

DOCTRINE OF FREEDOM

I. Introduction.

- A. Freedom or liberty is a concept that is often used but little understood by the human race.
- B. While volition (free will) is freedom to make choices, the possession of volition in and of itself does not make one free, either physically or spiritually.
- C. Though volition is independent in its function, it still remains dependent upon and confined to the parameters within it is able to operate.
- D. This is easily demonstrated by the institution of slavery.
- E. Even the sovereign will of God is enslaved to His absolute righteousness and justice.
- F. Most people believe that being free is doing what you want to, when you want to, etc., but this is a fallacy.
- G. As Scripture will reveal, true freedom is tied directly to authority and one's willingness to acclimate to the standards of said authority.

II. Vocabulary.

A. Hebrew vocabulary:

- 1. חָפֵּשׁ (chaphash); verb used 1x; to be free or loosed as opposed to being restrained or bound; free as opposed to a slave.
 - a. חֻפְּשָׁה (chuph^eshah); noun used 1x; liberty or freedom.
 - b. חָפְשִׁי (chaph^eshiy); adj. used 17x; free man as opposed to slave or captive; exempt from burdens or service.
- 2. דִּרְוֹר (d^eror); noun used 8x; liberty or freedom; release from bondage; when followed by a לָ (lamedh) it means to proclaim liberty or freedom to someone.
- 3. Several other Hebrew words that are not strictly in this family are used to denote various concepts that relate to freedom.

B. Greek vocabulary:

- 1. ἐλευθερόω (eleutheroo); verb used 7x; to make free; to set at liberty; to exempt or liberate from liability or bondage.
 - a. ἐλευθερία (eleutheria); noun used 11x; freedom or liberty.
 - b. ἐλευθερος (eleutheros); adj. used 23x; free, freeborn, freed from slavery, exempt, unrestrained, not bound by an obligation.
- 2. Like the Hebrew, there are other Greek words employed to express concepts of freedom that are not strictly translated/defined as freedom or liberty.

III. Definition and description.

- A. Freedom is the quality or state of being free; exemption or liberation from slavery, imprisonment, restraint, or the power and control of another.
- B. It allows open access, admission or use of that available.
- C. It is the independent ability to make decisions apart from any previous cause or antecedent/preliminary determination of another.
- D. While freedom and liberty are synonymous, freedom emphasizes the lack of restraint or repression, while liberty implies previous restraint.

IV. Freedom and God.

- A. God is revealed to be the ultimate self-determining agent. Eph.1:11
- B. Out of God's self-determination, He formed a creation that reflects and reveals Himself. Rom.1:19-20
- C. The freedom of God is exercised and observed in the government of the moral creatures whom He created.
- D. God's freedom, the exercise of which must be compatible with His essence, determined to create free moral agents whose eternal destiny would be decided by themselves and the use of the freedom He provided.
- E. This view of God's freedom and the freedom of those whom He created must be maintained in the face of exaggerated and unscriptural views of sovereignty.
- F. Any view that God's sovereignty, by an eternal divine decree, determined a fixed destiny of His moral creation without regard to individual choice reduces the concept of freedom to null and void. Deu.30:19, *"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse (the two options of reality given to men). So choose (בָּחַר [bachar]; to choose, elect, select, decide for; denotes a careful, well thought-out choice; it is the same verb used of God choosing for Himself, Deu.7:6, et al) life in order that you may live, you and your descendants"*; Cp. Josh.24:15; Pro.1:29
- G. That God chooses/elects certain members of the human race into His plan and that man can choose/elect for His plan, denotes a self-determining action by both parties that is reciprocating and establishes the volitional bases of agreement between both parties necessary for a union to occur.
- H. God provided moral creatures with the ability to make decisions on their own and these decisions, not God, determine their eternal destiny.
- I. This is the purpose of Divine institution #1, volition; the freedom of choice.
- J. God desires that His creation enjoy the freedom of will that He Himself possesses.
- K. God placed the Laws of Divine establishment in order to protect freedom and insure the proper function of volition.
- L. Again it is noted that while God has maximum freedom, even He is bound to act only in a manner compatible with all the attributes of His essence.

