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The Elephant in the Room

Exodus 21:1-11

The expression "elephant in the room" is a metaphorical idiom in English for an important or enormous topic, question, or controversial issue that is obvious or that everyone knows about but no one mentions or wants to discuss because it makes at least some of them uncomfortable or is personally, socially, or politically embarrassing, controversial, inflammatory, or dangerous.

The Elephant in the room when Exodus 21:1-11 is read:
God doesn't seem to have a _____
with _____ in the Bible.

Slave: A person who is wholly subject to the will of another; one who has no will of his own, but whose person and services are wholly under the control of another.

Whoever steals a man and sells him, and anyone found in possession of him, shall be put to death. - Exodus 21:16

Things we need to consider when taking this kind of elephant by the ears:

- o There are things in the Bible that are hard to understand
- o We can't answer every potential question in one sitting
- o We need humility
- o We should want to avoid hypocrisy
- o We need to let the bigger, clearer passages in the Bible help interpret the less clear passages

Reason #1: God only _____ the practice of slavery in the Bible. But He never _____ it.

Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called (saved). Were you a bondservant (doulos) when called? Do not be concerned about it. (But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity.) - 1 Corinthians 7:20-21

Reason #2: Slavery as an institution is not _____.

Reason #3: The institution of slavery is _____ to understanding the _____ reality of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?" Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin." - John 8:31-34

See Romans 7:14-25, Luke 4:16-21, 1 Peter 1:17-19, Romans 6:16-22

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body. - 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a slave, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. - Philippians 2:5-8

See Matthew 28:18-20

His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant (doulos). You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' - Matthew 25:21