

"In Christ" - Romans 6 - 8 (Freedom)

The devil is a thief. He would most certainly love to "steal" your freedom - deceive you into thinking and acting as though you are not free in Christ. If he can trick you into a sin or law or fear consciousness, he is well on his way to accomplishing his objective. In fact, he would love to roll all three into one brand of theology: "I'm still a sinner, I need the law to become righteous, but fear I'll never achieve that." (The devil makes a pretty good living off of those of us who believe that!)

Don't ever let the devil (or anyone else) talk you out of your freedom from sin for righteousness (see Romans 6, II Cor 5:17-21, et al). In Christ, you have a new relationship to sin - you are dead to it! Liberated from what you did - "sins" (Col 2:13), liberated from what you were - "sin" (II Cor 5:17), so you may "walk in newness of life" (Ro 6:4) - i.e., the "righteousness of God" (II Cor 5:21). To walk in your freedom is to walk in these words: IN CHRIST, I AM DEAD TO SIN, ALIVE TO GOD!

In Christ, you are free from law for grace (Ro 6:14). Romans 7 is the testimony of a man trying to live the life pleasing to God with the help of (or, "under") the law. It is also the witness of a man being killed by such thinking (Ro 7:10-11). The "ministry" of the law is to reveal sin (Ro 7:7), to arouse sin (Ro 7:8-9), even to empower sin (I Cor 15:56) - no route to Christ-likeness! It is a good thing we "have been released from the law" (Ro 7:6) because all its "requirements" have been met "in Christ" (Ro 8:4). We are now free to live by grace. It is grace that reveals sin (without condemnation), yet, arouses and empowers righteousness. To walk in your freedom is to walk in these words: IN CHRIST, I AM NOT UNDER LAW, BUT UNDER GRACE!

In Christ, you are free from fear for love. Fear is not your motive force - it never leads to liberty. (There is nothing irrational about a Christian feeling fear, but there is something irrational about being compelled and conditioned by it.) In Christ, there is no fear of condemnation (Ro 8:1-4), no fear of insignificance (Ro 8:16-30), no fear of defeat (Ro 8:9-11, 31-34), no fear of separation (Ro 8:35-39). The love of Christ casts out such fears (I Jo 4:18). Compelled by His love (II Cor 5:14), the evil one can make no good use of fearful emotions. To walk in your freedom is to walk in these words: IN CHRIST, I AM COMPELLED BY LOVE, NOT BY FEAR!

Learn to experience and enjoy your freedom in Christ. It was for such freedom that Christ set us free (Ga 5:1).

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GREETINGS

Modern technology seems to have an agenda - to minimize and depersonalize human contact as much as possible. As though life would be less difficult, less painful without it! From drive thrus (old school) to pay by phone (new school), personal interaction, face-to-faceness is increasingly fading, seen as a terrible inconvenience.

The church, of all places, ought to be the guardian and purveyor of all things personal and free. We have a wonderful opportunity to bear witness to the personal nature of our personal God (in human persons) in an increasingly impersonal culture.

From public smiles and greetings to in-home meals and gatherings, the personal touch that we have freely received in Christ can be freely given away anytime we choose.

How about it? Instead of a one time celebration of personal love - Valentine's Day - why not make each day a celebration of God's personal touch, His personal love? Why not personally demonstrate - though kind and loving gestures - that God "so loves the world" He came in Person? That He comes in your person into their world?

Maybe, just maybe, we might personally flesh out Romans 2:4 (go ahead, look it up!)... and maybe, just maybe, contribute to an atmosphere conducive to change!

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

7,14,21 CCF
****CCF not meeting 2/28 for Spring Break**

9 Alachua Study
12-14 Florida Retreat
23 Ocala Study

FEB 28 - Mar 2 Tyler, TX (903-561-9995)

MARCH

11-13 San Antonio (210-478-0618)


APRIL

22-24 Monticello, UT (859-393-4104)

MAY

6-8 Waymont, PA (607-239-5006)

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 Upcoming Conferences