

Bondage by Charles Stanley

The Truth that Sets Us Free

John 8:28-32

I. Introduction: Do you feel free? Maybe you're trapped in patterns of negative thought or unhealthy behavior. Perhaps you confess your sins and resolve to do better next time, but when the pressure mounts, you fall into the same destructive cycle, over and again.

The good news is that in Jesus, there's hope. He promised, "You will know the truth and the truth will set you free" (John 8:31). Christ has the power to break the chains holding you captive.

II. Many people are in bondage to *error* or *false teaching*.

These incorrect ideas include:

- There is more than one way to get to heaven.
- We can be saved through good works.
- God accepts or rejects us based on how well we perform.
- God is love, so everyone will go to heaven.
- Salvation can be lost and regained.

III. Others are enslaved to *evil deeds*.

No one ever intends to be trapped in sin. But little by little, it takes hold of one's life. If we're not careful, we will find ourselves in bondage one day.

While no one is without sin, God wants us to deal with our wrongdoings honestly and quickly.

IV. People can find themselves in *emotional bondage*.

Here are a few types of enslaving emotions:

- **Fear.** Those who are filled with fear are not trusting God.
- **False guilt.** We often place expectations on ourselves that are not God-given. Then when we fail, we feel guilty.
- **Jealousy.** You cannot be envious and happy at the same time.
- **Anxiety.** Jesus said, "My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you." (John 14:27 nkjv).
- **Guilt.** If you are a child of God and you ask Him to forgive something, He will do it (1 John 1:9).
- **Bitterness.** If you are resentful, hostile, or angry toward someone, negativity will spill over into your relationships with other people.

- **Unforgiveness.** When you are tempted to withhold forgiveness, remember how gracious God has been to forgive you—every time you ask.
- **Inadequacy.** It's often more important to get something done—even imperfectly—than to not do it at all.

V. What are the effects of spiritual bondage?

- **Your relationship with Jesus Christ suffers.**
- **Spiritual enslavement hurts your testimony.**
- **It grieves the heart of God.**
- **Your body may suffer from its negative long-term effects.**
- **The Lord can't use you to your full potential.**

VI. What is the cure? Remember your:

- **Personal relationship.** If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, all your sins are forgiven. You will never lose your salvation.
- **Position.** You are no longer an enemy of God. As His child, you have the privilege of approaching His throne at any moment for grace to handle any situation (Heb. 4:16).
- **Possession.** The Holy Spirit lives within you and provides power for every circumstance. God allows you to partake of His nature, and He gives everything you need to lead a godly life (2 Peter 1:3-4).
- **Personhood.** As God's child, you are of great worth and value to Him.

VII. Conclusion:

Do you struggle with any areas of bondage that I mentioned? If so, you can be free through the power of Jesus Christ. Once you have accepted God's gift of salvation, you are His child. You then have access to God's presence, where you can find grace and mercy to overcome any struggle. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, you can reject unhealthy patterns and begin walking in righteousness again.

As children of God, we already have our freedom—we just need to receive it by faith. God wants to deal with your sins. Are you ready to be set free?