

Liberty in Christ

"Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness" (Rom 6:16-18 NKJ).

Our country was founded upon the principles of freedom—freedom from the tyranny and bondage of oppressive governments. The famous cry of the revolutionary war spoke of this earnest desire for freedom from oppression, "Give me Liberty or Give me Death" (Patrick Henry). This desire for freedom carried over to the emancipation of black slaves in this country in the 19th century, and then a hundred years later with the equal rights movement of the 1960's. This desire for freedom has been the passionate plea for many who have been oppressed. And for many, freedom came at the expense of their lives.

And yet, true liberty is not found in governments, but in Christ. Man can only regulate behavior; he cannot change a man's heart; only God can do that and does so by the washing and regenerating work of the Holy Spirit in the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Once the heart and mind are made alive in Christ, a person's view of life and reality will progressively change in conformity to God's word, and he will begin to see what true liberty is. From that change in worldview will flow a change in behavior; thus real political reformation flows from spiritual renewal in Christ.

Christ died on the cross not only for the forgiveness of sins once and for all time, but in His one death He also redeemed His people, all believers in Him, from the bondage of sin. This is true liberty: that in Christ the believer is free from sin through His death to no longer serve sin but to serve righteousness. To serve righteousness is the freedom of serving God, which we learn from Romans

Chapter 6. Jesus not only purchased the believer in Him from the bondage of sin, but He also freed the believer from the requirements of the law and the curse of the law, having fulfilled the law perfectly and completely, becoming for His people their righteousness and justification before a holy God. This is another form of liberty in Christ which the believer in Christ receives by grace alone through faith alone.

But there are many people who profess faith in Christ who, nonetheless, live their lives as those who are still in bondage to sin; and there are many who seek to put us back under the requirements of the law of the Old Testament, which was fulfilled perfectly and completely by Jesus Christ. In either case, to live in sin or to live under the law of the Old Testament for your righteousness is to live a life of ingratitude to Christ; to nullify the grace of God and deny Christ as being a complete savior. In either case, the end result is eternal death, eternal damnation.

If you earnestly desire liberty, you will not find it in the government, nor will you find it serving sin or keeping the Old Testament law. These will only enslave you in one form or another. True liberty (and eternal life) will only be found in Christ and Him alone, as you by true faith put your trust in His atoning work on the cross, and rest in His righteousness alone as your righteousness, your justification before God. Only then will you by the power of Holy Spirit be able to freely serve God and one another through love, and not by the tyrannical demands of other men, or in bondage to your sin nature (Galatians 5:1-14; Ephesians 4:17-24).

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