

God's Law Gives Freedom

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Date: 05 July 2026

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[0 : 00] Freedom. Americans love freedom. And I'm no different on that score.! As Sam reminded us, we're celebrating 250 years as a nation,! and of freedoms that have been dearly bought.

! God defines it in His Word, and we see this so clearly in Psalm 119.

We're studying themes found in this psalm that would explain to us why David would tell us in verse 164, seven times a day, I praise the Lord for His righteous laws.

Is he out of his mind? Praising God for His righteous laws. We just recited the moral summary of those laws in the Ten Commandments. No, he's in his right mind, praising the Lord for His laws. So we come to this psalm to have our minds informed, to have them renewed, to have them put right as needed by the truth of God's Word. So today we see another reason for praising the Lord for His righteous laws.

[1 : 22] And the reason is that God's laws are not chains that destroy your freedom. They are rather commands marking out the very pathway of freedom.

I want you to notice two verses. Verse 32. I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free.

Clearly, David's view of freedom is not that of the world, for he sees God's commands as the very place where free hearts love to run.

And then verse 45. I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your precepts. He sees freedom as the result of seeking out God's precepts, His laws.

So first of all, this morning, let's notice how man has perverted the idea of freedom. Man says freedom is the ability to do whatever I want to do.

[2 : 30] Freedom's having no one over me, putting restrictions, laws, and rules upon me. The freedom he wants is to be completely autonomous. And kids, that's a big word, but it's made up of two small words.

Auto nomos. Self law. They're a law to themselves. They're the ones making the laws.

Where I alone decide what I do and what I don't do, I determine what's right and wrong for me. I don't want anyone telling me how to live. God included.

Especially God. Because His commandments really cramp my style. So that's the idea. Folks want to be able to sing at their own funerals.

I did it my way. As their last words. That's the world's view of freedom. And we see it all around us. Second truth.

[3 : 32] This is nothing new. Though we may see an increase of man's boldness to make that claim out loud in our nation. It actually dates back to Genesis chapter 3.

God made His law clear to Adam and Eve. Very clear. You can eat from all the trees of the garden except this one. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Don't eat that one.

And that law was for their good. But Eve listened to another voice. It was the voice of Satan in the serpent. And his spin on God's law.

That said, It's not really for your good, Eve. But rather, God's law is like a chain. You mean you can't eat from any tree? Why would He restrict you from eating from any tree?

He's holding out on you. He's keeping you from something good. Indeed, the knowledge of good and evil. And God's just making empty threats about death to keep you in slavish submission.

[4 : 38] Well, she not only listened to Satan. She set herself up as the judge. And she saw that the tree, the fruit of the tree was good for food.

And she saw that it was pleasing to the eye. And that it was also desirable for gaining wisdom. So she then makes the decision for how she'll live.

She takes from the tree the forbidden fruit. She eats. She gives some to her husband. And he eats. They sought freedom by declaring their independence from God.

We don't like your laws, God. And so from now on, we'll determine what we do. Now, how did their so-called freedom work out for them?

Well, you know the rest of chapter 3. How it ruined their communion with God. How it ruined their fellowship with each other. All the blame shifting and the antagonism.

[5 : 36] The feelings of guilt that they felt for the first time. A guilty conscience condemning them. They're hiding from God. To put it shortly, the Children's Catechism says, Instead of being holy and happy, they became sinful and miserable.

That pretty well wraps it up. Sinful and miserable. Because the way of the transgressor is hard. So that's the second truth.

That the world's perverted view of freedom is an old one. Fathered by the devil himself, the father of lies. The third truth is that we've all inherited this same sinful nature from our father Adam.

That like him, seeks our freedom by declaring independence from God and his laws. Now, this is everywhere in the scriptures.

I think it's most clearly stated in Isaiah 53 and verse 6. It says, We all, like sheep, have gone astray. The whole flock of the human race.

[6 : 43] All the sons and daughters of Adam. We all have strayed like sheep. We have each one turned to his own way.

What's true of us all is true of us individually. Adam and Eve turned their back on God to their own way. I turned, you turned, each one have turned to his own way.

I did it my way. My way is the way this life will be lived. And oh, we may still obey some of God's commandments.

That is, if it agrees with what we want. But just let God's command rub up against something I don't want to do. Or telling me to do something.

