

Rev. 1:5b-6 “Set Free to Serve”

For the Children: In the Book of Exodus we read how God freed His people from slavery to the Egyptians. But He did not just set them free so that they could say, “We have escaped the Egyptians!” He did not take them through the wilderness just so they could find a nicer place to live. Or so that they could get to see beautiful sunsets in the desert. He set them free so that they could become His special servants. We have been set free from our sins by the Lord Jesus for the same reason: so we can be God’s special servants. **Questions:** From what have we been set free? How did the Lord Jesus set us free? How can we serve God today?

Introduction:

First Point: What the Lord Jesus Has Done for Us

- 1) He Loves Us: In John’s doxology he reminds us that the Lord Jesus loves us. The language implies a continual love. He demonstrated this love above all by His work on the cross (Jn. 15:13).
- 2) He Has Set Us Free: Jesus’ work on the cross has resulted in us being set free (“loosed”) from Satan, sin and death – from the guilt and power of sin, and the condemnation that sin deserves. The language here implies a once-for-all release.
- 3) He Has Made Us Priests: The Lord’s work on the cross was High-Priestly work. Because we share in Him, this makes us priests (v. 6). A priest has a special office involving serving the Lord in a close and concentrated way. V. 6 is alluding to Ex. 19:6, which states that God made Israel to be a kingdom of priests, a holy nation. OT Israel and the NT church have been set free (salvation) to serve as priests. Both the Passover and the Lord’s Supper express this truth.
- 4) He Has made Us Kings: As the Great King, Jesus defeated Satan, sin and death. He was raised up to kingly exaltation. We share in this triumph. Hence, John quotes Ex. 19:6 to point out that Israel and the Church are made to be a *kingdom*. We are “*royal* priests,” especially chosen to serve before the King. This creates a double responsibility to render holy service. See also 1 Pet. 2:9f.

Second Point: How We Are to Serve Him

- 1) The Service of Worship: “To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever” implies that we have been set free that we might be busy praising our Great King, out of gratitude for His Priestly work for us.
- 2) The Service of Obedience: Because He is the Lord and King, Jesus must be obeyed. Again, gratitude for His gift of salvation also leads to obedience. If we don’t obey Him, the witness of our praising Him will be compromised.
- 3) The Certainty of These Things: The word “Amen” confirms all of these truths: Jesus really does love us; He really has set us free; He really has made us to be His royal servants. And He really does deserve this service from us.

Conclusion:

