



Sisters in the Spirit Ministries Newsletter

Empowerment for the Christian Woman

THE COST OF FREEDOM



By Rev. Dr. Katrina White Brown

"Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:32

Since the beginning of the world, humans have all sought freedom in one form or the other. The appeal of being free—to do whatever you want, when you want, and how you want, is overwhelming.

God created Adam and Eve to be free in the Garden of Eden. Yet, they gave up their freedom by choosing to rebel against God. The perfect freedom God created in the Garden was gone, and humankind has been suffering the long-term effects, both physically and spiritually, ever since.

Just what is freedom? Its defined as *the power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint*. But freedom in its purest form comes with a price—freedom is not free. And as America celebrates Independence Day, commemorating freedom from tyranny, its important to note that the na-

tion was founded upon the idea that God created all human beings to be free. The Declaration of Independence states that people *"are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."* Ironically, these are the characteristics of freedom that continue to be denied to many across the country and globally.

Freedom comes with responsibilities. Although people have been searching for freedom for thousands of years, they seem to be reluctant to accept the responsibilities that freedom requires. Not only that, freedom also has an illusive quality about it. When you don't have it you want it, but when you do have it, you don't value it.

For example, in the Bible, the Old Testament records how God's people lost their physical freedom time and time again as various empires overtook them; most

continues on page 6



20 SECONDS OF PRAISE

Health officials recommend washing your hands frequently, for a minimum of 20 seconds, as a primary defense against germs. You can time this by singing a verse and chorus of:

America the Beautiful

By Samuel A. Ward

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!

America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

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*Sisters in the Spirit is an outreach
ministry created to empower
Christian women in better serving
the Lord. We are here to help
"equip God's people for works of
service, so that the body of Christ
may be built up ..."*

Ephesians 4:12



July is **MY** month! I was born in July and I am obnoxiously and unashamedly celebratory about my birth month.

Birthdays are special, and I am so grateful for each one that God gives me. And so I celebrate—not just the day I was born, but the entire month!

One of the ways I celebrate is by publishing a series of inspirational messages on social media entitled **LIVING THE JULY LIFE**. This year's inspirations come from the **SPICES OF LIFE**. These are some of the scriptural spices that have seasoned my walk with the Lord.

1. **DON'T GIVE UP** - No one can take what God has placed within you, unless you give it up. Don't Give Up Your Power. This is the Holy Spirit, which is the unstoppable, unmovable Presence of the Lord. It is the power to move mountains, part the waters, heal our land, and overcome all obstacles. Don't Give Up Your Praise. This is what fills us with joy and gratitude in serving a risen Savior who loved us unto death so that we might have life. Don't Give Up Your Prayer. This is your direct communication with God Almighty. Prayer renews our hope, guides and comforts us through trials and tribulations, and brings clarity in the midst of confusion. "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." Galatians 6:9

2. **FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION** - Peter described Satan as "a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." The imagery is powerful, but Satan is a lot more subtle. He munches on us one bite at a time; often in little snack sized bites. For example, we may be running late for work so we just forget about our morning prayer - that's a bite out of our time with God. Or, we may encounter a non-stop talker, who just gets on our last nerve. We harshly tell that person to just shut up - that's a bite out of our goal to be kind to one another. Pretty soon, the person God created us to be has been completely consumed. But when we walk by our spiritual faith in God and not by our Satan distorted physical sight, we get an internal bite-proof shield of protection against being eaten alive by Satan—we will always win. Because when "God is within her, she will not fail." Psalm 46:5

3. **BE EQUIPPED FOR THE JOB** - I graduated from high school at an early age, believing that my purpose in life was to change the world. This was to be accomplished through my ability to write. I planned to author gripping commentary on the human condition that would cause people to treat each other with love and caring. All that changed however, when my white high school counselor advised this 16 year-old black teenager against going to college. She said "my people don't typically do well in college", and that I would be better off learning how to "file papers or to do somebody's hair." Her words convicted me to go to college, just to prove her wrong, but the decision was the best I could have ever made. I learned how to actually become a writer. College prepared me to better fulfill God's purpose for my life "so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:17

These are just some of the ways that God's Word has inspired me. In my Spirit for you my Sisters, is that you never take life for granted and that you will always celebrate life with confidence because of this assurance: "the Lord goes before you and will be with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you." -Deuteronomy 31:8

*Love, Peace, and Blessings Always,
Katrina W. Brown*

THE WORD ON FREEDOM

By John Roxy

The Word of God has a lot to say about freedom. Freedom in the Bible is not just about physical liberation, but also about spiritual emancipation. It is a concept deeply rooted in the idea of deliverance from sin and bondage.