Or to not do what I do want. And you will see. That we don't do it around here. I'm calling the shots. Make no mistake about that.

[7 : 50] So we've all joined Satan's rebellion. His war against God. There was first the war in heaven. And then he brings the war to earth. And infiltrates humanity.

The whole human race. Now, there's a lot of wars. There's always been wars. And until Jesus comes, there will be wars. But if we're to understand any war between two countries, we need to dig into history.

We need to ask the why question. Why are they at war with each other? What's the point of hostility?

Now, it's often disputes over land. Sometimes it's ethnic and religious prejudices. Sometimes revenge. And maybe even taxes on tea without representation.

And so, in this war of mankind, we're asking the question. What's the battle all about?

[8 : 56] What does man have against God that he's declared war against him? What's fueling this hostility? And Romans chapter 8, verse 7, gets right to the point and explains the situation.

Of man's hostility against God. It says the sinful mind, that is the mind of man without the spirit. The mind of man as he's born with only the flesh, the sinful nature.

That mind is enmity, hostility to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

So, there, the secret is out. God's law is the point of hostility. That's the rub. I mean, if God would just stay in his heaven and mind his own business, I'd be okay with him.

But he's interrupting my life. He's giving commands, telling me what to do and not to do. Thou shalt, thou shalt not.

[10 : 08] And I won't have it. It's my way. And so you see how it's the law. It's God's law that is the point of hostility. And we will not submit.

So, ever since the fall of man, man's sinful nature has a natural aversion to God's law. It puts him off.

It's what J.I. Packer called, we have an allergic reaction to God's law. It irritates us. It's offensive to us.

We don't like it because it forbids what we want and it commands what we don't want. So, the angry atheist, he shows his hostility by thumbing God's face and making fun of his commands, these outdated commands.

This idea that things were so supernaturally done, like the Bible says, ha, ha, ha. Well, that is hostility against God, but it's not the only way hostility shows itself.

[11:20] In fact, it can be very religious and polite. People can do many religious things, but where God's law rubs them the wrong way and requires something they don't want to do, they show their hostility by just ignoring it, just carrying on life as usual, as if God had never spoken, as if he's the most irrelevant thing in the universe.

They will not change. They will not repent. They will not abandon their way and submit to God's way. You see, God's law is the point of hostility between every lost sinner and God.

Now, some may say, I'm not at war with God. Well, that may be the God that you've created in your mind, that he's just fine with you.

I mean, that's the God that's being proclaimed in our day. But just let someone hold before you the God of the Bible who requires you to believe everything he said and to obey everything he's commanded.

And at once that hostility boils to the surface. Sometimes just by thanks but no thanks. I will not submit to what he said.

[12:38] I will not bow. So you see how the world views God's commands as chains that are holding me back and I won't have it. Well, the fourth point this morning is the real kicker is that though we thought ourselves to be free, free to do whatever we wanted, in fact, we were caught in the worst bondage of all.

For we were willing slaves of sin and Satan. Paul writes in Titus 3.3, at one time, we too, he puts himself in, he puts us in, we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived, enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures.

We too, enslaved. Ephesians 2.2 and 3, we were following the ways of this world. We had a hook through our nose and we were following the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who's now at work in those who are disobedient.

All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature, following its evil desires and thoughts. And all the while we boasted we were free, free to do our own thing, not realizing that our own thing was Satan's thing.

And we were doing exactly what he wanted us to do, to sin, to rebel against God, to not submit to his law. So doing away with God's laws does not lead to real freedom, it leads to real bondage.

[14:17] Bondage to sin, bondage to Satan. For whether you realize it or not, Romans 6.16 says, you are slaves to the one you obey. That's the principle.

Who do you obey? That's your master. You are slaves to the one you obey, whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or slaves to obedience, which leads to righteousness and holiness, Romans 6.16.

And so we were slaves, willing slaves of sin, deceived. Augustine, in his confessions, where he wrote his confessions before he was converted, what he was wrestling with, and how he was thinking, and this was his confession, I am bound, not with another man's iron, but with my own iron will.

I gave my will to my enemy, and he made a chain and bound me with it. You see, it was our will. We chose sin, willingly chose sin.

And our enemy made a chain, and now we're bound. You see, we love our sin, and sin takes us further than we wanted to go, and it holds us there longer than we want to stay.

