

No Freedom Without Sacrifice

(1 Peter 2:16, Galatians 5:1)

I. Introduction

- A. When Dad was a young kid, his great aunt Sanny told him stories about the war
 - 1. That's the Civil War! Her father and both brothers were killed in the war
 - a. She told of "Yankee raiders" butchering their cows and taking their food
 - b. She told Dad about the Civil War much like he told me about WWII!
 - 2. It is possible (unlikely) that Aunt Sanny could have met Daniel F. Bakeman
 - a. Bakeman died in 1869 at 109 as the last veteran of Revolutionary War
 - b. Aunt Sanny's life spans a Revolutionary War veteran and my father!
 - 3. **Point:** We may think July 4th has been around forever, but it really hasn't!
- B. *Department of Veteran Affairs* says **656,543** Americans have died in our wars
 - 1. That rises to **1,196,326** if you count all service-related deaths during war
 - a. That includes 50,000 POW in Civil War and 2000 to malaria in Cuba
 - b. Of course, that doesn't include almost 2 million Americans wounded
 - c. *Dept of Veteran Affairs* says **44,570,861** Americans have served in war
 - 2. Our freedom is never free; there can be no freedom without sacrifice
 - 3. And that reminds us that there can be no freedom without responsibility
- C. Today is the 234th July 4 since the Declaration of Independence in 1776
 - 1. We tend to let holidays to become about holiday, not what they represent
 - a. Thanksgiving is about eating turkey; Christmas is about getting gifts
 - b. July 4? It's about fireworks! It should be a reflection on our freedoms.
 - 2. What is freedom? We tend to see freedom very selfishly—it's all about us
 - a. **Example:** Suppose a neighbor plays music so loud your windows rattle
 - 1) You ask to turn it down and they say, "*Hey, it's a free country!*"
 - 2) What does it mean? *Don't have to care about you or horse you rode in on!*
 - b. Freedom means that we can do what we want and not care about others
 - 3. Paul says that freedom rather comes from the presence of God (**2 Cor 3:17**)
Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.
 - 4. In the NT, the freedom of God is never free—it always has responsibility.

II. Live as Free People (1 Peter 2:16)

Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves.

- A. The phrase that jumps out here (*especially on July 4*) is “live as free people.”
1. We like that! We are free in Christ, and so we are to “live as free people”
 - a. Peter sounds a little like Braveheart, “*They can't take away our freedom!*”
 - b. But he also points to the responsibility of freedom, “*live as God's slaves*”
 2. In fact, his point here is that we shouldn't misuse freedom to cover-up evil
 - a. Freedom in Christ can't become an excuse for evil choices or bad living.
 - b. Freedom is opposite of not caring about you or horse you ride in on (2:17)
Show proper respect to everyone, love your fellow believers, fear God, honor the emperor
 - 1) Why do Christians find it so easy to be disrespectful to the president?
 - a) Constitution gives us the right to dissent with president's policy
 - b) God does not give us the right to disrespect president (man or office)
 - 2) Remember, when Peter says “*honor the emperor,*” this is NERO
 - 3) If Peter's church can honor Nero, we can easily honor our president
 3. In this context on freedom, the word SUBMIT appears over and over
 - a. Citizens were to submit to government (*both local and national*) (2:13)
 - b. Slaves are to submit to their master (*even evil and abusive ones*) (2:18)
 - c. Wives submit to husbands (*even ungodly and unchristian ones*) (3:1)
- B. So living as free people in Christ sometimes means submission to others
1. Word “*submit*” (*hypotasso*) is military term meaning “*order or rank under*”
 - a. Submitting means to willfully place myself under another person
 - 1) Private is placed under a sergeant, sergeant is under a captain, etc
 - 2) Opposite of “*submit*” is to seek my advantage or insist on my way.
 - b. That rubs us wrong way! To submit my will to another is un-American!
 2. But Peter insists we submit to other people “*for the Lord's sake*” (2:13).
 - a. Submission is part of living as free people—*freedom means responsibility*
 - 1) We can't use freedom in Christ as an excuse to do evil
 - 2) Neither can we use our freedom as an excuse to get our own way
 - b. We are to live as free people, but freedom always means responsibility.