Galatians 5:1 reminds us that “it is for freedom that Christ has set us free. This verse highlights the ultimate purpose of freedom in Christianity as a means to live a life free from the power of sin. Moreover, the Bible teaches that true freedom comes through obedience to God’s commandments. In John 8:32, Jesus says, “then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” This suggests that true freedom is found in knowing and following God’s truth.

As believers strive to walk in righteousness and align their lives with God’s word, they experience a profound sense of liberation from the chains of worldly desires and temptations. Ultimately, freedom in the Bible is not just about autonomy or independence but about finding true freedom through faith and devotion to God.

Freedom, in various forms, is a recurring theme in the Bible, often tied to liberation from bondage or sin. These examples showcase various forms of freedom in the Bible, including physical deliverance from oppression, liberation from sin, and the freedom found in a relationship with God through faith.

ISRAELITES’ EXODUS FROM EGYPT

The Israelites’ Exodus from Egypt exemplifies a powerful display of freedom in the Bible. As they crossed the parted Red Sea, God’s miraculous intervention granted them physical freedom from their oppressors. However, this moment also symbolizes a deeper spiritual liberation, as it marked their journey towards the Promised Land. In this land, they could worship and serve God freely without fear or bondage. Moreover, the Exodus narrative highlights how true freedom often requires faith and obedience. This story serves as a timeless reminder that genuine freedom is not merely about breaking physical chains but also about embracing a life rooted in faith and righteousness.

GIDEON AND HIS DELIVERANCE FROM THE MIDIANITES

Gideon’s story in the Bible is a powerful example of freedom and deliverance. As a

timid farmer, he was called by God to lead Israel against the oppressive Midianites. Despite his doubts and fears, Gideon trusted in God and followed His instructions with courage.

Through a series of miraculous events, Gideon gathered an army but was ultimately directed to reduce its size drastically to demonstrate the power of God’s deliverance. This strategic reduction emphasized that victory came not from human strength but from divine intervention.

As Gideon led his small band of warriors into battle, they witnessed God’s mighty hand at work, defeating the Midianite forces without needing to lift a sword. This remarkable victory showcased how true freedom and liberation come not through earthly might or numbers but through obedience to God’s calling.

DAVID ESCAPING SAUL’S PURSUIT

David’s escape from Saul’s pursuit in the Bible serves as a powerful example of freedom. Despite being relentlessly chased by King Saul, who sought to kill him out of jealousy and insecurity, David never lost faith in God’s protection and guidance. Through his cunning strategy and trust in God, David was able to evade capture and stay one step ahead of his enemy.

This story demonstrates how true freedom is not just the absence of physical restraints but also the liberation of one’s spirit from fear and despair. In the face of danger, David remained steadfast in his belief that God had a plan for him, leading him to eventual victory over Saul.

This narrative inspires us to seek freedom not only from external threats but also from internal doubts and limitations, trusting that with faith and perseverance, we can overcome any obstacle that stands in our way.

ESTHER AND DELIVERANCE OF THE JEWS

The story of Esther in the Bible is a powerful example of freedom and deliverance. Despite being a young Jewish woman living in a foreign land under the rule of King Xerxes, Esther courageously stood up for her people. Through her bravery and wisdom, Esther was able to influence the king’s decision to save the Jews from destruction.

Esther’s journey showcases how one individual can make a significant impact on behalf of others.

Her willingness to take risks and trust in God’s plan ultimately led to the freedom and deliverance of her people. This story serves as a reminder that freedom often requires courage, sacrifice, and unwavering faith in divine providence.