[15:43] It has its grip upon us. The mind, Romans 8.7, his mind does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

You see, the sinner boasts of his freedom, but he's not so free after all. Just tell him, stop sinning then. Well, he may trade one sin for another, but he'll soon find that he cannot free himself.

He can't change his nature. Sinner is what he is. Sin is what he will do. He can't change himself any more than a fish could make itself to have a nature to live on land instead of in the water.

You can't change yourself any more than an Ethiopian can change the color of his skin, or a leopard change its spots. How can you, who are doing, who be accustomed, you who are accustomed to doing evil, how can you do good?

You can't, you see. Fish swim, birds fly, sinners sin. It's their nature to do so. So that's the background to our text this morning.

[16:50] We're finally coming around to Psalm 119. But it's the background of the twisted view of freedom as if it's freedom from God's law. Let's now come to true freedom.

And we find it in David's testimony here in Psalm 119. And what strikes us immediately is the fact that, number one, God's law and David's freedom are not enemies, but friends.

Verse 45, I will walk around in freedom, for I have sought out your precepts. God doesn't steal our freedom, or I say God's law does not steal our freedom, but contributes to it.

He doesn't find freedom by running from God's commands or by ignoring God's commands, but by actively seeking them out, learning them, submitting to them, and living by them.

Now this is a true believer. This is not a lost sinner. We're talking about David, the man of God. And he has the spirit of God in him. And this is now that new nature, you see, that brings David's freedom and God's law together.

[18:10] And the more David aligns himself with God's precepts, the more freedom he enjoys. Now that's a whole different view of God's law, isn't it?

It's also a different view of freedom. Freedom is not the ability to do what you want. It's the ability to do what you ought. What you ought as defined as God's law.

And then when you walk in those ways, you say, ah, that's what I was made to do. And that's exactly right. Things go smoothly when they're operating according to the way the manufacturer made it.

So the manual says that you put gas in the gasoline tank. Now you're free to put sand and water in it, but don't complain to the manufacturer if it goes rough.

You're free to say, I don't want God's law. But don't complain to your maker when your way, the way of the transgressor, gets hard, you see.

[19:18] So David's got a different view of the law, a different view of freedom. And it's the Holy Spirit who at your conversion to Jesus Christ has come to live in your heart.

And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, freedom. 2 Corinthians 3, 17. Real freedom because he's now at work within us both to will and to do what pleases him.

So here's the command outwardly. The Spirit within is moving us to live as God has made us to live. And so we find freedom in God's commands.

He empowers us to walk in obedience to God's law. He moves us to be careful to obey his laws.

Ephesians 36, 27. And that's where we find real freedom. Walking with God in his ways, not ours.

And that's when we find his law to be perfect liberty. Twice, James calls God's law the law of liberty. Isn't that something?

[20:29] Law and liberty have no room together in the world's eyes. Yes. James calls it the law of liberty. Or as the NIV translates, the law that gives freedom.

And then the verse, James 2, 12, where he says, Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law of liberty. God's law is a law of liberty.

Every one of those 10 commandments you recited is a law of liberty. It's a way to, it's the way free people live. It's the law that gives freedom.

And then, after telling us to be doers of the word and not merely hearers deceiving ourselves,

James writes, James writes in chapter 1, verse 25, but the man who looks intently into the perfect law of liberty and continues to do this, not forgetting what he's heard, but doing it, he will be blessed in what he does.

He will be happy in his life. Why? Because he's living according to what he finds in the law, the perfect law of liberty, the law that he was created to walk in. So true freedom is not the permission to do what you want, it's the power to do what God wants.

[21:48] Doing what you want leads to bondage. Doing what God wants is freedom. I will walk about in freedom. For I have sought out your commands. Are you seeking God's precepts?

If you love freedom, you'll make them your active pursuit. Reading the Bible. Filling and renewing your minds. Memorizing, meditating on God's laws.

God's gospel. Applying them to your life. Let's go to our second text from Psalm 119. It's verse 32.

Here David says, I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free.

Clearly David's idea of freedom is not like that of the world. He's not running from the path of God's commands, but in the path of God's commands.

Because he sees God's path of commands as the place where free hearts love to run. I run in the path of your commands.

[23 : 01] Notice there's a cause-effect relationship here between these two phrases. I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free. So our running is the effect of something God has done in us.

