

Freedom from Sin

I. Introduction

- A. We are beginning a new sermon series today. Normally, we don't do topical series back to back, but this felt like the Lord redirected our steps
 - 1. We are beginning a series called Freedom in Christ, and it is going to unpack salvation and all of its implications
 - 2. The fancy term for this is Soteriology → the study of Salvation
 - 3. We want to go through what enslaves us, what frees us, and how we should live as freed people no longer enslaved to sin and death
 - 4. We want you to experience freedom like never before
 - a) Some of you will follow Christ for the first time by faith...
 - b) Some of you will find new freedom in Christ that you never knew...
 - c) Some of you will be delivered from bondage...
 - 5. Simply stated, we believe that this series will be transformative. Why can I say that with confidence? Because **the Gospel is always transformative**
 - 6. Basically, we are going to look at the gospel from a dozen different angles, beautiful facets to this singular diamond, shining like the sun
 - 7. And as we stare at it, we will be freed, we will be transformed
- B. I recently heard a testimony of a man who gave his life to Jesus... adrift in the sea, in winter, at death's door → he cried out to God for forgiveness
- C. At the heart of the human story is a cry—sometimes silent, sometimes desperate—for freedom.
 - 1. Freedom from guilt, from fear, from shame, for help & deliverance.
 - 2. From cycles we can't break and burdens we can't bear.
 - 3. From pain, suffering, and turmoil.
 - 4. *There's a reason people cry out to God instinctively in desperate times*
- D. Scripture tells us this cry is not just emotional → it's spiritual.
- E. Behind the pain of life and the failure of human effort lies a deeper issue: **we are born in bondage to sin.**
- F. The world's response to bondage is to psychoanalyze, to medicate, to ignore, to drown it out, to block it out, to run away... but that's not how God deals with it
 - 1. Maybe that's where many of you are today... even as a believer... thinking you'll never be free from your anxiety, depression, etc
 - 2. Well, God doesn't owe us anything... and I can't guarantee... but
- G. I know this: God enters into our bondage, not with advice, but with deliverance
 - 1. Deliverance defined: the act of being rescued or set free (note: passive)

H. Sin = Spiritual Bondage

- 1. Jesus put it bluntly: *"Everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin" (John 8:34),*
 - a) He isn't being poetic or dramatic
 - b) He is diagnosing a spiritual condition.

2. Sin is not just wrong actions. Sin is a symptom of a power that enslaves the will, darkens the mind, and twists the heart.
 3. In our natural state, you don't just do sin; **sin rules you**. And under its rule, you live under a curse of death and the weight of condemnation.
 - a) *Romans 6:23 explains, For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
 4. No amount of moral striving can undo that slavery. No religious system can rescue you from it. Nothing of your sweat can help you escape.
 5. Since sin is spiritual, the solution must be spiritual and supernatural.
 - a) Which is why modern efforts to eliminate the supernatural from Jesus' ministry are so evil
- II. God gives a picture of deliverance in the story of the Exodus – an OT Object Lesson
- A. Israel, God's chosen people, were enslaved in Egypt for 400 years under Pharaoh's brutal rule. But then something changed.
 - B. *"The people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help... and God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant..." (Exodus 2:23–24)*
 1. Deliverance began with a cry. Not a polished prayer → just a groan from the depths of bondage. "OH, GOD SAVE US!"
 2. And God responded. Not b/c they were righteous, but b/c He is faithful.
 3. God raised up Moses as a deliverer, a rescuer. Moses himself had no power, but God worked through him via miracles
 - a) Every time Moses would cry out to their captor, Pharaoh, "Let my people go!" → it was a plea for freedom
 - C. The Passover: Blood and Liberation
 1. The ten plagues were like cutting all the small roots on a tree stump, and the final swing of the axe leading to deliverance from Egypt came through the Passover—a night of both judgment and mercy.
 2. God told the Israelites to sacrifice a lamb without blemish and spread its blood over their doorposts.
 3. Deliverance (rescue) would come through the blood of a substitute
 - a) If they obeyed this strange command, then the Angel of Death would "passover" their house
 - b) If they refused to obey, rejecting this command, then death would fall on their house, not on a lamb, but on their firstborn son
 4. The morning following the Passover, there was great wailing as many woke up to death, but it also became the catalyst for freedom
 - a) Blood. Sacrifice. Death. Freedom. Exodus
 5. After the Jews crossed the Red Sea, this moment would define them.
 - a) God told them to remember it every year → **LOOKING BACK** to what God had done
 - b) God had freed them from a Kingdom of Evil Darkness and brought them into those first steps towards the Kingdom of God

- c) BUT, little did they know at the time, it was also a signpost
LOOKING FORWARD
- d) The Passover would become a lens through which we understand the cross and crucifixion of Christ

III. Jesus

- A. On Palm Sunday, Jesus entered Jerusalem from Bethany.
 - 1. In fulfillment of prophecy, Jesus enters riding on a donkey- a Messianic marker indicating that he was claiming to be the King sent to rescue them from their oppressors.
- B. Once again, they cry out... just like in Exodus: *"Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" (Mark 11:9)*
- C. Hosanna means "Save us, please!"
 - 1. It's a cry for liberation.
 - 2. Jesus' silent cry back, "Let my people go..."
- D. But the crowds, like many today, misunderstood the freedom they needed.
 - 1. They wanted freedom from Rome, freedom from oppressive taxes, freedom from exploitation, and political exhaustion
 - 2. But Jesus came to give freedom from their true oppressor: sin
- E. It is fitting, then, that the night of his betrayal, Jesus celebrated his final meal with his friends → the Passover, but he reinterprets it
 - 1. Rather than going through the traditional seder process, Jesus says:
 - 2. *"This is my body, given for you... this is my blood of the covenant, poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." (Luke 22:19–20)*
- F. It may be lost on us, but looking back, it was not lost on these Jewish followers
 - 1. Christ was claiming that He was the true Passover Lamb.
 - 2. This is what John the Baptist meant when he cried out, "Behold, the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world..."
 - 3. His blood would cover the hearts of those who trust in Him.
 - 4. Through His sacrifice, the final and greater Exodus would begin – not from Pharaoh but from sin and death.
 - 5. As the Red Sea was torn open, so would Jesus' flesh & the veil