V. Physical freedom.

- A. Physical freedom is contrasted to the institution or status of slavery.
1. Slaves possess volition, but are not free to do as they will in all circumstances.
 2. Another, the master, controls their life.
 3. Slavery as an institution is not condemned in the Bible. Gen.24 (Abraham and his servant); Philm. (Teaches grace orientation between the master and slave)
 4. In fact, the Divine viewpoint states that if one becomes a Christian as a slave, they are to remain acclimated to that niche unless God makes available freedom, at which point then they should accept it. 1Cor.7:21
 5. One could become a slave in the physical realm via:
 - a. Capture during war. Deu.20:10-11; 1Sam.4:9; 1Kgs.9:20-22
 - b. Purchase. Exo.21:1-11; Lev.25:44-46
 - c. Insolvency/bankruptcy. Exo.21:1-6; Deu.15:12; Lev.25:47
 - d. Criminal activity. Exo.22:1-3
 - e. Birth. Exo.21:4; Jer.2:14
- B. Authority as it relates to physical freedom:
1. Freedom never means the unbridled ability to do anything and everything that a person wants.
 2. All normal members of any society must recognize that their freedom ends where the freedoms of others begin. *Ex. We have freedom to worship in America as we see fit, as long as it does not infringe upon the freedom of others to worship.*
 3. Laws and authority are necessary restraints upon personal freedom in order to ensure the maximum freedom and good for all.
 4. Failure to abide by establishment laws that various authorities put in place will result in a loss of freedom.
 5. Therefore, freedom demands the responsible use of one's freedom in order to maintain the status quo.
 6. Personal freedom demands that we respect:
 - a. Other persons.
 - b. Other's privacy.
 - c. Other's possessions.
 7. Apart from authority and self-discipline, freedom ceases to exist.
 8. Authorities in the Divine institutions provide the framework within that one exercises their freedom.
 - a. Volition – we are the self-determining authority in our choices. Philm.14
 - b. RM/RW – the husband is the authority over the wife. Eph.5:23
 - c. Family – parents are the authority over the children. Eph.6:1

- d. Job – master/steward/boss is the authority over the servant/employee. Luk.12:42
 - e. The ECC (establishment chain-of-command) – civil authority is established to provide protection of the masses and the ECC is ordained by God. Rom.13:1-7; 1Tim.2:1-3; 1Pet.2:13-17
 - f. Nationalism – each nation is an authority over itself and citizens so that geographic/political freedom is available in history for men to freely pursue God. Act.17:26-27
 - C. The military and physical freedom.
 - 1. The military under the Divine institution of Nationalism, is designed to prevent outside aggressors from robbing the populace of its freedom.
 - 2. When external forces threaten freedom, the demand for self-sacrifice to insure freedom may become necessary. Neh.4:11-23 (Israel/Jerusalem under restoration after the Babylonian dispersion of 586 BC)
 - 3. The military is the agent that purchases and maintains freedom for the individual.
 - D. Physical freedom is necessary for the proper function of volition and the resolution of the A/C.
- VI. Spiritual freedom (a.k.a. Freedom in Christ).**
- A. All men are born spiritual slaves via the STA. Rom.6:20 *See Doctrine of the STA/OSN*
 - 1. This is due to our position in Adam. Rom.5:12,19
 - 2. Adam was free prior to the fall. Gen.2:16-17,25
 - 3. Spiritual slavery is a result of the fall and state of all prior to salvation. Rom.6:17; Gal.4:9; Ti.3:3
 - B. Ph₁ salvation (SAJG) is freedom purchased by the work of Christ on the cross. Gal.3:13; Ti.2:14; 1Pet.1:18-19
 - 1. Slaves must be redeemed by someone who is free, and Christ was qualified to do so via His unique relationship with God and freedom from the STA and sin. Rom.8:2; 2Cor.5:21
 - 2. Christ is “The Freeman” and hence, mankind’s kinsman redeemer (*see Doctrine of Kinsman Redeemer*).
 - 3. The price of redemption is called His blood. Eph.1:7; 1Pet.1:18-19
 - 4. Faith in Christ provides Ph₁ freedom. Joh.8:35-36; Act.13:38-39
 - 5. The believer is exhorted to exploit that freedom and not enter into slavery again. Gal.5:1
 - 6. Prior to salvation, the STA ruled the life in the realm of spiritual death and the body just acted out the corrupt desires of the sin nature. Rom.5:19
 - C. Christ’s work effecting our Ph₁ freedom was designed to also provide maximum freedom for Ph₂ to include any form of legalism. Gal.5:1ff