As we reflect on Esther’s story, we are encouraged to stand up for justice and fight against oppression wherever we may encounter it. Just as Esther used her position of influence for the greater good, we too can use our voices and actions to bring about freedom and deliverance for those who are marginalized or oppressed. The story of Esther serves as an inspiration for all believers to be bold advocates for justice and champions for freedom in our world today.

JESUS, THE LIBERATION FROM SIN AND DEATH

Jesus’ role in the Bible as a liberator from sin and death is arguably one of the most profound examples of freedom. His sacrifice on the cross for the sins of humanity symbolizes liberation from the chains of sin and eternal separation from God.

Through his resurrection, Jesus conquered death itself, offering believers the hope of eternal life and freedom from the fear of mortality. Moreover, Jesus’ teachings also emphasize true spiritual freedom beyond earthly constraints. He taught that genuine liberation comes not through material possessions or worldly power, but through love, compassion, and humility.

By embodying these qualities in his own life and ministry, Jesus showed that true freedom lies in living a life dedicated to serving others and following God’s will with unwavering faith.

Ultimately, Jesus exemplified a revolutionary kind of freedom that goes beyond physical boundaries to transform hearts and souls for eternity.

These stories remind us of the importance of seeking freedom not only from physical bondage but also from sin and spiritual oppression. Through these examples, we are encouraged to embrace our freedom in Christ and live lives that reflect the values of love, justice, and liberation. Let us heed these lessons and strive to embody the true essence of freedom in our daily lives.



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ARKANSAS
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CONNECTICUT
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IOWA
WISCONSIN
SOUTH DAKOTA

MAINE
KANSAS
NEW JERSEY
WASHINGTON
DELAWARE
UTAH
SOUTH CAROLINA
ARIZONA



A young couple moved into a new house. The next morning while they were eating breakfast, the young woman saw her neighbor hanging the washing outside.

"That laundry is not very clean; she doesn't know how to wash correctly. Perhaps she needs better detergent."

Her husband looked on, remaining silent. Every time her neighbor hung her wash out to dry, the young woman made the same comments.

A month later, the young woman was surprised to see a nice clean wash on the line and said to her husband, "look, she's finally learned how to wash correctly. I wonder who taught her this?" The husband replied, "I got up early this morning and cleaned our windows."

And so it is with life ... What we see when watching others depends on the clarity of the window through which we look. So don't be too quick to judge others, especially if your perspective of life is clouded by anger, jealousy, negativity or unfulfilled desires. Judging a person does not define who they are. It defines who you are.

Jesus cautioned against judging others. *"Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."*

In this passage Jesus is telling us that there is a manner of judging others which is deadly. Using unequal weights and measures when judging others, for example thinking "her sin is bigger than my own" puts our souls in danger. If we use harsh judgment towards each other, Jesus is telling us that God will use the same weights with us. But hypocritical judgment is solved by looking at ourselves first.

By looking for the speck in our own eyes, we'll repent and not incur God's judgment. Self-examination could help us avoid divine judgment by leading us to catch and correct ourselves before God, in His righteous justice, deals with us.

Join with Sisters in the Spirit in providing the SIS Newsletter to the 800 women incarcerated at the Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women in Troy, Virginia

Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women (FCCW) is the largest prison for women in Virginia. SIS has been sending newsletters to several of the inmates for years, and the women have found *Freedom in the Word* that they read. The FCCW Chaplain Rev. Jerusha Moses, contacted SIS and asked if the Ministry could provide newsletters to all 800 of the women. We said

Yes, Yes, Yes!

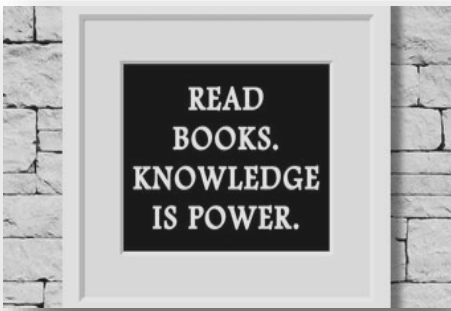
You can help us accomplish this!
Your gift of \$25 will help sponsor three months of newsletters for 10 women incarcerated at FCCW.

