

Freedom In Christ

Text : **John 8:31-47**



INTRODUCTION :

A. This is the time of the year we Americans celebrate our freedom from England.

1. July 4th is one of the most widely celebrated holidays of the year.
2. Great herds of beef and many flocks of chickens are sacrificed on backyard grills.
3. More beer is consumed on the 4th than any other day, even “Super Sunday.”

B. Americans place freedom among the highest values held.

1. Though the “oppression” we suffered at the hands of England was nothing when compared to the tyranny of those suffered by many, we fought for our freedom.
2. Until recently, any time our freedom was threatened, we’ve fought tenaciously.
 - a. During **WW II** there were days in which more people died than in all the years in the war against the radical Muslims in the Middle East who seek to make us Muslim.
 - b. We dropped two bombs that killed more people than live with 60 mile of us.
3. We have fought wars to free others out of the fear that we might fall next. (**Korea**)

C. As witnesses our text, the Jews had the same attitude. (**They loved freedom.)**

1. They claimed to be free even when they were not.

John 8: 33 - They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, ‘You will become free’?”

 - a. That was an absurd statement.
 - b. They were being occupied and ruled by Rome at that very time.
2. Historically, the Jews had been slaves more than they had been free.
 - a. In Egypt
 - b. In the promised land they were often enslaved : Philistines, Babylon, Syria, Persia.

I. The desire for freedom appears to be instinctive within mankind.

A. God created man to exercise dominion over the rest of His creation.

1. **Read ... Gen. 1: 26-28**
2. God reaffirmed man's dominion to Noah after the flood. **Gen. 9: 1-2**
3. It's hard for the ones created to dominate and rule to accept domination, to be humble.

B. Thus, from the beginning of time man has rebelled against authority.

1. The very first family on earth rebelled against their creator.
 - a. Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit. (**Who is God to tell us ...?**)
 - b. When God warned Cain to do right, Cain responded by killing Abel. **Gen. 4: 7**
2. The descendants of the first family rebelled against God.
 - a. Lamech defied God by killing a man and a boy, then threatening others.
 - b. Soon **"every intent of the thoughts of his (man's) heart was only evil continually."**
3. Even after God wiped all of the evil people from the earth, men kept rebelling.
 - a. After the flood, Noah's grandchildren began building a tower to prevent God from again destroying them with flood.
 - b. They were not willing to have God rule over them.

II. God's people have a long history of rebellion. (*Not just people of the world.*)

A. Israel was never served God long without rebelling.

1. They were given great blessings in Egypt, but adopted the idols of the land. (**calf**)
2. God gave them the land He promised Abraham, but they wouldn't take it. (**all died**)
3. When they took the land, they didn't purge it as God commanded so they fell to idols.

B. Israel rejected God as their King.

1. When God took them out of Egypt, He made a contract (*covenant*) with them.

2. He would give them a land and provide for them if they would follow Him as King.
3. Soon after receiving it they demanded an earthly king like the neighboring nations.
 - a. **I Sam. 8: 4 f**
 - b. God understood they were rejecting His rule ... **Vs.- 7** (Cf. - **John 19: 15**)

C. Each time Israel left God, they were captured and dominated / enslaved.

1. They were ruled over by others while they were in Canaan. (e.g. **Philistines**)
2. They were carried off into captivity in strange lands. (e.g. **Babylonian**).
3. Even so, they never completely humbled themselves to accept God's reign over them.
4. This is the same rebellious attitude that caused Rome to destroy the Jewish nation.
 - a. The Romans valued peace and used their military to enforce it.
 - b. The Jews were continually rebelling until Rome would tolerate it no more.
 - c. This rebellious attitude was what motivated Vespasian and Titus to destroy Jerusalem with such malice.
 - 1) **"Not one stone left upon another"** (They plowed the city to erase any trace of it.)
 - 2) They destroyed the temple and all the genealogical tables. (**Levitical priesthood**)

III. Man can never be his own master.

A. Man is a possession of the God who created him.

1. Man was created by God from the dust of God's earth. (**His labor & His materials**)
2. God still retains possession of the earth, of all it contains and of all who live on it.
 - a. **Psa. 24: 1-** **The earth is the LORD's, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it.**
 - b. Man's denial of God's ownership does not make it so. (**The truth stands.**)
 - 1) **ILL. - Until the day he died of emphysema my uncle denied smoking could have killed him. His denial changed nothing; he died.**

- 2) **ILL. -** Satan told Eve, “Thou shalt not surely die.” **but they did.**
3. Man was not only created **-BY-** God, he was also created **-FOR-** God.
 - a. **Col. 1: 16-** For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and **for Him.**

