

## Set Free FROM Sin

The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation to all who believe (Rom 1:16). Since it is so powerful why do we not see a great move of God with multitudes being truly, and completely saved and re-born? Is the gospel that is preached today the same gospel of the Holy Scriptures? Ezekiel prophesied in his day that the shepherds were fouling the clear waters with their feet leaving them muddy waters instead of the pure un-adulterated water of the word (Eze 34:18-19). The apostle Paul also said, "I fear that somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, our minds have been led astray from the simplicity and purity that is in Christ. Is it possible that the preaching of the gospel today is the preaching of another Jesus who Paul did not preach and as a result some are receiving another spirit through a different gospel? (2 Cor 11:3,4) We hear many messages today that are filled with entertaining stories, psychology and even secular media! If we begin to put our trust in men and make flesh our strength then we are cursed. But blessed are those who trust is in the Lord and whose hope is Him. (Jer 17:5,7) Paul says that he did not preach in cleverness of speech, that the cross of Christ should be made of no effect. (1 Cor 1:17) Neither were his messages nor preaching in persuasive words of (earthly) wisdom, (philosophy, carnal reasoning/logic) but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that people's faith should not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God. (1 Cor 2:4,5) His gospel did not come in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. (1 Thess 1:5)

What is the Gospel then? "All flesh is like grass, and all its glory like the flower of grass, the grass withers, and the flowers fall off, but the word of the Lord abides forever. And this is the word which was preached to you (1 Pet 1:24-25). The true gospel is not going to be liked by all, nor accepted by all. Woe to you when all speak well of you, for thus they did to the false prophets (preachers) before you (Luk 6:26) Lord, let us return to your word and preach the cross once more. It's the cross, the blood and the resurrection that will save this land. We have been born again THROUGH the living and abiding word of God (1 Pet 1:23). According to His great mercy he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for us, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. We are chosen by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that we may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood. (1 Pet 1:3-5,2)

The simple message, as I am coming to see it, is summed up in John the Baptist's revelation when we saw Jesus: "Behold! The lamb of God, who comes to take AWAY the sins of the world!" (John 1:29) This is the gospel in its purest form. He did not come to save us IN our sins, but He came, praise the Lord, to save us FROM our sins. There is a difference. Jesus, after getting baptized and overcoming the temptations and trials in the wilderness, proclaimed, "the Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor, He sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden, to proclaim the favourable year of the Lord." (Luke 4:18,19) He came to set the captives, like me, free. Hallelujah! Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom. It is for freedom that He set us free! What kind of freedom is this? It most definitely is not the freedom to do whatever we want and to fulfill the desire of our flesh. On the contrary, "those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." (Gal 5:24) It is the freedom that a bond-slave has—the freedom to do whatever the Master desires and whenever He commands it. Not my will, but Yours be done. Behold, in the scroll of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will; For Thy law is written in my heart. It is the freedom from sin, from this mortal, corruptible flesh (sin nature). It is the freedom from self: self-worship, selfish

ambition, selfish motives, self-love and self-exaltation. Jesus is to be Lord of all. He wants to come to have pre-eminence (first place) in everything, (Col 1:18) not our self and things of this world. “Why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?” (Luk 6:46) Sin is the pleasing of self and the loving of one’s own life. Pride and self are two of the main roots to most sin and rebellion. ‘I can do it. I can live the way I want. I am a queen. I will not be a widow. (Rev 16:7) I am the righteousness of God, in Christ Jesus, while I walk in the stubbornness of my own heart. I will have peace. I don’t care what the word or what others say. My sins are forgiven forever; past, present, and future.’ These are the words that spew straight out of the serpents’ mouth. From that great dragon, who was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceived the whole world. (Rev 12:9) The true freedom that gives life and leads to life eternal is obtained by grace through faith and will conform us to the image and nature of Jesus Christ.

