

GOD'S "WORD" THE NEW TESTAMENT PERMITS SLAVERY

The Catholic Church is not as against slavery as it lets on. It openly taught in the pre-political correctness days that "Slavery not against natural law [immoral] for it is okay to own a person's work but not the person." It only condemns slavery that claims to own the person but all slave-masters would pretend to own the person's labour not the person anyway so what use is that?

The Old Testament is clear that God commands slavery in a way that deliberately opposes the dignity of the slave. We must remember that Exodus gives the words God used when he legislated that a slave may be beaten badly but care must be taken not to do them permanent damage. It was okay to beat them up savagely as long as they didn't die during the beating but after. Read Exodus 21:7-11. When God went out of his way to make such an evil law in relation to slaves, he clearly accepts the notion of slaves being inferior beings. Nobody can be sane and argue that Israel needed the right to abuse slaves which was why God tolerated the abuse. That excuse cannot hold water here and it in fact insults those who suffered because of God's law. God gives no hint that he let the beatings take place for cultural reasons or because the people were intransigent. In fact he gives no hint that the laws are temporary or provisional. The Law of Moses claims to be an everlasting law. Indeed Exodus attacks the culture of occultism and idolatry. Exodus presents Israel as struggling to accept the law so it is nonsense to imagine that poor God had no choice but to make some bad laws to avoid having to make worse ones.

The principle behind slavery in the Old Testament is that you can buy or sell or steal a person. Slaves from other nations were put up for sale to Israelites. The contract was to be forever though there were some ways out that did not apply in most cases. In a shocking example of the corruption of children, Israelites could grant slaves to their children as inheritances (Leviticus 25:44-46). Foreign women and children could be taken during war and forced to be slaves. {This is not mentioned but it is obvious this led to sex slavery!} The Old Testament stresses how God owns everything. Thus if you told somebody back then how wrong slavery was they could say, "But God knows best and he owns them and thus he gives them to us. It is because God owns us he can do what he wants."

The New Testament ratification of slavery was unavoidable because Jesus condoned all the evil of the Torah, the Law of Moses, because he understood this book as the word of God. Slavery was blessed under the Law of Moses which is the word of God according to Christians and Jews. My New American Catholic Bible of 1971 contains copious notes verifying that the Old and New Testaments permitted slavery. The New Testament went as far as to require that slaves be better slaves! As the Christadelphian booklet, Christ and Protest observes, slaves were never even told by the Bible prophets and authors and God to ask good masters for their freedom (page 3).

Christadelphians argue from this that it is wrong to be assertive and that one must not defend oneself but that presupposes that slavery is wrong. The Bible commands assertiveness in the cause of Christ so they are wrong - the Bible thinks that slavery is lawful.

Bible believers for most of history, kept slaves and upheld slavery as a cultural norm and a system. Those who claimed to be Christian and who battled to abolish slavery found that real Bible believers were an obstacle. But they won the day. They probably doubted their faith enough to refuse to endorse slavery though it was commanded and blessed by the Bible God.

Wilberforce is often mentioned as having fought slavery on biblical grounds. But the fact remains that the majority of Christians of the day were okay with it and had communion every Sunday as if they were right with God. Religion's function as a placebo for evil enabled the problem of slavery and even celebrated it. And if Christianity is so great it took it a long time to decide that slavery is a sin. The Old Testament God condoned masters battering their slaves almost to death and as for Jesus and his cronies, they did say things that imply slavery is problematic but they were careful not to call it a sin. A religion of hypocrisy and moral placebos is hardly a good protector of human rights. It could turn evil again in an instant.

St Paul may have really written the Epistle to the Colossians and the one to the Ephesians. Even if he did not they still betray his support for slavery for they were certainly written by somebody who was well acquainted with his

religious policies. He tells those who own slaves to be clement towards them (Colossians 4:1; Ephesians 6:5,9). These masters are Christians because Paul advises them to be gentle in honour of Jesus.

Ephesians 6:5 is taken as proof that Christianity advocates slavery to men. But take a close look. Jesus is a literal slave master. It is definite that the faith recognises slavery when Christ is the owner. This slavery is taken in a symbolic sense but in the light that the New Testament was written for ordinary people who had no time to study it should not be. We should argue that if Jesus can keep slaves man can too.

Paul wrote his shortest epistle which was addressed to Philemon in about 63 AD who lived in Colossae. Philemon's Christian lifestyle is praised though it included buying and selling slaves. Some say that even if Paul repudiated the practice his clear conviction that Christ's second advent was so near that it would not have inspired him to campaign for greater justice. That is no excuse for he could have stopped his bellwethers from approving slavery with one or two words. It is certain that Paul approved of people having slaves.

In case anybody says that Paul meant servants and not slaves let this sink in: Colossians 4:1 tells slave owners to be fair to their slaves for they too have a master in Heaven. People are not to work for God for a reward so they are slaves and they have to be slaves for the penalty of disobedience is so terrible. Paul means slaves all right.

