

*Studies in Galatians (16/22)***Christ-Given Freedom.***Galatians 5:1*

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” Gal. 5:1. Altho we included this verse in our study last week, it contains quite enough for our entire study this week, and even more. In order that we may see how Christ makes free, we will consider

**A Practical Example**

in His earthly ministry.

“And He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in nowise lift up herself. And when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. And He laid His hands on her; and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.” Luke 13:10-13.

Then when the hypocritical ruler of the synagogue complained because Jesus did this miracle on the Sabbath, He referred to how each one would loose his ox or ass from the stall, and lead him to water, and then said:—

“And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?”

**A Parallel.**

Note these two points about this woman: She was bound by Satan; and she had a spirit of infirmity, or lack of strength.

Now note how accurately this describes our condition before we meet Christ.

1. We are bound by Satan. “Every one that committeth sin is the bond-servant of sin,” John 8:34 R.V. “He that committeth sin is of the devil,” 1 John 3:8. “His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.” Prov. 5:22. Sin is the cord with which Satan binds us.

2. We have a spirit of infirmity, and can in nowise lift ourselves up, or free ourselves from the chains that bind us. It was when we were “without strength” that Christ died for us. Rom. 5:6. Now these two words, “without strength,” are translated from the very same word that is rendered “infirmity” in the account of the woman whom Jesus healed. She was “without strength.” To be without strength means to have no strength at all. That is our condition.

### **What Jesus Does for Us.**

What now does Jesus do for us?—He takes the weakness, and gives us in return His strength. “We have not an High Priest which can not be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” Heb. 4:15. “Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.” Matt. 8:17. He becomes all that we are, in order that we may become all that He is. He was “born under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.” He hath delivered us from the curse, being made a curse for us, that the blessing might come to us. Altho He knew no sin, He was made “to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Cor. 5:21.

### **Why He Does It.**

Why did Jesus make that woman free from her infirmity?—In order that she might walk at liberty. Certainly it was not in order that she might continue of her own free-will to do that which before she was obliged to do. And why does He make us free from sin?—In order that we may live free from sin.

What is sin?—“Sin is the transgression of the law.” 1 John 3:4. To be a bond-servant of sin, therefore, and in nowise able to lift ourselves up, on account of infirmity, is to be unable to keep from transgressing the law. That is, it is to be unable to keep it. Why does Christ make us free?—Only in order that we may walk in the law blameless. “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.” Rom. 8:3, 4. He certainly does not deliver us in order that we may go on transgressing the law.

### **Free from the Law.**

“But,” some one will object, “it says somewhere that we are delivered from the law.” Yes, it does; and that is just what we are talking about. It is what we have been studying in the third and fourth chapters of Galatians. Christ was made under the law, to redeem us from under the law. Before faith came, we were under the law, shut up in prison. The law was our jailer; for “the strength of sin is the law.” 1 Cor. 15:56. “The law works wrath; for where no law is, there is no transgression.” Rom. 4:15. The law is our accuser before God. It charges us with having transgressed its holy precepts, and shut us up in prison, criminals condemned to death. How only can we get free from its condemnation?—Only by being able to show that we have the righteousness which it demands. This we get in the life of Christ. He covers us with the robe of righteousness. He puts righteousness not only on us, but in us, so that the law can find no fault in us, because in Christ there is no fault. Then the law lets us go free

from prison. Now we are on good terms with the law. That which before was our accuser, is now our friend; it witnesses to our righteousness in Christ.

But we shall have more of this at another time; what we wish now to consider a little further is how wondrously and how really Christ makes us free from the spirit of infirmity that keeps us from walking uprightly, according to the law of God. We can not tell how He does it; He alone knows how it is done, because He alone has the power; but we may know the reality of it.

We have already read that it is Satan that binds us with the cords of sin. Now read further: "He that commits sin is of the devil; for the devil sins from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." 1 John 3:8. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Heb. 2:14, 15.

### **The Means Used.**

By what means is it done?—By His word and touch. He said, "Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity," and laid His hand on her; and immediately she was straight. Faith in His Word makes the glorious freedom a reality to us. We must know also that He touches us. It is true, whether we know it or not; for He is touched with the feeling of our infirmity. Mark, He is now, even while He is High Priest in heaven, touched with the feeling of our weakness. He feels what we feel. Therefore He must be in the closest touch with us.

### **The Freedom Already Ours.**

Pay special attention to the words of Jesus to the woman, uttered while she was yet bound down, and unable to lift herself up: "Thou art loosed from thine infirmity." "Thou *art loosed*,"—present tense. That is just what He says to us. To every captive He has proclaimed deliverance. "The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raises up all those that be bowed down." Ps. 145:14. There is not a single soul that is bowed down with the weight of sin, which Satan hath bound on him, whom Christ does not lift up. Let the message be sounded far and wide. Let every soul hear it, that Christ has given deliverance to every captive. Thousands will rejoice at the news.

### **Faith Grasps Facts.**

Does anybody doubt it? Let me prove it to you. You will agree that we are made free by faith. When faith comes, we are no longer in prison. That is what we have learned in the third chapter of Galatians. But we can not believe a thing that is not so. Faith lays hold of acts, things actually accomplished, and nothing else. Faith does not make facts, it only

believes them. We do not make a thing so by believing it; we believe it, or at least ought to, because it is so. If it were not so before we are called upon to believe it, there would be nothing for us to believe. Therefore the fact that we get freedom in Christ by faith, and that anybody can have the same freedom by faith, proves that the freedom is already given to all. They have only to grasp it, and walk at liberty. Our part is to say with the psalmist, "O Lord, truly I am Thy servant; ... Thou hast loosed my bonds." Ps. 116:16. Don't go to arguing with the Lord, and saying that you can not walk straight. He says that you are loosed, and that is enough. Hold fast to His words in the face of the devil, and you will find that they will never fail you. The word which says, "Thou art free," is the word that keeps you free. Don't let it go from your mind.

### **The Way, the Life.**

Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." John 14:6. There is no other way, except the way that leads to death, and that we do not care to have anything to do with. Now read the words of the Lord by the psalmist: "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways." Ps. 119:1-3. What, then, is the way of the Lord?—It is the law of God, for the law is His life. Broken, it is death to us; kept, as it can be only in Christ, it is life and peace. It is "the perfect law of liberty." In Christ, it is "the law of the spirit of life." Rom. 8:2. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Sin, transgression of the law, is bondage; righteousness, which we find in Christ, who is the perfection of the law, is life, liberty, and peace.

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