

## Spiritual Liberation

(Go To Meeting)

Tom Fannin—July 15, 2023

It's really good to be here and enjoying the Sabbath that started the Sabbath morning here with me and my wife and as we prepare a little bit later to be able to go with the brethren and fellowship.

Recently we celebrated in this country, the United States of America, the 4th of July: Independence Day. It's certainly a day to celebrate as we think about this nation that we live in that I've been able to have the privilege of being born into, and being able to partake of the blessings that God's given this nation. Freedom has been a big part of this nation's history and all the promises that God gave to Abraham and that he fulfilled in this nation and the independence given to this nation at that time.

So, when we think about freedom, we enjoy freedoms ourselves freedoms spiritually through our calling that the world right now doesn't have but those of us who have been called by God and have His Spirit we do have this freedom.

We know that this freedom took us out of bondage. It took us out of the bondage of sin and we know it came through Jesus Christ.

Let's turn back there to Rom. 6 and just read a couple Scriptures about this freedom that we all have from the bondage of this world and the bondage of sin.

Romans 6:17: "But thanks *be* to God, that you were *the* servants of sin, but you have obeyed from *the* heart that form of doctrine, which was delivered to you; and having been delivered from sin, you became *the* servants of righteousness. I speak from a human point of view because of the weakness of your flesh; for just as you *once* yielded your members in bondage to uncleanness, and to lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now yield your members **in bondage to righteousness unto sanctification**" (vs 17-19).

There was a point in our lives where we were under bondage, the bondage of sin, and we yielded ourselves to lawlessness, and in continuing into more lawlessness. But once we were called into this freedom we have and this understanding ***then our minds and our outlook changed!*** We wanted to become ***servants of righteousness and build the very mind of Christ!***

This world is in bondage as far as there is a love of the world, a love the things of the world and there's a spirit in this world that holds this world completely in bondage and that comes from Satan.

Isaiah 60:1: "Arise, shine; for your Light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you."

Apply this to ourselves today. Hasn't the Light shined upon us? Certainly it has and with the receiving of God's Spirit we have this Light within us and we'll talk a little bit later about what we are to do with this Light.

Verse 2: "For behold, **the darkness shall cover the earth...**"

That's what we see this darkness covering the earth and that comes from Satan and his demons and that demonic spirit that is covering this earth.

"...and **gross darkness** the people..." (v 2). *There is a gross darkness upon the people in this world all the way down through time!*

When you look at the word *gross* what it means is *there's something there that's obvious but it's unacceptable!* So you may think of things in life that you deemed as being gross—"that is gross"—and that's what's going on in this world. Again, it's ***a gross darkness!***

For those of us who have the Light and have this understanding it's obvious to us what's going on in this world and it's unacceptable, ***and at some point it's going to be removed!*** It comes through Satan and his demonic spirit and it's upon the people.

"...**but the LORD shall arise upon you,** and His glory shall be seen upon you" (v 2).

- Is that true?
- Is God's glory seen upon us?
- Will God's glory be seen upon His people in the Kingdom?
- In the future for Israel?

*We know it will be, but it's seen upon us!*

Verse 3: "And the Gentiles shall come to your Light, and kings to the brightness of your rising."

So, think about us and what we can be doing because as we move further into the message that's what we're going to be talking about. We're kind of on the thought about this world being held in bondage.

Ephesians 2:1: "Now, you were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you walked in times past according to the course of this world..." (vs 1-

2).

We walked the way the world walked. The world has its own course, its own path and we were walking right along with the world.

“...according to the prince of the power of the air...” (v 2).

That’s what we just talked about; ***that darkness that covers the people, covers the earth!***

“...the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience” (v 2).

So it’s a spirit we always have to remember is at work; it’s working continually.

So, let’s now while we’re in Ephesians here let’s go back to Eph. 6 and just ***read about this darkness that’s held this world and keeping this world in bondage!***

Ephesians 6:10—*Paul writes*: “Finally, my brethren, be strong in *the* Lord, and in the might of His strength.”

That is the only true strength we can have; ***it’s in God!*** It’s not going to come from ourselves! Whatever we face in the future as this world becomes more darkened and evil, ***the strength we need it’s going to have to come from God*** and that’s the Source.

Verse 11: **“Put on the whole armor of God so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, because we are not wrestling against flesh and blood...”** (vs 11-12).

If we are wrestling against flesh and blood the battle we’re in may be a little bit different but that’s not what we’re wrestling against here

“...but against principalities *and* against powers, **against the world rulers of the darkness of this age,** against the spiritual *power* of wickedness in high *places*” (v 12).