IV. The Cross

- A. *1 Corinthians 15:3, "Christ died for our sins in accordance with the [prophecies of the] Scriptures..."*
 - 1. "For" can mean "for the benefit of" or "because of"
 - 2. Jesus didn't die for the benefit of our sins that's silly
 - 3. Jesus died because of our sins
 - 4. On that cross it was OUR sins and HIS death.
 - 5. He got paid what we deserve: death
 - 6. Jesus, the sinless one, took our place and our penalty
- B. This is called **PENAL SUBSTITUTION**: Jesus paid our penalty as our substitute.
- C. So, as Jesus hung on the cross, beaten, pierced, bearing the sin of the world, He cried out: *"It is finished." (John 19:30)*
- D. This is not a cry of defeat, but of completion.

1. The Greek word *tetelestai* means “Paid in full.”
 2. The wages of sin is death, and Jesus paid the full price for sin and wrath
 3. With that payment, the curse of sin, since Genesis 3, has been broken.
 4. The technical word for this idea of the full penalty of wrath being paid is **PROPITIATION**.
 5. The punishment was satisfied on Jesus, and with that, the bondage of sin was severed for all who would believe. No more payments can be made.
- E. The cross is the place where God heard the groaning of creation and answered with finality.
1. *Romans 8:22–23, For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.*
- F. Just as the blood of the lamb protected the Israelites from judgment, the blood of Christ delivers us from sin’s penalty and power.
- G. Just as Israel walked out of Egypt free, we walk out of spiritual slavery into freedom by grace.
- H. *Colossians 1:13–14, He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, [14] in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins*
- V. Here is where this matters:
- A. For forgiveness of sins, yes. This is where it begins. **Have you trusted in him?**
 - B. But there are many of you who are forgiven, you’ve surrendered to Christ, you trust in him, but you are not experiencing **the freedom of propitiation**.
 - C. “If I fail, I am unworthy of love and deserve to be punished.” Do you think that?
 1. Be honest with yourself. If you are a believer, when you fail, do you feel like a total loser? Like you have no worth? Do you beat yourself up?
 2. Have you repeated that so many times that it’s now a part of your identity? Does the weight of your own sin feel like it’s crushing you?
 3. In your head do you constantly think things like, “I am a failure”
 - D. The enemy is a liar → it’s the only tactic he has left
 1. If you are in Christ, then you are 100% forgiven, not a failure.
 2. In Jesus, you don’t deserve punishment, you don’t deserve condemnation, and you don’t deserve wrath.
 3. The payment for your failure is complete: past, present, future
 4. If you live under that veil of failure as a believer, you have embraced a lie
 5. And the TRUTH of Penal Substitution / Propitiation can set you free
 6. You ARE free in Christ, but you don’t believe in the Freedom you have
 7. So, therefore, you aren’t walking it out
 - E. The Lie: “When I fail, I’m unworthy of love and deserve to be punished.”
 1. This lie takes an isolated incident and turns it into a character trait.
 2. Believing the lies leaves us with two options when we fail.
 - a) We either blame ourselves or someone else.

- b) If the former, we will expend a lot of energy on self-loathing thoughts that leave us feeling deflated. (thoughts or actions)
- c) If it's the latter, we will spend a lot of energy blaming someone else for what went wrong. (thoughts or actions)

F. God's answer to this lie is propitiation.

- 1. Jesus came to take the punishment we deserve
- 2. He absorbed God's wrath on our behalf.
- 3. In him, we are victorious.
- 4. We don't have to fear punishment from God for our past failings.
- 5. We are FREE from the curse (punishment) of sin

VI. Exodus

A. Romans 6:6 declares: "We know that our old self was crucified with him... so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin."

B. And Galatians 5:1 urges: "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free."

C. We don't just believe in forgiveness—we live as freed people.

- 1. Not under guilt.
- 2. Not under shame.
- 3. Not under legalism.
- 4. Not under fear.
- 5. Not under sin's control.

D. But here's the key: freedom begins with a cry.

- 1. Like the Israelites in Egypt.
- 2. Like the crowds in Jerusalem.
- 3. Like Jesus Himself on the cross.
- 4. We cry out: "Lord, save me."
- 5. And God answers: "It is finished."

E. Cry Out and Come Out

- 1. If you are weary under the weight of sin—addiction, shame, fear, legalism... CRY OUT
- 2. Jesus did not come to make you religious. He came to set you free.
- 3. The pattern is clear:
 - a) Cry out like Israel, "Save me!"
 - b) Look to the Lamb like at Passover. Place your trust in HIS blood and not your own efforts. It is the blood of the New Covenant
 - c) Hear His cry at the cross in response: "It is finished. The debt is paid in full."
- 4. You are not forgotten, but forgiven.
- 5. The price is paid, no more debt is owed.
- 6. The prison doors are open, by faith walk out into the light.
- 7. Come out of Egypt. Step into freedom.