

The Freedom of the Cross

“Everyone who sins is a slave to sin... so if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.” John 8:34-36
“Now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.” Romans 6:22

At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus Christ declared, “The Spirit of the Lord is on Me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners (Luke 4:18).” Jesus fulfilled this mission by dying on the cross. God used His Son’s death to set us free from the kingdom of darkness and bring us into His kingdom of light (Colossians 1:13). The Bible says, “God set you free when He sent His own Son... to be a sacrifice for our sin (Romans 8:3).”

Before we were saved, we were slaves to the fear of the destructive power of sin in our life (Romans 8:15). But through the cross, Christ has set us free from the guilt and condemnation of sin. “For by the death of Christ we are set free... our sins are forgiven (Ephesians 1:7).” When we were still lawless and rebels to God, we were enslaved to sin. But through His death, Christ freed us from this power of sin. “We know that our old self was crucified with Him so that our sinful nature might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin (Romans 6:6).” When we were still unbelievers, many of us were afraid of physically dying. But, even as believers, many of us are still afraid of sin’s power; wrongly believing we are still captive to sin. However, by His death, Jesus has freed us from this fear of death and sin’s stranglehold. “So that by His death He might destroy him who holds the power of death - that is, the devil - and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death (Hebrews 2:14-15)”

Therefore, by Christ’s death on the cross, we have been forever freed from the fear of sin’s dominion and the fear of death. It is crucial for us to know that sin is no longer master over us and

death no longer has dominion over us. “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death (Roman 8:1).” Why? Because the Bible says that through Christ’s death we have been “brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God... 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; 21).” Before we were born of the Spirit, we were enemies of God. But by His Son’s death on the cross, God has set us free to be His bondslaves. How did God deliver us from the power of sin and produce this miraculous change of heart in us - from godless, rebellious sinners to devoted bondslaves of God? The way God accomplished this glorious liberation for us was simply profound and powerful: Since we were born into sin, God freed us from sin’s captivity by including us in His Son’s death so we could be born into life (Romans 6:3-5). “He who has died has been freed from sin... we have died with Christ (Romans 6:7-8).” This operation of the cross was like a divine heart transplant. When Jesus Christ died on the cross, God exchanged our terminally sin-sick heart with His Son’s divine holy heart. We were once sons of disobedience and children of wrath (Ephesians 2:1-2), but now that God has removed our sinful nature and put the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, we have become sons of obedience (Romans 6:6-20; Galatians 4:6; Colossians 2:11).

Since Christ has set us free from the kingdom of darkness, should we continue to practice sin? Absolutely not! “For you were called to be free, my brethren; only do not use your freedom to indulge sinful desires (Galatians 5:13).” Jesus Christ has set us free from sin for the very purpose that we would practice holiness (sanctification). “For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but to sanctification (1 Thessalonians 4:7).” The Bible says we have been freed from sin and have become enslaved to God (Romans 6:22). Many Christians think they can continue to willfully practice sin and still receive the benefits of salvation. Other Christians

think that holiness is too strict a standard to keep. Still other Christians think that spiritual freedom means you can do whatever you please, living lawlessly, and still be covered by the blood of Jesus. None of these are true. The apostle Paul said, “Should we sin because we are under grace? God forbid! (Romans 6:15).” And the apostle Peter said, “Act as free men and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil but use it as bondslaves for God (1 Peter 2:16).” Paul also wrote, “Keep yourself free from sin (1 Timothy 5:22).” Even though we may be under grace, God has never changed His standard of holiness. Here is the divine truth: You are either a slave to sin or slave to God. “Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? (Romans 6:16).” Practicing obedience to God is essential because the Bible says “without sanctification no one will see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14).” Unless we walk by faith in this freedom from sin purchased by Christ’s blood, we cannot know the Lord. The apostle John taught, “Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. But you know that He appeared so that He might take away our sins. And in Him is no sin. No one who lives in Him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen Him or known Him (1 John 3:4-6).”

Jesus Christ died on the cross to set us free from the power of sin and death. If we do not use this priceless freedom to serve God as His bondslaves, then Christ will have died needlessly for us. If we are not enslaved to God, we cannot be sanctified. And without sanctification, we cannot know God nor can we inherit eternal life (Romans 6:22).

“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.” 2 Corinthians 3:17
“It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore, keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.” Galatians 5:1