

“Freedom from Sin”  
(Romans 6:1-7)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

1. The blessings the Lord gives you – if you are a believer this evening – are far greater than you realize.
  - a. The fact that He has loved you with an everlasting love.
  - b. That He chose to save you and make you like His Son.
  - c. That He called you – when dead in sin and an enemy – with a call that raised you to life and friendship.
  - d. And that having given you the gift of faith, He justified you – He clothed you with the righteousness of His Son, took away your sins, and declared you to be what you are in fact in Jesus Christ: perfect.
  
2. What kind of value can you place on these things?
  - a. What would you give for them?
  - b. What is it worth to escape hell and enter heaven?
  - c. Surely it’s worth more than you can ever imagine, more than a million worlds full of riches.
  - d. And yet the Lord has given it to you freely.
  - e. How much then should you thank Him with your whole life?

B. Preview.

1. But that’s not all He’s given you. There’s still much more.
  - a. If you are walking with the Lord in holiness, from the heart, that is the proof that He’s given you another blessing far beyond comprehension.
  - b. He has not only freed you from the guilt of sin – that would have driven you down into hell forever – He has freed you from its power.
  
2. This evening, let’s consider two things:
  - a. First, that if you are walking with the Lord in holiness from the heart you can know that you’ve been freed from the power of sin.
  - b. Second, that this is the proof that He has also freed you from its guilt.

II. Sermon.

A. First, if you are walking with the Lord in holiness from the heart, you can know that you’ve been freed from the power of sin.

1. When it comes to sin in general, what is it that most Christians today are concerned about?
  - a. Whether or not they’re forgiven; whether their sins have been cleansed; whether their guilt has been finally dealt with.
  - b. This is very important.
    - (i) If your sins aren’t forgiven, then you’re still guilty.

- (ii) And if you're still guilty, then you are still in danger of hell.
  - (iii) This should create more than a little concern.
2. But there is something else true believers are at least equally concerned about – whether they have been freed from the power of sin.
- a. If you're a true believer, you'll never be content merely to be free from judgment while you're still a prisoner of sin.
    - (i) You must also be free from its power to command you.
    - (ii) You must be free to love the Lord and to do what's right.
  - b. That's exactly what the Lord has provided for you in Jesus Christ – sanctification – which is what Paul speaks of in our passage.
    - (i) He says if you have savingly trusted Jesus, you have died to sin (v. 2). This is true in at least two ways.
      - (a) One is that you are dead.
      - (b) The other is that you are alive again.
    - (ii) Remember, Jesus' life was vicarious – everything He did was for you, all He did was in your place.
      - (a) When He obeyed, He was obeying for you.
      - (b) When He died, He died for you.
      - (c) When He was raised, He was raised for you.
      - (d) The same is true of His ascension, coronation, and intercession.
    - (iii) Paul focuses here on His death and His resurrection to show how these two events changed your life.
      - (a) When the Spirit baptized you into Jesus Christ – when He united you with Jesus – at that moment everything Jesus did became yours.
      - (b) At that moment, His death became yours and you died – your old man, your flesh, your corruption, died – “Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?” (v. 3).
      - (c) At that moment, His resurrection also became yours and you were raised – raised to new life in Jesus Christ – “Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life” (v. 4).
      - (d) Because you were crucified with Christ – because your sin was put to death – and because you were raised to life – because you now have His life in your soul – you are no longer the slave of sin but of righteousness: You are freed from sin.
        - (1) You no longer look for an excuse to sin – Paul says you will never use God's grace as an excuse to sin so that God's grace can abound towards you.
        - (2) Instead, you look for ways to kill it, to be done with it, to put it to death.

- (3) You want to be like Jesus – to reflect His life.
- (4) Walking with the Lord in holiness – because that’s what you want to do – is the evidence that you really have been set free from sin’s power.

B. Why is it important to know that you have been set free from its power? Because, second, this is the proof that He has released you from its guilt. This is how you can have the assurance that you’re saved.

1. Everyone who has been freed from the power of sin has also been set free from its guilt.
  - a. This is what the Reformers meant when they said there is no justification without sanctification.
    - (i) Justification is God’s declaration that you are righteous only through the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ.
    - (ii) But when the Lord grants this imputed righteousness (positional), He at the same time grants His Spirit to produce practical/personal holiness.
    - (iii) He transforms you into the image of His Son. Paul writes, “For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to become* conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren” (Rom. 8:29).
  - b. So many who profess to be Christians today want to excuse their sins.
    - (i) They want to believe that they obey God in Jesus. He did all the good works they will ever need, so they’re not going to try to add to His works by keeping God’s commandments.
    - (ii) Though it’s true that you should never try to *add* to Jesus’ work for your justification, it’s also true that you must obey God if you are saved – obedience must be the pattern of your life.
      - (a) John writes, “Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God” (1 John 3:7-10).
      - (b) Paul says in our text, “What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? . . . our old self was crucified with *Him*, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin” (vv. 1-2, 6-7).
      - (c) It’s true that your works don’t save you; but it’s also true that you will be lost without them.

2. Good works – or sanctification – are necessary; they are the necessary evidence that you are freed from the guilt of sin – that you are justified.
  - a. Justification is a *declaration* by God that you are righteous in Jesus Christ.
    - (i) It's not something He shouts from heaven.
    - (ii) It's not something you can see Him do.
    - (iii) It's something you must know by faith.
      - (a) God says He justifies those who trust in Jesus.
      - (b) You have trusted in Jesus.
      - (c) Therefore, you are justified.
    - (iv) But it's also something you can know by the evidence of a changed life.
      - (a) If you are growing in holiness, if you are obeying the Lord more and more from the heart, then you can know you are justified, because only those justified will be sanctified.
      - (b) And knowing you are justified, you can know that you will be glorified – you will never be lost – as we'll see in a couple weeks.
  - b. So what's your condition this evening?
    - (i) Are you walking with the Lord in holiness, because you love Him, because you want to be like Him and do the things He did?
      - (a) Then you can know you are freed from the power of sin.
      - (b) And being free from the power of sin, you can know you are just – you are perfect in Jesus Christ.
      - (c) You don't have to be practically perfect.
        - (1) No one will be this side of heaven – every true believer struggles with sin.
        - (2) But the fact that you want to be perfect shows you are in Jesus Christ – only the Spirit's saving work creates this desire.
    - b. But if you're not walking in holiness from the heart – if you don't want to be perfect, like Jesus – the power of sin hasn't been broken.
      - (i) If it isn't broken, then you're not justified.
      - (ii) And if you're not justified, then you are still in danger of God's judgment, in danger of hell.
      - (iii) If that's where you are this evening, then run to Jesus.
        - (a) Jesus says if you come to Him, He won't turn you away.
        - (b) If you come to Him He will receive you.
        - (c) He'll take away all your sins; He'll give you His perfect righteousness; He'll save you from hell.
        - (d) All you need to do is turn from your sins and trust Him.
        - (e) Will you do that now? I pray you will. Amen.