- **Frederick Douglass on Escaping Slavery**
  - **Matthew 19:29; Romans 6:1-18**
    - *Deliverance; Freedom; New Life; Redemption; Sin; Slavery*

Frederick Douglass grew up as a slave in Maryland in the early 19th century and experienced slavery's every brutality. He was taken from his mother when he was only an infant. For years as a child, all he had to eat was runny corn meal dumped in a trough that kids fought to scoop out with oyster shells. He was whipped many times with a cowhide whip until blood ran down his back, kicked and beaten by his master until he almost died, and attached with a spike by a gang of whites.

But even so, when Frederick considered trying to escape to freedom, he struggled with the decision. He writes in *Narrative of the Life of Frederick, An American Slave* that he had two great fears.

The first was leaving behind his friends:

I had a number of warm-hearted friends in Baltimore- friends that I

loved almost as I did my life-and the thought of being separated from them forever was painful beyond expression. It is my opinion that thousands would escape from slavery, who now remain, but for the strong cords of affection that bind them to their friends.

His second fear was this: *If I failed in this attempt, my case would be a hopeless one- it would seal my fate as a slave forever.*

Today, people who find themselves in slavery to sin and who this about escaping to freedom in Christ, may have similar fears. They may fear leaving behind friends. They may fear they'll fail in their attempt to break from sin and live free from God. They should take heart from Douglass's experience. On September 3, 1838, he remembers:

> *I left me chains, and succeeded in reaching New York without the slightest interruption of any kind… I have been frequently asked how I felt when I found myself in a free State… It was a moment of the highest excitement I ever experienced… I felt like one who had escaped a den of hungry lions.*

Citation: Kevin A. Miller, editor and author, Wheaton, Illinois