17- He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.
 - b. Man was not created to be autonomous, but **-FOR-** the use of his creator. (**Eph 2:10**)

B. Satan lead man in his rebellion against God and Satan seeks to rule over man.

1. Satan came into the garden to take away what belongs to God.
 - a. **Gen. 3** ... Satan did not offer anything to man. (**Persuaded man to reject God**)
 - b. Satan was being malicious toward God, NOT benevolent toward man.
 - c. Satan rejected God’s authority (**rebelled**) and wanted others to join him in rebellion.
2. Obviously Satan did not have the ability to create his own world and inhabitants.
3. Neither Satan’s nor man’s rejection of God’s ownership makes it so. (**truth stands**)

C. Because God loves His creation, He does not force it to come to Him.

1. God has the ability to force man to comply, but allows us the freedom to choose Him.
 - a. Love never forces itself on another.
 - b. To use another is not love. (The rapist just wants to satisfy him or her own self.)
2. God also protects us from others forcing us to serve them.
 - a. **I Cor. 10: 13**
 - b. **John 10: 28**
3. God wants our hearts, not just our external compliance.

D. No one can choose not to have a master. (We are owned by rite of creation.)

1. “I’m not a servant; I don’t believe in God or in Satan **either one.**”
2. “Man was not created; he evolved from slim in the sea.” (**educated fool ... Psa 14:1**)

3. “I’m just going to live until I die and then cease to exist.” (**It’s my life and ...**)

E. The war between God and Satan includes everyone.

1. It’s an all encompassing struggle. (**Satan seeks to rob God of His whole creation.**)

a. It started before the beginning of time and will last until the end of time.

b. It’s universal in scope. (*Not just a world war or an inter-stellar war, but universal*)

c. It’s also inter-dimensional encompassing both the physical and spiritual realms.

2. One may or may not join the rebellion, but he may not avoid the conflict.

a. **Luke 11: 23- He who is not with Me is against Me; and
he who does not gather with Me, scatters.**

b. THUS, I have but two choices: accept Jesus as my Lord and serve Him, or rebel and try to rule my own life. (**,i.e., to join with Satan.**)

*** The act of not gathering is to WAR against Jesus the Christ of God. Rom 5**

IV. Rebellion has consequences.

A. When a slave runs away from his master, he does not become a free man.

1. He becomes a criminal, a fugitive.

a. He’s a fugitive from the law. ... He’s seeking to avoid justice.

b. He’s a thief. He was another man’s property and he stole that property.

2. In his attempts to avoid capture, he must multiply his crimes.

B. The rebellious slave becomes the enemy of the only one who can free him.

1. The owner’s claim follows him wherever he goes in life. (**no statute of limitations**)

2. If he’s ever brought before any judge he will be condemned.

3. The owner is the only one who can relinquish his claim and free the slave.

*** Therefore, there can be no freedom without reconciliation.**

C. **Why does God not immediately destroy His rebellious slaves ? He wants them to come back to Him because they love Him. (*not to be captured and dragged back*)**

1. Love cannot be forced on any level. (**phileo, agape, even eros**)
2. Love must be voluntarily given as an act of free will.
 - a. One cannot “fall” into love or fall out of love.
 - b. One’s mind is under his own control.
 - 1) For Example : **When a man looks, he decides whether to lust or not.**
 - 2) **Matt. 5: 28** ... God won’t condemn a person for something he cannot control.
3. Outward actions can be forced, **but** not the heart.

D. **A servant who loves his master voluntarily serves Him.**

1. **Exod. 21: 5- But if the slave plainly says, ‘I love my master, my wife and my children; I will not go out as a free man,’ 6- then his master shall bring him to God then he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost. And his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him permanently.**
2. As we read about how servants are supposed to serve, we learn the attitude we are to have in our service to God.
 - a. **I Tim. 6: 1-2**
 - b. **Read .. Col. 3: 22-25**

CONCLUSION :

A. **There are also consequences to **NOT** being rebellious ... to serving faithfully.**

1. Those who serve receive the blessings of the Master’s household.
2. Those who serve the Master enjoy his love and protection. (**no fear**)
3. Those who serve God have eternal peace and security.

B. **Jesus is the only one who can give true freedom to anyone.**

1. **Luke 4: 17- And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the**

book and found the place where it was written, **18-** “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, **19-** to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.” **20-** And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. **21-** And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

2. **READ ...** Rom. 8: 14-17 (Choose to be a child, NOT a runaway slave.)