

How do I Develop a Relationship with God?

VII. Making it Legal



“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.”
– James 4:8



The Depth of Relationships



- Foreign
- Familiar
- Fellowship
- Friendship
- Family
- Fundamental



The Depth of Relationships



- Foreign
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The deeper the relationship, the more likely we are to seek to bind ourselves to the other person legally, if a legal relationship does not already exist



The Purchase of a Slave

[Steven] **has bought a slave**, [Ernest] by name, from [Ivan], and [Alex], his son, and **has paid ten shekels of Silver**, the price agreed. [Ivan], and [Alex], his son, **will not set up a future claim on the slave**. In the presence of [John], son of [Luke]; in the presence of [Joseph], son of [Justin]; in the presence of [Leroy], son of [Arthur], the scribe, who sealed it with **the seal of the witnesses**. The tenth of [March], the year when Rim-Sin, the king, overcame the hostile enemies.

Contract for the Sale of a Slave, Reign of Rim-Sin, c. 2300 B.C.



The Legal Purchase of a Slave

- Ends submission to one master
- Begins submission to a new master
- Requires a price to be paid by the new master
- Prevents any further claim by the old master
- Is publicly witnessed by third parties
- Is recorded for future reference



God Purchases us as a Slave

Romans 6:16-22



Romans 6:16-18

Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? 17 But God be thanked that though **you were slaves of sin**, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. 18 And **having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.**



Romans 6:20-23

For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. 21 What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. 22 **But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God,** you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.



God Purchases us as a Slave

Romans 6:16-22

- Until the purchase is made, we belong to sin



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- The legal relationship begins when we “obey from the heart the form of doctrine” delivered to us (v. 17)



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Romans 6:16-22

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- The legal relationship begins when we “obey from the heart the form of doctrine” delivered to us (v. 17)
- That legal form is described in v. 3-6



Romans 6:3-6

Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.



God Purchases us as a Slave

Romans 6:16-22

- Until the purchase is made, we belong to sin
- The legal relationship begins when we “obey from the heart the form of doctrine” delivered to us (v. 17)
- That legal form is described in v. 3-6
- The price paid is the blood of Jesus (1 Pet 1:18-19)



1 Peter 1:18-19

knowing that you were not **redeemed** with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, 19 but **with the precious blood of Christ**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.



Without the Legal Purchase

- We may obey and serve God to the best of our ability
- But we are still owned by sin, with the end result of eternal death
- The legal transaction must be made or we still owe our souls to sin
- We are serving two masters, but we are still legally bound to the law of sin and death
- Because we have not been purchased by God



The Legal Adoption of a Child

- Example: My brother Michael



The Legal Adoption of a Child

- Michael's adoption **REQUIRED**
 - Great expense
 - Much time and effort
 - Michael's desire for that relationship
 - Severing the relationship that he had with the state
 - The decree of a judge and the witness of the legal system of the state of Florida



The Legal Adoption of a Child

- The adoption RESULTED IN Michael
 - Being a full-fledged member of our family
 - Having every right, responsibility, privilege and promise that the other children had
 - Having a new name and a new family
 - Being able to call us father, mother, brother and sister
 - Being ours



God Adopts us as His Children

- God desires to adopt us - Ephesians 1:5



Ephesians 1:5

having predestined us **to adoption as sons** by Jesus Christ to Himself, **according to the good pleasure of His will,**



God Adopts us as His Children

- God desires to adopt us - Ephesians 1:5
- The adoption ends our slavery and makes us children - Galatians 4:1-7



Galatians 4:1-7

Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all ... 3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. 4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 **to redeem** those who were under the law, that we might receive **the adoption as sons**. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" 7 Therefore **you are no longer a slave but a son**, and if a son, then **an heir of God through Christ**.



God Adopts us as His Children

- God desires to adopt us - Ephesians 1:5
- The adoption ends our slavery and makes us children - Galatians 4:1-7
 - We get a new name
 - We can call God father - v. 6
 - We can call Jesus our brother
 - We are a son instead of a slave - v. 7
 - We partake of the inheritance - v. 7
 - We are fellow-heirs with Jesus



God Adopts us as His Children

- God desires to adopt us - Ephesians 1:5
- The adoption ends our slavery and makes us children - Galatians 4:1-7
- The adoption occurs when we believe and are baptized – Gal. 3:26-29



Galatians 3:26-29

For you are all **sons of God through faith** in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were **baptized into Christ** have **put on Christ**. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And **if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs** according to the promise.



Without a Legal Adoption

- We may enjoy close fellowship with Him and the family of God
- But we cannot legally call Him our Father
- We cannot inherit eternal life
- He cannot take us to heaven because we do not legally belong to Him
- Because we have not been adopted by God



The Wedding of a Wife

- Example: Rachel and I



Jesus Marries us as a Spouse

- Eph. 5:25-27



Ephesians 5:25-27

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.



Jesus Marries us as a Spouse

- Eph. 5:25-27
 - We take on His name
 - We renounce all others
 - We strive to make ourselves attractive to Him, please Him, and submit to Him
 - We are under His care and protection
 - He gives His life for us
 - We give our life for Him



Jesus Marries us as a Spouse

- Eph. 5:25-28
- The legal marriage occurs when we are sanctified and presented to Him (v. 26-27)



Ephesians 5:25-27

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 **that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church**, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.



Without the Legal Marriage

- We may love Him and He loves us
- We may seek to please Him and submit to Him
- We may draw as close to Him as possible
- But our “old man” is still alive (Rom 7:2-4; 6:5-6)



Romans 7:2-4

For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. 3 So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. 4 Therefore, my brethren, **you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another -- to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.**



Romans 6:4-6

Therefore **we were buried with Him** through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if **we have been united together in the likeness of His death**, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that **our old man was crucified with Him**, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.



Without the Legal Marriage

- We may love Him and He loves us
- We may seek to please Him and submit to Him
- We may draw as close to Him as possible
- But...
 - our “old man” is still alive (Rom 7:2-4; 6:5-6)
 - we are not His
 - He cannot take us with Him to His heavenly home
- Because we have not been legally married



Our Personal Relationship with God

- Is one of love, respect and submission on our side and love, blessing and care on God's side
- Grows deeper and stronger as we continue to provide the things that are necessary for a personal relationship
- Results in a desire to legally bind ourselves to God, and Him to us



Our Legal Relationship with God

- Is prompted by our personal relationship with Him
- Can be affected by our personal relationship
- IT IS NOT defined by our personal relationship



Our Legal Relationship with God

- Depends on
 - Us being purchased from slavery to sin into service to God
 - Us being adopted from being children of wrath to being children of God
 - Us forsaking all others and being wedded to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ



Our Legal Relationship with God

- Has a form defined in God's law
- This form must be complied with for the covenant relationship to be legally valid and binding
- God has no common law servants, sons or wives!



The Legal Form

“You obeyed from the heart **that form of doctrine** to which you were delivered”

- Rom. 6:17

- Believe (Rom. 10:17)
- Repent (Luke 13:5)
- Confess (Rom. 10:9-10)
- Be Baptized (Rom. 6:1-6)