Peter urged battered slaves to put up with their troubles because Jesus taught that God approves of a person who won't protest when they are abused (1 Peter 2:18-20). He was more concerned about the rights of the evil masters than the victims.

Jesus approved of slavery when he recommended us becoming slaves to one another. We are to be slaves to God for we are to serve him for his sake and not for any benefit even if there will be any benefit. And God could thrust you into Hell forever for a sin committed on your deathbed even if you lived a near-perfect life.

Christians approve of the New Testament God's approbation of slavery but say that the reason for his approval was that the slave system was too deeply woven into the fabric of society for anybody to pick out. But this is untrue for God gave laws that the people hated far more than that. No hostels for runaway slaves were set up which proves the point. Thought God has the power to melt the frozen heart? His Christianity is full of unwholesome and shocking ideas like Jesus dying as a human sacrifice!

The Magnificat, the prayer recited by Mary at the Visitation and which is the most important prayer to Christians next the Lord's Prayer, hints that slavery is right. Mary calls herself God's slave-woman meaning she classed herself the lowest of the low in that Roman society she was part of and handmaiden is just a polite but inaccurate translation (page 99, Biblical Exegesis and Church Doctrine).

In the past, the Church tended to mask the Bible teaching in favour of slavery by translating the Hebrew word ebed for slaves as servants. This happened in the King James Bible. The same happens to the Greek words, pais and doulos and sundoulos. That is inconsistent for a slave is a person forced to serve you and a servant is a person who does it willingly (New Age Bible Versions, page 225). The King James translated slave as servant in Philemon 16. In it, Paul says that he is sending Onesimus back to Philemon but more than as a slave – as a brother. It is stupid to imagine that Paul means more than as a servant for if Philemon was a true Christian he would have already considered Philemon to be a brother if he was a servant. But you cannot suppose that a slave is your brother – slavery attacks human equality. Onesimus is not sent back to Philemon to be a slave but a servant. Paul did not like Onesimus being a slave which indicates that Paul knew it was wrong. But despite that he hypocritically pretended that a slave could be thought of as a brother! How fair! Paul had no right to trust Philemon to send the boy back to him for when Philemon enslaved the boy and abused him he could do it again.

Some will tell you that that the apostle Paul warned that Christians must not become the slaves of any man inferring that slavery was wrong (1 Corinthians 7:21-23). There Paul says that if you were a slave when you converted then stay one unless your freedom is offered to you for he who was a slave when called is free in the Lord though he who was free when called is a slave in Christ. However it is certain that when slaves are not told to run away or to clamour for freedom but to leave it up to the master that he thinks the masters have a right to the slaves. He then warns that since we were bought with a price, the death of Jesus, we must not become the slaves of men. Paul is talking here at this point about spiritual slavery to men such as priests and false prophets who have

you working for them and have you getting nothing back from God though you expect to get blessings from God. Paul is talking about freedom from such for Jesus did not buy slaves back from their masters and couldn't for he never paid a ransom of money. The converted slave to man is free from slavery to sin in the Lord though he is still a slave to man in the ownership sense. The freeman who is converted becomes a slave to the Lord for he has to do good for the Lord and not for his own sake so like a slave he does not work for rewards. Paul makes it clear that the slave should remain a slave if his freedom is not offered to him and that Jesus having paid for him does not give him the right to refuse to be a slave any more to man. So when he says that Jesus paid for you do not become the slaves of man he means do not become the spiritual slaves of man for the price paid was a spiritual price and was paid to God not man. So you don't become slaves of men in the sense that men become like gods to you. (Pope take note. Would this warning have any meaning if Paul believed in your system where priests control the powers of God to forgive sins and feed us with his body and blood?) The Christians who use these verses to improve the reputation of the New Testament are just cons.

The Bible is clear that underpaid or not you have a duty to live simply and not ask for a raise. John the Baptist told the Roman soldiers to avoid violence and be content with their wages (Luke 3:14). He meant unjust and unnecessary violence for violence in self-defence is not wilful violence but self-defence. This is only natural when Jesus said that if a soldier forces you to go one mile with him carrying his pack then go another mile with him (Matthew 5:41). You won't even get gratitude for that so when you are to work without gratitude or anything for yourself you may have to work with little or no wage. Jesus commanded that we pay what should not be paid (Matthew 22:21) implying that we should not seek to be paid if the employer does not want to pay us. Though the Bible sees pagan nations as having no right in themselves to punish anybody for they are evil themselves, God uses them to punish and execute evildoers (1 Peter 2:13-17). By implication he uses bad employers to punish us or to discipline us. The parable in Matthew 20 that has God paying those who work for him at the last minute the same as those who laboured long for him infers that trade unionism is sinful. If it had not been God would have set ones up in the Old Testament. But this is unjust. God has no right to show one more gratitude than another especially when we all deserve a second chance no matter what we have done.

The New Testament is pro-slavery and if Christians who we know universally condoned and encouraged the keeping of slaves up until a few centuries ago really believed it was God's word they would still be keeping slaves.

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