1. Ph₂ spiritual freedom is directly related to the truth of BD. Joh.8:32
 2. The Word of God is called the Law of Liberty. Jam.1:25
 3. Spiritual freedom in time is contingent upon pursuit of BD. Psa.119:45; Joh.8:31-32
 4. It is contingent upon proper orientation to the Spirit of liberty/FHS. 2Cor.3:17
 5. The true blessing of freedom comes from the application of BD that the believer pursues. Jam.1:22-25
 6. The mature believer who understands and functions within the guidelines of BD experience a freedom that others can only dream.
- D. Spiritual laws and restrictions govern true freedom.**
1. Spiritual authorities are the protectors/guardians of our freedom (Act.20:28), just as authorities in the physical realm (Rom.13:4), since all authority is from God. Rom.13:1; Heb.13:17
 2. Failure to abide by the laws results in loss of freedom. Rom.13:4
 3. As believers, we are not to infringe upon the freedoms in Christ bestowed upon other believers to include:
 - a. Partaking of things associated with idols as illustrated by the dietary code. 1Cor.8:4-8 cp. Rom.14:1-4
 - b. The same goes for observance of holidays. Rom.14:5-6
 - c. The bottom-line application is that believers are to respect other believer's level of spiritual growth and understanding as seen in the term "weak in faith". Rom.14:1
 - d. "Weak in faith" does not refer to STA disobedience or rejection of BD, since this demands separation (2The.3:14), but refers to those ignorant of the freedoms of BD as seen in the term "doubts/διακρίόμενος/can't discern/distinguish/differentiate" in Rom.14:23 that denotes the intellectual evidence or proof necessary for faith to act upon is absent.
 - e. This application is designed to maintain harmony between new members of the particular local church and those already grounded in the principle of freedom. Rom.14:1a cp. vss.17-20
 - f. The higher application is for the stronger believer to abstain from any activity that would knowingly violate the conscience of a new member while in their presence. 1Cor.8:9-13; Rom.14:14-15,20-21 *See Doctrine of Stumbling and Stumbling Blocks*
 - g. This is designed to give all members of the church maximum individual freedom to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, while working out their own Ph₂ salvation. 2Pet.3:18 cp. Phi.2:12
 4. It is the Word of God that is our military/defense for freedom. Heb.4:12; Eph.6:11-17

5. MPR is the restriction(s) placed upon us to ensure our freedom. Mat.11:29-30
6. Isolation of the STA (being in FHS) is the law that all are to operate under in pursuit of freedom. 1Cor.9:24-25 cp. the Royal Law of Divine Love Jam.2:8 cp. 1Cor.13:8,10; Gal.5:13-14
- E. Ph₃ freedom for believers is the ultimate in human freedom. Rom.8:21
 1. It is eternal freedom from the STA via the new resurrection body. Rom.7:24; 1Cor.15:42
 2. We will have the entire realm of BD in our new brain computers and within our souls. Heb.8:10-11
 3. Since absolute righteousness and justice is the standard used to generate perfect maximum freedom, those believers who do it right in time and finish their course, will be rewarded with the wreath of righteousness hailing them as the true champions in the cause for freedom. 2Tim.4:8

VII. Abuses and enemies of freedom.

- A. Liberty is not license. Gal.5:13; Rom.6:15; 1Pet.2:16
- B. Legalism. Act.15:10; Gal.2:4; Gal.5:1-9
- C. The flesh/STA. Prov.5:22; Gal.5:13
- D. False teachers. 2Pet.2:18-19

VIII. Conclusions.

- A. The understanding of physical freedom provides the background by which one may understand spiritual freedom.
- B. The majority of men, including believers, do not exercise their right of freedom and therefore are not truly free. Joh.1:10; 1Cor.9:24
- C. They are slaves to some viewpoint, system, activity, etc. that proceeds from the STA and not from being in FHS and adhering to BD.
- D. The result of failure to deal with the STA via doctrine is enslavement and death. Rom.6:23; 8:6
- E. Paradoxically, those who determine to enslave themselves to God and Divine viewpoint are set free. Rom.6:22
- F. To whatever extent the believer is oriented to God he is free.
- G. In areas of ignorance or intentional disregard of BD, the believer remains a slave.
- H. Doing what you want in life such as the FSH i.e., pursuing funsville, pursuit of the opposite sex, money, power, details, etc., does not make for a free or happy believer.
- I. The happiest and freest people on the planet are those with maximum doctrine in subjection of themselves to the Law of Liberty.

*“Act as free men, and do not use your freedom
as a covering for evil, but use it
as bondslaves of God.”*

1Pet.2:16