

# WHAT IS FREEDOM...REALLY?



Are you **free**? Are yo

u **sure**? People think that because they live in America or aren't in prison that they're "**free**." So let's talk about that. Does freedom mean that you can do whatever you want to do? Is a prisoner less free than someone in the "outside world" because he has restrictions placed on him? I will contend that there are far more limiting influences outside of prison than there are inside it. It's all in how you look at the situation, to begin with.



When you really start to think about it, *what is freedom*, anyway? Are you free if people can hurt you? Are you free if you're in debt up to your ears? Are you really free from all the social, religious, and economic pressures that are placed on you each and every day? Freedom is something we all cherish but few ever actually find. So how do we obtain true freedom? Before I share what I believe to be the answer to that question, I would like to share a bit of my personal experience with this whole freedom thing.

In some ways, in very real ways, a prisoner "*behind bars*" has more freedom and has every advantage over someone who appears to have freedom in the world. I have served the Father from the heights of a thriving international ministry reaching millions of people all over the globe in more than eight languages, and I now have the opportunity to serve Him from a very low position, having lost everything along the way. But did I lose my freedom or actually gain

it? And since we're supposed to compare our lives to Yeshua's, let me ask a question: Did Yeshua lose His freedom when He was crucified or did He gain it? What is freedom really? What does it look like?

Inside this facility, these intense training grounds, I have more time to pray, study, contemplate, meditate, calculate, and develop a deeper relationship with Yeshua than I ever did when I was in "full-time ministry." When I was "free" to do what I wanted, life is what told me what to do and that left little time for relationships and the things that are most important in life. And real freedom happens when a real relationship with Christ is truly nurtured, a process that takes time and lots of it.

Friends, real freedom is not following a bunch of rules, checking things off our religious list, or even removing the traditions and doctrines of men from our lives. Religious people are always looking for something to do FOR God, while the Creator is looking for people to do something **WITH** Him. He doesn't need anything, including our worship. He wants a relationship!

**REAL** freedom comes when you can look the Creator Daddy in the eye and know that the only reason you're breathing is because of His great love for you. Real freedom starts with understanding that He *is* love and it is that love that emanates through Him to even give us commandments to follow. Their beginning is love. Their end is love. His entire goal in giving them to us is not to make HIM happy, because He is already perfectly fulfilled within Himself. His goal in guiding us through His decrees is to produce love in us. **REAL** love. Where most people do things out of religious obligation and superficial offerings while they slander their neighbor, judge their brother, and condemn someone of a different color, creed, or walk, the Father is looking for those who have His heart. He's looking for those who understand that in order to walk on water, you must first have the faith to get out of the boat. And to get out of the boat means that you have to ignore the limitations that the mind and society place on an individual and have faith in the One who is, the One who has no limitations.

To be free is to refuse to allow the world to define you, judge you, or even compliment you. Yes, even a compliment can cause the carnal desire for more compliments, which puts you into slavery to perform for applause. Freedom is playing for an audience of One. Freedom is trusting in His Word, His Way, and His promises. Freedom is taking enough time every single day to say, "My Father is important to me and I will not be enslaved to the point where my time with Him is stolen." If real freedom is defined as being set free from this corporeal, earthly habitation to sit in the presence of the King for all eternity, then couldn't it be said that whoever takes, and I do mean takes, the time to sit in His presence is the one that is truly free? Who is in prison really? What is freedom really? If it's true that whoever the Son sets free is free indeed, then when will we live that freedom so it's *felt*?

Freedom is not a place, a country, or the exercise of your own will. Freedom is not being able to do what you want to do. Real freedom is being so close to Him that you know what **HE** wants you to do in every situation, removing the limiting influence of the world and all the critics who come with it. Yahweh has no limits. *And the more time you spend on His lap, the freer you become.*

Shalom,

Jim Staley. - 18 May 2017