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Serving in Newness of Spirit

An incident occurred in slavery days that beautifully illustrates salvation as the gift of God, and the saved man's works as the fruit of love.

The scene is a southern slave market. The auctioneer is selling a chain-gang lot of colored humanity as if they were so many head of cattle, or horses, or mules. Husband is being sold and separated from the wife, wife from the husband, children from their mothers, mothers from their children.

Presently there is placed upon the auction-block a giant; his finely-formed features, his refined and intelligent face, draw the attention of the crowd. The auctioneer eyes him up and down, then turns to the buyers and says:

"Here is a fine specimen of the race. This man stands six feet four in his bare feet; he weighs two hundred and twenty pounds—all bone, muscle, and sinew. He is only twenty-four years old. What am I bid for the man?"

Mr. Brown—"I bid nine hundred dollars."

Auctioneer—"Nine hundred dollars I am bid! Nine hundred dollars! Going at nine hundred! Gentlemen, he is worth twice the money."

Mr. Grace—"One thousand."

A—"One thousand I am bid! One thousand dollars! Make it eleven, Mr. Brown."

Mr. B—"Eleven hundred."

Mr. G—"Twelve hundred."

A—"That is right, keep it going. Here is a fine prize for the man who has the nerve to pay the price. Twelve hundred dollars! Going at twelve hundred! Make it thirteen, Mr. B."

Mr. B—"Thirteen hundred."

Mr. G—"Fourteen hundred."

A—"Mr. Grace bids fourteen hundred! Only fourteen hundred dollars for this handsome prize?"

Colored Man—"Gentlemen, don't waste your money on me. I am not worth fourteen cents to any man. I

have worked my last hour as a slave. You may flog or starve or hang me—I covet death! I want to die! But work as a slave, I never will—no, not for an hour!”

The calm but defiant decision pictured in his face, the firmness in his tone, the fire that flashed from his eyes, stunned the auctioneer for a moment. Recovering, he said:

“Gentlemen, pay no attention to his talk; you can take all this out of him in fifteen minutes with a good blacksnake. Go on with your bidding gentlemen. Mr. Grace bids fourteen hundred dollars! Make it fifteen, Mr. Brown! No? What, afraid of the man? Going at fourteen hundred dollars, twice—third and last call—sold to Mr. Grace for fourteen hundred dollars.”

The man stepped down from the block and with Mr. Grace walked away from the crowd. Drawing his check-book from his pocket, Mr. Grace begins writing a check for the price of this man.

Colored Man—“Mr. Grace, don't you pay fourteen hundred dollars for me. You have bought a dead man. I will die willingly, yes, gladly, but I will never work an hour as your slave. I give you this final warning, don't pay fourteen hundred dollars for a dead man.”

Mr. Grace continues to write the check, and when finished, he hands it to a messenger, who carries it to the former owner. Then addressing the colored man, he said:

“Sam, you are a free man. I bought you to set you free. You are not my slave, you are your own free man. I'll take those handcuffs off.”

The colored man was staggered, stunned, by this sudden announcement. He stood speechless, startled, trembling. Recovering his speech, he said:

“Mr. Grace, do you mean that you have paid fourteen hundred dollars of your good money to set this poor man free?”

Mr. G.—“That is what I said, and that is what I mean. All the time you, as my enemy, were hurling your defiance, I, as your friend, was purchasing your freedom.”
Colored Man—“O, Mr. Grace, I love you! I'll work

for you as long as I live. Let me go home with you. I want to show you that beneath this black breast there beats a heart that feels and responds to love like yours. Let me go home with you. I want to work for you forever, because I love you.”

Mr. Grace—“All right, Sam, come along, but remember, you are not my slave, nor do I want you to work to pay for your freedom; that is the free gift of my grace to you.”

Colored Man—“Oh, I understand. I won't try to pay for it, but I want to show how much I appreciate your gift by my labor of love.”

Reader do you see it? Do you see the true motive for commandment keeping? Do you see the only place for works in the plan of salvation?

This is what the Apostle Paul saw, and this is what so mightily moved his heart to go to the ends of the earth crying, “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Eph. 2:8-10.

This is the only place for commandment-keeping in the plan of redemption, the only place in the preaching of redemption or in the redeemed man's life.

“We love him, because he first loved us.” “If ye love me keep my commandments.” “This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous.” I John 4:19; I John 14:15; I John 5:3.

“He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” I John 2:4.

The above is Chapter 27 of the book by A. F. Balenger, entitled, “The Proclamation of Liberty and the Unpardonable Sin.” The book contains 18 illustrations, 45 chapters, and 267 pages. Price \$1.00

This leaflet will be furnished free to all who ask.