

10 Slaves

- Slaves in the Roman Empire were omnipresent
in one of the great world slave societies.
The economy depended on slavery.

- “Enslaved persons”

Principal means of acquisition:

War and vernae (house born)

- No difference in dress or appearance
- Predominance of males;
implications for demography

Relative autonomy of the enslaved



Manumission and freedmen/women:

The most upwardly mobile segment of
Roman society

Roman freedwomen

Manumission matrimonii
causa

and for other reasons



- Many probable freedmen/women in the New Testament, e.g.,
- Joseph Barsabbas Justus (Acts 1:23)
- Lydia (Acts 16)
- Antonius Claudius Felix (Acts 24:22-26), Roman procurator of Judea 52-60
- Synagogue of the freedmen (not libertines!) Acts 6:9

- Paul's possible origins:
 - Jerome's testimony that Paul's parents were enslaved by a Roman and gained freedom with citizenship
- Paul was born a Roman citizen Acts 22:28



Once more, the
Firmius family