Jesus said *"Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."*

There is encouragement, enlightenment, and empowerment within the pages of the SIS Newsletter. You can help provide this freedom in the words of the Newsletter by sending your contribution to:

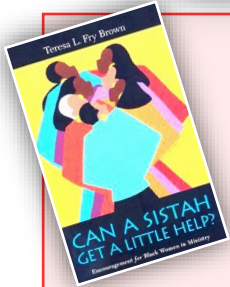
SIS Ministries
P.O. Box 649 * Gloucester Point, VA 23062
Attention: Freedom in the Word Campaign
Or use our cash app - \$SntheS

Thank you!
for your generosity towards
those who are in prison!



THE COST OF FREEDOM

Continued from Page 1



CAN A SISTAH GET A LITTLE HELP?

BY REV. DR. TERESA L. FRY BROWN

Rev. Dr. Teresa L. Fry Brown is Professor of Preaching in the Candler School of Theology at Emory University and in 2010, she became

the first African American woman to attain the rank of full professor. She also served as the Director of Candler's Black Church Studies program. This book focuses on how Black women can faithfully navigate the internal and external challenges of ministry.

She writes, "As I travel around the world and across the United States... Women confide in me that they discern little or no support from men (or often from women) of their God-called ministries, leaving them feeling alienated, abandoned, and sometimes perplexed. Support systems are few and far between. I do not have all the answers, but I am able to draw on my personal journey to share successes and failures, joys and sorrows, disappointments and surprises, apprehensions and assurance of women in ministry. And sometimes that's enough."

The bulk of the book is based on Rev. Dr. Brown's twenty-two years in ordained ministry and as a seminary professor. She recalls, "Until my early thirties, I worked in Black Baptist churches as a choir member and director, Sunday school superintendent, Bible study teacher, missionary, director of women's ministry, youth director, secretary, cook, counselor, and community activist... Called into ordained ministry at age thirty-two, I was told to wait until the senior pastor figured out what to do with me... At that time there were few female role models, and no female mentors... My social life dried up. Men thought that I was no longer feminine, and women saw me as a threat to their positions in the church." She said "I rarely heard anything positive about women in ministry, even from women, although these were some of the same people who voted to issue me a license to preach. I was angry with God and disgusted with people." But she advises to assess the church culture and locate your allies. "Do not declare war unless there are really 'weapons formed against you,' then pray for guidance before you contribute to the destruction of the faith community. If, for example, you believe God created ALL persons equal regardless of their gender, class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, physical ability, health, or marital status and the church leadership does not, then it's time to consider your options.... You can quit, fight, teach, or assimilate."

She concludes that "Yes, there will be obstacles. But if we keep focused on the goal we will make it---perhaps bloodied, but alive and ready to do God's work." This heartfelt and sympathetic book will be of most value to other women entering or already in an area of ministry---but also to persons (including men) concerned with the contemporary Christian church.

Review from Goodreads.com. **Can a Sistah Get a Little Help?** is available at Amazon.com, Christianbooks.com, and Goodreads.com.

notably the Egyptians, as detailed in the book of Exodus. The loss of physical freedom was often tied to the spiritual disobedience of the Israelites, but God repeatedly forgave His people and rescued them.

However, everything in the Bible leads to the coming of the Messiah. When the Lord freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, He was foreshadowing the arrival of Jesus Christ. And it was Jesus who paid the cost of our freedom from sin.

When Jesus began his short ministry on the earth, he announced that he was the one God's people had been waiting for since the fall of humanity. That Jesus Christ rescued us from the bondage of sin through His death and resurrection, and that He offers us true freedom in this life and beyond is the core belief of Christianity. Jesus explained it like this: *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life"* (John 3:16).

While Believers still battle with sin, and always will, we are no longer slaves to that sin, because Jesus paid the cost to liberate us. He said: *"Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the Son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed"* (John 8:34-36).

And, God gives us freedom in choosing whether or not to accept His gift of freedom through Jesus Christ. Everyone can decide for himself or herself, to accept or reject Jesus' salvation. Choosing Jesus does come with responsibilities however. As the Apostle Paul explained *"you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another"* (Galatians 5:13). Paul adds that *"there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death."* (Romans 8:1-2) Because of that new freedom, we are no longer in bondage to sinfulness, and now we can choose righteousness.

