

I Am Free

Words: Andy Gleiser

Music: Matt Taylor

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"But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness." (Romans 6:17-18)

It has been a delight to minister alongside The Wilds, creating music for the churches they serve. Part of their ministry is providing summer camps for all ages. They often designate their Wednesday evening music and preaching exclusively for the gospel.

In late summer of 2022, Matt asked me for new lyrics for a "Wednesday night song on the gospel" that the camp might use in future summers. He also asked that the lyrics be lighter in feel and less dense of a text to sing. I wrote the opening line of the chorus fairly quickly, and then sought to fill in the rest of the song around the idea of Christ setting us free from the bondage of death and the shackles of sin.

I chose as my main imagery the metaphor of Jesus finding me as I sat in a dark dungeon. I could not break from the heavy chains or from the locked door keeping me shrouded in thick darkness. But Jesus came and set me free...

This image is of course not original to me. In his great hymn "And Can It Be," Charles Wesley mastered the picture with his powerful lyric.

*"Long my imprisoned spirit lay,
Fast bound in sin and nature's night.
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray;
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light.
My chains fell off, my heart was free;
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee."*

This song is my attempt to recreate how I feel every time I sing Wesley's enduring gospel hymn.