



Blackfoot

Church of Christ

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Prisoners-- there are both GOOD and BAD!

By Bill Sexton

Recently I received a letter, in which the person mentions another as being "in prison, mentally, physically, and emotionally."

That triggered in my mind to THINK about different kinds of prisons, and inmates. Let us look at some prisoners the Bible speaks of and then some of men and then some of our own making.

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,² With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;³ Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.⁴ There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; ⁵ One Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Eph. 1:1-6)

He was a prisoner, when he wrote the letter of Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. However, in our text that wasn't the prison he was mentioning-- He had in fact committed himself to the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus being a FREE MAN, he was truly under the rule of Jesus Christ, and he pointed to his desire of others, to conduct themselves properly, recognizing certain eternal facts. He had voluntarily committed His life to the Rule of Christ, as Lord!

Truly one is a servant to the one (or whosoever) he commits his/her life to:

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?¹⁷ But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.¹⁸ Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." (Rom. 6:16-18).

If one is not under the Lordship of Christ, having voluntarily committed his/her life in obedience to the gospel of Christ, then that person is under the rule of the evil one, and is thus a servant of sin, separated from God, and headed to eternal destruction (2 Thess. 1:7-10; Rom 3:23; 6:23).

One can be, and evidently many are in the prison of drugs, alcohol, gambling, and various other rulers that are not good; they are all bad!

How sad it is to observe in our day people who have voluntarily given themselves over to alcohol or drug additions. I grew up around the alcohol and have seen so many lives for all practical purposes destroyed by it, and made many around them miserable, too. I have nothing good to say of the stuff.

However, in our day, other drugs are the MASTER of many people, too. They have had such presented to them as something that is good, that will make them feel a HIGH, and they get hooked, and the drugs capture them and imprison them. How sad, and each one causes many others to live in sadness and misery, also.

Another factor (activity) that has captured many too, is GAMBLING. It is gaining more and more acceptances, and is presented as something wonderful and exciting, the idea of winning and getting something for nothing. What a deception. I hear such advertised on radio and TV, and it stirs my inner being, and I turn them off. Yet, such is all around us, and many wastes their hard-earned money and get themselves

into a situation that they become slaves to it trying to pay off the losses.

Beloved, one can become a prisoner to pleasure. The Bible speaks of those who will love pleasure more than God (2 Tim. 3:1-4). Friends, a Christian should find pleasure in being faithful to God, being with His people, and participating in things that are right. That kind of pleasure is lasting. The pleasure of the flesh, without God's acceptance and authorization is destructive. Don't be, please!

Are you a prison, allowing things mentioned or others, perhaps, to be your master? Jesus should be man's rightful ruler.

Comments by Ross Ward;

Bro. Sexton references some of the common addictions in our country and it is likely that we have witnessed the powerful draw of these, even to the point we find people who are slaves to their habits. The idea of being slaves or addicted to something goes beyond those of the sensual nature. We certainly see much of that around us, but do you know anybody addicted or a slave to their work? I suspect we probably do. When we consider Jesus' teachings, we see that those who sin are called slaves to sin. John 8:34, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever commits sin is the servant (slave) of sin." When we consider the life style of the Christian in the bible, we see one who is a slave to Christ and one another. Gal 5:13, "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve (Be slaves to) one another." Many recognize the consequences of addiction in our world, and the consequences are bad, but the consequences of sin are even greater. Being a slave to Christ and each other fulfills His will and provides for an eternal home in heaven. Truly a great reward!

Prayer Requests & Announcements

- Tom is recovering from back surgery
- Chad and Paxton will be traveling back from DC this week. Ross & Debbie are away in AR this weekend; Rachel will be traveling to AR This week.
- Keep April in your prayers as she deals with health issues
- Tammy Woodward is suffering serious effects from cancerous brain tumors.
- The Christians in the Philippines.
- Bible class at Chad and Kass' postponed

For prayer requests, call or text

Chad @ (208) 221-2587 or Ross @ (208) 680-6590

Assignments

<p><u>Today</u> Bible Study – David Porter Song Leader – David Porter Lord's Table – Chad Mitchell Sermon – Ben Palmer</p>	<p><u>Wednesday</u> Bible Study – Chad Mitchell Song Leader – David Porter Invitation – Ben Palmer</p>
<p><u>Next Sunday</u> Bible Study – Tom Mitchell Song Leader – Ray Mitchell Lord's Table – Larry Thompson Sermon – David Porter</p>	<p><u>Next Wednesday</u> Bible Study – Chad Mitchell Song Leader – Ray Mitchell Invitation – Chad Mitchell</p>

Blackfoot Church of Christ
370 North Shilling Ave.
Blackfoot, Idaho 83221

Meeting Times:

Sunday Class 10:00AM
Sunday Worship 11:00AM
Wednesday Class 7:30PM



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