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THE SLAVE

LUKE 12

The Blessed Slave

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"The Slave: The Blessed Slave"

PART I

Luke 12

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"THE SLAVE: The Blessed Slave - Part I"

There are many words in Scripture to describe believers: Saints, Sons (sons and daughters of God), and we are slaves. We're Joint Heirs with Christ, Members of His Body, Branches, and Sheep...but the dominating word is **slave**.

In the Old Testament, the word translated "slave" is used as either a noun or verb. It is used 1,100 times, and yet it is only translated "slave" in the King James once.

In the New Testament, the Greek word is **doulos** and it is used 150 times, and, only a few times, is it translated "slave" in the early English Bibles, and then only when it refers to an actual, physical slave (like in Ephesians 6) or when it refers to us being "slaves of sin" (Romans 6). The majority of the time the word is translated "servant."

Yet, the most comprehensive word in the NT - **doulos** - is never referring to a servant.

Gerhard Kittel, in his Theological Dictionary, said there was no study of the history of the word necessary, because the word is always referring to a slave - not a servant.

"The meaning is so unequivocal and self-contained that it is superfluous to give examples of the individual terms or to trace the history of the group."

But there is a difference in a servant and a slave:

- Servants were hired; slaves were owned
- Servants had freedom of who they worked for; slaves had no such freedom.
- Servants were considered more of an employee; slaves were considered property
- Servants could have several employer at one time; slaves could not serve two masters.

But in the Roman Empire, almost 20% of all the Roman population were slaves. That was approximately 12 million individuals. They had the opportunity to earn their freedom, eventually becoming citizens and even masters themselves. Additionally, the slaves of a good master enjoyed a stable and relatively comfortable life, and the slaves of important people often possessed a certain degree of their own prestige and influence.

First-century slaves might be highly educated or trained as specialists in their fields, allowing them to function in the same capacity as free persons. In fact, some slaves even worked as doctors, teachers, or philosophers in the employ of their masters. Though Roman society never viewed slavery as the ideal, the institution did not generally carry the same stigma that is associated with the eighteenth-century slave trade.



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But it is here, in **Luke 12**, the slave was accountable to the Master for how he used the resources of the Master – especially in the Master's absence – and liable for how they treated their fellow servants.

You see from **Luke 12** why I am calling this "**The Blessed Slave.**"

I. We are blessed not to be a slave to sin.

Everybody is a slave to someone or something. There is really no such thing as a free will. Our will is in bondage to either sin, or self.

John Newton, author of "Amazing Grace," remembered what it was like to be unconverted, to be one of those who "act as Satan bid(s)," bound by "chains of guilt and sin." Newton called this pitiful existence "careless awhile they live in sin, enslaved to Satan's power." For in "the castle of the [unbelieving] human heart," [Satan] reigns, and keeps his goods in peace. The soul is pleased to wear his chains, nor wishes a release.

- **John 8:34** – *"Truly, truly I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin."*
- **Romans 6:16** – *"you are the one's slaves whom you obey..."*
- **Romans 6:17** – *"slaves of sin"*
- **Romans 6:18** – *"having been set free from sin..."*
- **Romans 6:20** – *"slaves of sin"*

II. We are blessed to be slaves of Christ.

The metaphor of us being "slaves" or "servants" is used more frequently than the term Christian.

It was the single most used term Paul had of himself that we see in:

- **Romans 1:1**
- **Galatians 1: 10**
- **Titus 1:1.**

"Paul, a slave of Jesus Christ..."

Philippians 1:1 – *"Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus"*



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James, the half-brother of Jesus, did not flaunt the card of being his half-brother; instead in **James 1:1** said, *"James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ."*

Peter, too - **II Peter 1:1** - *"Simeon Peter, a slave and an apostle of Jesus Christ..."*

Jude 1 - *"a slave of Jesus Christ and a brother of James..."*

John sees us as servants in **Revelation 1:1** - *"The revelation of Jesus Christ that God gave Him to show His slaves what must quickly take place. He sent it and signified it through His angel to His slave John..."*

The 144,000 in **Revelation 7:3** are called the *"slaves of our God"*
Even in Heaven, as described in **Revelation 22:3**, *"and His slaves will serve Him."*

Even Jesus is described as a servant in places like **Isaiah** and **Philippians 2**.

III. We are blessed to have no personal rights.

A slave had no rights. He could not be a citizen of the country. He could not give a witness in a court of law. He could not own anything. He could not be defended in a court of law. Legally, he was not a person, but a possession. He had no power over himself.

Philippians 2:3-5 - *"Do nothing out of rivalry or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. Everyone should look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Make your own attitude that of Christ Jesus..."*

That's why Jesus said you are no longer in charge of your life...

Luke 9:23 - *"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."*