

## We Must Change to be Changed! – Part 1: Changing Our Minds About Sin and Freedom

(John 8:31-36)

### INTRODUCTION:

1. About five years ago I became fed up with certain aspects of my spiritual life and how these deficiencies were hindering my relationship with God and his people.
  - A. I knew it was time to fix them, as I had truly known for some time, but had not taken the necessary steps to make it happen.
  - B. At that time, I came to face the reality that:
    - i. If I kept thinking the same way and approaching things the same way, it was foolish to expect a different outcome or end than what I had already seen and rejected!
    - ii. So, I knew that unless *I was willing to change* certain things in my life, the door was never going to be opened wide enough to let God fully into my life so that He might change me in ways far greater than I could ever change myself!
2. So, as the title of this lesson indicates, I want to talk to you about how we must change if we hope to be changed by God.
  - A. Today I want to talk about **changing our minds** about **sin** and **freedom**.
  - B. To do that I want to focus on Israel's redemption from their Egyptian bondage and how God expected this to change their mind about life and Him.
  - C. I preach this because I expect that there are likely some here today that desperately want change in their life, but like Israel, and me, find themselves stuck in an unproductive and maybe destructive rut, and need to be motivated to make changes that will bring greater change!

### BODY:

#### **I. Israel had a bondage mindset:**

- A. That does not mean Israel was content in their bondage—they were not (Ex. 2:23-25 – “Now it came about in the course of those many days that the king of Egypt died. And the sons of Israel **sighed because of the bondage**, and they **cried out**; and their **cry for help** because of their bondage rose up to God. <sup>24</sup> So God heard their groaning; and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. <sup>25</sup> God saw the sons of Israel, and **God took notice of them.**”).
  1. So, we see Israel's bondage resulting in their **cry for help** that God took notice of and **acted on their behalf**, sending **Moses** to Egypt to free them (Ex. 3-12).
  2. We know God gave **Moses** the power to do great signs and wonders that displayed God's dominance over Egypt's gods and Pharaoh himself.
  3. And Moses' efforts as God's messenger brought about Israel's release from their bondage.
- B. We know it was God's **grace** that did this because Israel did not deserve it! (Ezek. 20:5-9 – “Thus says the Lord GOD, “On the day when I chose Israel and swore to the descendants of the house of Jacob and made Myself known to them **in the land of Egypt**, when I swore to them, saying, I am the LORD your God, <sup>6</sup> on that day **I swore to them, to bring them out from the land of Egypt** into a land that I had selected for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands. <sup>7</sup> I said to them, ‘**Cast away, each of you, the detestable things of his eyes, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt**; I am the LORD your God.’ <sup>8</sup> But they **rebelled against Me** and were not willing to listen to Me; **they did not cast away the detestable things** of their eyes, **nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt**. Then I resolved to pour out My wrath on them, to accomplish My anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. <sup>9</sup> **But I acted for the sake of My name**, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations among whom they lived, in whose sight I made Myself known to them **by bringing them out** of the land of Egypt.”).
  1. Israel rebelled against God even when He came to deliver them, choosing to keep their detestable idols rather than to devote themselves to Him.
  2. Yet, the Lord delivered Israel, not because of their worthiness, but for His **name's** sake—that it would *not be profaned by Israel's destruction* but instead *known by their deliverance*.
- C. Though Israel went along with freedom, they failed to change their bondage mindset.

1. Israel failed to appreciate:
  - a. The **power of Yahweh** displayed in the plagues—His control of water, light and darkness, weather, creatures, and life itself!
  - b. **God’s dominance over Egypt and its Pharaoh** and what that meant for all who would stand in the way of God’s will and purposes.
  - c. **What this all meant for them as God’s people** and the **hope** it offered for a better life in the land that “flowed with milk and honey.”
2. So, when trials arose, they reverted to their “bondage mindset.”
  - a. We see this at the Red Sea as the Egyptians approached (Ex. 14:10-12 – “As Pharaoh drew near, the sons of Israel looked, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they **became very frightened**; so the sons of Israel **cried out to the LORD**.<sup>11</sup> Then they said to Moses, “Is it because there were no graves in Egypt that **you have taken us away to die in the wilderness**? Why have you dealt with us in this way, bringing us out of Egypt?<sup>12</sup> Is this not the word that we spoke to you in Egypt, saying, ‘Leave us alone that **we may serve the Egyptians**’? For it would have been **better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness**.”).
  - b. Despite God’s repeated deliverance and His continual providential care, they did not change their minds!
    - i. They refused to trust God and instead repeatedly **complained** about their need for water (Ex. 15:22-25; 17:1-3) and their need for food (Ex. 16:1-4; Numbers 11, etc.), while **expressing their desire to go back to Egypt!**
    - ii. In fact, when Moses was delayed while receiving the 10 Commandments, Israel reverted to their **ways of bondage** by **making themselves a god** in a golden calf, claiming it to be the god that brought them out of Egypt (Ex. 32:1-4ff.).
3. Their failure to change their minds cost them the Promised Land!
  - a. When God brought them to the Promised Land, note Israel’s reaction after hearing the words nay-saying spies (Num. 14:1-4 – “Then all the congregation lifted up their voices and **cried**, and the people **wept that night**.<sup>2</sup> All the sons of Israel **grumbled** against Moses and Aaron; and the whole congregation said to them, “Would that we had **died** in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had **died** in this wilderness!<sup>3</sup> **Why is the LORD bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword**? Our wives and our little ones will become plunder; **would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?**”<sup>4</sup> So they said to one another, “**Let us appoint a leader and return to Egypt**.”).
    - i. God went from the great redeemer to become the problem, the source of their trouble!
    - ii. I have seen this time and again! And people return to their bondage—their destruction.
  - b. Their **bondage mindset** led to God’s rejection of them and to their deaths in the wilderness (Ex. 14:26-32 – “The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying,<sup>27</sup> “How long shall I bear with this **evil congregation** who are **grumbling** against Me? I have heard the complaints of the sons of Israel, which they are making against Me.<sup>28</sup> Say to them, ‘As I live,’ says the LORD, ‘just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will surely do to you;<sup>29</sup> **your corpses will fall in this wilderness, even all your numbered men**, according to your complete number from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled against Me.<sup>30</sup> **Surely you shall not come into the land in which I swore to settle you**, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.<sup>31</sup> Your children, however, whom you said would become a prey—I will bring them in, and they will know the land which you have rejected.<sup>32</sup> **But as for you, your corpses will fall in this wilderness**.”).
4. So, beware of the “bondage mindset”!

