

Session Seven: The Cross of Christ Sets Us Free

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[0 : 00] Hey guys, welcome back to Gospel Growth.

This is One Harbor's Life on Life discipleship course. We've been talking together about getting the gospel, how disciples get the gospel. In the last session, we talked about what the cross does for us.

One of the things it does is sin means that we're guilty, but the cross means that we're forgiven, right? And we also talked about how it's easy to hear that stuff and say, you know that stuff, but not really believe that stuff.

And so we've got to watch out for that sort of inoculation that can come where we hear it so many times, you know, Jesus died for my sins, that it really stops affecting us like it should. It kind of goes in one ear and goes out the other.

But what we want to always watch out for is that the good news of the gospel doesn't become old news, right? So I'll just encourage you right now to pause and take a second and go, man, God, help me. Help this sound to me again like good news, like the good news that it is.

[0 : 59] Help me because I'm in danger of this feeling like old news. Help me remember and listen and help me not just hear this, help me actually believe this, right? Okay, so the gospel does mean that we are forgiven, but is that all that it means?

I mean, is guilt the only thing that sin does to us that makes us guilty? Is, you know, forgiven the only thing that the cross does for us? I think there's another thing that's really helpful for us to see, and that's that while sin makes us slaves, the cross sets us free, right?

Sin made us guilty, and the cross means we're forgiven, but sin makes us slaves, and the cross sets us free. I think a lot of folks who are Christians, they understand that they're forgiven, but they don't understand that they're free from sin.

And so it kind of results in a couple of different things. The first group of us may try to set ourselves free from sin. You know, we're gonna do it in our own strength, and, you know, we're gonna fight our way through this, and, you know, if we just try hard enough and keep the rules just right, we'll be free from sin one day.

But that kind of reminds me of Galatians 3, where Paul says to the Galatians, are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now gonna be perfected by the flesh? What's Paul saying?

[2 : 08] You couldn't start this thing in your own strength. How are you gonna finish it in your own strength? It's impossible, right? It's all by grace and mercy. So we can't set ourselves free from sin.

So the other group is kind of the opposite. You go, man, I'm forgiven, but I'm still enslaved to sin. And so the second group kind of gives up trying altogether. And this, you know, I'll kind of give you the mantra that you'll probably hear.

You call somebody out on something, they're a Christian, they're doing something that they shouldn't be doing. You just say, hey, you know, you do it the best way you possibly can, but you call them out on it, and they kind of come back with something like this, you know, well, I'm just a sinner saved by grace.

Don't judge me. Don't tell me what I should be doing. I'm just a sinner saved by grace. There was a bumper sticker back in the day. It said this, Christians aren't perfect, just forgiven. Which is true, except for that seemed to be licensed to drive as terrible as possible.

I mean, these were the biggest jerks on the road were the guys with these bumper stickers, right? So it's that attitude that, man, I'm still a slave to sin. Get off my back. This is just how it goes. You know, God understands, and that's just how it is.

[3 : 08] Those are the two ditches you'll fall into, kind of legalism or license. I'm gonna get myself free, or I'm not even gonna try. And what I wanna just ask you is, do we honestly think that Jesus would die for that?

Would he die to set us free, to forgive us from sin, but not to free us from sin? I think the Bible's clear. I think the Bible tells us that Jesus has set us free. Are we forgiven in Christ?

Yes, but I think we're also, I think we're set free in Christ. Listen to what Jesus said about his ministry in John 8. He answered them, truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits a sin is a slave to sin.

If you commit one sin, Jesus said, you know what it proves? You're a slave. But then he says, if the son sets you free, you're gonna be free indeed. Jesus said, look, I understand your slavery. I understand your situation better than you do, because if you sin once, you're a slave.

But he said, I'm gonna set you free, and you're gonna be really free, right? So how does this happen? Well, I think one thing that's helpful to understand is that Jesus is our Christus Victor, right? Here's what that means.

[4 : 07] It means that Jesus is victorious. He's victorious over Satan. He's victorious over sin. He's victorious over demons. He's victorious over death. He's victorious over all the things that held us captive, all the aspects of sin that enslaved us.

Jesus is victorious over those things, right? He is totally victorious over them. What looked like the greatest defeat in history, Jesus on the cross, was actually the greatest victory. The Bible shows us this incredible picture of Jesus reigning over these powers that he's taking dominion over, right?

It's incredible. Listen to Colossians 2.13. You who were dead, you were dead in your trespasses in the uncircumcision of your flesh. God made you alive together with him. So Jesus died so we could become alive, because we were dead, right?

And he forgave us all our trespasses. He canceled the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. He set it aside and he nailed it to the cross and he disarmed the rulers and the authorities.

He put them to open shame by triumphing over them and him. This is a powerful picture of this reigning victorious king who now puts to shame everyone who he's conquered.

[5 : 17] He's conquered sin. He's conquered Satan. He's conquered death. He's conquered demons. He's done this for us, right? The language that Jesus has set us free continues.

Listen to how the Bible describes what the cross means for us. It says that we're ransomed and we're redeemed, right? Now you've probably heard those words or sung those words or said those words.

What do those words mean, right? Well, what they're getting at is that the sin doesn't have dominion over us anymore. This is language that was really reserved for slaves, right?

These words were used for people who were the property of someone else. I'll give you some examples here. In Romans 6.14, it says, for sin will have no dominion over you.

Another translation says, sin shall no longer be your master. And this is slave language. This is, you're someone's domain. You're like someone has dominion over you. You're their property, right?

[6 : 12] They're your master. Sin shall no longer be your master. Listen to what, this is the song of heaven that we hear in Revelation 5, verse nine, regarding the gospel and what it's done.

