

THE FREEDOM OF THE CROSS

Watchman Nee:

(Watchman Nee attributed this chapter to an article by Rev. Gordon Watt. However, Watchman Nee's article is quite different from the original article entitled "Liberty Through the Cross" by Rev. Gordon Watt. We have therefore chosen to translate his chapter from the Chinese. Readers interested in the original article by Rev. Watts should consult The Christian magazine, September 20, 1923, published by Morgan & Scot, London, England, edited by James W. Thirtle.)

"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not be entangled with a yoke of slavery again" (Gal. 5:1).

Three words are used in the New Testament to describe the "freedom" for which Christ has set us free:

- (1) A word for forgiveness, which refers to God's pardon.
- (2) A word often translated authority. This word refers to the privilege and authority purchased by the Lord Jesus through His precious blood for our freedom.
- (3) A word that pictures one who was formerly in prison, but has now been liberated (1 Cor. 7:22).

A bound life cannot deliver another bound life. Many Christians are bound; they cannot follow the Lord freely, and they are subdued by their environment. They fear men and the world. Satan does not wish to see a Christian living the liberated life. Yet all the power of darkness has been defeated by the power of Golgotha. The victory at Golgotha has secured for us our victory. God's Word (the Bible) clearly points out the way that Satan exercises his great power to frustrate God's children from experiencing the freedom they deserve.

THE POWER OF SIN AND OF OUR OLD LIVING

The power of sin and of our old living have been clearly dealt with on the cross. We should have faith concerning this fact. The reckoning in Romans 6:11 describes the attitude of our will concerning a certain matter. It is not a power in our flesh but the power in the Holy Spirit that reckons what God sees as true. We should adopt this attitude towards our old enemy.

SUFFERING

One power is continually used by Satan for his own end: suffering. In reading Romans 8:18, we see that suffering in God's will is often the pathway to light; through suffering one receives life and fruit. Many of God's children are pitiful and poor because they lack God-given trials. But here is a question: do we view all sufferings and adverse conditions to be from the Lord? Many Christians consider that they ought to submit to all adverse circumstances. They do not realize that sufferings sometimes come from the enemy. These include things such as distractions, depressions, numbness, and things that hinder our spiritual progress. As God's children, we should reject all these things. We should not accept anything that oppresses us and should not consider them to be God's will. We should differentiate between God's will and Satan's will. We should know what is from love and what is from sin. We should test all things by the spirit of the cross and by the will of God. We should identify what kind of suffering we are facing in various circumstances by the teaching of the cross. We should accept what is from God and reject what is from Satan.