

## God's Emancipation Proclamation

On January 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which declared that all slaves were free. The country was in the midst of a war over slavery. Some were fighting to keep the slaves in bondage while others fought to free the slaves.

About 2,000 years ago, another battle took place against slavery, but not the physical kind. This battle was against spiritual slavery. Because of sin, we and all people were bound in slavery to the devil and his wicked schemes. There was nothing we could do in order to free ourselves from the chains of sin. Without Jesus emancipating us, we could only obey sin. "Everyone has turned away, all have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one" (Psalm 53:3).

Because he had mercy on our dreadful predicament, God sent his Holy Son to free us from Satan's cruel clutches. Our Savior came to win the battle against our merciless master. On the cross, Jesus suffered terrible pain and was forsaken by God in our place. Because of this we have been set free. We are no longer slaves to sin. Through our baptism we died with Christ and rose victorious with him. "For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been set free from sin" (Romans 6:6-7).

Jesus' resurrection is proof of our freedom from slavery. Jesus rose from the dead and we are forgiven. "[He] was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification." (Romans 4:25 NKJV) Our Savior's resurrection was God's Emancipation Proclamation—his declaration that we are free from slavery to sin.

### **Prayer:**

Dear Jesus, thank you for coming to fight the battle to free me from slavery to sin. Please help me remember that I am your child now and no longer belong to the devil. He can no longer have control over my life. In your name I pray. Amen.

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