

FREEDOM

I'd like to share a few thoughts and some scriptures with you about freedom. Let's start with the definition.

The dictionary that I looked in showed about 17 different definitions encompassing all the different aspects of the word. I'll just list a few.

This first one is pretty obvious.

Being free or at liberty from confinement or physical restraint.

Since most of us aren't locked up, here are a few of the other definitions that may apply to us:

Exemption from external control, interference, or regulation.

The power to determine action without restraint.

The power to exercise choice and make decisions without restraint from within or without autonomy; self-determination.

In America we sum up all of these definitions with the word "independence."

My unscholarly definition is;

Being able to do what we want, when we want, how we want, with no one being able to stop us.

I've lived my whole life in the United States of America. We call ourselves the land of the free and the home of the brave. We probably have more personal freedom in America than in any country on this planet. I think it's ironic that with all of our personal freedoms, we are some of the most bound people on the planet.

Our country can boast very high rates of suicide, drug and sexual abuse, depression, crime and quite a few more negative things.

It seems that the things that are supposed to make us the most free really don't make us free at all.

Romans 6.16 states that,

Whoever or whatever you submit yourself to, that's whose servant you are.

I remember back in the 1960s and 70s the hippie movement in our country. This group of people, who called themselves "Hippies," wanted to be absolutely free from every moral, political, and social standard in our country. They said that we want to be completely free of these things so that we can pursue free love, peace, happiness and be absolutely free without any consequences.

Unfortunately as they rebelled and threw off every natural restraint in our society, they became slaves. They became slaves to lust, receiving the consequences of sexually transmitted diseases, and unwanted pregnancies. They became addicted to drugs receiving the consequences of overdoses, with the physical and emotional damage they produced.

Many completely dropped out of society and lost the ability to function normally in it.

Proverbs 14.12

There is a way that seems right unto man but it leads only to death.

John 6:63, It's the spirit who gives life, your flesh profits absolutely nothing.

Back in the 70s, Bob Dylan did a Christian album. I remember the lyrics of one of the songs.

"You're going to serve somebody. It might be the devil. It might be the Lord, but you going to have to serve somebody."

I'd like to share some scriptures that show the difference between freedom FROM GOD and freedom IN GOD.

Romans 8:20 amp

For the creation, the (nature) was subjected to frailty (to futility, condemned to frustration), not because of some intentional fault on its part, but by the will of Him who so subjected it—[yet] with the hope

That nature, the (creation) itself, will be set free from its bondage to decay *and* corruption [and gain an entrance] into the glorious freedom of God's children.

God told Adam in Genesis 2, the day you eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall surely die. The scripture goes on to say that Adam lived many, many years after that. So what really died? Adam's spirit died. His spirit was created by God when He made man in His image.

Man's soul, his mind, his emotions, and his will became the preeminent and guiding force of his life with the help of Satan.

He was free FROM God, and could do what he wanted, when he wanted, how he wanted, and there was no one to stop him from doing it. Satan was actually encouraging and influencing it.

The scripture says, that every man did what was right in his own eyes.

The result was that several times in history Man became completely evil by his own doing with Satan's help.

God could not tolerate that evil in His creation, so He destroyed much of mankind leaving only a remnant to bring the Messiah, the Savior into the world.

God's plan of restoration for men, was the gospel. He brought forth His plan of restoration by putting all men in Christ by his doing.

(1 Corinthians 1.30)

He then crucified Him, buried Him, and raised Him from the dead and seated him at the right hand of God, with Christ. (Romans 6)

Whatever happened to Christ also happened to man.

God made this incredible re-creation available to men by them trusting in God's incredible work on his behalf. By faith in the work that only God Himself could do. Because of God's incredible love for His creation, He did this for us before we even asked.

The freedom that God created for us sets us free in three different ways.

Freedom from sin and judgement.

Even so consider yourselves dead to sin and your relation to it broken, but alive to God in unbroken fellowship with Him. Romans 6.11

Freedom from the authority and influence of Satan and this world.

The Father has delivered and drawn us to Himself out of the control and dominion of darkness and has transferred us into the Kingdom of the Son of His love. Colossians 1.13

Freedom from our useless way of life inherited from Adam and Eve.

You must know and recognize that you were redeemed and ransomed from the useless and fruitless way of living inherited by tradition from your forefathers, not with corruptible things like gold. But you were purchased with the precious blood of Christ, the Messiah, like that of a sacrificial lamb without blemish or spot. 1 Peter 1.18

When God gives us such an incredible gift, what kind of response should we have?

I think, thank you Daddy is the one that he's looking for.

The apostles also gave us some exhortations for this response.

Peter said,

Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but *use it* as bond-slaves of God. 1 Peter 2.16

Paul wrote to Galatians,

For you brethren, were [indeed] called to freedom; only [do not let your] freedom be an incentive to your flesh *and* an opportunity *or* excuse [for selfishness], but through love you should serve one another. Galatians 5.13

And again in Galatians 5.5,

In [this] freedom Christ has made us free [and completely liberated us]; stand fast then, and do not be hampered *and* held ensnared *and* submit again to a yoke of slavery [which you have once put off]. It appears from these scriptures, that we have the choice of continuing to follow the leading of our soul which leads to bondage.

We also have the choice of accepting God's work on our behalf by faith, and walking in the freedom that He made available to us.

This freedom that God made available for us, is an ever-increasing and growing relationship with His Holy Spirit

Paul wrote in 2 Corinthian 3.17 amp,

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (emancipation from bondage, freedom).

And all of us, as with unveiled face, [because we] continued to behold [in the Word of God] as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are constantly being transformed into His *very own* image in ever increasing splendor *and* from one degree of glory to another; [for this comes] from the Lord [Who is] the Spirit.

The Greek word translated "transformed" is the compound word, metamorphoo.

Meta, meaning "changed by being with."

And morphoo, meaning, "changed into a completely different form"

Like a caterpillar to a butterfly.

Hebrews 7:25 kjv

He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing he ever lives to make intercession for them.

I looked up the word translated "to the uttermost." It means completely, perfectly, and eternally.

God's plan to redeem and set mankind free is unlike any other plan on this planet. God is the only one who can do it.

And as John wrote in chapter 8 verse 36, reading from the Amplified version,

If the Son liberates you and [makes you free men], then you are really *and* unquestionably free.

Freedom does not come from independence. It comes from the oneness and complete dependence on God, as members of His family, that Christ's incredible sacrifice made available to us.

It's freedom WITH God, not freedom FROM God that sets us free.

God bless you.

Jim Fuller