## II. Christians have a freedom mindset!

- A. The saved have **died to the old way of sin** (Rom. 6:1-2 – “What shall we say then? **Are we to continue in sin** so that grace may increase? <sup>2</sup> **May it never be!** How shall we who **died to sin still live in it?**”)!  
 1. There is to be **no soft spot** in our hearts for our past life of sin nor can we, like Israel, consider it an option to return to whenever we are faced with trials or discomfort!  
 2. Reception of God’s grace means you have **died to sin!**
- B. The saved have been **raised with Him** through **baptism** to **freedom from sin** (Rom. 6:3-7 – “Do you not know that all of us who have been **baptized into Christ Jesus** were **baptized into his death?** <sup>4</sup> Therefore we have been **buried** with Him **through baptism into death, so that** as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, **so we too might walk in newness of life.** <sup>5</sup> For if we have become **united with Him in the likeness of His death [in baptism – rp]**, certainly we shall also be in the **likeness of His resurrection,** <sup>6</sup> knowing this, that our **old self was crucified with Him**, in order that **our body of sin might be done away with**, so that we would **no longer be slaves to sin;** <sup>7</sup> for he who has **died is freed from sin.**”).  
 1. Through **baptism** God brings you into Christ and into his death, where you are united with Christ in the likeness of His death and resurrection resulting in **newness of life** (6:3-5).  
 2. The results are **crucifixion of our old sinful selves** and **freedom from sin** (6:6-7)!
- C. The saved must **believe** in that **freedom** and **live like it** (Rom. 6:11-14 – “Even so **consider yourselves** to be **dead to sin**, but **alive to God** in Christ Jesus. <sup>12</sup> Therefore **do not let sin reign in your mortal body** so that you obey its lusts, <sup>13</sup> and **do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness;** but **present yourselves to God** as those **alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.** <sup>14</sup> For **sin shall not be master over you**, for you are not under law but under grace.”).  
 1. Note the **change in mindset that must follow our baptism** into Christ and His death and its resulting resurrection with Him!  
 2. The bondage mindset that characterized our life in sin is **gone**, replaced by a mindset of freedom to choose serve God in righteousness!  
 3. God provides the saved the power to **change**, to live by a **new mindset of freedom** that **no longer bows** to the mastery of **sin** and **Satan**, but instead **chooses** to bow before Jesus Christ the great Master of Heaven and Earth!

#### CONCLUSION:

1. So as we conclude, I plead with you to be wise and recognize the futility of sin’s bondage and its terrible wages and **choose freedom** in Jesus (Rom. 6:20-23 – “For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. <sup>21</sup> But **what fruit were you getting at that time** from the things of which you are now **ashamed?** For the **end of those things is death.** <sup>22</sup> But now that you have been **set free from sin** and have **become slaves of God**, the **fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.** <sup>23</sup> For the **wages of sin is death**, but the **free gift of God is eternal life** in Christ Jesus our Lord.”).
2. So, my friends, if you are in sin and Jesus is not yet your Savior, or if you are still living with a “bondage mindset” even though you have been redeemed, know that God would have you to be free.  
 A. That freedom is offered in His loving grace shed upon this world through Jesus.  
 B. If you are outside of Christ, will you choose today to come to Him, believing in Him as your Lord and Savior, repenting of your sins, confessing your faith in Him, and being baptized into Him and His death that you might receive salvation and be raised to newness of life in freedom and hope?  
 C. If you are a Christian but sin still has a hold on your life, will you return to Christ in repentance, confession of your sin, and seek God’s grace to forgive and you that you might live again in freedom of Christ and the hope of eternal life?