

PROGRAM 96 TEASER

“Freedom!” That has been the cry of many a soul trapped in slavery to self-appointed “masters.” But the cry for freedom also comes today from many directions—people who feel trapped in jobs, neighborhoods, physical and mental handicaps, abusive marriages and other prisons where they feel there is no escape. But Jesus told us of the worst slavery of all that even the rich and famous cannot escape without His powerful intervention. We take up the ages old universal cry for “FREEDOM” today on More Than Talk.

PROGRAM 96 PAGE 1

FREEDOM!

PAGE 1 The Worst Kind of Slavery

“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:32

Freedom's opposite is slavery. However, there is more than the obvious recognition of slavery - master over servant. The cry for "Freedom!" comes from many directions - people who feel trapped in jobs, neighborhoods, physical and mental handicaps, abusive marriages and other situations, from which they feel there is no likely escape.

But Jesus told us of the worst slavery of all to come upon every human being. In fact, we're actually born into this horrible bondage and, if not for Jesus, we would all die in it. It is slavery to the whip of sin and its whip-master, Satan. Only the all-powerful God can liberate us. He uses the truth to do it, but not just impersonal truth. When Jesus spoke today's scripture, He knew that He Himself was and remains "The Truth." And as "The Way, the Truth and the Life," He can instantly set the prisoner free from the stockade presided over by the father of lies. Let me explain how in a simple song I wrote:

There's a question heard across the land,

One that you'll hear asked on every hand:
Can you tell me the way to be free?
Is there such a thing as liberty?
Open up your heart, then take His hand;
Love the One who is both God and Man:
Ask His will in every little plan;
And you'll be free, you'll be free.
Let the love of God your life control;
Let His Holy Spirit within you flow:
Live for others everywhere you go;
And you'll be free, you'll be free.
Bend to help a neighbor in despair;
Go to one who's hurting, with your care:
Let the things God gives be yours to share;
And you'll be free, you'll be free.

My Prayer: "I love You, dear Father, for sending my Liberator to set me free from sin and self. Let me experience that freedom to the fullest and declare to others that You have sent Jesus with Your Emancipation Proclamation!"

PROGRAM 96 PAGE 2

FREEDOM!

PAGE 2 Exposing The Thief

“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” John 10:10

This verse has been used, and in many ways abused, as few others. Many Christians have grown tired of hearing it, because they have seen it twisted by those who use it to obtain and justify lavish lifestyles, especially in the ministry. And yet Jesus never said anything more meaningful and beautiful than the above words.

I shall tell you in simplicity what He is saying to you and to me. He comes to set us free from our prisons as hated slaves of three monstrous masters who act as one -

Satan, sin and self. In doing this, He makes us sons and daughters of the Godhead - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In Adam's fall, Satan was free to steal us from the Father, to kill us through sin and its effects, and to destroy us by making us victims with him in his own eternal destruction guaranteed by God. But in Jesus' rising from the dead as God's second Adam, the devil's curse was broken and the blood of the Savior opened the door to abundant, overflowing life.

What is that "abundant life?" It is experiencing the full measure of the love of the Father, the grace, favor and mercy of the Son, and the constant fellowship of the Holy Spirit who comes to make His home in you and me. "Abundant life" is His perfect love casting out all fear, joy that is unspeakable and full of glory, and peace that flows like a river and passes human understanding. Abundant life is all that - and more. The more of your heart you give Him, the more of this life He gives you.

My Prayer: "Lord Jesus, You bore agony to give me abundance, carried my sin to grant me holiness, and destroyed my greatest enemy to make me Your friend. I love You - but yearn to love You more!"

PROGRAM 96 PAGE 3

FREEDOM!

PAGE 3 You've Been Adopted!

"For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." Romans 8:15

How many people grow old still wishing they had been born someone else. Maybe a movie star or a rich man or a great intellect. They would have even been proud just to have been adopted into one of those supposedly "important" families. But while those fantasies are worthless (for don't forget, many miserable movie stars, rich men and super-intelleccts wish they had been born someone else!), the Creator of heaven and earth seeks to adopt every human being into His "forever family."

