

“What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost Which is in you, Which ye have of God; and ye are not your own? For ye are—

**BOUGHT . . .**  
**WITH A**  
**PRICE . . .**

Therefore glorify God in your body”

1 Corinthians, 6. 19, 20.

A timely message to children of God.

## **"Ye are bought with a price."**

1 Corinthians 6. 20, 7. 23.

### **The Christian, the World and Its Warfare.**

**T**WICE the Holy Spirit emphasizes this purchase, and it affects everything in the daily Christian life. Salvation does not only concern the heart, or one day of the week, or one part of the body: the whole of a redeemed one, and all that he has alike belong to the Lord Jesus. This is fundamental and vital. It is the ground of the absolute command, "**Be not ye the servants of men.**" Here, moreover, is the solution of our problems. We have not **two** responsibilities, nor **two** objects in life: everything is contained within our responsibility to the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence we rejoice in the exhortations of Ephesians 6. 5, 6, "In singleness of your heart, **as unto Christ,**" "as the servants of **Christ,** doing the will of God from the heart." Likewise in Colossians 3. 23, 24 we read, "**as to the Lord,** and not unto men," "**Ye serve the Lord Christ.**" Now we can more fully understand, "No man can serve two masters" (Matt. 6. 24). He can easily have two employers, but the "master" before us here, and the "service," must not be confused with a contract for a few hours' work. We **belong** to our Master: **everything** that is ours is His. A purchased one has no private property. None can have **divided** interests in such a case. It is impossible.

O blessed privilege—to belong to the Son of God! He died and rose for us, that He might be Lord (Rom. 14. 9). Our freedom is in Him and for Him. "Thou wast slain and hast redeemed to God by Thy blood" (Rev. 5. 9). This is the theme of Scripture, yea, and the joy of heaven. Is it not the delight of a believer, now, as he worships in spirit and truth? I **was** a slave of sin: I **was** in prison: I **am** bought, bought by One Whose love and wisdom and will and arrangements are good and acceptable and perfect. My bewilderment is removed. I have not to burden myself by trying to please men, nor to conciliate them. The death of Christ on Calvary has, we repeat, solved all problems, if only our hearts realize this. We have only One to please, and He is the most delightful Master there can be.

Other questions, too, such as success in business, are settled by this precious fact. We are not our own. Money and position are no longer to be the object. The background "trivial task" is now dignified if He appoints it. Of what worth is the world's opinion? But if the Lord Jesus wishes something to be done, it is truly precious. His will decides its value: everything which He wishes, He makes glorious in wishing it.

We cannot expect settled peace on earth till the Prince of peace reigns (Isa. 9. 6). Man's compromises are not the fruit of love, nor the work of righteousness (Isa. 32. 17). We thank God for all temporary lulls, and indeed for **all** that He, in perfect wisdom and overruling, permits. We thank Him "for kings and all that are in authority," and acknowledge such wholeheartedly with tribute, custom, fear and honour (Rom. 13. 7, 1 Pet. 2. 17). But we can never say we "**belong**" to them. They did not "**buy**" us. We belong to Christ. Nothing can alter this unalterable relationship,—nothing! We readily pay taxes, because God has said so. We do not even ask how the money is spent. That is not our responsibility. We dare not resist authority (Rom. 13. 2): to us, as children of God, the powers that be are **unquestionably** of God. What if they should persecute us? Even this would be God's chastisement for us by the time it reached us (Ps. 119. 71), and they would still remain the ministers of God to us for good (Rom. 13. 4, 8. 28). No, we dare not "resist": we would ever be "subject" for conscience sake (Rom. 13. 5). But if a command infringes our belonging to Christ, and our loyalty to Him, we can only say, submissively and unresistingly, "We have no need to answer in this matter, if it be so, our God . . . is able to deliver . . . but if not . . . we will not" deny our Lord, Who died for us (Dan. 3. 16-18). Like Daniel we would purpose "in our heart" (Dan. 1. 8). Such deep and definite "purpose of heart" (Ps. 17. 3, Acts 11. 23) was never more needed than to-day. It is a time of "give and take," of compromise, expediency, and uncertainty. Often it appears that "Truth is fallen," but truth and the will of God are our trusteeship, not a matter of bargaining, and the believer is graciously encouraged to be firm by the Holy Spirit's ministry of the unchanging words, "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." Submission is not always obedience, but it is always non-resistance. "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5. 29): the Holy Spirit is given by God to those who obey Him (Acts 5. 32). "Him only shalt thou serve" applies not only to worship, but to every other part of our believing life. When a Christian was commanded by the Roman emperor to worship an image, he could give but one truthful answer, "Nay, I am bought with a price." And so as to all else, however popular and plausible, against "the law of Christ." As it was then, it is still to-day. There is no "development": the Lord's will remains. "Whose image and superscription?" is the searching question. The **money** bears Cæsar's: but we do not: we belong to Christ. **Taxes** we pay in current coin, but we cannot give "**ourselves**." The thoughtful believer may see herein God's Own solution of the problems as to warfare also.

