

## Freedom is Never Free!

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The bald eagle was chosen June 20, 1782 as the emblem of the United States of America, because of its long life, great strength and majestic looks, it's freedom in flight, and also because it was then believed to exist only on this continent.

On the backs of our gold coins, the silver dollar, the half dollar and the quarter, we see an eagle with outspread wings. On the Great Seal of the United States and in many places which are exponents of our nation's authority we see the same emblem. The eagle represents freedom. Living as he does on the tops of lofty mountains, amid the solitary grandeur of Nature, he has unlimited freedom, whether with strong wings he sweeps into the valleys below, or upward into the boundless spaces beyond.

It is said that the eagle was used as a national emblem because, at one of the first battles of the Revolution (which occurred early in the morning), the noise of the struggle awoke the sleeping eagles on the heights and they flew from their nests and circled about over the heads of the fighting men, all the while giving bringing forth their shrieking cries. "They are shrieking for Freedom," said the patriots. Thus the eagle, full of the boundless spirit of freedom, living above the valleys, strong and powerful in his might, has become the national emblem of a country that offers a picture of freedom for us all.

The message I would like to share on this special 3<sup>rd</sup> of July service is this: "Freedom is Never Free."

This can be illustrated in two specific ways.

**A. In the history of the United States.**

It really is true. Freedom is NEVER free when it comes to the foundation and continuation of our country. Our country is a very unique country that has experienced wonderful freedoms and liberties over the years. America is built upon the *Declaration of Independence* which was a document that was ratified by the Second Continental Congress, on July 4, 1776, which declared the colonies to be FREE and independent of England.

America is also built upon the *U.S. Constitution* that was adopted on September 17, 1787. The Constitution of the United States is the supreme law of the United States of America. It was the framework for the organization of the United States government and spells out the relationship that the federal government is to have with the FREE states, citizens, and all people. The Constitution gives powers to the states and the people and establishes a system of government where sovereignty continued to belong to the people and where the people delegate power to both federal and state governments and where the people retained some powers for themselves.

America is also built upon the *Bill of Rights*. This was a formal statement of the rights of the people of the United States that was incorporated in the Constitution as ten amendments. It gave the people the rights for freedom of speech, to practice religion, to bear arms to protect themselves, and many other liberties.

Taken together, these three documents form the basis of all our laws, principles, heritage, and FREEDOMS. But in spite of all these documents, we have discovered down through the years that American freedoms were not free. You can declare them on paper but many have paid the price, the highest price, so we could retain our freedoms.

Our troops and veterans have sacrificed all that is precious to them — their life, limb and time away from their families — to protect our freedoms and way of life. Without our brave military fighting foreign enemies who would do us harm, Americans would not be able to enjoy basic human rights that too many in this country take for granted today.



We would be locked into totalitarianism, communism, and the control of foreigners over us.

Freedom is very wonderful. But freedom is NEVER free! A price must be paid. And many brave soldiers paid the price by giving their own lives for the freedoms that this country was built upon.



In John 15:12-13 Jesus gave this commandment to His disciples:

“This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” Jesus was applying this principle first and foremost to His own approaching death on the cross, but secondarily to all His followers. He was saying that not only would He die for His disciples but that they too should be willing to die for their friends. This idea of dying for another is the supreme character of love and friendship. If we miss this, then we will miss the primary thrust of what Jesus was teaching.

Jesus had spoken of His love for His disciples (“as I have loved you” - v. 12). He would shortly show them how great it was by making the supreme sacrifice for them. After that, they would not only have His command but also His example to follow. John learned what Jesus had taught him for he later writes in 1 John 3:16 these words: “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren.”

We are reminded by both Jesus and John that the most loving action that a person can do for his friend is to die for them. “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” Dying for others is a clear demonstration of love. As we will see in our second point in this message, Jesus demonstrated His love for us, when He died on the cross. There are a lot of implications behind this statement but what I want all of us to see today is how friendship is established by willingness to sacrifice one’s life for another.

With this thought of dying for someone else, I want to personally thank ever individual who was willing to serve in our military, who was willing to step out to maintain my freedoms. I thank everyone who has given their personal life for me. I thank every individual who was willing to put their “all” on the line for me. Jesus said, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

With this Bible verse in mind, we need to remember about the Independence Day of the United States, also referred to as the Fourth of July, which is a federal holiday commemorating the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, by the Continental Congress. It declared that the thirteen American colonies regarded themselves as a new nation, the United States of America, and that they were no longer part of the British Empire. However, with this declaration came the defense of our freedoms and the loss of life – people dying for the freedoms of others.

