

Intro:

1 Cor. 9:7-10: "For our sakes this is written". WCF 19:4. Here, the Fifth. Duties of superiors to inferiors: WLC Q&A 129 and 130.

Main Point of Text: God's first judicial laws protected the civil rights of servants to create a desire for liberty and Jesus for all.

Sermon Point: *Love liberty, love your Master.*

Move 1: *God's judicial laws protect the civil rights of all to lead to liberty for all.*

Text about civil rights of servants (per government). Sold by self or parents due to poverty (Lev. 25:39-40); or sold by state due to criminal debt to pay (Ex. 22:3). Not forced upon forever against their wills:

- Vss. 1-3: rights of male servant to be respected by master during contract.
- Vss. 4, 7-11: rights of female servant to be respected by master (as family) unless he breaks contract.
- Vss. 20-21; Vss. 26-27; more equal rights for servants.
- Deut. 15:12-18: when contract fulfilled, give resources. Remember Egyptian slavery; work 1/2 price.
- Toleration/not approval. P. Fairbairn (1868): Adaptation to their time. Like indentured servitude today:
 - No word for "slave" in Hebrew. Meant "laborer". [More than "hired servant", Hebrew has word].
 - At outset, vs. 16 (also in Deut. 24:7). Cassuto: so don't think what happened to Joseph is approved.
 - Rules protected rights of Hebrew servants as equals in God's nation (Lev. 25:42-52; Deut. 5:12).
 - Marriage of the woman would make her an equal in the master's family no matter what.
 - Foreigners can be long-term slaves (Lev. 25:44-46). But can become citizens (Gen. 17:12-13; Ex. 12:44).
 - Deut. 23:15-17, runaway slaves from pagan nations due to harsh treatment were to be given refuge.
 - In Bible, it doesn't grow.
 - Also, vs. 6: had to be *public* profession of willingness to bind self for life in love.

Must interpret Philemon with LC 142: "menstealers" forbidden in 8th; and 1 Tim. 1:9-10; Rev. 18:13.

Move 2: *Always seek liberty for all.*

Emphasis of the text is to seek liberty within a social system in place to make it happen:

- Vss. 2, 4, 11, 16, 26, 27 (Deut. 24:7): freedom is preferred and promoted for all (including gender).
- Lev. 25, Year of Jubilee, slaves were to be set free regardless of present term of contract.
- 1 Cor. 7:21-23: *Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.*

Move 3: Jesus became an eternal servant so you can serve Him together in eternal freedom.

Vss. 5-6. Psalm 40:6-10 (Hebrews 10:5-10). Christ loved the Father, His Bride, and her children so much that He willingly took on eternal service in our humanity and His humiliation (WSC 23). Has the scars to show for it (John 20:27; Rev. 5:6). So may you endure your scars for Him: *Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.* (1 Pet. 2:24 [Isaiah 53:5]).

Jesus should and must have this effect in your living: Heb. 2:10-18; Phil 2:5-18. John 8:36; Galatians 5:1. No slavery to the fear of death, Satan, man, and the world.

Conclusion:

Love liberty, love your Master.