

The Great Liberator

In 1810, South America was still part of Spain's vast New World Empire. By 1825, however, the continent was free, having won its independence at the cost of bloody wars with Spanish and royalist forces. People like Simon Bolivar and Bernardo O'Higgins lead the fight against the Spanish for the freedom of their countries. Here in the United States we honor George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and the like for their efforts in freeing this country from the rule of England. Just about every nation in the world has some sort of story concerning a great leader who was instrumental in helping that nation gain its freedom. What is interesting is that in many of those instances, the freedom, if there ever truly was any, was so short lived as to be non-existent. Fidel Castro was a leader of the Cuban revolution against the regime of Batista and was successful in overthrowing that government, but then essentially enslaved the Cuban people under his own rule. In our discussion in this lesson I want to look at this idea of liberators 1 freeing their people.

John 8:36

2

36 So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

Merriam-Webster defines the term "Free" as...

- 3
- ★ Not costing any money
 - ★ Not held as a slave or prisoner
 - ★ Not physically held by something

This is the short version, the actual definition has 15 different ideas to it, but I think we get the gist. The concept of freedom is as old as man and is used in the scriptures in a variety of ways, including the three illustrated here. Our discussion is going to be concentrated on the thought of the one who brings freedom, the liberator. We are getting ready to go into a discussion of the Book of Judges on Wednesday nights. Very basically, the Book of Judges records a history of the Jews wherein they fall away from God through their disobedience, they are punished by being oppressed by a different nation, and God raises up a Judge, a liberator, to free them from that oppression and bring them back into a faithful relationship with God. The thought of being a slave is universally repulsive to man. No one wants to be a slave. Though we see throughout the ages that many times here have been people who have willingly placed themselves into some form of servitude to pay off a debt or accomplish a specific goal. Do you have a house payment? Think about it. Bond slavery was very common in both Old Testament times as well as in the time of Christ and following. So much so that God saw fit to establish laws concerning it and the treatment of those that had committed themselves to it, as seen in **Exodus 21** and **Lev. 25**.

In the case of a nation being under bondage to another nation, we have to look no further than right here in our own country. The people of this land had become tired of being obligated to pay taxes to England and having to live under the rule of a nation so far away with no representation, all of which was viewed as oppression. So, they revolted and fought a war to free this country from that oppression.

Such people, in whatever country they were from, are revered, honored. Statues are built and histories written that proclaim their greatness and laud their achievements. We honor those that have fought the wars that brought us our freedom and have helped to maintain it. In their own rights, they

are as much liberators as any of the founding fathers. We do well to honor them, especially those that have paid the ultimate price for that freedom. Friends, in this country, at least since slavery was abolished, we have not felt the kind of oppression that so many in the world have and still do feel. We have brothers and sisters in Christ that don't have the opportunity to worship God without the threat of persecution. We do, at least up to this point. Political liberty, that which allows us the freedom to meet and worship as we please allows the latitude for so much that is good, as opposed to its opposite which involves so much that is oppressing.

But, we might have the greatest political liberty in the world to do as we please, and still be slaves. Look at the world of religion around us. They all have the same right as do we, to meet and worship as they please. We may find their worship to be reprehensible, as with those who worship Satan, but the same right that allows us to meet here in Oakdale allows them to meet wherever. Just know that that right to meet neither justifies nor makes right their worship practices, they are still reprehensible and sinful. But such is the nature of the limited freedom that man can bestow. There is no such thing as true freedom in the world of man. We might have more freedom than others in other nations, but we still have limits on our actions, we still pay taxes. That is what is seen in religion, people think that they are free to do whatever they want and maybe in the eyes of man, they are, but in the eyes of God and according to his standard they are mired in the depths and degradations of their sin and have no freedom from its curse at all.

Therein is the point of this lesson...

4 1) Freedom is Possible

Look back at the passage we started with...

John 8:36 **5**

36 So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

The Son has the ability to make man free. That has never been the question; Christ can free man from his bondage in sin...

Rom 6:5-7 **6**

5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, **6** knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; **7** for he who has died is freed from sin.

The word "if" implies a condition. The Son of God can make the prisoner of sin free. This is the message of the Gospel, no matter who you are, what you have done, how many years you have remained a part of the world, the Son, the righteous liberator, can make you free.

Heb 7:25 **7**

25 Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Too many times people tend to think that their sin, their disobedience, is of such an offensive nature that God could not possibly forgive them, so they allow their doubt of the power and love of God to forgive to keep them from taking the step to...