Since the inception of the United States of America on July 4, 1776 every generation of Americans have been called upon to defend freedom and liberty. Over the years more than forty-two million Americans have served their country in time of war. More than a million have secured the blessings of liberty with the cost of their own lives. I want to give statistics from the Department of Defense detailing the casualties of some of the major wars of our countries history. I offer only some of these statistics as proof that true freedom is never free. I cannot possibly mention all of the wars and loss of life. But listed are some major wars.



It's a sad reality that nearly 500,000 military personnel died during the U.S. Civil War. That's almost half of all Americans who have ever died during wartime, and more than a hundred times more than died during the American Revolution, according to the latest estimates from the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs. With all the atrocities being committed by ISIS terrorists — the mass genocide, the beheadings and sex slavery — there is never a greater time to be grateful for the freedoms we have in America, and to appreciate all those who have served in uniform and who lay it all on the line to protect our freedoms. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Freedom always has a price tag attached to it. To possess the freedoms that we have today many people have lost their lives. In previous generations, our military rose to the call of duty and protected us from the horrors of Hitler, communist dictators and other evildoers who were hell-bent on stripping Americans of their basic human rights.



I think of the story of Thomas Hudner. He crash-landed his fighter plane behind enemy lines in 30-below-zero weather in an ultimately unsuccessful but valiant attempt to save his downed wing man, Jesse Brown, the Navy's first black pilot. Hudner became the first Medal of Honor recipient of the Korean War.



Our troops have left blood on battlefields all over the world so their children and ours can grow up and enjoy the freedom to carve out our own paths in life. We will never forget!



There are no words that can properly express our collective gratitude. Saying thank you never seems enough! My hope is that those who have served know how much they are admired and appreciated for upholding our freedoms. Those who sacrificed so much should be remembered for their sacrifices.



Today I also think of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. We sometimes forget about them. They Individually, each of them had more to lose than to gain in a revolution. Each signer became a marked man, pursued relentlessly by the British retribution. None who had property or family were spared.

Most lived to see their families killed or separated forever and their property sacked. Nine signers died of wounds or hardships during the war. Many died in poverty-the fathers of our country! Their pledge - "our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor"-was no idle boast. The cost of freedom is incalculable.

Many, from the inception of this country to now, have paid the price for our freedoms and liberties. And in looking back we can certainly conclude that "FREEDOM IS NEVER FREE."

This is our main point for our sermon today. Freedom is Never Free.

This can be illustrated in two specific ways.

### **B. In the passion of Jesus Christ.**

Christ's passion refers to His willingness to die on the cross for us because of His intense and compassionate love for all mankind. Jesus can also testify to the fact that freedom is NEVER free. This is because Jesus died on



the cross to grant us spiritual freedom (liberty) from the judgment of hell and also freedom from the enslavement of sin.

Ephesians 1:7

“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.”

Colossians 1:13-14

“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins.”

The word “delivered” means freedom. Jesus dies to deliver us from the power of Satan. Also, the word “redemption” speaks of a ransom price that was designed to free us from hell’s judgment and sin’s slavery. The Bible says that Jesus paid that redemptive price or ransom price to provide us with the spiritual freedom that we need from God’s wrath and judgment.

In essence, Jesus said, “Freedom is not free, I have paid for your spiritual freedom from sin’s penalty and power.” There was a redemptive or FREEDOM price that Jesus had to pay for you and me. Jesus died on the cross to PAY THE PENALTY for you and me and grant our spiritual freedom! I want you to know this today. Have you been set free or redeemed from the coming judgment and sin’s power?



There are four freedom points to consider.

### 1. The price of spiritual freedom

Matthew 27:26-50 records these words:

“Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered *him* to be crucified. Then the

soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band *of soldiers*. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put *it* upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him,

- The PRICE of spiritual freedom
- The PARDON of spiritual freedom
- The PROMISES of spiritual freedom
- The PERSONAL faith of spiritual freedom.

and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify *him*. And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross. And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted *thereof*, he would not drink. And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. And sitting down they watched him there; And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left. And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.

“Likewise also the chief priests mocking *him*, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth. Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Some of them that stood there, when they heard *that*, said, This *man* calleth for Elias. And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled *it* with vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink. The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him. Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.”

Freedom is Never free! Jesus Christ endured great physical pain and agony on the cross in order to set us free. He also endured mental and heartfelt agony when He was forsaken by the Father. Yes, it was true, our spiritual freedom was not free. It was bought with a great price.

