

The Freedom You Need And Want

Message Magazine's Online Devotional for Sunday, January 24, 2016

This Week's Devotional Focus is, "Freedom From Sin."

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33).

I am going to start this week's devotional thoughts with great news! I hope you are ready for it. You can be free from sin. Now I realize this might be a startling statement to some, because you recognize the abysmal failure you've been at trying not to sin. Don't worry, though. Our "trying" is often the problem, but we will come back to that later in the week. Today, we are going to begin with Jesus.

The Bible says, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:16-17). Have you ever lusted for that which is unholy? Some intimate encounters are unholy. Some desires for fame and notoriety are unholy. Some things that we do for fun that tempt death are unholy. Pride definitely is unholy. All of these things are "in the world." That is to say, the three categories of lust in these verses, which Jesus encountered in the wilderness temptations recorded in Luke 4:1-13, comprise that which Jesus overcame according to our theme text. Further, the Bible says, "I will not talk with you much more, for the prince (evil genius, ruler) of the world is coming. And he has no claim on Me [He has nothing in common with Me; there is nothing in Me that belongs to him, and he has no power over Me.]" (John 14:30, AMP).

This is a great place to stop. Our loving God is giving us a special message today. He gave us Jesus, His only begotten Son so we would have everlasting life. Not only would Jesus pay the sin debt of those who submit to Him by faith, He also would cancel all slavery claims the devil has over our lives. If we rest our trust in Him, we are no longer compelled to serve sin. He overcame so He has the right to empower us to overcome.

It doesn't matter to what we have been enslaved. It could be the chief sin of pride. God can handle it. It could be addiction to alcohol or drugs. No sweat. God can handle it. You might be a wife-beater. God can handle it. You may be a sex offender. God can handle it. You may have done some things so egregious it would be shameful for me to enumerate here. Guess what? God can handle even that. Here's one more text: "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace" (Romans 8:1-6, ESV).

The first order of the day is to recognize your need for Jesus' victory to be applied in your life. Then ask the Lord to help you confess your sins so He

can be faithful and just to forgive you and cleanse you from all unrighteousness. Our freedom from sin begins with Jesus' victory over it while living on earth. Thank God for His victory!