Namely, setting our hearts free. He's liberated our hearts from our bondage to sin and Satan. And that motivates us. It moves us to run in the path of God's commands.

I saw something this week in my backyard that I've not seen in 70 plus years. I wonder if you've ever seen it. It was a deer and her little fawn.

And the fawn was so little, it couldn't have been alive for more than a couple days, maybe just hours. Because as I watched from my house way in the back of my yard, that little fawn just all of a sudden darted full speed 30 yards in this direction.

Mom stays here. And then it turns around and full speed darts the other direction, 60 yards over here. And then continues to do that four or five times while mother's just watching and me from the house.

[24 : 27] Now do you know what I think was happening? I think that fawn had been cooped up in its mother's womb. And those spindly legs that had been all bent and curled up in there were suddenly freed in the birth.

And now, with the joy of newborn freedom, it's just running back and forth. This is fun, Mom! That's what I think.

And I'm no dear whisperer, but I think that's what it looked like. And it surely is at least a picture, I believe, of what happens to a believer who's been in bondage to sin all of his life.

We were born in sin. A slave to sin. Because we're a slave to whatever we obey. And the believer who's lived in sin as its slave, finding that the way of the transgressor is hard, now is born again. Born again by the Spirit of God. Life comes. A new birth. He's set free by a supernatural work of God.

[25 : 45] Bringing him into the liberty of the children of God. Writing God's law upon his heart. Implanting spiritual desires and taste buds in his affections for holiness.

So that now he can say with Paul in Romans 7, 22, in my inner being, in my heart of hearts, I delight in the law of God.

No lost person can say that. They may keep some of God's commands. But no lost person can say, in my inner being, in my heart of hearts, I delight in the law of God.

But that's what a believer who's been born again by the Spirit with the law written on his heart, his affections, can say. And so he's found running in the path of God's commands.

For God has set his heart free. And it's the path of true and happy freedom. And he shows it by running in the path of God's commands. It's the spontaneous reflex of a heart set free.

[26 : 51] Not lollygagging around, not dragging his feet, but full out run in the way of God's commands. You see, his heart is in it. It's cheerful, glad, gospel-driven obedience.

Obedience is the result of God setting his heart free. Do you know anything of this joyful running in the path of God's commands?

1 John 5, 1-3 says that the one born of God who's had this new birth loves God. And this is love for God to obey his commands.

And his commands are not burdensome. And so obedience is now his happy choice. since his enmity has been replaced with love.

And his heart's consuming passion is no longer my way, my way, but your way. What did we sing? Not my way, not my will, but yours be done.

[27 : 50] That's a newborn heart loving to run in the way of God's commands. For if the Son has set you free, you shall be free indeed.

And the path of God's commands is where freed hearts love to run. I don't think my understanding of what I saw that day is completely out to lunch.

I think Malachi 4, verse 2, really says something similar. He says, For you who revere my name, the Son of Righteousness will rise with healing in its wings, and you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall.

There he's been, boxed up in a stall all winter. And in spring, he's let loose out into the pasture and he shows his joy by kicking up his heels and running out into the new freedom.

That's a picture God uses in Malachi 4, 2. And running in the path of God's command, running, not just traveling, but running in the path of God's command says something important to us.

[28 : 56] Do you know what it says? Mother says, Son, it's time to get off the couch and go out and weed the garden. And with a groan, he says, Oh, do I have to, Mom?

As if it was cruel, unusual punishment. And she says, Yes, you must. And he slowly peels himself off the couch and out the door in the direction of the garden, but he's dragging his feet, traveling the speed of a snail.

What does the slowness of his speed say to you? What is he telling us by his slowness? His heart's not in it. That's what it's telling you. Oh, he's going, but his heart's not.

All right, rewind. Mother says to the sons, Time to get off the couch. Go weed the garden. Okay, thanks, Mom. And he's running to the garden.

What does his speed tell you? His heart's in it. I don't know if Mom's promised him money or what, but his heart's definitely in it.

[30 : 05] How do you know that? His speed with which he runs. What is your speed in the way of God's commandments saying?

Is your heart in it? Or are you just going through the motions and just doing your duty? John Calvin, warning against zeal without knowledge, said, It's better to limp in the right road than to run in the wrong road.