We honour the authority that bears the sword (Rom. 13. 4), but we are not **part** of the authority, **we** do not bear the sword, we would not "reign" before the time (1 Cor. 4. 8), even to the extent of a vote-share. We remain strangers and pilgrims here. We are not our own: our calling is heavenly (Heb. 3. 1), our citizenship heavenly (Phil. 3. 20). Romans 13 indicates just **what** we are to render, and we would loyally and gladly do this for Christ's sake, and in His Name. But we cannot sin against Him, in His Name. A Christian **cannot** be revolutionary to the glory of God; even in a land of atheism: he can only suffer submissively. Even to "**use threats**" is graciously forbidden him (1 Pet. 2. 23). He would not wish to execute wrath if he could. To-day is not the time, and he is not the person to carry this out (Rom. 12. 19). Meekness is his appointed characteristic: **here** is the patience and the faith "of the saints" (Rev. 13. 10). Has Christ taken the sword? Nay, He **sits**, He has not risen up to judge. Then those who are "bought with a price" are to have their feet shod only with the preparation of the gospel of **peace**. I cannot preach Christ to a soul while I blow his brains out: and anything that is incompatible with the fulfilment of Mark 16. 15 does not belong to me as a member of Christ. "Bought with a price!"

Wondrous words, "Your bodies are the members of Christ" (1 Cor. 6. 15). Is it surprising then that believers are encouraged to "go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His **reproach**" (Heb. 13. 13)? The whole attitude is of one piece, and **all** over-reaching in business, and self-defence, and worldly "standing up for one's rights," and legal redress are cut out. The Christian is as a "sheep." His only safety from wolves is Christ. "Lo, **I am with you** all the days" (Matt. 28. 20). To act the Christian sometimes, and to use the world's threats at another, is to bring disgrace on His Name.

Herein then we find His searching call to holiness. If I humbly say, "I belong to Christ," I must not only plead conscience when dealing with "problems," but humbly "do **all** in the Name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3. 17). Has not the body been presented to Him (Rom. 12. 1, 2), and are not the members now for Him to use (Rom. 6. 13)? How can the hand presented to Him for His gracious work of bringing souls to Himself write a harsh letter, or work evil to another, any more than throw a bomb? That rifle does not fit the hand which would only minister love, and "make disciples of all the nations" (Matt. 28. 19). Have I a neighbour? I can only love (Rom. 13. 9). Have I an enemy? I can only love (Matt. 5. 44). "Bought with a price," I cannot suit myself to "circumstances." Without the "authority" of the Lord Jesus (Matt. 28. 18), how can I choose and

act as if I were **my** own? Independence is robbery if I am bought. I am not free to sin, but only free to do His will.

The all-comprehensiveness of the claim of Christ, to His redeemed, answers any objections that may be raised. For example, we are asked: "What would happen if everyone took the same standpoint?" There is no Scriptural suggestion that believers will ever be a majority now: they remain a "little flock." But "IF" all took His standpoint in **all** things they could at least "follow His steps" (1 Pet. 2. 21). So the question, "What would happen?" only appeals to those whose ideal is a position in **this** age. If more had the joy of John 12. 25, 26, how blessed it would be. A kindly authority may say, "We own your loyalty, but what if we exempt you as Christians; what shall we do as to others who ask what you ask on far different grounds?" We answer that it is not ours to advise authorities, but we do not ask an undue "favour." If the authorities in any land persecute, they rob themselves far more than us. A Christian in the wrong place, stifling his conscience, would be a hindrance to all, but in the right place, honouring his Lord, he is an asset to the land. None can plead that we are favoured, unless they are willing for the "**whole**" of the standpoint, for the reproach of Christ, and its surrender of much that men of the world hold dear. The simple standpoint of "Ye are bought with a price," will never attract the mixed multitude in man's day (1 Cor. 4. 3, marg.). 'Tis the same in a trades union. Whenever a child of God says "No," others may retort, "But you have advantages." We answer:—You would not allow us to act otherwise: you demand that we receive these for your own sakes, not ours. And the true Christian gives far more than he receives: the persecutor loses far more than he gets. The humble believer is willing to surrender advantages, but not willing to surrender his Lord or his Lord's will. Let him have his Lord in prison rather than be without his Lord in luxury. Believers are not citizens of the world, but they are the salt of the earth: how oft is God's judgment held back by praying Christians! "Bought with a price!"

