

“Are You Still Wearing Your Grave Clothes?”

One day recently this thought came to my mind: “It’s one thing to be free, but it’s a shame if we aren’t walking in the fullness of our freedom.” Then Sunday, Pastor Brad talked about Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead, and how he came out of the grave with his grave clothes still on, then Jesus told others *“...take off the grave clothes and let him go.”*

The day I got saved, I was standing in front of my machine in the factory where I worked and said “Lord, I give up! I’ve tried it my way and it’s not going well - I want to do life Your way.” That was the day Jesus brought me out of the “grave” I had been in for 42 years - I didn’t smell bad like Lazarus did, but I was certainly bogged down by multiple layers of “grave clothes!”

I hadn’t been to church for over 20 years, and when I said what I did, I didn’t really understand what I had done, and I had no clue how my life was going to be radically transformed in the days, weeks, months, and years ahead! What I did know was that I had been hooked on pornography (and wanted to quit, but couldn’t!) for years, and He instantaneously set me free from my bondage, so even though I didn’t understand it all, I KNEW that what I had was real, and I wanted more of Him!

In John 8:36 He says: *“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”* (NIV) So when we are born again, our sins have been forgiven, and we have the promise of eternal life, because death (the grave) no longer has a hold on us, which is awesome, but if we are bound up in our grave clothes (sinful thoughts and actions), we are not living in true freedom!

In John 10:10, Jesus says: *“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”* (NKJV) Jesus wants us to live ABUNDANT lives as Christians, and the only way to do that is to allow Him to remove layer after layer of our filthy grave clothes. So...how do we do that!

John 8:31b-32 tells us: *“Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”* How do we know the truth? *“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth.”* (John 16:13 NIV) In John 14:26 Jesus said the Holy Spirit will *“teach us all things.”*

If we read and APPLY the word in our lives, if we are involved in a church that teaches us the truth, and if we are around others who we allow to hold us accountable, our grave clothes will slowly fall away and we can be free indeed! Amen!