



WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A "SLAVE" AND A "SON"?

Galatians 4:1-7 and Romans 8:15-16

from Redeemer Presbyterian Church adapted by Darrin Patrick

A Different Understanding

Slave: "Grace" is God's maintaining your strength and power so to live a better life.

Child: Grace is a transforming power, to be melted by spiritual understandings of gospel truth.

Slave: "Faith" is trying hard to do good and be better, establishing your own record (a 'right-eousness') so God and others will accept you.

Child: Faith is a discipline of remembering and living every moment as an accepted child.

Slave: "Obedience" focuses nearly completely on external duties. Examination of attitudes and motivations is too traumatic and is ignored.

Child: Obedience is seeking to please God first in our attitude of love, then in obeying his will. Concentration on principles and attitudes.

A Different Lifestyle

Slave - Fear-based life

Child - Faith working through love

Slave: Compulsive obedience. Obeys God and moral codes out of fear of rejection--a compulsive, driven moralism. "Driveness". Unrealistic goals. Often a lot of self-criticism.

Child: Obeys out of joy in your Father and out of gratitude for the certainty of his love. "How can I live so ungratefully to one who will never reject me?"

Slave: Controlled by people. Expectations and opinions of others become the real moral standard. We are controlled by what people think.

Child: Integrity and courage is easier. "The only person whose opinion counts is my Father! Who cares what the rest think?"

Slave: Hiding. Lots of strategies to hide our inner and outer failings from others and ourselves. Including: gossip, blame-shifting, anger at other races/classes, obsessions, overwork, etc

Child: Open and transparent. Freedom from having to put up a front. Able to appreciate people who are different and hurting.

Slave: Isolation. Growing feeling that no one understands, that no one cares, no one can be trusted.

Child: Because of openness and transparency, and a lack of self-pity.

Slave: Despair in troubles. Sees difficulties as "pay backs" from God. Result is either guilt (because there's an awareness of moral failure) or bitterness (because there's a feeling of moral accomplishment).

Child: Learns to see discipline as fatherly, loving instruction, preparing us for future tests. Learns lessons and shows patience.

Slave: Begrudging repentance. Admitting failure is destructive of one's very basis for living (that being a sense of moral adequacy). So repentance is galling, last resort.

Child: Admitting failures is the basis of a Christian's self-image as adopted child. Repentance reminds anew of magnitude of his love. Repentance quick, willing.