

FREEDOM FROM WRONG THINKING AND DOING

This very same Paul wrote several letters to believers in Jesus. He wrote at length to the Roman believers about wrong thinking and doing (sin). In Romans chapter 6, he wrote about the fact that sin's power over believers is now broken through a relationship with Jesus. In Romans chapter 7, Paul wrote that believers were no longer bound (chained) to the old ways (the law). In Romans chapter 8, believers are shown that they can live life in freedom in the Spirit of God. Paul reminded the Roman believers that **“Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God's Grace” (Romans 6:14)**. He talked about the fact that (through a relationship with Jesus), **“Now you are free from your slavery to sin...”** (Romans 6:18). **“...Now you do those things that lead to holiness and result in eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord”** (Romans 6:22 – 23).

Even Paul struggled with 'sin'. He said, **“I have discovered this principle of life-that when I want to do what is right, I will end up doing what is wrong. I love God's law with all my heart. But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord”** (Romans 7:21-25). **“So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to Him, the power of the life-giving Spirit**

has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death” (Romans 8:1-2). **“So, God did what the law could not do. He sent His own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body, God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving His Son as a sacrifice for our sins. He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit”** (Romans 8:3-4). He encouraged believers that **“You are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. And Christ lives within you, so even though you're your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God. The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you”** (Romans 8: 9-11).

HOW DO I DECIDE TO KNOW JESUS?

Just like Paul and Silas' *jailer* decided to follow Jesus, you can decide to follow Jesus right now. **“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved...For Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved”** (Romans 10: 9, 10 and 13). So, just stop a moment and tell Jesus that you do believe in Him and the sacrifice He made for you that now gives you access to God, the Father. Ask Him to come into *your* life and bring *you* the **true freedom** that you are looking for. He will bring His Holy Spirit to live in you as well. Then, read His love letter to you, the Bible. Start with the Gospel of John. Keep talking to Him (praying) daily. He loves you!

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Freedom

FREE TO RIDE



FREE TO DECIDE

WHAT IS IT ABOUT MOTORCYCLES?

On a bright sunny day, you will see motorcycles everywhere. There are all kinds of riders from all walks of life. Some ride alone. Some ride as a couple. Some ride in groups. The ages of the riders vary from teenagers to seniors. Some people have been riding for 50 years or more. If you ask any rider what riding means to them, they say “freedom!” They say that there is such a sense of freedom that they don’t get when they drive in a car. They say that they can forget the problems in their lives and just enjoy the ride.

A SENSE OF FREEDOM

Not everyone rides a motorcycle to feel that sense of freedom. Some people learn to fly an airplane. Some people go out on a boat. Some go camping. Some go to a lake and fish. Some go to the ocean. Some people kayak or canoe. Some take a walk and others hike up a mountain. Others walk their dog or play ball with their dog. There are many other ways people spend their time. But all people are trying to find a way to feel freedom *on the inside*. People don’t like to be bound up by anyone or anything in their lives. This desire to be free can be the root cause of why people make certain choices in life. It starts early in our lives. Look at any child crossing a street. The adult has to train them to take their hand as they cross the street. Children want to be free to run, and holding someone’s hand, affects their deep desire to be free.

FREEDOM FROM OUR CIRCUMSTANCES

Many times, if people aren’t looking for freedom out on the road or flying or boating, they *are* looking for freedom from the circumstances they are living in. There may be family issues that make a person feel trapped. Teenagers often feel pinned down by having to follow the rules of their parent or guardian. There may be a relationship or a friendship that makes them feel trapped. There could be a job that stifles them and makes them feel like a slave. There could be financial issues that make them feel like they will never be free from bills and debt. There could be chronic health issues that limit their freedom to move around and go places that they want to go. Even the elderly in homes can feel trapped by their age and circumstances in life. Although they feel trapped in their life, they are still free to move around their communities.

FREEDOM FROM JAIL

But there are those who have lost their freedom and are held captive by others. There are prisoners in jail that want their freedom, too. The Apostle Paul was in jail many times for talking about Jesus. But one time in particular, he and a man named Silas were in the jail singing praises to God and all the other prisoners were listening. All of a sudden, there was a great earthquake. The foundations of the jail were shaken and the all of the doors to the cells were opened. Miraculously, at the same time, Paul and Silas’ and all of the other prisoners chains came loose (Acts 16:26). Freedom!

FREEDOM IN THEIR INNER SOUL

But, there is even more to Paul and Silas’ jail story. Not only did their chains fall off their legs, but the jailer (who had no leg irons on) found freedom in his spirit. He knew that this was a miracle and he *assumed* that the prisoners had run away. He was so scared that *he was going to kill himself!* But Paul stopped him and told him that **all** of the prisoners were still in the jail and had not run away! The jailer decided to worship the God of Paul and Silas and gave his life to Jesus. He found spiritual freedom right there in jail! (Acts 16:27-34). Not only that, but the jailer’s family also chose to believe in Jesus as well. Then, the next morning, Paul and Silas were physically released from the jail.

FREEDOM IN OUR INNER SOUL

So, what if you can’t physically leave the “jail” of your life right now? Is there a way to be free *in* your life just like the jailer found freedom in the jail where he worked? The answer is “**yes.**” Jesus said “**I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me**” (John 14:6). Jesus **said “You will know the truth and the truth will set you free”** (John 8:32). Jesus also said “**So if the Son sets you free, you are truly free**” (John 8:36). Just like the jailer, Jesus promises that you *can* find the freedom you are seeking in Him. Not a place, but in a person. You can have a *relationship* with Him. And, you don’t have to get up, go somewhere and do a bunch of things *before* you come to Him. You can do it right now.