8

“Draw near to God through Him”

We all deserve to be punished, because we all have sinned. All men sin and fall short of the glory of God, Rom. 3:23. Sin is the bane of all men, it separates man from God and as long as man is bound in the bondage of that sin he can never truly be free of the debt he owes because of it and be restored to his creator. And know this, no sin is great that God cannot forgive it, as long as we come to Him through Christ in humble submission...

1 Cor 6:9-11

9

9 Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, **10** nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. **11** Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

The debt of sin is the oppression of separation from God, freedom from that debt, that separation, is possible only in Jesus Christ...

1 John 1:7

10

7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Freedom is possible, freedom from sin is found in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. But remember, God is just: He must punish sin. It is not possible that the Judge of all the earth will overlook any debt of sin that has not been forgiven. That should be a rather sobering thought, God, because of His very nature, cannot overlook the debt of sin. The only way that man can be freed is if that debt is paid. That is where the blood of Christ comes in, His sacrifice pays the debt so that God can forgive that sin, and set man free from his debt.

Freedom from the debt of sin is possible, which brings us to our next point...

11

2) Beware of false and or seeming liberty

Satan is the great deceiver...

John 8:44

12

44 You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

He uses lies and deception to make men believe that they are doing what God wants them to do. He hides his lies in the form of sincerity or apparent common-sense or ignorance. He makes men think that because they are sincere in their efforts that their sincerity makes their actions righteous even when their actions are not of God. He makes them think that ignorance is an excuse to ignore God, Christ, and the Word of Truth. He leads man into a false security of thinking they are right with God through some convoluted logic or common-sense when in fact they are walking with Satan and not God. The world is full of people who are sincerely going through patterns of worship that are in fact sin because they are not from God.

1 John 2:15-16

13

15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. **16** For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

Every good thing of God is imitated by Satan as a form of deception to lead man away from God. The most dangerous lies are those that are so surrounded by truth that they become almost impossible to see as a lie. Satan told Eve...

Gen 3:4-5

14

4 The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die!"

There is truth in Satan's statement to Eve, a twisted truth, but truth none the less. He knew that when she ate of the fruit that she would not drop dead immediately, so he played on her ignorance of the truth of what God meant and by twisting the truth deceived her into eating of the fruit. Satan leads men into thinking that they are doing God's will when in fact they are not. Where does God's Word and Law tell us that taking the Lord's supper is Ok once a month or year? Where do we see the Apostles putting on a rock and roll concert to attract people so that they can preach the Gospel to them? Where do we see the New Testament church practicing only parts of the scriptures instead of all of it? Where do we see the Church becoming a social club and not being condemned for it? Where? But that is what is seen in the world of religion today. Satan has succeeded in making men think that they have been freed from their sin while actually dragging them deeper and deeper into the bondage of sin. That is the greatest deception of all. Make someone think that they are being obedient and doing right while they are in fact doing wrong in disobedience.

So many times nations have thrown off the oppression of one dictator just to put on a different one. That is our next point...

15

3) True freedom can only come from the true liberator

Satan pretends to be the liberator leading man into all sorts of pleasures while making him think that he still has a relationship with his creator. But lies and deceptions can never free man from the bondage of sin. Freedom from sin can only be found in the true liberator, Christ.

Acts 4:12

16

12 And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

Freedom from sin can be found only in Christ. He is the true liberator of man.

Gal 5:1

17

1 It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.

The lies of Satan can only lead to lies in worship which will never lead to the reward of heaven. If we allow Satan to lead us astray, even in one small aspect of the Law, then...

James 2:10

18

10 For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.

There is a truism about being liberated. Those being liberated must first want to be. If the people are happy where they are at, there is nothing that anyone can offer them to make them want change. People must first realize that they are in bondage, then they must want to be set free. Christ has given Himself so that man could be free. But that freedom comes with a price...

19

One's Life

Rom 14:7-8

20

7 For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; **8** for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

Our life is the cost of our freedom which raises the question of our last point...

21

4) Am I free

The answer to that question lies in the lives we live in response to our great liberator, Christ Jesus. Let's look again at what the term freedom means...

22

★ Not costing any money

Rom 6:23

23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

23

★ Not held as a slave or prisoner

Rom 6:16-18

16 Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? **17** 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, **18** and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

24

★ Not physically held by something

2 Cor 6:11-12

11 Our mouth has spoken freely to you, O Corinthians, our heart is opened wide. **12** You are not restrained by us, but you are restrained in your own affections.

Jesus is the free gift of salvation to all who will come to Him in faithful obedience. He wants to free all men from their bondage of slavery to sin. But it must be a free choice on man's part, to willingly come to God on His terms, not ours.

25

Am I free