

Alive and Free

I Timothy 1:5-8

“The purpose of my instruction is that all believers would be filled with love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and genuine faith. ⁶ But some people have missed this whole point. They have turned away from these things and spend their time in meaningless discussions. ⁷ They want to be known as teachers of the law of Moses, but they don’t know what they are talking about, even though they speak so confidently.”

Before you trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, the Bible says you were "dead in (your) trespasses and sin." And that means that you had no life in you toward God. First of all, you were spiritually incomplete, because you did not have the Spirit of God within you. Therefore, you had no relationship with God. Secondly, you were morally incomplete, because you had no moral standard, and even if you did you could not live up to it. Although you might have had some “**standard**” to strive for, you had no power outside of your own “**self**” to accomplish such a feat. And thirdly, you were mentally incomplete, because you were incapable of understanding the truth of God until first of all you receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. The Bible simply reminds us, “spiritual things are spiritually discerned.”

Then the Bible says that when you received Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, He made us complete in Him. Colossians 2:9-10 says, “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.” And having been made complete in Him, God made us alive and free. John 8:36 says, “Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.” There are many people who know they are saved but have never discovered the *true joy and contentment and pleasure* of being a child of God.

One of the primary reasons Paul wrote to young Timothy was to express the truth and freedom available through Jesus Christ. The problem was that false teachers had entered into the fellowship of these new Christians. And verse 7 reads like this in the Greek, “They want to be known as teachers of the law of Moses, but they don’t know what they are talking about, even though they speak so confidently.” And the result was, these false teachers were teaching that while it was right to accept Jesus as the Messiah, one must also live under the regulations of the Mosaic Law.

The burden was too great for the young church. The people has lost their joy and fallen into various forms of bondage.

I am sure that you have heard me often talk about legalism, but what is legalism? Legalism is the attempt to demonstrate our Christian faith by living by human rules. It is not the way of freedom in Christ. **We cannot demonstrate God's work of grace while living under the bondage of the law.** Completeness is found in Jesus, not in keeping certain rules or regulations.

Go back with me to Colossians 2:9-15, "For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority. When you came to Christ, you were circumcised, but not by a physical procedure. Christ performed a spiritual circumcision—the cutting away of your sinful nature. For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with him you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead. You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. 15 In this way, he disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross."

Child of God, it is a Biblical fact that all we will ever need is

found in Jesus! When we accepted Him as Savior, we were given a new spirit, a new relationship to God, a new morality, and a new standard to live by one that the Holy Spirit enables us to follow. We can understand spiritual truth because 1 Corinthians 2:16 reminds us, “we have the mind of Christ” to renew our minds.

This does not mean that we are perfect or that we will never sin again. It does mean that when we abide in close fellowship with Christ, sin loses its appeal in our lives.

It means that we can freely choose to do what is good and right in the eyes of God. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things are passed away; behold, all things have become new."

Christ dwelling us makes us sufficient and adequate for all things. It is no longer our nature to sin. Peter tells us in 2 Peter 1:4 that we are now the “partakers of the divine nature.”

Even though we are new creatures spiritually, our bodies are the same. God has given us certain natural desires that are both normal and essential. When we try to satisfy these desires in our own strength, we yield to sinful desires. **God wants us to understand our position as believers we are totally complete in Christ.** He has promised to meet every need we have within His perfect timing.

Over the years, we were programmed by parents and circumstances to think a certain way. Then came a point in our lives where we realized that all we were programmed to believe did not work completely. We found a deep abiding need for a Savior. We asked Jesus Christ to come into our lives, and we were changed.

Yet, there is still a struggle. We have a new nature that no longer matches the old way of doing things. A war erupts between doing what God wants us to do and yielding to the desires of the flesh.

If you begin your Christian walk by thinking that you still have an old sin nature, you will try to battle against it the rest of your life. Sin is easier to yield to when we think we cannot help what we do or feel. We begin to tell ourselves it is just our old sin nature coming through.

Likewise, if you have the attitude that God merely patched you up at the point of salvation; you will spend the rest of your life dealing with doubt, discouragement, and defeat.

