

# Set Free to Serve

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- [ 0 : 00 ] Let's turn in our Bibles to the passage of scripture which we read and as that's in the Gospel of John chapter 8 and as God would help me I'd like to concentrate and read again verse 36.
- John chapter 8 verse 36. If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.
- If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed. Surely these words are amongst the most encouraging words in scripture and yet as we read so many people object to them. Why? Why do people get upset when they hear Christ offering this wonderful overture of mercy? If the Son therefore make you free, you shall be free indeed.
- Is it not this? The implication that the people are in bondage. Now, isn't that what we read here? They replied to Jesus, what do you mean talking about being free?
- We were never in bondage to any man. Isn't that astonishing? They were never in bondage to any man. He's speaking to Jews. Who doesn't know?
- [ 2 : 06 ] If anyone knows anything about the Bible, they know that Israel came out of Egypt. Now tell me, how does the Bible describe Egypt? What's the terminology for Egypt?
- The house of bondage. And here they are saying, we were never in bondage to anyone. Talk about being blind. Talk about being spiritually dead.
- We were never in bondage to anyone. 430 years in the house of bondage of Egypt. What about the 70 years in captivity in Babylon? Was that not bondage? But here they are, we were never in bondage.
- Were they not complaining that they were under the oppression of the Romans? And yet they can say, we were never in bondage. You see, real bondage is bondage you're unaware of.
- Actually, spiritual bondage. It's the most serious, it's the worst type of bondage. Spiritual bondage.
- [ 3 : 26 ] You see, you can have freedom of speech. People say, political bondage is a great thing to fear. But you can have, you can have freedom of speech, and yet you can't control our tongues.
- Or we can have freedom from poverty, and yet remain very discontented. What will we do next? What will we get next? What do we want next?
- You can have freedom of fear, and yet you can't enjoy peace. Spiritual bondage.
- So, what sort of things is the Saviour referring to here when he speaks of, if the Son make you free? Free from what type of spiritual bondage?
- As God would help me, we'd like to look at that first of all. And then secondly, the problem is not just freedom from things, but freedom to do things.
- [ 4 : 32 ] We'll look at that secondly. So, what does Christ here promise to free us from? Two or three things we'll notice.

First, I'd mention this, condemnation of the law. We find in our Bibles that well-known text, the soul that sins shall die, because we've broken the law.

We find in our New Testament, whoever keeps the whole law of God, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

Have you got that? You can keep the whole law of God. All your life. And then, in your last hour, you break one point of one law.

Then you failed to keep the law. How are you getting on? How many points of how many laws, and how many times have you broken it?

[ 6 : 02 ] Oh, you see, that's awful hard. That can't be right, can it? Surely, if just one point of one law, once lost, condemned.

Well, think about, change the analogy, think about it. If your head is underwater, by one inch, one millimetre, if your head is one millimetre underwater, listen, you'd drown as surely as the man who's lying on the seabed.

Am I right? Does it matter how far underwater your head is? You drown? It's the same with the law. God is a holy God, and he demands absolute perfection.

Continually. Now, I mentioned condemnation of the law. Being condemned by the law is different from being charged with breaking it.

It's different from being accused of breaking it. Condemnation is final after evidence.

[ 7 : 28 ] Now, you know very well, with CCTV, someone can complain they weren't in such a place at a certain time, and you switch on the cameras, and there they are, going into the shop to steal, or mug, or whatever it is.

We can produce evidence through CCTV of where we are, when we want. Do you think God can't do that? If we can do it our earthly, physically, how can God not just say to the angels, on the great day of judgment, switch on that video.

Show them breaking the law. How many times? How many places? How often? It's after evidence. God doesn't do anything behind your back.

And on the day of judgment, there will be evidence provided. It won't just be claimed you did it. The evidence we broke the law will be there.

Don't you need to be freed from condemnation of the law? Christians are free from condemnation of the law.

[ 8 : 47 ] Do you know that? Christians in here tonight, we are free from the condemnation of the law. And we've broken the law thousands of times.