The wonder of it all! When you turned from your sins and asked Jesus to save you, you moved from being a child of wrath (Ephesians 2:3) to being called a "son of God." (Romans 8:14) You were transferred from Satan's kingdom of darkness to Christ's Kingdom of light. Adopted by God as His very own, you are no longer a slave to Satan, sin or self. Now you are free to obey the Holy Spirit who lives within you and will teach you what to think, say and do. And as we please Him through simple obedience, the Spirit will bring a blissful cry from deep within us that says "Abba" - the Hebrew word for "Father" - as we cuddle in God's arms.

I read the following story about some first graders discussing a picture of a family. "One little boy in the picture had a different color hair than the other members. One child suggested that he was adopted and a little girl said, 'I know all about adoption because I was adopted.' 'What does it mean to be adopted?' asked another child. 'It means,' said the little one, 'that you grew in your mommy's heart instead of her tummy.'" See why being adopted by God is so awesome? It all came about by the love in His heart!

My Prayer: "Oh my Abba - my Father - thank You for carrying me in Your heart long before I was carried in my mother's womb. Thank You for adopting me into the most important family of all - Your own! By Your grace, I want to show my appreciation by walking worthy of such an honor"

PROGRAM 96 PAGE 4

FREEDOM!

PAGE 4 The Chain Breaker

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.” Galatians 5:1

No human being ever walks independent of outside invisible spiritual forces, good and evil. You will find yourself yoked up with one or the other. Jesus offers a yoke that brings "relief, ease and refreshment and recreation and blessed quiet for your souls." (Matthew 11:29 Amplified) Satan's is a yoke of slavery. The question is: whose yoke are you accepting - the one where you walk in union with your powerful but gentle Savior, or the other where you are dragged along by a defeated but vengeful Satan?

The answer to that question is not difficult to find. Jesus' yoke lifts and liberates your spirit. You find yourself free to love Him more and more. The devil's yoke tries to drown you - pulling you under the strong currents of your sins and weaknesses. Christ says to you, "I died to cleanse you from your sins. I rose to deliver you from the power of sin." Satan says, "You can never be free from my yoke. Your sins and weaknesses are part of you. Jesus is not enough. You must struggle on in human endeavor!"

Now who will you believe? If Christ stood four feet from you - in visible presence - and declared "I set you free from all slavery to sin!" would you be thrilled and believe Him? He is closer than that - His Spirit is within you just waiting for you to say, "Lord, I believe You!" By faith, place yourself under Jesus' own yoke. As you walk with Him, you will find greater and greater distance between you and the devil's yoke that tries to chain Christians to bitterness, compromise, pride, lust, laziness, judgmentalism, loneliness, fear, guilt, inferiority and whatever else has tried to keep you a slave. You have been set free by the chain-breaker Himself - Christ Jesus. Believe it!

My Prayer: "Father, I want no part of the devil's yoke of bondage. I'm going - now - to confess any sins and weaknesses to You and dare to believe that Your Son's blood and power can cleanse and free me - NOW! Set me free, and help me to stand fast in Your freedom."

PROGRAM 96 PAGE 5

FREEDOM!

PAGE 5 Freedom Forever

"While we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal." 2 Corinthians 4:18

I heard of a man who had an experience of God taking him to heaven. When he met Paul, he asked the great apostle about the sufferings he had endured and received a smile and the answer: "Those sufferings were only for a moment." This lines up with today's scripture and its context. Think of your worst troubles and sufferings as Paul describes his own: "pressed on every side - troubled and oppressed in every way...we suffer embarrassments and are perplexed and unable

to find a way out...persecuted... struck down...constantly being handed over to death for Jesus' sake." (vv 8-11 Amplified) Yet he is found praising God and declaring victory in every trial.

The reason is not hard to find. Paul looked beyond the temporary visible into the eternal invisible: "Though our outer man is decaying and wasting away, yet our inner self is being renewed day after day. For our light, momentary affliction ...this slight distress of the passing hour is...preparing...for us...a vast and transcendent glory and blessedness never to cease!" (vv 16,17 Amplified)

This is taking God's perspective - not man's - on the worst trials of life. You and I must train ourselves to see the invisible hand of God behind anything allowed to touch us. In a moment (compared to eternity) physical pain shall be no more. Questions that perplex will all be answered. Loneliness will be swallowed up by the company waiting for us in heaven. Life's greatest disappointments will vanish when we get that first glimpse of His face and welcoming smile. It will be worth it all when we see Jesus!

My Prayer: "Teach me, my Father, to look beyond this changing world of time and sight and to see everything in light of the invisible reality of eternity."