What if some scorn and oppose? Did not the Lord Jesus say, "They are not of the world, **even as I am not of the world**," and again, "Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you **out of the world**, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15. 19)? Is the path attractive? Yes, if **He** is; no, if **He** is not. O that you and I may yet find sweeter music in the glorious words, "Who gave Himself for us that **He** might deliver us **from** this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father" (Gal. 1. 4). This is no new theory. It has always been His will for **His** own, because they are not **their** own. The whole belongs

to Him: shall He have His rightful purchase, or shall it be sinfully withheld? "You soon won't be able to do anything," says someone. On the contrary, we can truly be a blessing in daily life, and fill many spheres to God's glory. They may be "humble," but we shall seek to be found trustworthy. The faithful Christian should be the best subject and the most reliable employee, though he cannot present **himself** to his earthly master. He **has** presented himself once to one Master, owning that Master's sovereign right, but he can be faithful, and he will hate "eye-service," because of the honour of his one "Master." The Lord Jesus has not left His own without instructions. Professions and occupations which involve judgment and threatening are indeed closed, all that includes deceit and untruthfulness is obviously excluded, but they can work with their own hands the thing which is **good** (Eph. 4. 28), and the promise of Matthew 6. 33 is not a dead letter. We shall have food and raiment (1 Tim. 6. 8).

"Here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come," is true whether in London or New York, Berlin or Lenin-grad, Rome or Tokio:—we are not **earth's** citizens. The Lord has said: "My kingdom is **not** of this world: if My kingdom were of this world, **then would My** servants fight" (John 18. 36). "Now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly" (Heb. 11. 16). This describes our attitude. We are here to do the will of God, and the little things become sanctified, and the daily duties have a new meaning (2 Cor. 5. 17). Let the believer bring the love of Christ into workshop and office, let the just weight, which is His **delight**, as much as the prayer of the upright (Prov. 11. 1, 15. 8), be found in constant use, and men will at least be compelled to say, "we shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God" (Dan. 6. 5). Thus will there be a witness, and some will be ashamed (1 Pet. 3. 16), and drawn to Christ. But if those who bear Christ's Name plead conscience as to national and legal authorities, yet use tricks of trade in the dark, or urge that they cannot fight, yet welcome enlarged income by making munitions, the fine gold is become dimmed, and the ointment of the apothecary will send forth a stinking savour (Eccl. 10. 1). The "heavenly calling" is not to be put on when convenient, and then put off. "Because ye belong to Christ" affects seven days in the week. The believer has no time off: he is never "his own," except that in love he possesses his soul in the joy that his Lord possesses him for ever.

"Bought with a price." Sound forth the words yet again. Do they mean little? Did the Son of God give **Himself** for His own, and are they still like men of the world? Are there not **two**

spheres to-day, or is there only one? When Noah prepared an ark to the saving of his **house**, he condemned the **world**, and 1 John 5. 19 speaks of two positions still. Far be it from us to say who are not redeemed and who are. "**The Lord** knoweth them that are His" (2 Tim. 2. 19). Some such may be "mixed" with the world, only He can separate His gold from dross. But His principles and precepts are for our guidance, and He divides all into two classes, and only two. Again we read the words, "I have chosen you **out of** the world." If you, dear reader, deny this, your contention is with the Lord Jesus Himself, not with us. If you say, "I, too, believe in Christ," affectionately we ask you, if you are "bought with a price," to accept the privileges of whole-hearted separation unto Him, and all His will. If, alas, you say "No," by lip or by life, how can we, to avoid your displeasure, deny Him the pleasure of love's obedience? It is plain that Romans 12. 19-21 and 13. 1-4 are quite different, because dealing with two different spheres. Is it difficult to say in which of the two the disciple of Christ shall now be found?

