

IDOLATRY

Part 6a

The Problems of Idolatry

“Servitude To Idols Lead To Bondage”

Matt. 6:24

INTRODUCTION

- I. THERE ARE SEVERAL WORDS USED FOR SLAVERY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. Matt. 6:24
- A. Therapon is a word for slavery that places the *emphasis upon the performer of present services, with no respect to the fact whether as a freeman or slave he renders them; as bound by duty, or impelled by love.* – Richard Trench cf. Heb. 3:5 (hapox)
 - B. Hupertees – is a servant who is *an under rower, as distinguished from the soldier, on board a war-galley; then the performer of any strong and hard labour; then the subordinate official who waited to accomplish the behest of his superior.* – Richard Trench cf. 1 Co. 4:1; Acts 13:5; 26:16 (one who sets the pace)
 - C. Diakonos is translated *to minister or to serve* in the New Testament. cf. Rom. 16:1; Col. 1:7
 - D. Doulos goes beyond the act of service to *denote the subordinate attitude of one who is serving.* *Richard Trench notes that doulos emphasizes one that is in a permanent relation of servitude to another, his will altogether swallowed up in the will of the other.* cf. Phil. 2:7
 - 1. The Thessalonians turned to God from idols. 1st Thess. 1:9
 - a) “Turned” is from epestrepho (aor. Act. ind.) -- is used in the New Testament of changing directions; pivating from moving in one direction to head in a different direction. Acts 9:35; 11:21 (of those who believed during the early church.)
 - b) The Gentiles are urged to “turn” from idols to salvation.
 - (1) The Gentiles are seen as turning from darkness. Acts 26:17-18
 - (2) The Gentiles are seen as “turning to God”. Acts 15:19
 - (3) Paul urged the Gentiles at Lystra Acts 14:15.
 - 2. The aim of the Thessalonians was to “serve” the true and living God. 1st Thess. 1:9
 - a) “Serve” “douleuein (pres. Act. inf.) *to put oneself at the disposal of another for the purpose of allowing them to lord over one.* Rom. 6:6 (of the sin nature’s capability); Rom. 7:6 (of the capability of the believer to serve in a new kind of spirit)

- b) Two characteristics set the God of the universe apart from the gods of the Gentiles. Vs. 9
 - (1) “Living” -- “zao” (pres. Act. part.) -- one who is in a continual state of being alive as opposed to the dead idols that men serve. Cf. Acts 25:19; 1st Tim. 3:15; Heb. 3:12; 10:31; 12:22; Rev. 7:2 (contrasted with dead); Acts 14:15 (contrasted with idols)
 - (2) “True” is from aleethion -- **one Who is really as He seems; authentic; accurate**-- K.D.J. cf. John 4:23(of worshippers); 1st Tim. 3:1 (of a saying)

II. IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR MEN TO SERVE AS SLAVE MORE THAN ONE MASTER. Matt. 6:24

A. Matthew states the impossibility of serving more than one master. Vs.24

- 1. “No man” is better interpreted “no one” (oudeis -- not one person)
- 2. “Can” translates the Greek verb dunamai (Pres. mid. indic.) -- is used in Scripture of having an inherent ability to do or perform a thing. Cf. John 16:12 (of truth); Acts 20:32 (of grace)

B. The problem of serving more than one master is identified. Vs.24

- 1. An emotional choice is made between one over the other.
 - a) “Hate” is the word miseo -- **unlike ekthros which is an open hatred of someone; miseo is a silent undertone of hatred that is conveyed by subtlety.** -- K.D.J. cf. Rom. 7:15 (of one’s own behavior)
 - b) “Love” is the word agapao -- which is used of -- being committed to. Cf. John 14:23
- 2. There is an affinity for one.
 - a) Seen in holding to one is from antechomai which is used of “adhere to; by extension to care for; support.” -- Strong’s lexicon cf. 1st Thess. 5:14 (of support); Tit. 1:9 (of holding to the faithful word)
 - b) Seen in despising the other -- kataphroneo -- **to look down upon; to have contempt for.** -- K.D.J. 1st Tim. 4:12; Rom. 2:4

C. Men don’t have the ability to serve more than one master. Vs.24

- 1. “Cannot” is the use of the negative with dunamai notes the incapability of one to do a thing. Cf. Matt. 6:24; Ja. 4:2 (of those not being able to obtain what they desire); Acts 27:31 (of physical salvation); John 16:12 (of the inability to bear God’s plans)
- 2. “Mammon” is used in Scripture of “**treasure, riches**” -- Joseph Thayer Lk. 16:9, 11, 13

III. BELIEVERS ARE FREED FROM THE SIN NATURE THAT BOUND US IN SERVITUDE TO IDOLS.

- A. False liberty can lead to bondage to the elements of the World System the believers had previously escaped. 2 Pet. 2:19-20
 - 1. “Bondage” is the word *doulos* (per. part.) ***a continuance of submitting oneself in servitude to a person or thing.***
 - a) The (perf. part.) is used of being locked into a marriage. 1st Co. 7:15
 - b) It is used of bondage to the elements of the world system. Cf. Gal. 4:3
 - 2. There is corruption in the world enslaves men to bondage. 2 Pet. 1:4;12

- B. The Romans were freed from bondage to the sin nature by obeying a “form of doctrine”. Rom. 6:18, 22

CONCLUSION