



Sunday, July 3, 2022



Main Text: Luke 4:18--The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

Introduction: Tomorrow, July 4, 2022, our country will celebrate what is commonly known as Independence Day; the day thirteen colonies broke free of Great Britain's control, two hundred and sixty-six years ago. Millions of Americans will celebrate with relaxation, tasty food, and fun activities. Festivities will range from casual family and church BBQs to firework displays, parades, and concerts. However, while Americans are free from taxation and domination of another country, millions of Americans are still under a different type of bondage; a spiritual bondage. Millions are still enslaved to brokenness, dysfunctional relationships, and manifold addictions. They are held in the clutches of devil. So, while people will celebrate our nation's independence and its freedom from a physical overlord, many remain in spiritual bondage. Thankfully, Jesus declared that He came to "set at liberty" those who are bruised. In other words, Jesus died on Calvary to free humanity from the tyranny of devil.

Why Physical Freedom Is not Enough: Matt. 16:26, James 1:25

Matt. 16:26—for what is a man profited, if he shall gain the entire world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

John 8:34-- Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

Note: Matthew 16:26 is one of the most thought-provoking passages in the Bible! The point of the text is that it does not matter if we gain the entire world if we lose our own soul! If we are free in every aspect but bound to a life of sin, we have gained nothing! Jesus said, if we "committeth" sin, that is, continuing to practice sin, we are slaves to sin! True freedom includes spiritual freedom from sin. If we never experience true freedom, spiritual freedom, we will never be totally free.

Satan Will Not Willing Let You Go: Ex. 3:19, 2:26

Ex. 3:19- And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand.

2 Tim 2:26--And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

Note: When God called Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt, the children of Israel had been enslaved for 430 years. God told Moses that Pharaoh would not let the people go unless by a mighty hand. The same was true for America in 1776. Rather than allow the colonies to break away from the

empire, the King of England deployed soldiers three thousand miles to maintain control over the colonies. Tyrants are never willing to free their captives. The same is true with Satan, he will not willingly allow anyone under his grasp to go free. Paul said the sinner is taken captive by the devil at his (the devil's) will.

To Break Free, the Oppressor Must be Overthrown: Ex. 14:24-27, Col. 2:13-15

Ex. 14:24-27-- ²⁵ And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians. ²⁶ And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. ²⁷ And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.

Col. 2:3-15—(13) And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; (14) Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; (15) And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

Note: Even after God smote the Egyptians with ten horrific plagues, they still tried to recapture the Israelites! God had to miraculously rescue the children of Israel, which He did by parting the Red Sea and allowing the children of Israel to cross on dry ground and drowning the Egyptians in the sea as they pursued the Israelites. Christ did the same for us spiritually when He died on the Cross. He nailed our trespasses to the cross, spoiling principalities and powers, that is, the devil! Paul said, Christ made a spectacle of the devil before everyone and triumphed over him! Just as God broke the Egyptians power to enslave the Israelites, Christ broke the devil's power to enslave the souls of humanity.

Jesus Came to Give us More Abundant Life: John 10:10

John 10:10--The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

Note: No one in bondage is living an abundant life. Even though North America contained many natural resources, and was three thousand miles from England, England controlled the livelihood of colonists. They (the colonists) were not living abundantly. The same is true for unbelievers today. The Declaration of Independence freed Americans from the mandates of the King of England, but as captives of the devil, many Americans are still not living an abundant life. Jesus came that we might have abundant life!

Whom Christ Sets Free is Free Indeed: John 8:36, Col. 3:17

John 8:36--If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Col. 3:17-- Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty.

Note: If Christ has freed us, then we are free! But what does that mean? The dictionary defines freedom as the power or right to act, speak, or think without hindrance or restraint. Most people do not realize it, but when we are under Satan's dominion, we are not free to act, speak, or think without hinderance. You may recall someone saying, "I do not serve God or the devil. I am doing my own thing." That is a deception! The truth is, before we are born-again, we are taken captive by devil at his will (2 Tim. 2:24). When we are filled with the Spirit, then there is liberty, that is freedom or liberation from the devil's will. In the Greek, the word "free" can mean to liberate or to exempt from liability or

burden. Jesus's death on the Cross truly liberated and exempted us from liability. However, in the full context of freedom, we are freed from doing certain things and freed to do other things.

What Did Christ Free Us From?

- **The Bondage of Sin: Rom. 6:14-16—(14)** For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. (15) What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. (16) Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

Note: Before we experience the new birth, sin is our master! We may not be the wildest or vilest person in the world, but our sin nature is in control. While in sin, we are manipulated by our sin nature, which is easily influenced by the devil and the world. But after we are born-again, we are no longer under the dominion of sin. We are freed from having to submit our bodies to sinful deeds.