1 Corinthians 6:20

“For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.”



C. Truman Davis, M.D., described what takes place when a person is crucified. This medical doctor provided a physical description. “The cross is placed on the ground and the exhausted man is quickly thrown backwards with his shoulders against the wood. The legionnaire feels for the depression at the front of the wrist. He drives a heavy, square wrought-iron nail through the wrist and deep into the wood. Quickly he moves to the other side and repeats the action, being careful not to pull the arms too tightly, but to allow some flex and movement. The cross is then lifted into place.

“The left foot is pressed backward against the right foot, and with both feet extended, toes down, a nail is driven through the arch of each, leaving the knees flexed. The victim is now crucified. As he slowly sags down with more weight on the nails in the wrists, excruciating, fiery pain shoots along the fingers and up the arms to explode in the brain—the nails in the wrists are putting pressure on the median nerves. As he pushes himself upward to avoid stretching torment, he places the full weight on the nail through his feet. Again he feels the searing agony of the nail tearing through the nerves between the bones of the feet.

“As the arms fatigue, cramps sweep through the muscles, knotting them in deep, relentless, throbbing pain. With these cramps come the inability to push himself upward to breathe. Air can be drawn into the lungs but not exhaled. He fights to raise himself in order to get even one small breath. Finally, carbon dioxide builds up in the lungs and in the blood stream, and the cramps partially subside. Spasmodically he is able to push himself upward to exhale and bring in life-giving oxygen.

“Hours of this limitless pain are experienced with cycles of twisting, joint-rending cramps, intermittent partial asphyxiation, and searing pain as tissue is torn from his lacerated back as he moves up and down against the rough timber. Then another agony begins: a deep, crushing pain deep in the chest as the pericardium slowly fills with serum and begins to compress the heart. It is now almost over for the crucified person. The loss of tissue fluids reach a critical level, the compressed heart struggles to pump heavy, thick, sluggish blood into the tissues, and the tortured lungs make a frantic effort to gasp in

small gulps of air. He can feel the chill of death creeping through his tissues. Finally, he can allow his body to die.”

Friend, the Bible records this entire torment described above with the simple phrase, "And they crucified him" (Mark 15:24). Freedom is Never Free. This is very true when it comes to the terrible redemptive or FREEDOM price Jesus had to pay for each one of us on the cross, so we could be liberated from the judgment of hell and the power of sin and Satan.

There are four freedom points to consider.

## 2. The pardon of spiritual freedom

As a result of Jesus' death on the cross for you and me, we can receive a full pardon for all our sins – past, present future. We can have the slate wiped clean forever. We can have all of our sins pardoned or forgiven, so we can go to Heaven when we die.

Ephesians 1:7 is worth repeating:

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace

Colossians 1:14 once again adds:

In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins

Yes, redemption (being free!) is linked to the forgiveness of our sins (all of them!). Only when we are forgiven of all our sins can we truly be free from God's wrath and judgment and free from enslavement to sin. It's a wonderful think to know that all of your sins are forgiven forever. It's wonderful to know that Jesus paid the necessary fine or penalty for all of them in your place so you could go free! Jesus died on the cross so you can get out of jail free! This means that through Jesus Christ you can have every sin that you have ever committed and every sin that you will commit today and in the future pardoned or forgiven forever. Jesus died to give you pardon for all of your sins. And this pardon comes only thorough Him – not through rituals, religion, and reformation.

All of these things get in the way (they are like roadblocks) and they do not allow you to look ONLY to Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins. Have you ever had all your sins forgiven through Jesus? You can KNOW that they are forgiven if you really believe that Jesus paid the total redemptive price to free you from all judgment for all the sins that you have and will ever commit.

### 3. The promises of spiritual freedom

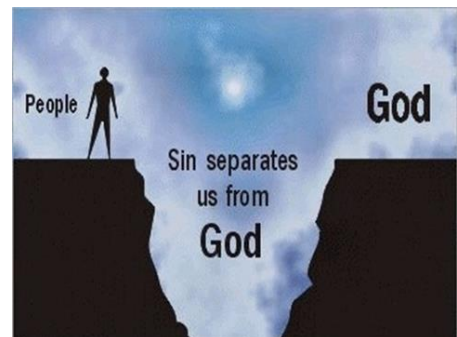
#### a. Eternal life

John 14:6

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

- **Jesus is the ONLY WAY to eternal life** – “I am the way” and “no man cometh unto the Father, but by me”

In a day of pluralism which basically teaches that there are many ways to Heaven, Jesus taught that He Himself was on the ONLY way to Heaven. Do all religions lead to God? And is one religion better than another? Actually, no religion leads to God. Getting into God’s presence comes through a person – not a religious organization. There are NOT many ways to God – only one!



