

April 9, 2017

“Crosswalk”

A Six-Week Journey with the Cross, Part 5

“Freedom through the Cross”

“But Christ has rescued us from the curse pronounced by the law. When he was hung on the cross, he took upon himself the curse for our wrongdoing...so we receive God’s promise of freedom only by believing in Jesus Christ.”

Galatians 3:13a, 22b

A. Jesus promises me freedom through the cross...

Three words in the New Testament are used to describe freedom for which Christ has set us free... (Rev. Watts, The Christian Magazine)

1. A word for forgiveness, which refers to God’s pardon.
“But even greater is God’s wonderful grace and his gift of forgiveness to many through this other man, Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:15b
2. A word often translated authority. This word refers to the privilege and authority purchased by the Lord Jesus through the precious blood for our freedom.
“When you forgive this man, I forgive him, too. And when I forgive whatever needs to be forgiven, I do so with Christ’s authority for your benefit,” 2 Corinthians 2:10
3. A word that pictures one who was formerly in prison, but has now been liberated.
“And remember, if you were a slave when the Lord called you, you are now free in the Lord. And if you were free when the Lord called you, you are now a slave of Christ.” 1 Corinthians 7:22
4. “You are fully free when you have the desire, the ability, and the opportunity to do what will leave you with no regrets forever.” –John Piper

“If you don’t have the desire to do a thing, you are not fully free to do it. Oh, you may muster the willpower to do what you don’t want to do, but nobody calls that full freedom... And if you have the desire to do something, but no ability to do it, you are not free to do it. And if you have the desire and the ability to do something but no opportunity to do it, you are not free to do it. And if you have the desire to do something, and the ability to do it, and the opportunity to do it, but it destroys you in the end, you are not fully free – not free indeed.” –John Piper

B. To discover freedom, I must realize and admit my slavery...

“For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins.” Colossians 1:13-14

1. The cross gave me the power to be set free from the power of the enemy.
“Because God’s children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death. Only in this way could he set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying.” Hebrews 2:14-15
2. The cross brings the power of God to my life.
“For I decided that while I was with you I would forget everything except Jesus Christ, the one who was crucified... I relied only on the power of the Holy Spirit. I did this so you would trust not in human wisdom but in the power of God.” 1 Corinthians 2:2,4b-5
3. The cross brings freedom when I admit my need.
“Jesus said to the people who believed in him, ‘You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. And you will know

the truth, and the truth will set you free.’ ‘But we are descendants of Abraham,’ they said. ‘We have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean, “You will be set free?”’ Jesus replied, ‘I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave of sin. A slave is not a permanent member of the family, but a son is part of the family forever. So if the Son sets you free, you are truly free.’” John 8:32-36

4. The cross brings freedom when I am faithful to Christ’s teaching.

C. To walk in freedom, my old self must die...

“My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” Galatians 2:20

1. I must die to the opinion of others.
“Those who are trying to force you to be circumcised want to look good to others. They don’t want to be persecuted for teaching that the cross of Christ alone can save.” Galatians 6:12a
2. I must die to the idea that I can get to heaven by my good works or being good enough.
“As for me, may I never boast about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Galatians 6:14a
3. I must die to this world’s interest in me.
“Because of that cross, my interest in this world has been crucified, and the world’s interest in me has also died.” Galatians 6:14b
4. I must be able to see my full need for dependence on the cross! The closer I get to the cross, the more I see my unworthiness.
“Cling to your faith in Christ, and keep your conscience clear. For some people have deliberately violated their consciences; as a result, their faith has been shipwrecked.” 1 Timothy 1:19

D. Freedom of the cross will bring...

“Don’t be selfish; don’t try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don’t look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal’s death on a cross.”
Philippians 2:3-8

1. Freedom will bring a heart to serve!
2. Freedom will bring a humility that only desires for Christ to be seen in me!
3. Freedom will bring a hunger to be obedient!
4. Freedom will bring a full surrender to the will and desire of God!

“We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin.”

Romans 6:6

“So if the Son sets you free, you are truly free.”

John 8:36

**There are many who are held prisoner by bitterness,
guilt, resentment, worry...held captive by memories...
Jesus died for your freedom!**

*“Father, only you understand how much I’ve been hurt by these people. I don’t want to carry the pain for another second. I don’t want to be a bitter person. But I need your grace and the power of the cross to release my hurt and to forgive those who’ve hurt me. This is the turning point. First, I need to experience your forgiveness. You know all the ways I’ve hurt others, and I’m so sorry for my sins. Jesus, thank you for dying for me. I accept your grace and forgiveness, and I need it daily. Today I’m turning to you, and I’m choosing to forgive the way you have forgiven me. Every time the memory comes back, I’ll forgive them again until the pain is gone. Heal my heart with your grace. In Jesus’ name. Amen.” **

*Rick Warren

Coming next:

40 Days of Prayer and Fasting –

March 5 – April 16, 2017

April 16: After the Cross - 3 Days Later