

The Spirit of Adoption and the Spirit of Slavery Contrasted

by Gary H. Patterson

“For <the Spirit which> you have now received <is> not a spirit of slavery to put you once more in bondage to fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption <the Spirit producing sonship> in <the bliss of> which we cry, Abba (Father)! Father!” (Romans 8:15; Amplified Bible)

The following contrast will help us understand which of these spirits we are operating under. Embracing these truths will liberate us from and cause us to avoid many years of struggle and bondage, *if* we believe.

While applying this, understand there exists different levels of freedom under the Spirit of Adoption and different levels of bondage under the spirit of slavery.

[The use of the word “spirit” is actually referring to spiritual entities that have influence over us by way of our state of heart and our believing before God.]

The Spirit of adoption	The spirit of slavery
Is received and not achieved from God.	Does not come from God.
Produces sons who are given joint-heir status with God’s only begotten Son, Christ Jesus. Sons ask, “What else can I do for my Father?” and gladly give themselves.	Produces slaves who are duty bound to please their master. Slaves ask, “What is required?” Fear and obligation are the strong motivators.
Produces sons of God who rejoice having already received God’s approval by grace through faith in His Son.	Produces slaves who work for approval.

The Spirit of adoption

The spirit of slavery

<p>The bliss of God’s fathering influence is seen in all that the adopted do. They are responsible but carefree.</p>	<p>The monotony of slavery permeates all they do. They are responsible but burdened with care.</p>
<p>Your doing is based on your sonship with the Father in Heaven.</p>	<p>Your doing is based on what is required by their master—the wrong image of God. Because of which they are alienated from Him through dead works.</p>
<p>Produces sons who see the commandments and requirements in the Bible as already fulfilled in them through the inward work of the Holy Spirit.</p>	<p>Produces slaves who see the same as their primary responsibility. They work for privileges to which sons are already entitled.</p>
<p>Produces sons who <i>want to</i> obey such a wonderful Father God because of their new nature and all the good things He has bestowed on them. They realize God celebrates them because they honor His Son as He does in heart and in speech.</p>	<p>Produces slaves who spend all their lives trying to live up to God’s standards. They see Jesus as someone they should imitate but are always falling short in attempting to do so. They eventually gravitate to teachers who lower the standard to please their supporters and affiliations.</p>
<p>Produces the realization that life outside of the Spirit of adoption is barren and futile.</p>	<p>Keeps the slave mostly ignorant of and aloof to that quality of life afforded us through the precious blood of Jesus.</p>
<p>Produces sons who primarily call God Father and not man and are taught by Him directly.</p>	<p>Produces slaves that must be taught by men and they have no walk with the Lord except for that which has comes through men. They have trouble hearing the voice of God the Father.</p>
<p>Sons boast in their Father God only. This is their privilege...to know Him in His majesty and honor.</p>	<p>Slaves boast is in various affiliations with entitled people, benefactors, and religious organizations they are “privileged” to be connected with.</p>
<p>To sons, service is a joy!</p>	<p>To slaves, service is a step ladder.</p>
<p>Sons have no duties except to operate in God’s wisdom which is given freely to those who ask.</p>	<p>Slaves’ duties have no end.</p>

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Sons understand God's first things and will not do anything by their might, power, nor by their know-how and expertise, but only by the Spirit that cries out in them, "Abba, Father."	Slaves being preoccupied with duty have lost sight of their deep need and thirst for sonship with God. The Spirit of adoption is not given a voice because of the fear and works based relationship with the master.
Sons look <i>only</i> to the face of their Father for approval. They enjoy it by birthright and His loving and continual input into their lives.	Slaves search for and work for approval but never attain that which is only given by birthright.
Sons see the words of Jesus as rest, life, and peace...even the part about taking up their cross and following after Him.	Slaves see the same as a challenge thus opening the door of their being offended because of Him.
Produces sons who are not reluctant to approach God's throne of grace to obtain mercy and grace	Produces reluctance and even ignorance of how to find access to the same.

More Understanding from Scripture

In Matthew 11:25-30, Jesus likened His lordship over us unto a yoke that we are to *take* upon ourselves in order to learn of Him. Yes, we already know that a yoke typically spells responsibility, challenge, and servitude, right? After all, a yoke is a yoke. However, Jesus said that His yoke would require only one thing: that you take it, while understanding that IT (not us) will achieve rest for your souls, freeing us of the effects of a previous demanding yoke. A displacing of a previous yoke is often necessary. Christ's yoke does not demand servitude. Nor does it press upon our necks the weight of strict rules of discipleship. No, it brings our souls into a place of rest so He can teach us as His disciple. By so doing, we become a meek and lowly servant to the glory of God as Christ is.

If the use of such terminology in Scripture by Jesus causes us first to think of duty and responsibility instead of partaking of His divine nature, then we are likely under the spirit of slavery. Duty and responsibility are the outcome of our partaking of Him through a yoking (fellowship and communion) that gives rest to that inward conflict of slaving under a spirit of fear—that which exalts itself against God’s perfect will. That love sets every part of our being at ease...ridding us of “dis”ease. In fact, Christ’s yoke will change our perspective of responsibility and duty. These will be seen as a Father/son effort to reveal God’s glory.

In Matthew 19, a rich young man who came to Jesus and asked what he could do to obtain eternal life went away sorrowful because he considered the price Jesus required as too high—beyond reach. Why was it beyond his reach? Because he was not willing to be squeezed through the “eye of the needle.” Receiving Christ’s yoke requires that we be convinced, without rebuttal or argument, of our spiritual bankruptcy before the Lord (Matthew 5:3 - Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.)

The rich young man at least thought Jesus to be a great prophet and a good man, perhaps even better than himself thus the reason for asking him about eternal life. Two responses are common among those who refuse to allow the yoke they are wearing to be replaced with Christ: they either argue or go away sorrowful (or both).

Those benefits enjoyed by sons are not made available to slaves.

Jesus said to His disciples:

"No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you" (John 15:15).

Those who honor Christ as the Father does will have nothing hidden from them. Jesus will withhold nothing from them. He makes known to them ALL things He has heard from the Father.