How are we free? Christ took our condemnation. Christ paid for our sins. It's wonderful to be a Christian.

the Son makes Christians free from the law condemning them on that last great day that is to come.

Something else Christ promises to free us from. Not just the condemned condemnation of the law but the controlling pleasure of sin.

Now tell me, do you ever get up in the morning and say, well, my Bible tells me I'm born in sin so I better just get on sinning the day.

[ 9 : 48 ] Do you ever say that? Of course not. Why do you sin? Why do you sin in the last analysis? Because you think it will make you happy.

Am I right? You want it. You think it will make you happy. It promises it will make you happy. Christ is saying what?

Only I can make you happy. You see, sin is an addiction. The power of addiction. Only Christ can set us free from the pleasure of sin.

I think I mentioned in the morning, we can all be made to live a certain way. We can be made to do things. Tell me, can you deliver yourself from the pleasure of enjoying sin?

That's the key. Man's chief purpose of existence, man's chief end, is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

[ 11 : 00 ] Do you want to know you're a Christian? Here's a test. Do you enjoy God? Do you enjoy the scriptures?

Do you enjoy praying? It's a test. We're to enjoy God. Only Christ can make you free to do that.

He can only, he alone can free us from the pleasure of sin. Something else we need free from, and only Christ can make us free from it, the subtle influence of Satan's temptations.

He goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour through temptation. Adam was perfect when Satan got him first of all.

Satan still has access to us, and he still has access to Christians, even after their conversion in this world. And we need to be freed from that.

[ 12 : 13 ] Only Christ can do it. we're all under the control and influence. We're dupes of Satan, and isn't it amazing? The devil is quite happy if you don't believe in him.

Boy, has he got you in his hands. If you say, there's no devil, I don't believe in the devil. He's perfectly happy if you say, I'm perfectly happy. only Christ can pluck us out of Satan's hands.

And listen, Satan cannot pluck you out of Christ's hands. Christ can pluck you out of Satan's grasp, but Satan cannot take you out of Christ's grasp.

That's wonderful. That's good. Never, ever think that at the place called Calvary that Friday afternoon, never, ever think Satan had the victory.

Never think that Satan got Christ at last. Christ said, I lay down my life.

[ 13 : 37 ] The people could not believe, the centurions, the soldiers could not believe Christ died as quickly as he did. Because it took three days to die normally.

But Christ laid down his life before the expected time. No one took it from him. He laid it down. Why? To conquer death by his own death.

To conquer Satan by his own death. Only Christ can free you from the condemning power of the law. Only Christ can free you from the controlling pleasure of sin.

Only Christ can free you from temptations of Satan. But isn't there this also? The enchanting attraction of the world.

Doesn't the world appeal to us? No. It all began in the garden. It all began in Eden when Eve saw the fruit.

[ 14 : 47 ] How nice. How nice. How wonderful. It looked great. and said I'll be happy if I get that.

If I take that off. We're the same. Are we not? If we only get this. If we only get that.

If we only get a little more. We'll be satisfied with that. We tell ourselves. We kid ourselves. The enchanting attraction of the world.

Only Christ can save us from that power. That influence. And then of course there's the driving power of self will.

Have you children or grandchildren do you ever need to teach them? Now you have to say I want this. I want that. Doesn't it come naturally to them?

[ 15 : 53 ] I want. Do you ever have to train them to say I don't like this. I don't want to do that. Do you have to give them lessons how to say it? It comes naturally.

Do you have to teach them to say give me? Do they have to learn with practice to say me first? You don't have to teach them.

It comes naturally. We're born in sin shaped in in we want control of our own lives.

We object to interference from even a higher power like God and Christ. We want to rule our own lives.

How can we be freed from that? Only Christ can free us. Only Christ. If the Son make you free you'll be free indeed.

[ 16 : 54 ] Maybe you're saying to yourself I can never get free from these things. I'll never be free. Listen to Christ tonight. If the Son makes you free you will be free indeed.