Makes sense, doesn't it? Because at least you're on the right road, though you're limping. Well, David has one better than Calvin. It's better to run in the right road, to run in the way of God's commandments than to limp along, just to put in your time.

I run in the path of your commands where you have made my heart free. In light of such mercy, can we do anything less? But sadly, if we're honest Christians, we have to say we don't always run in the path of God's commands.

We sometimes do drag ourselves to duty. We come to it reluctantly. Well, I guess if I have to, it's Sunday again, isn't it?

[31 : 34] Okay, let's go. Why do we sometimes feel as if God's commandments are burdensome when they're not? Something's amiss when that's the case. When we're not running.

But that's reality, isn't it? It's not every Lord's Day morning that we wake up saying, I was glad when they said to me, let us go into the house of the Lord.

And you run to get ready with anticipation of the blessing of meeting with God and his people. It's not every Lord's Day that we say, better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere.

It's not every day that we feel like gathering to pray with God's people for his kingdom and to come and his will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

It's not every day that we delight in reading God's word and praying in spiritual things, in duties to our children, to our spouse, our church, our neighbors, our commands of God.

[32 : 40] why do these things sometimes feel like more of a burden than a delight to run in? What should we do? Well, I want to draw your attention back to the fact that this is a cause-effect verse.

The effect is running in the path of God's commands. And when that is weak and you've slowed down to dragging your feet, well, we need to get back to the cause.

What is the cause that makes a man, a woman, a boy, or a girl run in the way of obedience? It is God setting their heart free.

God enlarging their hearts from the little prison of I live for me and my life revolves around this little orbit of me and God setting our hearts free and bringing it into the great, grand project of living for the glory of God in everything I do.

I've got to get back to God what he has done for me in Jesus Christ to set my heart free. I need to fix my eyes on Jesus.

[33 : 52] After all, he's the great liberator, isn't he? He's the freedom fighter. He's the one who smashed the head of the serpent that we might be set free, free from sin, free from Satan.

So we need to fix our eyes on our freedom fighter, Jesus. Until something of the reality of what it cost him to set me free sinks in afresh, afresh sense of it all such that I say, I'm going to run in the way of his commandments.

Never was the path of God's commands more demanding and difficult than it was for the Son of God. In that eternal covenant of redemption before time began, God the Father said to his Son, Son, I'm going to give you a people.

Jesus constantly refers to them as those that the Father has given me. These are my elect. I'm giving them to you. It's my love gift to you, Son. Now I want you, I'm telling you, go down and obey

every commandment that I have ever given.

Obey it perfectly. so that you can have a righteousness to give to your people to make them right with us. And then I want you to be persecuted and to suffer and to die the death that they deserve under wrath, infinite wrath of God.

[35 : 23] I want you to go and take the justice that their sins, the punishment that they should endure forever. I want you to do that, Son. That's a hard path of command to run in, wouldn't you say?

But never was a son more obedient to his Father. And we're actually given the words that Jesus said as he was coming into the world. Hebrews 10, sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you have prepared for me.

I have come to do your will, O my God. Your law is my delight. It was no command from the Father unwillingness of this.

That's exactly what I want to do, Father. Your will, my delight. And Jesus hit the ground running in the way of God's commands. commands. We find him as a 12-year-old kid, we find him submitting himself to God's fifth commandment, honor your father and mother.

He went down to Nazareth and was obedient to his parents, perfectly fulfilling the fifth command.

We find him at age 30 being drawn by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil for 40 days and 40 nights, without eating.

[36 : 55] Some of us get angry and irritable when we've missed a meal or two. 40 days, 40 nights without eating. And he's being constantly harassed, tempted by the devil.

And his answer every time was, it is written. It is written. It is written. He's submitting. He's putting himself under God's law.

He was born under law and he's now submitting to that law, obeying it, doing the will of his father as he had been commanded to do. He's running in the path of God's commandment.

Throughout his life, he's tempted in every way as we are. And yet, without sin, he's mistreated by his brothers and sisters, never responding in sinful ways.

He's mistreated by the scribes and the Pharisees, the religious elite of his day. Never wants sinning in his heart, his thoughts, his attitudes, his words, actions at all.

[38 : 00] He's running, running in the way of God's commands. Undeterred by friend or foe, he set his face like a flint to go to the hellish cross to obey, to follow the path that his father commanded.

