Slavery And Liberty

by Pastor Cornelius R. Stam

We thank God for Abraham Lincoln and for his part in emancipating the black slaves in the United Sates. Yet, in a deeper sense, there is a slavery from which we all need to be emancipated.

The children of Adam are slaves by birth. Partaking of his fallen nature they find it an uphill fight to do right and easy to do wrong. No mother has ever had to teach her child to tell lies, or to steal or to disobey. Every child does these things naturally. All, by nature, are slaves to sin.

Some, on the other hand, have sought to make themselves slaves to the Ten Commandments in order to overcome their natural tendencies toward evil, but this does not produce the desired results. God did not give the Law to help us to be good, but to show us that we are bad and need a Savior. In Rom. 3:19 He says that He gave the Law "that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become [be exposed as] guilty before God"

Romans 3:19 KJV "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."

and in Verse 20 He says that "by the law is the knowledge of sin."

Romans 3:20 KJV "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

Only believers in the finished work of Christ are liberated from sin and its results. This does not mean that it is not possible for them to sin, but that it is now possible for them not to sin — to have victory in any given case. "For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law but under grace" (**Rom. 6:14**).

In grace Christ died to pay for our sins and in response to that grace believers seek to live for Him, just out of sheer love and gratitude for what He has done for them. This is the secret of victorious living, and God would have us keep it that way. **Galatians 5:1** says:

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

Yet, he also cautions believers, who enjoy this wonderful liberty:

"Take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak" (1st Corinthians 8:9).

"For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another" (Galatians 5:13).

"Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth" (Rom. 14:22).