It is the same with dispensations. Many think that because God commanded war to Israel of old, in executing His judgments, this justifies His people's participation to-day. But the conditions are utterly different:

*Then* His people were in one Nation.

*Now* His people are in all nations.

*Then* He appointed His people to act in His Name in wrath.

*Now* He entrusts His people with the gospel of His grace.

Furthermore, are the leaders of armies willing to recognise "the Captain of the Lord's host" (Jos. 5. 14, 15), and a standing still to see His salvation if He so appoints (2 Chron. 20. 17), or a reduction from 32,000, first to 10,000 and then 300, at His bidding (Jud. 7. 3, 7)? Unless His will is sought primarily on each occasion (1 Chron. 14. 10, 14), and "the battle is the Lord's," the parallel is only a fiction.\* "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men" (Col. 3. 23) is a principle in the context of **daily business**,—even as "if the Lord will" in James 4. 15. A Christian should put his heart into

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\* Nor can we forget that when God sent He normally appointed victory. But how can victory be for *both* sides? Yet His people *are* on both sides, being found in *all* nations. If any think He entrusts warfare to believers when they are born in one land, does He so if they are born in the "enemy land?" or should *each* believer decide anew on *each* occasion what he will do? How graciously God has prevented such an impossible dilemma, which would be unfair, if not traitorous, to a nation in the midst of strife, and would require knowledge that could not be attained by private individuals at the outset, when decision would be needed,—if at all. In wisdom He has prevented the "problem" by arranging for His Own "bought" ones to remain always as pilgrims, doing all they Scripturally can to be a *real* blessing in the land where God has placed and blesses them. How fitting are His appointments at all times.

whatever he does. If he accepts the call to fight, then he must fight enthusiastically "as to the Lord" if he meets an "enemy"-believer he must wish to lay him low, he dare not shoot to the side, with ammunition which is not his own: that would be stealing and guilty untruthfulness. If he has a bomb, he must desire the maximum for "his" country, in its deadly use. But, after all, is not heaven his country, and is not the gospel of peace still his message? Surely he is not called to destroy evil men, but to tell them of Christ. Has not he received mercy, to be merciful? He dare not hurry men into a lost eternity, unless the One to Whom he belongs has said that this is His will. And where has He entrusted us with such service to be done "unto the Lord, and not unto men" (Col. 3. 23)?

"Bought with a price." "No man that warreth **entangleth** himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Tim. 2. 4). A "soldier" has rightly one object: other objects are entangling. He is not in mere employment: his whole being is claimed. Hence by military (contrasted with civil) law, he cannot plead "conscience" against the official commands of a superior. Is this then the place for a Christian who belongs to Christ, and is personally responsible to Him? "The good fight of faith" means that all other surrender of "ourselves" would be our "entangling." Christ possesses His people **first**, and He will not sell them, nor give up the purchase of His Own precious blood. With love's jealousy He rightly claims their all, and shall our answer be, "Lord, Thou hast indeed purchased, but it is not easy to avoid the claims of others; let me be excused"? Nay, as His redeemed, let our response to His unspeakable love be more devoted love to Himself, while we wait for His Coming, and seek His approval and joy in that day.

Why does the Holy Spirit dwell within believers? This amazing fact is a wondrous privilege. He has come because we are "sons" (Gal. 4. 6). And He is called the "Spirit of promise . . . the **Earnest of our inheritance** until the redemption of the purchased possession" (Eph. 1. 13, 14). He has come to claim, even to-day, those who are "bought with a price," that they may simply **represent their Lord Jesus here**. Shall we "grieve" Him by "bitterness and wrath" (Eph. 4. 30. 31)? Shall we say we are "bought," and yet deny the leading of Him Who indwells in order that we may not act in our own natural ignorance? Can I send a sinner to judgment in the power of the Holy Spirit Who has come that I may be a witness of Christ in His power? Can I kill one whose only hope is the Lord Jesus—kill him in the Name of the Lord Jesus? "Bought with a price" is a blessed reality: O that there may be a blessed realization with abundant fruit, in every part of daily life, unto the praise of His glory!