- **Jesus is the ONLY GIVER of eternal life** – He Himself is “the life” (spiritual life) – not your church association, baptism, sacraments or anything else.

Eternal and spiritual life comes DIRECTLY from Jesus. You can’t find this life anywhere else or in anything else. It only comes from Jesus. If you want the gift of everlasting life then you must get it DIRECTLY from Him – not through church traditions, religious affiliation, or through any of your alms, acts of penitence, or good deeds. Friend, eternal life only comes through Jesus Christ.

Romans 6:23 says: “For the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

### b. Free life

Jesus said in John 8:32:

“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”



The truth is this. We are bound to sin. Sin controls our lives in so many ways. Only Jesus can free us from sin’s power and enslavement. There is no other person or program that can truly and forever liberate us from the strongholds of Satan and sin. It takes the saving power of Jesus to do this.

“His power can make you what you ought to be;  
His blood can cleanse your heart and make you free;  
His love can fill your soul, and you will see  
'Twas best for Him to have His way with thee.”

Jesus adds these words in John 8:36

“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”

True freedom, to be free indeed, is when we become a Christian through faith in Jesus Christ and we are set free from the sins that once ruled and empowered our lives. Are you free? Really free? Have you been liberated from the sins that are controlling your life? You can be free today (really free – not gimmicks attached to it) when you reach out to Jesus Christ and allow Him to set you free and start you on a new journey in life.

### c. Abundant life

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.”



Satan is like a thief. He wants to rob you of eternal, spiritual, and abundant life. He wants to steal away that which Jesus Christ wants to give you. Satan wants you to wind up in hell forever and be lost from the presence of God and His spiritual blessings.

However, Jesus wants to give you abundant life. Abundant life is a new quality of life – a new kind of life. It's a life filled with spiritual blessings such as peace, joy, satisfaction, and contentment. The abundant way of living is the byproduct or result of possessing spiritual freedom and liberty from sin.

The word “abundant” means superabundant, superior, exceeding, overflowing. This is the kind of life Jesus gives to those who place their faith in Him alone for salvation and deliverance. We receive many wonderful spiritual blessings from Jesus Christ when we come to Christ and allow Him to be our Savior and Deliverer. One thing is certain, a life that is freed from the power of sin results in great peace, wonderful joy, and complete satisfaction and contentment. It results in an abundant life.

#### 4. The personal faith of spiritual freedom.

This is where we must make a decision. We don't receive the free gift of eternal through Jesus Christ without expressing our faith or confidence in Jesus Christ ALONE to save and deliver us from hell, and give us a newfound life of spiritual freedom and abundance. If you want to go to Heaven and not hell when you die, if you want eternal life with God, if you want to find true spiritual freedom and a new way of life, freedom from the power of sins, then you must express your PERSONAL faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ or what Jesus did to save and deliver you from hell.

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 says “that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.” This is the Gospel or good news you must believe or express person faith in so you can go to Heaven when you die.



When I believe on Christ I am expressing faith in what Christ did to get me to Heaven and release from sin's slavery. I must personally express my faith in *Jesus' death on the cross*, which paid for the judgment of my own sins, in order to set you free from hell and sin's power forever.

I must also express faith in *Jesus' resurrection*. Jesus rose from the dead to give me eternal life and a new way of life. You could never live forever in Heaven unless Jesus rose from the dead, conquered death, and went to Heaven Himself.

We have national freedoms in this country today but Jesus died to give us spiritual freedom from the judgment hell and the power of sin. In every instance, we discover that freedom is NEVER free.

Freedom is Never Free!



Dear friend, if you want your spiritual freedom, then you must express faith in Christ ALONE to save and deliver you. Are you ready to express your faith or belief in Jesus to be your Savior? Right now, you can be free indeed as Jesus taught and free forever!

Below is a prayer of salvation and deliverance that you can pray in your own heart if you want to be saved from hell and the power of sin.

“Dear heavenly Father, I thank you for sending Jesus to die on the cross in my place. I believe in Him today. I believe that what He did for me on the cross will save me from hell and sin's power. I believe that He took my judgment upon Himself and became my Savior. I also believe He rose from the dead to give me everlasting life in Heaven. I transfer my faith to Jesus and will only trust in Him to save me forever. In Jesus' name, Amen.”