But last of all I'll mention here is we need to be freed from the guilt of sin. We hear a lot about guilt feelings.

Do you know what our real problem is? It's not guilt feelings. It's guilt. We are guilty. And do you know there's a verse in the Bible Exodus chapter 34 verse 7.

it says that God God is speaking and he's described defining himself. He says I can by no means clear the guilty.

Can you get out of that one? I can by no means clear the guilty. God defining himself Exodus 34 verse 7.

[ 18 : 23 ] What is guilt? What is guilt? Guilt is liability to punishment.

Because of your behavior you're liable to punishment. Christ says I can free you from your guilt of sin.

Do you believe him? Do you believe him? Your salvation depends on it. Let me show you how Christ frees someone from the guilt of sin.

Do you remember that mock trial which he went through before his crucifixion? Do you remember the raised up false accusers?

But even then they couldn't get their act together. And what the Bible says is they accused them of this and they accused them of that and he never answered a word.

[ 19 : 39 ] And I remember always saying Jesus why don't you speak up? You're innocent. You didn't do these things they're charging you with. Why didn't you speak up and say I didn't do these things?

Do you know why? Do you know what he was doing? He was standing in the place of the guilty. He was taking away our guilt. He didn't do these things he was charged with.

But the people he was standing in for were guilty of these things. so Christ opened not his mouth.

He took what was he doing? At that point bearing their iniquity away. Bearing their guilt. Taking their guilt away.

A few hours later he was taking their punishment away. But at that point taking their guilt. He stood accused of things he never did.

[ 20 : 37 ] But you and I did. And people in heaven did. Christ only Christ can say I can make you free.

I can free you from your guilt. and Christ took the guilt and bore the guilt as well as the punishment.

He bore it away in his trial and crucifixion. we need to be delivered from all these things and many more if we were to examine it more deeply.

But secondly we have to be freed not merely from certain things but we're to be freed to do certain other things.

I'll never forget the illustration. Why is a prisoner freed? I have visited very few prisons but before I was a minister I was in the Gideons was the old name and we used to get letters from prisoners who got Bibles and wanted to ask questions to go to two or three different occasions that's all I've been into prisons and I always remember going up giving the directions I think it was to Peterhead prison or was it Porterfield Peterhead I think it was and looking for the sign Peterhead prison or Porterfield prison you'll never see it you'll never see a sign Barlinnny prison do you know what you see H.M.

[ 22 : 37 ] prison Barlinnny or Porterfield or Peterhead it's her majesty's prison because the people inside have broken her majesty's laws now listen when a prisoner serves his sentence he's brought out to the gates of the prison and he's set free what is he set free to do anything he likes well if so he's back inside if he does anything he's like he's back inside he's not freed to do anything he's like that's not true liberty that's not true freedom he's set free to obey his majesty's laws her majesty's laws that's what you're free for that's a very important aspect in Christian freedom Christian freedom is not a license to do anything you like that's lawlessness that's anarchy you see we have to delight as I said to keep

God's law we don't want to by nature we have to be changed I think I mentioned that in the morning we have to be changed so we desire we enjoy we want to keep God's law another illustration supposing I get a new car and I want to test it out in speed and I drive down a town street at 50-60 mile an hour and at the bottom the police one comes around the corner and he says stop what's that sign say 30 mile an hour you'll be doing 60 he says well you might charge me you might let me off that's what you're supposed to do now supposing next week I'm going down the same road same car and I'm driving at 29 miles an hour and when I get to the bottom same policeman comes around the corner and he says oh just stop stop and he comes over to the car and he says that's better now

Mr. McCaskill that's fine now you're keeping the law now you're doing what's right and I say I'm nothing of the sort I'm driving at 29 mile an hour because that's what I want to do I just don't feel like going fast today you see that's lawlessness that's doing what I want doing what I like it's not taking pleasure in obeying God and that's what we're meant to do and that's what we're freed to do and my friend you cannot do that until Christ frees you to do that you see right now everyone here saved or unsaved we are all free to do what we want we do what we want I mean in the last analysis I dragged myself to the dentist

