

Freedom – 2

Galatians 5:1 (NIV)

1 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

- Christ has set us free
- Free from Slavery (Egypt)
- Free from bondage to the law, the flesh and sin
- The old is gone and the new has come
 - **2 Corinthians 5:17**
- He has removed our despair and darkness
- He has given us victory, strength and freedom
- We never need to return to Egypt

These patterns can weigh us down and keep us hindered from living the life of Freedom that Jesus has purchased for us

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NLT)

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. ² **We do this** by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith.* Because of the joy* awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne.

The Demoniac of the Gadarenes

No Slide: Mark 5:7–10 (NKJV)

- Demons want to stay where they are comfortable
- They establish a stronghold
- The presence of Jesus torments them
- Jesus gives them permission to leave and enter a herd of pigs
- They run violently into the water and drown
- The man is clothed and in his right mind

We may confess sin again and again yet continue to fall into it over and over

- We try to gain the victory yet fail no matter how hard we try
- *Maybe there is a past wound that needs healing*
- *Maybe there is something dark in our past*
- *Maybe there is something illicit we have dabbled in*
- *More than likely it is a spiritual problem*

Matthew 9:32–33 (NLT)

³² When they left, a demon-possessed man who couldn't speak was brought to Jesus. ³³ So Jesus cast out the demon, and then the man began to speak. The crowds were amazed. "Nothing like this has ever happened in Israel!" they exclaimed.

- The devil wants to get us into one of two groups
- The skeptics and the superstitious
- Skeptics believe demons either don't or never did exist
- Superstitious people see demons behind around ever corner

“There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them.”

– C.S. Lewis – The Screwtape Letters

Don't be deceived

1 Peter 5:8 (NLT)

⁸ Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.

- The devil is real
- Not all sin is caused by the devil
- You can't say “The devil made me do it”

We can't deny that demons exist but we can't see them as the root cause of every problem either

Until we settle this it will be hard to be set free from spiritual oppression

Mark 7:21–22 (NLT)

²¹ For from within, out of a person's heart, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, ²² adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, lustful desires, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness.

- We need discipline and the word
- We also need deliverance
- You can read your Bible all day and still be influenced by demonic activity

A Christian can not be owned by a demon. But a Christian can be influenced by and come under the control from a demon, even from within.

The Louw and Nida Greek- English Lexicon on demonic influence:

“One cannot speak of a person ‘being possessed by a demon.’ A more appropriate expression may be ‘the person possesses a demon.’ In other instances an idiomatic phrase is employed, ‘the demon rides the person’

- The person possesses a demon

Spiritual attacks from the outside:

2 Corinthians 12:7 (NLT)

⁷ even though I have received such wonderful revelations from God. So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud.

- When we humble ourselves the Devil will flee
– **James 4:7**

Demonic influence from the inside:

Ephesians 4:26–27 (NLT)

²⁶ And “don’t sin by letting anger control you.”* Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷ for anger gives a foothold to the devil.

- We have been made alive and sealed by the Holy Spirit;
- We can choose to live by the flesh or by the Holy Spirit – **Colossians 3:7-10**
- By living in the flesh we can “give place” to the devil

We need *deliverance* and *discipleship*

Pastor Jack Hafford – “*You can’t disciple a demon, and you can’t cast out the flesh*”

Warning signs you may possess a demon

Continued iniquity:

- Do you continually sin over and over?
- Do you willfully sin while thumbing your nose at God
 - something deeper is going on
- Habitual sin can open the door to evil influence
 - habitual sin may mean something evil has already moved in

Do you find yourself continually jealous of others?

Do you find yourself reacting to groups of people in a certain way?

Do you continually look at pornography?
– Even after you confessed it and pray over it

Do you find yourself drinking to much alcohol or drawn to stimulants and drugs

We can be in bondage to habitual sin and not even be aware of it

Woman caught in the act of adultery

Jesus is teaching and they bring him a woman caught in adultery

- They expect Jesus to condemn her
- They want him to give them grounds to throw rocks at her
- Jesus instead starts to write on the ground

John 8:7 (NLT)

⁷ They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, “All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!”

- One by one they storm out
- Later they return and ask questions
- The text indicates that some of them had become believers

John 8:31–32 (NLT)

³¹ Jesus said to the people who believed in him, “You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings.

³² And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

- If you truly want to be free you can be
- It's not a guarantee
- You'll need to abide in my word
- This is a great gift – to abide
- Their response is ridiculous

John 8:33 (NLT)

³³ “But we are descendants of Abraham,” they said. “We have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean, ‘You will be set free’?”

- Didn’t they know their history?
- They had been slaves in Egypt
- They fell into habitual idol worship and iniquity
- They had been conquered by the Chaldeans, Babylonians, Assyrians, and Greeks
- They were now under Roman rule
- They had been into bondage to EVERYONE!
- This is a picture of denial!

This is how we react

- well I’m sure that other people need deliverance, but?
- I’m a Christian; I’ve never been into bondage to anyone
 - What about your thought life?
 - What about pride?
 - What about fear and anxiety?
 - What about lust, anger, bitterness, jealousy, resentment or lack of forgiveness?

John 8:34 (NLT)

³⁴ Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave of sin.

- Jesus is not talking about salvation
- He is talking about habitual, willful sin
 - 1 John 3:4-9; 1 John 5:16-18
- As believers we can choose to live in bondage or habitual sin
- Do you want to be free?

John 8:35–36 (NLT)

³⁵ A slave is not a permanent member of the family, but a son is part of the family forever. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you are truly free.

- Jesus is warning us away from sin
- He is continually exposing the darkness
- Persistently holding out the lamp to our feet and a light to our path

Psalms 119:105 (NLT)

¹⁰⁵ Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.

When we continually live in the path of His word He makes us free!

In **John 8:34** the word “commits”

- Pledging to do something
- Formulating a plan
- Deliberately making choices we know are wrong
- “Whoever plans to sin – and then does it – is in bondage to sin”

Romans 6:16 (NLT)

¹⁶ Don't you realize that you become the slave of whatever you choose to obey? You can be a slave to sin, which leads to death, or you can choose to obey God, which leads to righteous living.

We are not to use our freedom as an opportunity to sin!

Galatians 5:13 (NLT)

¹³ For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love.

So many of us lie and hate our neighbor and lust in our heart and then come to church as if nothings wrong
That's not freedom – that's slavery!

Jeremiah 7:8–11 (NKJV)

⁸ “Behold, you trust in lying words that cannot profit. ⁹ Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom you do not know, ¹⁰ and *then* come and stand before Me in this house which is called by My name, and say, ‘We are delivered to do all these abominations’? ¹¹ Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen *it*,” says the LORD.

- Am I running to sin or running from sin?
- Do I regularly keep account with God?
- Confessing my sin
- Regularly calling on the Holy Spirit to give me strength and help me resist temptation?

If not we are deliberately committing sin in at least one area of our life

- That's a sign that evil may have gained a foothold in your life