

*In search of...*

# Truth & Right

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## Escaping Bondage

You know, no matter how many freedoms we give ourselves we are still in bondage. We will still have bills to pay and work to do. We will always have to pay the rent, or the mortgage, buy gasoline for our car which enslaves us to change its oil and give it a good bath every once in a while.

Worse yet, we are enslaved by the pseudo-standards which society erects for us to attain. We must have this car and that house. We must have those shoes, or that shirt. We must have this television set with this VCR and that stereo. Yet, it seems that once we have attained what we thought was society's standard, society brings out its "new and improved" version and we are enslaved to attain that as well.

In the end, our captivity seems to boil down to three masters, money, sex, and power (or affluence).

A person doesn't have to go too far to see some kind of "get rich quick" scheme lurking around the corner. The people who supposedly want you to get rich are making millions off of you. As far as sex goes, television personalities such as Phil Donahue, Sally Jessy Raphael, and Oprah Winfrey give us our daily dose of that. That is not to mention the constant barrage of TV shows which glamorize adultery and fornication. And you can look no further than the next political election to see how much men and women crave power. You can also see it in our desire to go higher and higher on the corporate ladder. Whether we like it or not, as a society we are enslaved to money, sex, and power.

Now, ask yourself a question. Is this what I want? Hedonic bliss? To have all my days filled with working and toiling only to end up being

controlled by these three masters, money, sex, and power? Or, is there something else? Is there another master? A kind, benevolent, caring, loving master? Is there one to whom I can go when I have problems in my life? When the burdens and cares of the earth are pressing down upon my shoulders, is there something that I can seek to replace the master of money, sex, and power? The answer is YES, there is another master!

This is the Master that says, "...If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31, 32). He also says, "...I am the way, the truth, and the life..." (John 14:6). And, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matthew 11:28, 29). Sin does not have to be your master. You can let Jesus be your Master if you will to do his will.

The kind Master says, "If any man will do his (God's) will, he shall know of the teaching..." (John 7:17). To know the teaching of this loving master we must hear the teaching with a view toward obedience. "Therefore whosoever hears these sayings of mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and

the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock" (Matthew 7:24, 25).

To escape the bondage of sin we must believe that this benevolent Master truly is the Son of God. He says, "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24). Once we know, trust, and are willing to act on this kind Master's words, then we must repent. He says, "...I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). And now, having repented of our sins, we are ready to confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32, 33).

At this point, one is not yet saved. "Why?" you may ask. "I have heard the blessed word of this wonderful Master. I have believed that He is truly the Holy One of God. I have repented and promised God that I will not be in bondage to sin and Satan any more. And I have confessed that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. Why am I not saved?" You are not saved yet because you have not been bought out of bondage. Jesus bought you out of bondage with His blood. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible

things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18, 19). You must contact His blood, the blood that pays for your sins. So, how does a person contact the blood of Christ?

Jesus shed His blood in His death. So if there is some way that I can die with Christ, then I can come into contact with His blood. There is a way. That way is through baptism. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:3, 4). Our old man is buried with Christ. We are then washed by His blood in baptism, and arise in newness of life. We are a new person. Sin is not our master any more. We are no longer in bondage. Christ is our benevolent, gracious Master.

Jesus said, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and [money, sex, or power] (Matthew 6:24). Who will be your master?

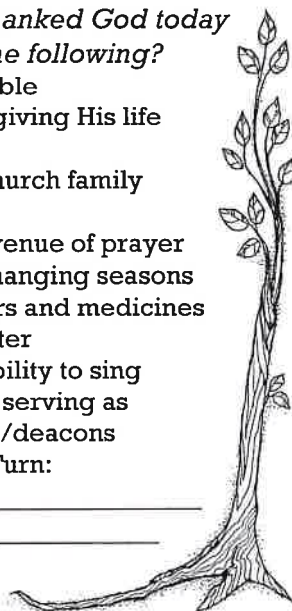
Kevin Cauley

God gave you a gift of  
**86,400**  
seconds today. Have  
you used one to say  
**THANK YOU?**

*Have you thanked God today  
for any of the following?*

- The Bible
- Jesus giving His life for us
- Our church family
- Jobs
- The avenue of prayer
- The changing seasons
- Doctors and medicines
- Laughter
- The ability to sing
- Those serving as elders/deacons
- Your Turn:

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# Suffering as a Christian

M W E F H X I J O R E O N S Q H I F J J  
 H K T X W I M U U U E W H Y D P D T B U  
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 L L T B B M U R D E R E R H V J F R P E  
 O D R R Y C F A E Y G W H F L Z E C I N  
 V F I F E V I L D O E R V A Z V R E Q T  
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 S B F A Q P T Z F Z M Y D L Z M R D Z G  
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 V S H S H Z N Z L Y Z M E G U Z F W Q B  
 T F Q L R T M S V Z M M A T M W Z Z Z G  
 Q F Q K O H K E Q Y G Y X F Y D B C Y V  
 E J Z P G R O Y N B K D W U G N Y C M T

**DIRECTIONS:** Look up the scripture in the Bible, and find the answer in the crossword above.

- 1 Pet. 4:12, \_\_\_\_\_, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes...  
 1 Pet. 4:13, But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's \_\_\_\_\_,  
 1 Pet. 4:13, that you may also rejoice and be glad when His glory is \_\_\_\_\_.  
 1 Pet. 4:14, If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are \_\_\_\_\_.  
 1 Pet. 4:15, But let none of you suffer as a \_\_\_\_\_ or a thief...  
 1 Pet. 4:15, ...or an \_\_\_\_\_ or as a meddler.  
 1 Pet. 4:16, Yet if anyone suffers as a \_\_\_\_\_...  
 1 Pet. 4:16, ...let him not be \_\_\_\_\_, but let him glorify God in that name.  
 1 Pet. 4:17, For it is time for \_\_\_\_\_ to begin at the household of God;  
 1 Pet. 4:18, And "If the righteous is \_\_\_\_\_ saved...  
 1 Pet. 4:18, ...what will become of the ungodly and the \_\_\_\_\_?"  
 1 Pet. 4:19, ...according to God's will entrust their souls to a \_\_\_\_\_ Creator