I don't enjoy it don't like it but I know it's better in the long run to go to the dentist but we've to enjoy keeping God's laws we've to enjoy serving God we've to enjoy pleasing God we can change our behavior what we cannot change is what we like doing we do what we want we do what we like but we cannot change what we like doing that's regeneration Christ alone can send his Holy Spirit to enable us and empower us to delight in keeping God's laws if the Son make you free he'll make you free to please God and to keep his commandments see true freedom is freedom to do what you were made to do a fish is never happier than when it's swimming in water it was made to swim a bird is never happier than when it's flying in the air it was made to fly in the air and what a long long long time human beings take to learn to understand we're never happier than when we're doing what we're made to do created to do to please

God to glorify God by keeping his ways without God there's no freedom we need God you need Christ to be free just think of Israel we often think and say when they were delivered out of Egypt we're talking there about the word bondage they did not actually they weren't actually delivered from slavery to freedom not technically they were delivered from slavery to covenant relationship you remember let my people go that they may serve me in the wilderness that they may keep a feast to me free my people that they may worship me in the wilderness that's freedom you don't know what freedom is until you do what you were made to do born to do you haven't got that freedom you don't want it you want your own way you want to do your own thing if the son makes you free you'll be free indeed and so do you understand christian freedom is freedom to follow god voluntarily to follow god cheerfully to choose god to love god that's true freedom enjoying god serving him obeying him now there's one as we finish there's one very important word here that we haven't spoken about it's only got two letters if if the son therefore shall make you free if is that a doubt is that a question is it only a possibility no no no no no no no the if is questioning will we turn to christ will we believe in christ will we put our faith in him if we put our faith in him it's absolutely certain you'll know freedom like you never knew before the uncertainty is the uncertainty of our trust in him not the uncertainty will he do it or not he will he's committed himself he's been commissioned he has no authority to reject or refuse anyone anywhere anytime who comes to him for mercy forgiveness for peace for pardon he has no authority to reject you he's been commissioned by the courts of heaven to grant every single sinner however deep sin freedom if just to finish

[ 31 : 33 ] Christ gives this freedom to anyone anyone and everyone who comes to him and believes in him and trusts in him you do not need to be a somebody for Christ to free you you don't need to be someone special you know as we indicated at the beginning it's amazing the answers people come up with most of the time people say I'm not good enough to be saved but you know someone once came up to me you know what they said they said I'm not bad enough to be saved they thought it was only bad people that Christ saved he didn't save decent ladies and gentlemen but as we try to point out in the morning God defines wickedness as those just not interested in him Christ gives this freedom to anyone

Christ gives this freedom free real freedom no small print no exclusion clauses no embargo notices to anyone the freedom is free to anyone and it's immediate you don't have to do a course you don't have to pass an exam you don't have to wait you just have to trust you just have to believe you just have to depend on him you just got to believe him if the son make you free you're free indeed and listen the son can give you this freedom without fail without fail Manasseh is in heaven it's not amazing have you read the things he did 2nd

Chronicles 33 read it Manasseh is in heaven and the things he did amazing who do you think of Mary Magdalene what kind of person do you think she was a lovely sweet gentle girl oh is that what she was that's what she turned out to be eventually it's not what she was when Christ met her she had seven devils seven devils within her Christ changed her Christ freed her the dying thief I wonder how many temptations Satan gave to him about what an hour to live two hours three hours hours to live he can't do anything for Jesus but he believed in his dying hours he rejects none he turns none away he gives this freedom without fail to those who believe him if the son therefore shall make you free you shall be free indeed may

God the Holy Spirit make his word effectual to every one of us here let's bow our heads in prayer our father in heaven be pleased to take the things of Christ and to make them ours tonight here in this place bestow faith in us we humbly pray graciously be with us now we ask thee keep us in your love keep us in your fear wash all our sins away for we pray all in Christ's name and for Christ's sake alone Amen