III. For Freedom Set Free

A. Paul says that it is for freedom that Christ has set us free (**Galatians 5:1**)

“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.”

1. This sounds very much like a Christian emancipation proclamation.
 - a. Judaizers were insisting that Gentile Christians follow Jewish tradition
 - 1) They must submit to ritual circumcision and become ritual proselytes
 - 2) Then they had to follow traditional fasts, feasts and rituals of the OT
 - b. Paul is adamant that this is not the case—we are free from all of that.
 - 1) If special days and special diets help you to focus on God— go for it
 - 2) But don’t bind these on others. And don’t be bound or judged by them!
 - c. We are free in Christ— and thus we are free from **everything but Christ!**
2. We don’t have Judaizers; long time since good debate on circumcision.
 - a. But there are a lot of folks that want to limit freedom in the same way.
 - 1) You’re not a Christian if you don’t see the millennium like I see it.
 - 2) You aren’t TRUE church if you don’t organize like we are organized, sing like we sing, baptize in exactly the way that we baptize
 - b. They won’t call themselves Judaizers... and certainly not “Legalists.”
 - c. But the idea is same; they seek to burden others with a yoke of slavery
3. But Paul tells us here, *“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free”*

B. But don’t shoot your fireworks off of total independence just yet (**Gal 5:13-14**)

You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another humbly in love.

1. We are free in Christ, but we aren’t free to sin or to act in unloving ways
 - a. Freedom doesn’t mean I can live like I want and indulge my sin
 - b. And freedom can’t mean I can forget about you and your horse!
 - c. Freedom doesn’t mean free FROM others but rather free FOR others.
2. What makes us free in Christ also makes us slaves to Christ (**Rom 6:16-18**)
 - a. We want freedom to mean we can do what we want, anything we want.
 - b. God says we are free for a purpose, free to serve Him as slaves.
3. Freedom always demands sacrifice— our freedom is never really free.

IV. Conclusion

- A. The 1998 Spielberg movie *Saving Private Ryan* is a powerful parable of grace
1. Two Ryan brothers die during D-Day invasion after a 3rd died days earlier
 - a. Their mother would receive all three death notices on the same day.
 - b. Chief of Staff learns her 4th son James Ryan (Matt Damon) is behind lines
 - c. He sends Cpt. John Miller (Tom Hanks) and 8 Army rangers to find him
 2. One by one, the Rangers lose men until Miller himself is mortally wounded
 - a. As he is dying, Miller pulls Ryan close and says, “*Earn this... earn it.*”
 - b. Pvt. Ryan is given the gift of freedom, but freedom is never, ever free
 - c. He can never earn what Miller gave him, but he can live out the sacrifice
 3. Years later, he stands at Miller’s grave and wonders if he earned it ([CLIP](#))
- B. We’ll never earn the grace that Jesus gives us at the cross; we can’t deserve it
1. The wages of our sin was death; all that we could deserve is death
 - a. The one thing that we don’t want from God is for Him to be FAIR
 - 1) We deserve death because of our sin (*past*) and sinfulness (*rebellion*)
 - 2) In God’s mercy and love, the great exchange took place ([2 Cor 5:21](#))
“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”
 - b. Jesus did what we could never do; as we sang earlier, “*Jesus Paid It All*”
 - c. Jesus said several things from the cross, but he never said “*Earn it.*”
 2. No, but one of the things that Jesus said about the cross was, “Follow me”
 - a. There is no freedom without sacrifice; for Jesus freedom meant a cross
 - b. And that is exactly what freedom means for all of us ([Luke 9:23](#))
Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me
 - c. There is no freedom without sacrifice— no freedom without a cross
 - 1) May we never use our freedom as excuse to indulge our sin nature
 - 2) May we never think that the cross means we have no price to pay
 - d. Our freedom from sin cost Jesus everything, and that is what it costs us
 3. “*Would you be free from the burden of sin? There’s power in the blood...*”
 - a. The last verse asks, “*Would you do service for Jesus your king?*”
 - b. That is the call to us all this morning, and that is our invitation.