What Owns Me?

“All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be dominated by anything.
—1 Corinthians 6:12, ESV

We usually know what we own.

We can point to a house, a car, a bank account, or things we have collected through the years.

It is harder to recognize what owns us.

It may be another person’s approval. It may be comfort, financial security, entertainment, or the need to have the last word.

We may call it a preference.

But what happens when it is threatened?

Something we once enjoyed can become something we believe we cannot do without. We begin arranging our decisions around keeping it.

And when obedience to Christ puts it at risk, we hesitate.

Paul’s words bring us beyond the question we often prefer to ask.

“Am I allowed to do this?”

That question matters. God has given commands. But Paul will not allow an appeal to freedom to become an excuse for slavery.

“I will not be dominated by anything.”

In the verses that follow, he addresses sexual immorality and reminds believers that their bodies belong to Christ. His argument rests upon a truth that reaches into every part of life:

“You are not your own, for you were bought with a price.”
1 Corinthians 6:19–20, ESV

The Christian belongs to Someone.

That belonging changes how we live among the things of this world.

We work, maintain our homes, enjoy friendships, and receive good things with gratitude. These ordinary pleasures need not draw us away from God.

But a gift can begin to occupy the place of the Giver.

Money helps us provide for our families and care for others. Yet we may look to it for an assurance it cannot give. We tell ourselves that one more increase will finally let us rest.

Then the increase comes.

And we still cannot rest.

Approval encourages us. But if we must have it, we may withhold what faithfulness requires.

Comfort refreshes us. But if comfort rules us, every difficult duty begins to look unreasonable.

Even being right can become something we serve. We defend a true statement, yet our resentment afterward reveals how much we needed to win.

What were we protecting?

We should bring such questions before God.

What do I find hardest to surrender?

What do I excuse because I want it so much?

What am I afraid obedience might cost me?

The answers require care. Grief does not prove we worshiped what we lost. Concern for someone does not mean that person has taken God’s place.

But we should pay attention when we repeatedly disobey to obtain something or refuse correction because we cannot bear to release it.

Jesus said that no one can serve two masters.
Matthew 6:24

Yet we try to negotiate.

We will obey, provided our reputation remains safe.

We will give, provided we never feel less secure.

Those conditions reveal the struggle. We are asking Christ to govern us within boundaries established by something else.

Remember whose you are.

The Savior who bought us gave Himself for us. His authority is good. We can confess what has gained too much power and take the next step of obedience, even while surrender remains difficult.

We will need His help.

And we belong to the One who died and rose for us.

Look again at your plans, possessions, habits, and reputation.

You may own them.

But do any of them own you?

Just a Thought.

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