- **The Penalty of Sin: Rom. 6:23—(23)** For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. **John 11:25-26--** Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

Note: The moment Adam sinned in the Garden, the entire human race was brought under sin (Rom. 5:12). In addition to being penalized for the sin of Adam, we are held accountable for additional sins we commit after coming into the world. The penalty for Adam's and our sin is eternal death. But the blood of Jesus frees us from the penalty of death. We must no longer fear death, because the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ!

- **Guilt and Shame: Gen. 3:8-10—(8)** And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. (9) Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where *are* you?" (10) So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."

Note: The ability to feel guilt and shame is as old as man. In fact, guilt and shame are results of Adam's and Eve's sin. After they realized their sin, the first couple attempted to hide from God. Their conscience was awakened, and they felt guilt and shame for their disobedience! Everyone has felt guilt and shame for something they have done. Even if we repent, feelings of guilt and shame often remain or resurface occasionally. Satan uses those feelings to overwhelm us. Instead of thanking God for forgiveness and looking forward, Satan tries to keep us looking back on past sin and reliving the guilt and shame that resulted from those sins. In that way, we are unable to go on with Christ and experience true freedom.

What Does Christ Free us to Do?

- **To Live Abundantly Unto God: 2 Cor. 5:17—(17)** Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Note: When God brought the Israelites out of Egypt, He never intended for them to go back. They had lived under harsh bondage for 430 years. He wanted them to live as a new nation; a peculiar nation; holy unto Him. The Lord wants the same for us when He cleanses us from sin through the new birth. He wants us to live as new creatures.

- **To Serve: Rom. 6:18-20**— (18) Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. (19) I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. (20) For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. **Matt. 22:37**—"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

Note: After gaining freedom from England, no American would ever submit to the domination of a foreign country again. Likewise, once Christ delivers us from sin, we must not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage (Gal. 5:1). Instead, we are to become the servants of righteousness. What does that mean? It means we seek to do that which pleases Christ in every aspect of our lives! We follow in His steps. We love the Lord with all our hearts, souls, mind, and strength. We experience true freedom.

How Do We Obtain Spiritual Freedom?

- **Come to Jesus: Matt. 11:28-29**— (28) Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Note: One of the effects of sin is that it causes us to struggle and toil in the world. We pine away to find the meaning of life, peace, and happiness. That is spiritual bondage. Jesus is the answer! In Him we can find rest from the physical and spiritual struggles of life. We can find true freedom, spiritual freedom.

- **Believe and Obey: Matt. 7:24-25**— (24) Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock. (25) And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

Note: God's program for man's redemption has always been two-fold. It includes what God does toward us and what we do in response to what God has done. Jesus promised rest to the weary, sin-sick soul. That is God's part. Our part is hearing and obeying Jesus's words. However, we will not hear and obey what we do not believe! Therefore, belief is paramount and requisite to hearing and obeying. True belief, which is faith, prompts our response of hearing and doing God's word. When we hear and obey the word of God, we are on our way to experiencing true freedom.

- **Experience the New Birth: John 3:5**—Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. **Mark 16:15-16**—(15) And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. (16) He that believeth and baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned. **Acts 2:38**—Then Peter said unto them, repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Note: True freedom comes when we break away from whatever held us in captivity. For example, in the physical sense, the Israelites became free when they left Egypt after 430 years of slavery. America became free when she won her independence from England. When the Israelites and America became free, they were different. They were new nations. Spiritual freedom means becoming a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17), which occurs when we experience the new birth. The new

birth is the “rest” Jesus promised, and the kingdom of God is the new life every human enters into when he/she is born of water and the Spirit. On the Day of Pentecost, Peter explained how to fulfill Jesus’s command. By repentance, baptism in the name of Jesus, and infilling of the Holy Ghost God’s promise of spiritual newness, true freedom, is granted to all who desire it.

Summary: Today, Americans are physically free from domination of another country; and it is great to celebrate that independence and freedom. But millions of people around the world are still in bondage—spiritual bondage. They are not free indeed! What does it matter Jesus asked, if a person gains the entire world and loses his soul? In other words, physical freedom is not enough! We need true freedom; that is, freedom from sin because the penalty of sin is eternal death and loss of the soul. The problem is we are taken captive by Satan at his will (2 Tim. 2:26). Unless the devil is overthrown, he will not release a captured soul. Satan comes to steal, kill, and destroy, but Jesus came to overthrow the works of Satan. Jesus came to set the captive free, to set at liberty those who are bruised (Luke 4:18) and give us a new life of abundant, spiritual freedom. If Christ sets us free, we are free indeed. We are free from the bondage of sin, the penalty of sin, and from the guilt and shame of past sins. We are free to live abundantly unto God, and serve the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. For where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is true freedom waiting to be experienced.