel for the purpose of training up a holy generation. He ministers interdenominationally and cross-culturally in nations,*

*churches, conferences, on the streets, and in homes. He and his wife also host The Holy Ghost Forum—a school of the Spirit. Follow him at Bert Farias and Holy Fire Ministries on Facebook or @Bertfarias1 on Twitter.*