

True Freedom!!!

“For he who has died has been freed from sin.” Romans 6:7

In the world’s history, there are a few celebrated legal “covenants,” which are commemorated for the great political and social freedom they granted to mankind. Among these are the Magna Carta, the Declaration of Independence, and the Emancipation Proclamation. However, none of these earthly “covenants” can compare with the *freedom from sin* that God has given us through His Son’s blood in *the New Covenant*. This is true freedom! “So if the Son sets you *free*, you will be *free* indeed (John 8:36).”

Before I was saved, I thought I could overcome sinful behavior through my willpower and self-effort. However, the harder I tried, the more I failed and became acutely aware of not only my outward sins but my inner sinful nature. In despair, I finally came to the conclusion that I would never be freed from my sinful nature until I died. Little did I know that death is exactly what God had in mind for my sinful nature. For since the time of Adam, all mankind has been born into sin and in bondage to sin. Since we came into sin’s captivity through birth, the only way we could ever be freed from sin was through death. This is why God in his divine wisdom included us in His Son’s death and performed what might be called a divine heart transplant. The Bible says that when we were born again, we were immersed into Christ’s death (Romans 6:3). Therefore, when Christ died, we died with Him (Romans 6:8). Our sinful nature was crucified with Christ and was removed from us (Romans 6:6). Since our sinful nature is dead and gone, we are no longer slaves to sin and Christ now lives in us (2 Corinthians 13:5; Colossians 1:27). This is the divine exchange that was made possible by Christ’s death on the cross. By our immersion into Christ’s death, we have been freed from sin! “For he who has died *has been freed* from sin (Romans 6:7).” This is the freedom that Christ purchased for us in the New Covenant by His blood.

Christ’s death on the cross has forever freed us from sin. Since we are no longer captives to sin, we never again have to fear the destructive power of sin. “For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, ‘Abba! Father!’ (Romans 8:15).” What a freedom – at Christ’s expense! This is the purpose of the New Covenant, which was made effective through the blood of Jesus Christ. What the Old Covenant could not do because of man’s sinful nature, God accomplished in the New Covenant through Christ’s death on the cross. “For what the Law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering (Romans 8:3).” The apostle Paul said, “Therefore, let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and through Him everyone who believes is *freed* from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses (Acts 13:39).”

Since our sinful nature (*which compelled us to sin*) has been removed from us, we have been freed from the power of sin. After we are saved, we need to know this great truth and stand firm *by faith* in it so that our minds will be renewed and transformed by this great truth. There is a great difference between the old sinful nature and the unrenewed mind. It is very important to always remember that the unrenewed mind does not have the same power as the sinful nature. Our old sinful nature was like a continuously operating "sin factory" that had to be destroyed by Christ's death on the cross before we could be set free from slavery to sin. The unrenewed mind, on the other hand, is simply our soulish mindset, which the Holy Spirit within us can transform now that we no longer have a sinful nature.

After I was saved, I *once again* mistakenly thought I had to be holy through my own willpower and self-effort. Although I knew I was not saved by my own works, I thought my sanctification now depended on my best efforts. Therefore, I zealously devoted myself to reading the Bible, prayer and fasting, going to church, giving tithes and offerings, and serving in ministry. Since I was a very strong willed and determined individual, it took a long and painful process for God to bring me to the end of my natural moral strength. But through many afflictions, which one brother in Christ aptly called the "gift of misery," God finally convinced me that I had absolutely no virtuous capability within myself to do His spiritual work and bear His spiritual fruit. Thus it was a glorious day when I realized that not only had Christ died for my sins (Romans 5:8) but that my sinful nature had also died with Christ (Romans 6:8). Words cannot fully express how grateful I am to God for the spiritual freedom I now have in Christ to serve Him with an undivided, holy heart. "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is *liberty* (2 Corinthians 3:17)."

You may be born again, but are you experiencing freedom from sin or are you beset with entangling sins? If you are not experiencing freedom from the power of sin, it is because you do not know (*believe and act on*) the truth that you have died with Christ. When did you die? Since Christ's death took place in the eternal realm, when Christ died you died with Him. Therefore, when you received Christ, your sinful nature was crucified with Him and was removed from you (*buried with Him*). This is the word of truth that sets you free. Jesus said, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you *free* (John 8:31-32)." By this declaration of freedom, Jesus made it clear that He meant freedom from slavery to sin (see John 8:34). By His death on the cross, Jesus Christ has freed us from the power of sin by removing our sinful nature. Let us now stand firm in the freedom He has purchased for us by His blood. This is true sanctification and spiritual freedom in Jesus Christ. "It is for *freedom* that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be entangled again by a yoke of slavery (Galatians 5:1)."

Tomorrow: Romans 6:8

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