

Theme: True freedom - the ability to live as God created us - is found only in Christ.

## I. Intro - Inconceivable!

- A. Classic movie 'The Princess Bride'
- B. Vizzini - events that happened are 'Inconceivable'
- C. Inigo Montoya - "You keep using that word, I do not think it means what you think it means."
- D. A lot of people use 'Freedom' this weekend - but I do not think it means what they think it means!
- E. What is true freedom? Where is it found?

## II. Insufficient Freedom

- A. The people in Jesus' day had false ideas of freedom  
They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?"<sup>34</sup> Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin."  
John 8:33-34
  - 1. Indignant at Jesus' offer of freedom in vv31-32
  - 2. They proclaimed that they were free already
  - 3. They thought freedom was being Abraham's physical descendants
  - 4. Jesus told them they were actually slaves - to sin!
- B. Incomplete of false views of freedom today
  - 1. Political freedom - democracy
    - a. This is what a lot of uses of freedom this weekend will refer to

- b. Political liberty is a good thing - and is certainly better than tyranny!
    - c. But freedom to vote does not mean we are truly free - we can vote for tyranny over others!
- 2. Freedom as liberty of choice that does not physically harm others  
"Liberty consists in being able to do anything that does not harm others." - From Article 4 of "The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen"
  - a. There is some truth in this - liberty of choice is not inherently evil
  - b. Our choices should not harm others physically
  - c. But this view is very insufficient - what is harm to others? Is adultery? Is driving drunk? Gossip?
- 3. Freedom as unfettered liberty of choice, and even mandated approval by others
  - a. Our culture has moved here - anything that we want
  - b. The common modern understanding of freedom begins by denying any ultimate ends for human well being beyond 'choosing' itself. Freedom in this modern view is freedom from any restrictions on choosing - including any restrictions derived from human nature, from the demands of justice, from the good that exists prior to the human will. Ken Myers
  - c. This is inherently self-contradictory - conflicting desires
  - d. My gender is now what I say it is - despite what every strand of DNA in my body declares
  - e. Battle between feminists & transgender community
  - f. Major battle between those proclaiming "born this way" and "I choose to be this way and my sexuality and gender is fluid"

- C. Most views of freedom today are incomplete or downright false, for they do not offer the full freedom God offers to us as His people
- D. Jesus says our real problem is that we are slaves to sin  
They answered him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?”<sup>34</sup> Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. John 8:33–34
1. The real freedom we need is freedom from sin
  2. This is because of the nature of sin - it enslaves
  3. The nature of all sin is to deceive us so it can enslave, distort, and destroy our humanity so we can not be who God has made us to be
  4. We think we can manage sin and contain it, but this is a fools errand. Sin always grows, spreads, & consumes, leaving destruction in its wake.

### III. True Freedom

- A. True freedom is found in Christ  
So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. John 8:36
1. Jesus came to set us free from slavery to sin
  2. This begins with our justification, which frees us from the penalty of sin
  3. But it includes sanctification - increasing freedom from the power to sin
  4. Jesus loves us too much to abandon us to the enslaving, deceiving, distorting, destroying power of sin

- B. Saved from sin and to righteousness  
But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted.<sup>18</sup> You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. Romans 6:17–18
1. Jesus saves us from sin so that we can be slaves to righteousness!
  2. We will serve either sin or righteousness - there is no mere freedom. Thus, true freedom is found in being a slave to righteousness so that our desires and actions are increasingly in line with God’s nature, character and will.
  3. This is restoration to who we were meant to be - and this is true freedom
  4. It has become something of a commonplace among scholars to note that— from at least the time of Plato through the high Middle Ages—the Western understanding of human freedom was inseparable from an understanding of human nature: to be free was to be able to flourish as the kind of being one was... To choose awry, then—through ignorance or maleficence or corrupt longing—was not considered a manifestation of freedom, but of slavery to the imperfect, the deficient, the privative, the (literally) subhuman. Liberty of choice was only the possibility of freedom, not its realization... David B Hart “The Pornography Culture” in The New Atlantis (Summer 2004)

## IV. Applying the Word Of Freedom

### A. Am I experiencing the freedom Christ gives?

1. Have I experienced from from the penalty of sin by having it forgiven in Christ?
  - a. There is no other way to be free from sin's penalty
  - b. Look to Him for forgiveness today!
2. Am I experiencing freedom from sin's destructive power?
  - a. Do not be deceived - sin is always destructive and enslaving
  - b. Make no mistake - sin is its own penalty as it distorts our very humanity
3. Am I letting God's Word define what is sin?

To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. <sup>32</sup> Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:31-32

  - a. Freedom comes from understanding and obeying the word of God
  - b. It does not matter how we feel or what we think the Spirit is saying - it matters what God has said in His Word
4. Am I actively repenting of any known sin?
5. Am I seeking to put off sin and put on righteousness?

### B. The Table of Freedom (worship team to stage)

1. This is the Table of Freedom

2. Jesus gave Himself so we might be truly free
3. We will sing "Jesus Thank You"
4. Reflect on the Gospel - Christ given for you
5. Confess sin - and come to receive power from God

### True Freedom

John 8:31-36

July 2, 2017

Communion

Hebrews 13:20-21

Teaching keywords: freedom; salvation and deliverance; Christian life

May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, <sup>21</sup> equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Hebrews 13:20-21

To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. <sup>32</sup> Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." <sup>33</sup> They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?" <sup>34</sup> Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. <sup>35</sup> Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. <sup>36</sup> So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. John 8:31-36