They sing a new song saying, worthy are you, Jesus, to take the scroll and to open seals for you were slain. You were killed on the cross. And by your blood, you ransomed.

You ransomed. You purchased people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. This is the power of the gospel. It's not just to forgive us, it's to free us. We've been bought by the blood of Jesus.

Jesus paid our ransom. In 1 Peter, it says it like this, in chapter one, verse 18 and 19. Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways you inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold.

So this is key. He said, look, Jesus didn't roll in like Scrooge McDuck with a whole bunch of gold and silver and jewels and say, I wanna set these guys free. No, no, no. Listen to what he did. It says, with the precious blood of Christ.

[7 : 14] Knowing that you were ransomed with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. God could not. He could have emptied the treasures of heaven. He could have given the whole world and he couldn't have given more than he gave to us when he gave us his only son.

We have been given Jesus, ransomed, so we can be set free from the power of sin. That word ransom, it means to purchase in the marketplace. That's what it means. Jesus ransomed us.

He purchased us in the marketplace with his own precious blood. We were bought by his blood. We've changed ownership. We were owned by our sin and by Satan, but now our ownership has been changed.

We've been redeemed, right? 1 Corinthians 6, verse 20 says it like this. You're not your own, for you have been bought with a price. We don't belong to ourselves. We don't belong to sin.

We've been bought. Galatians 3, 13 says, Christ redeemed us. He purchased us. That word redeem is to buy back a slave. He did that from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.

[8 : 22] The picture the New Testament gives is that we are not just a forgiven people, we're a free people, right? And there's some implications for this freedom, and I just want to take a couple minutes to walk us through these.

The first one is that we get new identities, right? Because the cross has set us free, we get new identities. We're not slaves anymore, right? So 2 Corinthians 5, 17, if anyone is in Christ, he's a new creation.

The old has passed away. Behold, the new has come. We've been purchased. We've been redeemed, and we've been given new names and new identities. Jesus didn't just set us free and walk away from us.

Like, okay, guys, good luck now. You're on your own. No, no, no. He bought us, and he brought us home. That's the crazy thing. He didn't just buy us, he brought us home. It's a powerful thing.

We've now become sons and daughters. We're not slaves anymore. Listen to how Galatians 4, 5 says it. Jesus redeemed those who were under the law so that we might receive adoption as sons.

[9 : 24] He didn't do this so that we would just go try to do this on our own and maybe succeed or not. No, no, he wanted us to come home. We want us to be sons and daughters. We're not a slave to sin anymore. We're sons.

We're daughters. We get new identities. The second thing we get is we get new willpower, right? We were once enslaved. We really had no choice but to sin, and even the good things we did, we did for sinful motivations, but we've been set free from that.

We can choose now not to sin. We can choose. We don't have to sin. We've been given God's grace, but that grace, it teaches us not to sin, right? It teaches us to say no to sin and to say yes to Jesus.

Listen to Titus 2, verse 11 and 12. For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age.

You know, what the Bible gets at here is real grace, true grace, gospel grace, doesn't just save us. It trains us, and it teaches us to say no to sin and yes to Jesus.

[10 : 26] We grow in self-control. We grow in godliness so that, not so that we can be redeemed, but because we've been redeemed, right? That's important to understand.

It's not so that God will redeem us. It's because he has already done it. Before we had no choice of sin, now we can actually resist it. So we get new identity, we get new willpowers, and then we also get new attitudes.

We get new attitudes. When it comes to fighting sin and trying to keep God's law, we get off that roller coaster that we all have been on of pride and despair. I'm doing good, I'm doing bad, pride and despair.

We get off of that, and because it was Jesus's spilt blood, it was Jesus's precious blood that set us free, and because it's God's grace that trains us to say no to sin and yes to Jesus, we're not proud and we're not full of despair.

It means now that we're humble. We're joyful. We see ourselves as servants of our Father. We are resting in the finished work of Jesus, but man, we are so excited to be laboring in the good work of sharing this gospel with other people.

[11 : 32] So different than people who are proud or people who are in despair, right? We're happily and humbly, we wanna glorify God with our bodies. We want to because how could we not? We're quick to forgive people because how could we not, right?

It changes who we are. We get new attitudes. One of these new attitudes is that we get total confidence in Jesus. Philippians 1 says that he who began this good work in us is gonna finish it.

We get that kind of confidence. Jesus, you started this. I'm not gonna try to set myself free. You do that. You do that, right? And let me give you a great verse for that one. Romans 16, 20, it says this.

The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Man, that is good news. Are we struggling with sin?

Yes. But are we slaves to sin? No. And one day, one day, Jesus is gonna crush Satan. One day. And in the meantime, the grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

[12 : 30] I'm excited for you guys to get a chance to talk about this in your groups. Let me give you some just helpful handles. And I would just encourage you, one, to talk about, man, does the good news become old news? That's a good one to talk about.

Just confess that if it's true and just speak the gospel to each other, remind each other of how good the gospel really is. Maybe you've only thought about the gospel in terms of forgiveness. You've never really thought about Jesus setting you free.

You kind of just decided you were probably gonna be always a slave to sin and gonna fight to free yourself or we're just gonna roll over. Wherever that's at with you, I would just encourage you to share that with your group.

Maybe you've never realized that Jesus was this victorious king and all that he's done. And I think if that's true for all these things, I would just really encourage you guys to spend time in your group to just thanking Jesus together, praying for each other, just rejoicing that Jesus's grace is what trains us now in this life and that one day this fight will be over and Jesus will crush Satan once and for all.

Love you guys. Hope this helps.