

The Bonds of Freedom

Saturday 3 May 2014



1. Our society values freedom and choice. Despite this, would we say that society is still 'held captive' in any ways?
2. What is real freedom? Is the biblical idea of freedom different from the cultural value of freedom?
3. Are Christians more or less free than non-Christians?
4. What kind of decisions lead to further freedom? What kind of choices lead to less free?
5. What things do we do to demonstrate our faith or commitment to Christ? Do we do these things out of law (because I have to) or out of love for self (I want something from it) or love for God (because I want to serve God)?
6. What happens when we find a standard in the Bible that we feel we can not or do not want to live up to?
7. Galatians 5 appears to set the standard as serving out of love. Is it possible to serve for reasons other than love? If you find yourself not serving out of love what is the remedy?
8. Paul indicates that it is possible for others to keep us from obeying. What voices do we listen to that might keep us from obeying?
9. Is salvation by faith in Christ alone or in faith plus works? How do we reconcile our views with the below Bible passages and other verses and thoughts on the issue:
 - a. James Ch 2 *"faith without works is dead"* and *"man is justified by works, and not by faith only"*
 - b. Romans 3:28 *"for we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law"*
10. In Paradise Lost, John Milton parodied humanity's rage against limitations when he had Lucifer declare *"better to reign in hell than to serve in heaven"*. Do you think that freedom with limitations is not freedom at all? Consider also Genesis 2:16-17 *"And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."*
11. Augustine writes that true freedom is not choice or lack of constraint, but being what you are meant to be and that humans were created in the image of God. True freedom then, according to Augustine, is not found in moving away from that image but only in living it out whereby the closer we conform to the image of Christ, the freer we become and the further we drift away from it, the more our freedom shrinks. Do you agree with this view of freedom?