The freedom that Christ came and died on the cross for is explained in the book of Romans, chapter six. He (Jesus) Himself partook of the same flesh and blood as us, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. (Heb 2:14,15) And what is the power of death? The sting (power) of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor 15:56, 57) The victory that overcomes the world, the flesh, and the devil is our faith (1 John 5:4) It is faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Paul writes that the death He died He died to sin, that we might live unto righteousness; for by His wounds we are healed. (1 Pet 2:24) If we truly believe, from the HEART, that God raised Jesus Christ from the dead then the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead will also give life to our mortal bodies. (Rom 8:11) So how do we get set free from this body of death? We DIE! This is a trustworthy statement, if we DIE with Him we will reign with Him (2 Tim 2:11) It is in death that we truly find life; life abundant now and in the age to come. “If we become united with Him (Jesus) in the likeness of His death, *certainly* we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.” (Rom 6:5) Our old self—life, motives, ambitions, and sinful ways—is to be crucified with Him, so that our body of sin (the incorruptible) might be made powerless, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has DIED is freed FROM sin. (Rom 6:6,7) This corruptible must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. (1 Cor 15:53) Let us put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts. (Rom 13:14) The word of God says that he who has died is freed FROM sin. This word FROM in the Greek (Gk: 575) means: a bringing or coming to an end, a separation, or departure. If we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, then we will be raised from the dead and walk in newness of life, (Rom 6:4) a life free FROM sin, communion with God and a life of true worship. (John 4:23,24; Rom 12:1). If any man is in Christ he is a new creation, old things are passing away, behold all things are becoming new. (2 Cor 5:17) This is the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ IN you, the hope of glory. (Col 1:27) He didn’t come to cover up our sins, or to see us as being holy as we continue to practice rebellion to His word. He appeared in order to take AWAY sins, (1 John 3:5) that we may be whiter than snow, without spot or blemish, blameless before Him in love. Brethren, do not be deceived, the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; the one who practices sin is of the devil. And it is for this purpose that He came, that He might destroy the works of the devil (the sinful nature). (1 John 3:7,8) This is the freedom that I am talking about here. I praise God that I can say, in the words of Paul, thanks be to God that I was a slave of sin, and become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which I was committed, and having been freed FROM sin, become a slave of righteousness. (Rom 6:17,18) And now, having been freed FROM sin and enslaved to God, I derive my benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life—Glory be to God! (Rom 6:22)

One might be saying that this is impossible! You can't be free from sin. We're only human; we are always going to sin. Jesus says that with man it is impossible, but with God all things are possible. (Matt 19:26) "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless (see Psa 19:13) with great joy." (Jude 24) It is not of works that none should boast, but it is all by the grace of God through faith. "For the (true) grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, teaching us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly and godly in the present age. Jesus gave Himself for us that He might redeem us FROM *every* lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. (Tit 2:11,12,14) Well now you're preaching sinless perfection! If we walk in the light (Psa 119:105) as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from ALL sin. (1 John 1:7) Jesus Himself says we are to be perfect, as our heavenly Father is perfect. (Matt 5:48) And again in the Old and New Testament it says you shall be holy, for He is holy. (Lev 11:44; 1 Pet 1:16) It is all grace, but He came to set the sinners free and to make us a royal priesthood, a holy nation, set apart, a peculiar people, a kingdom of priests, renewed in mind. Pure and sanctified unto Him, that we might proclaim the Excellencies of Him who called us OUT of darkness (sin) and INTO His marvellous light. (1 Pet 2:9)

Brothers and sisters, let us return (repent) to the Lord and do the first works. (Rev 2:5) Let us come to Jesus with child-like faith and believe and embrace the message of the cross. "For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God." (1 Cor 1:18) Let us boast in our weakness and glory is the cross of Calvary. Let's partake of His flesh and His blood (John 6:54) and desire even more so to know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; in order that we may attain to the resurrection of the dead. (Phil 3:10,11) Remember what Jesus said to Martha, "I AM the resurrection and the life!" (John 11:25) Jesus *will* transform this lowly body into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself. (Phil 3:21) It is not by might, not by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord of hosts. (Zec 3:4) We *can* live a life free FROM the bondage and slavery of sin. Free FROM the elementary principles of the world and traditions of men, which we can be taken captive through philosophy (intellectualism, human reasoning) and empty deception. (Col 2:20, 8) Free FROM the wrath of God, (Rom 5:9) which is upon the sons of disobedience. (Eph 5:26; Col 3:6) Free FROM the law of sin and of death, by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. (Rom 8:2) We will be more than conquerors through Him who loved us. (Rom 8:37) We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. (Phil 4:13) Let us come to the light and serve Jesus with *all* our hearts and love our neighbours as ourselves. Let's cry together and ask the Son of David to have mercy on us and forgive us of our wandering hearts. "May the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass. (1 Thess 5:23,24)