

Free To Be A Slave!

FREE BY GRACE—SLAVE BY CHOICE

by Dale Rumble

Free From the Prison of Sin

An animal born and reared in captivity until it is full grown and then offered an opportunity to be free will be fearful of leaving the “security” of its prison. It has become used to living as a prisoner; freedom, never experienced, is a totally unknown dimension of life. How sad such deprivation is!

Even more sad is the fact that the same condition is true for all who are unsaved. The slavery of sin, fear of death, hopelessness and corruption in their lives is a prison that they have become accustomed to living in. They have never experienced the *glorious* freedom of redemption. How much greater is their deprivation!

. . . that through death He (Jesus) might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. (Hebrews 2:14-15)

The gospel promises freedom from the prison of sin to all who respond with faith and repentance.

*. . . the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, **to proclaim liberty to captives, and freedom to prisoners.** (Isaiah 61:1)*

Any person controlled by sin is a slave in prison.

*Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the **slave of sin.** (John 8:34)*

The *only* name given under heaven whereby one can be set free from the prison and judgment of sin is the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 4:10-12). Freedom comes by believing that the Son of God came down to earth to suffer on the cross and shed His blood as atonement for our sin; having believed the good news of the gospel, one must truly *repent* in his heart for past sins and put his trust *wholly* on the One who died for him.

Jesus said to him, "I am the way and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but by Me . . . (John 14:6)

That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved. (Romans 10:9)

Jesus, and Jesus alone, is the key to freedom from the prison of sin. He sets the captives free.

*. . . if you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and **the truth shall set you free . . . if therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.** (John 8:31, 32, 36)*

We are justified through faith in the cleansing power of His blood (Romans 5:1, 9). To be justified means that God has imputed His perfect righteousness to our account. All of our transgressions are wiped away, just as if we had never sinned.

However, this does not imply that thereafter we will always walk righteously, either in thought or deed. Nevertheless, this is God's goal for us (Matthew 5:48; Ephesians 1:4). Therefore it is necessary both to understand our responsibility, and to recognize all that Christ accomplished for us on the cross, so that the process of our sanctification can take place, We are to be holy because He is holy. The next step is to learn how we can be free of the influence of our carnal nature that has caused us to sin in the past.

Free From Our Body of Sin

It is wonderful to have our sins forgiven, but we also want to walk in righteousness. Clearly we are not to continue in sin so that God's grace might increase. That would only put us back in the prison we have been delivered from.

The answer lies in having faith to possess all that Christ provided for us on the cross. He took our Adamic, sinful nature with Him to the cross; by faith it was put to death there.

*... knowing this, that **our old self was crucified with Him**, that our body of sin might be done away with, **that we should no longer be slave to sin.** (Romans 6:6)*

It requires faith on our part to believe this great truth. It also requires our obedience in water baptism, for this is the act by which we personally identify with Him in His death and burial, and begin to make this truth a reality in our life.

*... do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, **so we too might walk in newness of life.** (Romans 6:3-4)*

The Lord's command to converts today is the same one that He gave to the first believers:

And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38)

Faithful obedience in water baptism is our testimony that we have been crucified with Christ; that the Holy Spirit has circumcised our heart so that we can now walk in righteousness.

Thus you were circumcised when you were buried with Him in your baptism, in which you were also raised with Him to a new life through your faith in the working of God as displayed

when He raised Him up from the dead. (Colossians 2:12; Amplified Bible)

By faith, Christ can now live His life within me in place of my old Adamic self; I do not have to continue in sin! By faith I must daily reckon myself to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus (Romans 6:11).

*I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live **but Christ lives in me**; and the life which I now live in the flesh **I live by faith in the Son of God, Who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.** (Galatians 2:20)*

Let us now examine the freedom and victory that becomes ours as we walk in the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

Free from the Law of Sin and Death

The first issue to be faced in the matter of righteousness is how requirements of the Law are to be fulfilled in our lives. The answer is found in yet another dimension of freedom that Christ has provided for us in His redemptive work on the cross.

*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus **has set you free from the law of sin and of death.** For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the **requirements of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.** (Romans 8:2-4)*

Jesus kept perfectly every commandment of the Law in His life on earth, and by His death He paid the required penalty of death for *every sin ever committed*; past, present and future. In this way, He fulfilled the Law with *all of its requirements* and rendered it inoperative as the mandatory basis for righteousness in believers.

For He . . . broke down the barriers of the dividing wall, by abolishing (rendering inoperative) in His flesh the enmity,

which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances . . . (Ephesians 2:14-15)

*Having canceled out the certificate of debt **consisting of decrees** against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, **having nailed it to the cross.** (Colossians 2:14)*

He replaced the law of sin and death with the law of the (Holy) Spirit of life for His followers.

*Therefore, my brethren, you also **were made to die to the Law** through the body of Christ, that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for God . . . now **we have been released from the Law**, having died to that by which we were bound so that we **serve in newness of Spirit and not in oldness of letter.** (Romans 7:4, 6)*

Since the Spirit of truth will never contradict the word of truth, we are responsible to personally hear and obey His voice as the Spirit of God speaks to us out of scripture. For example, He would never lead us to steal. He transforms the dead “letter of the word” into a living, anointed word to our hearts.

Spiritual fruit can only come from the Holy Spirit. Right standing before God can never come from keeping laws in order to make ourselves righteous; this only leads back to slavery.

*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 5:10)*

The *law of liberty*, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, is the *perfect law* (James 1:25; 2:12). Walking in this law is how we can be changed into His image.

Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:17-18)

To become like Jesus, to do the works of Jesus, requires a baptism of the Holy Spirit. We need power; by faith we must tap into the omnipotence of God through receiving an overflowing, infilling of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5, 8). It is He who guides us and enables us to walk in victory helping us put to death deeds of our flesh (2 Corinthians 3:6).

For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. (Romans 8:13-14)

But I say, "walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desires of the flesh If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. (Galatians 5:16, 25)

Free to Become a Bondservant

One cannot truly be a disciple of Christ without becoming His bondservant. And one cannot become a bondservant without first experiencing the three freedoms that have been presented here. Believers who frequently fall into sin, or who cannot walk in victory over desires of their flesh, or who are in bondage to either legalism or a sectarian religious system, are simply not free to be bondservants of Christ.

The provision of the cross sets us free from all such things so that we can submit ourselves wholly to Him. This must be a freewill choice on our part, recognizing that we are no longer our own, for we have been bought with a price.

Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God. (1 Peter 2:16)

*And having been freed from sin you became **slaves of righteousness** But now having been freed from sin **and enslaved to God**, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification and eternal life. (Romans 6:18, 22)*

In Christ we are both free and slaves; we experience the freedom of the glory of God's children, while at the same time, being subject to His Lordship in our lives (Romans 8:21; Philippians 2:5-8). We are both kings and bondservants!

The gospel of the kingdom is both the good news of God's free offer of salvation and a proclamation of His government. These two truths must not be separated, for both are required to make disciples for Christ. The gospel we preach must proclaim His Lordship and our servanthood.

*For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as **your bondservants for Jesus' sake.** (2 Corinthians 4:5)*

Our choice is between going our own way or following the Lord which is the way of life.

. . . If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it. (Matthew 16:24-25)

There is not greater freedom offered to man than the privilege of being a bondservant of Christ.

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