That’s what we’re warring against that’s what we’re wrestling against, not necessarily people or that the happenings are that that’s going on in this world. ***We’re actually wrestling against and fighting against Satan and this demonic spirit!*** The whole world they don’t realize it but that’s what they are in.

We’re going to talk a little bit about why Christ came. Christ came to bring liberty, freedom as is the title of this messages it’s *liberation* to being able to set someone, people—whatever it may be—free.

Isaiah 61:1: “The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon Me because the LORD has **anointed Me** to

preach the Gospel to the poor; He has **sent Me** to bind up the brokenhearted, **to proclaim liberty** to the captives, and the **opening of the prison** to those who are bound.” *It’s upon Christ to do this and He has done that!*

Verse 2: **“To preach** the acceptable year of the LORD and the day of vengeance of our God; **to comfort all who mourn.”**

So, there’s a lot being talked about here that was planned from the foundation of the world. It’s not over, there’s a lot more to come and we’re going to be a part of that and we’re a part of that now. But ***Christ came to bring liberty to set everyone free who wants to be free!***

Hebrews 2:14: “Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, in like manner He also took part in the same, in order **that through death He might annul him who has the power of death—that is, the devil;** and **that He might deliver those who were subject to bondage** all through their lives by *their* fear of death” (vs 14-15).

Satan we know has the power of death. That’s going to be swallowed up; that power is going to be taken away. There is ***a hope for all men to be able to have eternal life*** and that’s been given to us now. As long as we remain faithful we will have eternal life but that that power, the power of death, Christ annulled and that took that away for what He did by becoming a man and sacrificing Himself for sins!

Psalms 102:18. “This shall be written for the generation to come; and a people who shall be created shall praise the LORD, for He has looked down from the height of His sanctuary; from heaven the LORD beheld the earth to hear the groaning of the prisoner, **to set free those who are appointed to death**” (vs 18-20).

So you know we were called at this time and many down through time have been called and receive God’s Spirit to be able to be firstfruits in God’s Kingdom but God has looked down upon the earth. He knows man. He created mankind in His image and He loves man and He wants all people to repent. He wants everyone to be a part of the Kingdom that wants to be a part of the Kingdom.

But he looks down upon earth and He sees man. He notices mankind and He wants to sit all mankind free, all those who want that freedom. And we know there are some that don’t.

Knowing what God and Jesus Christ have done for us

- Are there things we can do to help set others free?
- In our lives, physical lives we have today, what can we be doing?

We do have an impact on other people as we live our spiritual lives. In the things we do now we know we're preparing for the future, because in God's kingdom we'll be doing a lot, especially in that thousand-year period and later a hundred-year period for a second resurrection. We're going to be doing a lot to help people. Just like I talked about in Psalm as God looks down upon people and He wants to set him free from that power of death.

We're going to be involved in that. So there's things we're learning in this life, this physical life to be able to help later. But there are things we can be doing now to set people free, and I'm talking about those within the Church and I'm also talking about those within the world.

It's good to remind ourselves what we've been given and what we know because ***there are not a lot of how many people on the face of this earth that know what we know and have been given what we've been given*** and there's a lot of accountability for what we know and what we've been given.

Matthew 13:12: "For whoever has *understanding*, to him more shall be given, and he shall have an abundance, but whoever does not have *understanding*, **even what he has shall be taken away from him.**"

So, we do have understanding and all of us continue to get more and more understanding. There are things we need to do to get more understanding. It has a lot to do with our relationship with God and Christ and our desire for that. In the effort we put forth there's different things we do ourselves for that understanding but nonetheless we continue to have more understanding. It has a lot to do with our love of God in Christ and the Law: Their Laws and Their Ways.

Verse 16: "But **blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear.** For truly I say to you, many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see what you see, and have not seen; and to hear what you hear, and have not heard" (vs 16-17).

Just think about what we've been able to ***see, know and understand!*** What do we do with that? In this life we're living now this physical life?

We'll kind of plainly see what Christ says we should be doing with this.

Matthew 5:14—*Christ speaking*: "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a

mountain cannot be hid. Neither do they light a lamp and put it under a bushel basket, but on the lampstand; and it shines for all who *are* in the house" (vs 14-15).

There's a purpose for it! The city that's lit up can be seen from a long distance away. When they light a lamp it's there for a purpose not there to be covered up; it's there to bring light so there's visibility. What Christ says here in v 16 he says in the same way.