And on the night of his betrayal, he's in the upper room with his disciples. And just before leaving for Gethsemane, this is what he tells them. I will not speak to you much longer for the prince of this world, Satan, is coming.

He has no hold on me, but the world, the whole world must learn that I love the father and that I do exactly what my father has commanded me. Come now, let's go.

And off to Gethsemane. Where again, he's running in the way of God's commands. He takes the cup. If there's any way possible, take this cup from him.

But, not my will, yours be done. You see, it's the same submission to the father all the way to the bitter end. And in just a few hours, he is hanging on the cross.

[39 : 11] And he is suffering the damnation that his people deserve. He humbled himself and was obedient.

Obedient unto death. Even the death of the cross, the hellish cross of God's wrath poured out on him that it might not fall on us, his people.

He was running in the path of God's commands to set us free from our sins and its curse.

For Christ redeemed us from the bondage of sin and Satan and from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. And if that will not motivate you to run in the way of God's commands, I don't know what will.

Think what it costs for him to set you free and then run in the path of his commands. That word run caught my attention.

[40 : 17] I'm reading through the book of Numbers and there's a time there in the wilderness where Israel is once again complaining, complaining to Moses and Aaron, what are we doing out here?

We'd be better if we'd have died and so on. And of course that's complaining against God. And it's the sixth time as I'm counting on my way through the book and God is angry and God sends a plague upon Israel.

And the plague is mowing them down like dominoes set up on a table. I mean, they're just falling over in waves. And Moses says to Aaron, take your censer, put incense in it along with fire from the altar and hurry to the assembly to make atonement for them.

Wrath has come out from the Lord. The plague has started. So Aaron did as Moses said and ran into the midst of the assembly.

Here's the midst, the middle of the assembly. Here's the people who have died because of the plague. Here's the living. And it says that he ran into the assembly and he stood between the living and the dead and he made atonement and the plague stopped for the atonement turned the wrath of God away.

[41 : 42] Friends, that's what happened to each of us who are in Jesus Christ. We were all under condemnation.

The plague of God's wrath was coming for every one of us. We're all sinners and the wages of sin is death. And the plague is mowing people down.

They're dying and they're going to hell. And this plague is sweeping. And Christ, the mediating high priest, runs into the midst and stands between the living and the dead and makes atonement and the plague stops right there.

That's why it doesn't fall on us if we're believers in Jesus because it fell on him that we might be set free from the curse of God's wrath.

He saw me plunged in my distress and flew to my relief. For me, he bore the shameful cross and carried all my grief. Since from his bounty I received such proofs of love divine had I a thousand hearts to give.

[42 : 53] Lord, they should all be thine. All years, Lord, to run in the ways of your commands for you have set my heart free.

Amen. Lost friend, don't misunderstand what we're saying. We're not saying if you want to be set free from the curse of God's law just keep the law.

No, no, not at all. We're saying we're all sinners and if we broke the law once we're guilty of breaking it all. That's a dead end. Never was a way for sinners to be made right with God.

No, what we are saying is that Jesus has kept the law perfectly and has laid down his life as a ransom for many. Get into Christ and that plague of death will stop.

There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus and then you will run. You'll run for all your life to keep his commandments.

[43 : 58] I'll live for him who died for me. May God make it so. Many of us here have come and confessed our sins and pled the mercy of God in Christ, have mercy on me the sinner for Jesus' sake and he set us free.

May you come to him and find the same freedom that we have found. Let's pray. Oh Lord, our thoughts of freedom are often so far off center and it's not just the world out there.

That's the way we were born, wanting our way, thinking it was the way of real freedom. But how we thank you for the way that your grace has interrupted our lives and shown us that this is not the way of freedom, it's the way of bondage.

This isn't what you made us for. This isn't the way to flourish as your creature. But it's to come to know Christ as our law keeper. To know him who gave us the law is the very one who sets us free from the curse of the law and therefore to thank him by obeying his commands.

Oh, forgive us for the way we drag our feet sometimes and think that your commands are wearisome. You're a good God and all your ways are good and all your laws are good.

[45 : 23] Convince us of it afresh and lead us to Calvary just to see how for us you are, that you would give your own son up to be cursed in our place and that Lord Jesus you would go there willingly to die for us that we might be set free.

So work in our hearts we pray and draw sinners to this wonderful savior. We pray in his name. Amen.