From cover to cover, God's Word points the way to freedom in Christ. And God doesn't leave us wondering how to attain the freedom He offers. It starts with admitting that we are slaves to sin. It ends with choosing Jesus and following Him daily. Only Jesus can break the bonds of sin and lead us to true freedom, now and forever. He gave His own life so that we could be "free indeed." He asks us simply to trust and believe in Him.



**SIS Welcomes
Woodrena Curtis
to the Board
of Directors**

Sisters in the Spirit Ministries, Inc is pleased to announce the election of Newport News, VA native Woodrena Curtis, to the Board of Directors. She brings to the board a deep spiritual commitment to serving the Lord, and wide-ranging experience in organizational leadership.

Woodrena currently serves in a leadership role in the Bible Study Fellowship (BSF) International for Women - Newport News day program. BSF provides an in-depth, interdenominational Bible Study for people of all ages, backgrounds, and spiritual beliefs. She is a BSF administrator, focused on the preparation and planning aspects of teaching of God's Word for the more than 200 women who participate in the Newport News program. She has served with BSF for more than ten years, commencing after her retirement from her position with the Department of Defense (Northeast Region Headquarters) at Fort Monroe, Virginia.

SIS Board President Minister Dr. Katrina W. Brown said “we are so excited to have Woodrena as a part of the Ministry. She is a spiritually gifted woman who is passionate about serving the Lord and blessing others. With her background in counseling, Woodrena is bringing knowledge and resources that will help us in assisting those in need. As such, SIS will be able to touch more lives in meaningful ways as God would have us do,” Dr. Brown noted.

Woodrena is a longtime believer in Christ, having been baptized at a very early age. She has served in many areas of Christian stewardship at her church, First Baptist Church, East End, located in Newport News. She has participated in Youth Ministry; the Sunday School; Vacation Bible School; Praise Dance Ministry; and the League of Christian Women. She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration from Norfolk State University and received a Master's degree in Counseling from Hampton University.

Woodrena is married to Ronald Curtis, and they have one son; Ronald Jr. and his wife, RaShia. They are the grandparents of two - grandson Xavier and granddaughter Kennedy.



FREEDOM IN THE WORD Campaign

***We Really
Need Your
Help!***

We have raised over half of our goal needed to get the SIS Newsletter to the 800 women incarcerated at the Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women. (See pg. 5)

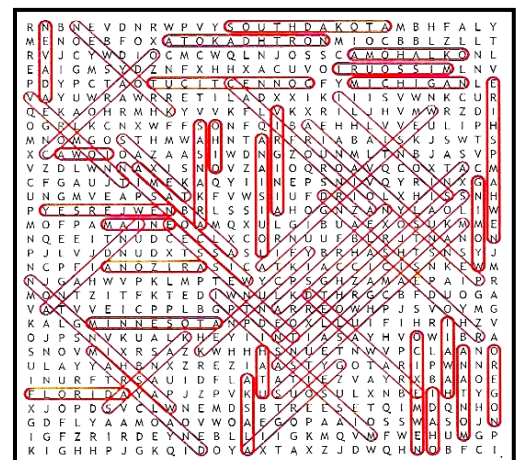
**CONTRIBUTIONS HAVE SLOWED DOWN
AND WE ARE STILL SHORT OF OUR
FUNDRAISING GOAL.**

Please Give.

Your gift of \$25 will help sponsor three months of newsletters for 10 women at FCCW. Please give as much as you can. These women may be in physical bondage, but not their spirit, because there is true freedom in God's Word!

**SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO
FREEDOM IN THE
WORD CAMPAIGN
P.O. Box 649
GLOUCESTER POINT, VA 23062**

Answers to LIVING IN AMERICA WORD SEARCH





Sisters in the Spirit Newsletter

This is a free monthly publication of Sisters in the Spirit Ministries, Inc, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded to empower Christian women in better fulfilling their God-given purpose.
Editor: Dr. Katrina W. Brown
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Visit our website:
sistersinthespirit.org



Sisters in the Spirit Ministries, Inc



[sis_ministries_inc](https://www.instagram.com/sis_ministries_inc)

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By e-mail:

sistersinthespiritministries@gmail.com
or kawbrown@yahoo.com

The LAST Laugh



Hattitude

A Florida elderly lady was standing at the railing of the cruise ship holding her hat on tightly so that it would not blow off in the wind. A gentleman approached her and said: "pardon me, madam. I do not intend to be forward, but did you know that your dress is blowing up in the high wind?" "Yes I know," said the lady, "but I need both hands to hold onto this hat." "I understand, but madam, you must know that your unmentionables are exposed!" said the gentleman in earnest. The woman looked down, then back up at the man and replied, "sir, anything you see down there is 85 years old. I just bought this hat yesterday!"

