

Symbol Notes

The spirits of Christians are citizens of a kingdom not of this world. God has provided a wealth of symbols so that the natural man, who cannot understand the things of the spirit (1 Corinthians 2:14), can realize that this kingdom is real, functional, and eternal. This kingdom promises release from the downward spiral of failure, from which the citizens of this world cannot escape (Romans 8:7). Further, these symbols teach Christians about the responsibilities of their citizenship, and the tools provided by God to overcome previously acquired bad habits (Romans 8:13).

Death

- If life has meaning, then a part of us will live forever. We call that part our “spirits.” God is also a spirit: eternal and non-physical. Physical death is used by God to illustrate spiritual death. When our spirits are connected to God, we are “alive;” when we are not connected to God, we are “dead.” Spirits do not literally die; it’s a figure of speech. Physical death is inherent to this creation. It is not a punishment for sin. If it were, then there is part of the effects of sin that Jesus failed to remedy.
- Passages about spiritual death:
 - Genesis 2:8 – 17, 3:22 – 24 “In the day you eat of it, you shall surely die.” Spiritual death, not physical death, began when Adam and Eve sinned.
 - Romans 6:16 – 23 Sin enslaves us and disconnects our spirits from God (death of spirit). The free gift is reconnection (life of spirit).
 - Romans 7:5 – 8:6 The justice mentality (embodied in rules) leads only to failure (death of spirit). Good people recognize this but are at a loss for how to re-connect with God (7:24). The new mindset, the faith mentality, is based on making decisions from the viewpoint of a spirit.
 - 1 Corinthians 15:20 – 26, 35 – 57 Jesus’ resurrection (in addition to being proof that He is God) was an illustration of the re-connection of our spirits with God. Physical death, the illustration of spiritual death, comes to an end (15:26) because it will have nothing left to illustrate.

Immersion

- Acts 22:16, Hebrews 10:22 Washing away of sin
- 1 Corinthians 6:11, Ephesians 5:26 Reserved for godly purposes (sanctified)
- Romans 6:3-4, 12:1. We become sacrifices like Jesus.
- Romans 6:4, Titus 3:5 Walk in newness of life. Our spirits are resurrected: reconnected.
- Romans 6:5 Also, Christians will be raised on Judgment Day.
- Romans 6:6 Christians are freed from slavery to sin.
- 1 Corinthians 12:13 Christians achieve miraculous unity.
- 2 Corinthians 3:18, Galatians 3:27 Being transformed into the image of Jesus.
- Colossians 2:12 Christians were buried with Him and have been raised (see Romans 6).
- 1 Peter 3:21 The water rescued Noah from an evil world, as baptism rescues Christians.
- Acts 2:38 Receiving Holy Spirit

Sacrifice

The common usage of the word is the pagan concept of “to give up something.” Pagan sacrifices seek to manipulate their god. This concept is never used in the Bible concerning sacrifices to the one true and living God. True sacrifices are a celebration of forgiveness with family and friends in the presence of God.

Jesus’ sacrifice incorporates all Mosaic images:

- Yom Kippur (2 Corinthians 5:21)
- Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7)
- Peace and sin offering (Ephesians 5:2)
- Cleansing of heaven (Hebrews 9:23)
- Blood atonement (Hebrews 9:25, 10:12)
- Participation (1 Corinthians 10:16 – 21)
- Reminder (1 Corinthians 11:23 – 27)

Our sacrifice incorporates all Mosaic images:

- Evangelism (Romans 15:16)
- Praise (Hebrews 13:15)
- Doing good and sharing (Hebrews 13:16, Philippians 4:18)
- General Christian activities (1 Peter 2:5)
- Faith (Philippians 2:17)
- Our bodies (Romans 12:1)

Slavery

In the New Testament, slavery was to be avoided (1 Corinthians 7:21 – 23), but the position of slave was not deemed a moral evil. Rather, slaves were commended to work hard and well (Ephesians 6:5 – 8, Colossians 3:22 – 24, 1 Timothy 6:1 – 2, Titus 2:9 – 10, 1 Peter 2:18 – 20). Christian slave owners were not directed to release their slaves, but to be good masters (Ephesians 6:9, Colossians 4:1)

Slaves of God or Jesus (1 Thessalonians 1:9, Titus 1:1, James 1:1, Acts 16:17, Romans 1:1, 2 Peter 1:1, Jude 1, Revelation 1:1, Philippians 1:1, Galatians 1:10, Colossians 4:12, 2 Timothy 2:24, Romans 14:18, Romans 12:11, Colossians 3:24). The phrase lacked the negative side of slavery because there was no fear in being a slave of God, since God acted in the slave’s best interests (Romans 8:15).

Slaves of one another (1 Corinthians 9:19, 2 Corinthians 4:5, Galatians 5:13, Philippians 2:22). This would be unattractive to the Greek notion of the liberty of the individual. Jesus was described as a slave in this same way (Philippians 2:7, John 13:5 – 17).

Slave of sin (Romans 6:6, Romans 6:16 – 23, Romans 16:18, Titus 3:3, 2 Peter 2:19) As most active addicts would say, “I can stop any time I want.” Paul made the point that Judgment was the cause (Hebrews 2:15); people are held in slavery to sin because of their fear of death and the next stop, Judgment.

Slave to Law (Romans 7:6, Romans 7:25, Galatians 4:1, Galatians 4:7, Galatians 4:21 – 5:1).

Slave to decay We are redeemed from slavery to the normal decay of the world (Ephesians 5:16, Colossians 4:5, Romans 8:21) and from sin (Romans 8:23, Ephesians 1:14).