When we miss the radical truth of salvation, we miss the truth of God's power in our lives. The moment you were saved, you were taken out of Adam and placed into Christ. Jesus Christ is now in you, and you are in Him.

You have a new nature in Christ that is one of obedience, submission, love, loyalty, and devotion to Jesus Christ. Christ is your very life. Therefore, He enables you to live without submitting to sin!

Romans 6:11 reminds us that when we go through the baptismal waters, we proclaim the truth that we have died to our old sin nature, that we have been buried in Christ, and raised a new person in the power of the Holy Spirit. We are new creatures in Him. You are not partly in Adam and partly in Christ. Ephesians 2:6 reminds us that we have been raised with Christ and are seated in the “heavenly places” with Him. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 5:17 that “old things have passed away, and all things are now new.” That includes your spirit, your nature, your life every part of you.

We also have a new freedom when it comes to guilt. Unfortunately many believers have a hard time accepting this. Often it is more comfortable to feel guilty, but God says in Colossians 2:13-14, “And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was

against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.” Romans 4:7-8 says, “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin.” All the guilt, judgment, and condemnation of sin has been canceled by Christ. He nailed them to the cross at Calvary.

That means we no longer have a sin debt. We don't have to pay the price of sin. Jesus paid it in full once and for all. Not only did God cancel our sin, He took it away.

God erased our sins through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. That is why the apostle Peter writes in 1 Peter 2:24 that Christ, "...himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness..."

Forgiveness is not received through confession or repentance. The only way we receive forgiveness is through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is God's personal grace toward us.

When I confess my sins to God, I acknowledge and agree with Him that what I have done is not in keeping with His will, Word, or plan. Repentance signals a change in my thinking. It shows that God's Spirit has convicted me of a particular sin and that I have chosen to turn away from it.

We cannot live a sinful life and remain in right fellowship with God. The idea of thinking that we can live a sinful life because our sins are forgiven leads to God's discipline, which is a breach in fellowship, which leads us to be out from under the umbrella of God's protection.

God who is holy and righteous, has chosen to express His love for us through His Son. His love is genuine, undeserved, and unconditional. You can release all the guilt you have been carrying for

years by accepting the complete forgiveness that is rightfully yours through Jesus Christ.

The truth is that many people miss God's very best because they refuse to remove the chains of guilt and sin from their lives. Each day they try to make it through life the best they can. Sunday after Sunday, they pray that the pastor will say something to help them bear the guilt they are under. **God wants all of us to rest in the liberty purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son.**

When Jesus Christ rose from the dead, He conquered every single power in opposition to Him, not once but, forever, as seen in 1 Peter 3:18-19, "For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; in which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison."

Through His resurrection, Jesus proclaimed His sovereignty over all the demonic powers forever. Satan and all of his forces are forever in subjection to His sovereign reign. **Nothing can come before your life until it has come before sovereign God.**

We have been released and liberated. Jesus, like a commanding general, walked into the Holy of Holies, into the heavenlies in absolute and total triumph over every single power and authority in existence.

John 15:5 tells us that nothing is equal to the Person of Jesus Christ who abides in each of us. Colossians 1:27 reminds us that it is Jesus Christ in you that is your hope of glory. **We have a new nature, a new sense of liberty, and a new freedom in our forgiveness.** **We have a new standard of conduct that we can keep through the power of the Holy Spirit.**

John 19:30 reminds us that Jesus cried from the Cross and said, "It is finished." **There is nothing you can add to your salvation or the**

freedom He has given you. There is nothing you can do to make you any more saved, or any more forgiven. When Christ atoned for your sins, He erased the slate clean and marked your account – “Paid in full.” **He also credited your account with all the benefits of being His beloved child.** All you have to do to enjoy the life He has given you, is to begin making withdrawals by faith in His sufficiency.

Our Christian lives are expressions of His grace. It is Jesus Christ expressing His life through us.

The Christian life is not following a list of do's and don't's. It is an overflow of Jesus Christ. That is what the Christian life is all about freedom to enjoy the life God has given us, freedom to share this truth with others.