

The Slavery of Sin

by C.I. Scofield

The sermon teaches that sin enslaves, including spiritual deadness and self-righteousness, but the truth, specifically Jesus Christ, is the delivering power from sin.

Topics: "Sin And Bondage", "Spiritual Freedom"

Description

C.I. Scofield preaches on the continuous test of discipleship, emphasizing that true disciples continue in their faith. He delves into the enslavement of sin, highlighting that even those who appear outwardly righteous can be bound by sins like bigotry, self-righteousness, and unbelief. The lesson underscores that the bondage of sin extends beyond outward sins to include spiritual deadness and self-righteousness, with the ultimate deliverance coming through knowing the Truth, who is Jesus Christ. The power of truth, both in Christ and in the revealed Word, is the key to freeing individuals from various forms of bondage.

Transcript

(John viii:31-40.)

I. The Analysis.

- (1) The test of discipleship is continuous. All who truly are disciples do continue.
- (2) Truth or tradition; truth or privilege, which? (verses 32-40).

II. The Heart of the Lesson.

That sin enslaves is a truth level to all human experience. The most obvious instance is that of the drink habit. Neither argument nor illustration is needed to convince us that drink enslaves its victims. But the men to whom Christ was talking in our lesson for to-day were not drinking men. They lived lives of the extremest puritanic strictness. Moreover, they were religionists whose whole lives were absorbed in religious observances. And not only so, their religion was not heathenism, but a religion revealed by the true God, and every form of it was observed by them with scrupulous exactness. They had the profoundest reverence for the name of God, and were assiduous in attendance on synagogue and temple. Why should Jesus tell such men that they were the bond slaves of sin? They did not steal, nor blaspheme, nor drink. They did not play worldly games, nor attend the theatres when in Rome.

Their sins were bigotry, self-righteousness and unbelief. And to those sins they were in a slavery so absolute that they did not even know it. Nay, they were most self-righteous and self-complacent at those very points. There is no heart so hard as the heart of a religious formalist. No other sort of man is so hopelessly cruel, so relentlessly unforgiving. No other man is so merciless toward the weak and erring. The two offences of Jesus which condemned Him in the estimation of these good people were His constant violation of their conventional ideas of strict Sabbath observance, and His close touch upon the lives of "sinners."

They were bound hand and foot in mere traditionalism and formalism; and, with a real zeal of God, they hounded Jesus to the cross. The lesson is that the slavery of sin is not confined to the outbreaking and openly shameful sins; that spiritual deadness and the monstrous sin of self-righteousness also enslave.

That is one-half of the heart of this lesson. The other half is that whether the bondage be that of drink or of Pharisaic correctness, the one delivering power is the truth. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." And all real knowledge of the truth begins with knowing Him who is the Truth. Truth is not an impersonal ethic, primarily. Truth, primarily, is just Jesus Christ; the ethic is incidental. Then, in a secondary but equally important sense, the whole body of revelation which gathers about and interprets Christ and His work is "the Truth."

Have we wondered sometimes at the tremendous emphasis which Scripture puts upon the divine sacredness of that body of revelation? Has it seemed to us harsh when Paul solemnly denounces the anathema of God on the preacher of "any other gospel than that which you have received"? Does it seem unduly harsh when a Spirit filled apostle delivered to Satan that he might learn not to blaspheme one worse error was the seemingly venial one of maintaining that the resurrection had passed already? (1 Tim. i:20; 2 Tim. ii:17-18). It was because the only means which can avail for the saving and disentrallment of men is the Truth.

The incarnate Truth, Christ, saves the slaves of sin by His power, from the bondage of sin, as He saves them from the guilt of sin by His blood; and the revealed Truth saves men from mental and spiritual bondage by the new light which it brings.

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