Happy Birthday!

A wife treats her husband by taking him to a strip club for his birthday. At the club, the doorman says, "hi Jim, how are you?" The wife asks, "how does he know you?" Jim says, "I play football with him dear." Inside the Club, the bartender says, "the usual, Jim?" Jim says to wife, "before you say anything, he's on the Darts team." Next, a stripper says, "Hi Jim! Do you crave the special again?" The wife storms out, dragging Jim with her, and they jump into a taxi. The taxi driver says, "hey Jimmy boy! You picked up an ugly one this time..." Jim's Funeral is on Sunday!!!

The joys of aging

I have everything that I wanted as a teenager, only 60 years later. I don't have to go to school or work. I get an allowance every month. I have my own pad. I don't have a curfew. I have a driver's license and my own car. The people I hang around with are not scared of getting pregnant and I don't have acne. Life is great. I changed my car horn to gunshot sounds. People get out of the way much faster now.

I didn't make it to the gym today. That makes five years in a row. I decided to stop calling the bathroom "John" and renamed it the "Jim". I feel so much better saying I went to the Jim this morning. When I was a child I thought "nap time" was a punishment. Now it feels like a small vacation. The biggest lie I tell myself is... "I don't have to write that down, I'll remember it". I don't have gray hair... I have "wisdom high-lights"! I'm just very wise.

If God wanted me to touch my toes, He would've put them on my knees.

Last year I joined a support group for procrastinators. We haven't met yet.

Of course, I talk to myself. Sometimes I need expert advice. At my age "Getting Lucky" means walking into a room and remembering what I came in there for.

Thou shall not ...

Murphy showed up at Mass one Sunday and the priest almost fell down when he saw him. He'd never been to church in his life. After Mass, the priest caught up with him and "Murphy, I am so glad you decided to come to Mass. What made you come?" Murphy said, "I got to be honest with you Father, a while back, I misplaced my hat and I really, really loved that hat. I know that McGlynn had a hat just like mine and I knew he came to church every Sunday. I also knew that he had to take off his hat during Mass and figured he would leave it in the back of church. So, I was going to leave after Communion and steal McGlynn's hat." The priest said, "Well, Murphy, I notice that you didn't steal McGlynn's hat. What changed your mind?"

Murphy replied, "Well, after I heard your sermon on the 10 Commandments I decided that I didn't need to steal McGlynn's hat after all." With a tear in his eye the priest gave Murphy a big smile and said; "after I talked about 'Thou Shalt Not Steal' you decided you would rather do without your hat than burn in Hell?" Murphy slowly shook his head. "No, Father, after you talked about 'Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery,' I remembered where I left my hat."

Not afraid

A few minutes before the church services started, the townspeople were sitting in their pews and talking. Suddenly, Satan appeared at the front of the church. Everyone started screaming and running for the front entrance, trampling each other in a frantic effort to get away from evil incarnate. Soon everyone had exited the church except for one elderly gentleman who sat calmly in his pew without moving, seeming oblivious to the fact that God's ultimate enemy was in his presence. So Satan walked up to the old man and said, "Don't you know who I am?"

The man replied, "Yep, sure do." "Aren't you afraid of me?" Satan asked.

"Nope, sure ain't." said the man. "Don't you realize I can kill you with a word?" asked Satan. "Don't doubt it for a minute," returned the old man, in an even tone. Did you know that I could cause you profound, horrifying, physical AGONY for all eternity?" persisted Satan. "Yep," was the calm reply.

"And you're still not afraid?" asked Satan. "Nope." More than a little perturbed, Satan asked, "Well, why aren't you afraid of me?"

The man calmly replied, "Been married to your sister for over 48 years."