

What Does It Mean to be “Free Indeed”

Intro:

1. America is the land of the free.
2. The staggering immigration rate proves it - people from all over the world want to live here.
3. Our country was founded on Christian principles.
4. Our military through the years have fought wars & died to defend it.
5. Great crusaders like Martin Luther King have enhanced it.

John 8:28-36

6. But what does it really mean to be free indeed?

What was Freedom Like During Ancient Times?

A. Hebrew society during Jesus' day.

1. According to the Law slaves were to be treated humanely & with dignity.
2. Hebrew slaves could be redeemed by their families anytime.
3. **Ex 21:2** stated that Hebrew people could only be enslaved 7 years.
4. **Lev 25:39-41** says that in the 50th year (Jubilee) all slaves would be freed & all debts cancelled.

B. Roman society during Jesus' day.

1. Slaves were the complete property of their masters & treated hardly better than animals.
 - a. The bad news: slaves were usually citizens of a country conquered in battle or sold as payment for a debt.
 - b. The good news: the emancipation of slaves in Roman culture was quite common.
2. Normal people, who were not slaves, living in the Roman empire did not necessarily have civil rights. Only “free born” citizens had civil rights in Roman society.
3. Paul used his “free born” status to advantage when he got into trouble.
 - a. In Philippi he demanded that the city officials apologize & escort him out of the city. (**Act 16:35 & 37**)
 - b. In Jerusalem. **Act 22:23-29** - As they were shouting and throwing off their cloaks and flinging dust into the air, the commander ordered Paul to be taken into the barracks. He directed that he be flogged and questioned in order to find out why the people were shouting at him like this. As they stretched him out to flog him, Paul said to the centurion standing there, “Is it legal for you to flog a Roman citizen who hasn't even been found guilty?” When the centurion heard this, he went to the commander and reported it. “What are you going to do?” he asked. “This man is a Roman citizen.” The commander went to Paul and asked, “Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?” “Yes, I am,” he answered. Then the commander said, “I had to pay a big price for my citizenship.” “But I was born a citizen,” Paul replied. Those who were about to question him withdrew immediately. The commander himself was alarmed when he realized that he had put Paul, a Roman citizen, in chains.

II. What is Freedom as a Christian?

A. The Christian faith did not do away with the practice of slavery.

1. Several passages - **Eph 6:5** being one - commanded slaves who were Christians to obey their earthly masters as they would the Lord.
3. However - in Christ all social distinctions are done away with. **Gal 3:28-29** - There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.
3. **ILL: The Book of Philemon - Humane treatment for a runaway slave.**

- B. v34** - Everyone becomes a slave when they commit sin - & all of us are sinners!
1. **Rom 3:23** - for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God . . .
 2. **Rom 5 :12** - Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.
- C.** When Lord Jesus died on the cross, He provided you freedom! What does this freedom include?
1. Freedom from the Law of Moses.
 - a. **Col 2:14** - having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.
 - b. **Rom 8:2** - because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.
 2. Freedom from sin. **Rom 6:18** - You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.
- D.** What does “free indeed” mean then?
1. Absolute freedom would be anarchy. So effective freedom must be within certain boundaries!
 2. Freedom in America - freedom under law.
 3. Freedom in the family for wife & children - under the protection & authority of a godly husband.
 - a. In fact, a wife who submits to her husband’s authority is promised special spiritual power!
 - b. **I Pet 3:1-2** - Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.
 1. **Purity** (ἀγνός) = pure, chaste, holy.
 2. **Reverence** (φόβος) = fear.
 - c. **I Pet 3:7** - Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect . . . so that nothing will hinder your prayers.
 1. **Considerate** (γνώσις) = being knowledgeable.
 2. **Respect** (τιμή) = honor, worship.
 4. “Free indeed” is spiritual freedom within the scope of God’s word.
 - a. **v32** - Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”
 - b. So - you are free within the boundaries of God’s revealed truth!

You are free to be what God created you to be - living the way He intended for you to live. When you receive the peace & contentment He planned for you to have - then you are “free indeed”!