Verse 16: "In the same way also, you are to let your Light shine before men, so that they may see your good works..."

There's something about us that needs to be seen and we'll be talking about hearing, also. People in this world need to see something from us. But we also at the same time within the Church have a responsibility to set examples to others, also. In the examples we set within the Church to help others and encourage others and strengthen others.

It's a Light nonetheless to others and why? Why? *Well it says right here because of this, because the good works that are seen!*

**"...and may glorify your Father Who is in heaven"** (v 16).

***That's the whole purpose of our life, whatever it is, that God receives the glory. Because:***

- what we do
- what we have
- what we understand
- any example we set for others to see

***it from God!***

His calling, His Spirit within us and how He's worked with us to give us these things. **The glory of whatever is seen in us goes back to God** and we always have to be mindful when we get that opportunity to remember God and ***give the credit to God!***

I think about a lot of the people I work with and I've had an opportunity in my career to be in leadership, to be able to influence a lot of people. To be able to hire a lot of people, to build departments and be a part of startups and I've really enjoyed that.

Hopefully over the many, many years I've done this I've been able to set a good example for the people around me. One thing I take notice of is how they treat me by the example they see. I noticed a lot that there's conversations that are had they don't have with me. When they're in my presence they conduct themselves in a different way.

Even when it comes to clean and unclean meats or an understanding they have of me and how I keep the Holy Days or the Sabbath. They understand what I do and they respect that.

Do they do those things? *No!* But at least the example we all set, it's noticed. It gets put in the mind of people. So, it may help them now; it may help them later. We don't know; but nonetheless we are a Light and we do have an effect on people.

I want to talk a little bit about you know what the church should be doing. What all of us should be doing.

Isaiah 42:6: "I the LORD have called You in righteousness, and will hold Your hand, and will keep You, and give You for a covenant of the people, for a Light to the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, those who sit in darkness out of the prison house. I *am* the LORD; that *is* My name; and My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to graven images" (vs 6-7).

Just speaking here again about Christ and what Christ is doing and will be doing. But it also applies again to us and the Church and what we need to be doing in the preaching of the Gospel. They help:

- to bring light to those in this world
- to bring something to them they haven't heard before: ***the Truth!***

Then they can choose to believe or not. Maybe this time isn't the time for them. It might be a later time but nonetheless there are those whom God is calling and working with now, and maybe they hear through us. But there's a certain way this is done is it's talked about here in v 8 because it's through God and through His name.

His glory is not going to be given through another. It's directly through Him that our preaching comes. He's not going to have it done another way. There are a lot of different ways churches of this world try to reach out to people.

***But God only reaches out through His Truth*** not any other way. That's how we need to approach things in the Church and what we do.

Think about Paul there at Mars Hill and the message he gave there to the Athenians. He talked about God and he talked about Jesus Christ and the authority given to Him. He talked about God commanding all men everywhere to repent. So again, the message the Church has today is to be given.

Let's go back to Heb. 4; I want to just talk about something here that's really important for us to remember and get within the Church and within our example. We continually come to God and Jesus Christ and we should always be directing people to God and Christ.

Hebrews 4:14: "Having, therefore, a great High Priest..."

That's Who we have. We have Jesus Christ. He's our High Priest. He's ours!

"...*Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession *of our faith*" (v 14).

There we there is a faith that we have that, we possess. There's a confession of it, and we hold on to that dearly.

Verse 15: "For we do not have a High Priest Who cannot empathize with our weaknesses, but *One Who* was tempted in all things according to *the likeness of our own temptations*; yet, *He* was without sin."

So, Jesus Christ knows very much what it is to be flesh, what it is to live in this world. He knows that and He sits at God's right hand!

Verse 16: "Therefore, we should come with boldness to the Throne of Grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

We always have time of need. I don't think anybody listening to this message will ever say:

I never have time of need walking in this physical life I'm in. I'm fine. I never have struggles. I never have difficulties. I never have trials. I never have issues in my life.

We're always in time of need. So, we boldly can come before God and Jesus Christ and ask for help and They give it to us. But you know we can always direct others to the same Source we come to and that's what we should be doing. Within the Church primarily reminding everyone that's what we need to be doing. But also there's opportunities also to help those within the world and direct them to God and Christ. Well there's a proper way to do this.

Romans 10:14: "***How then shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed?....***"

How are they going to do that? Call upon God and Christ Whom they have not believed. Maybe not heard. Maybe not known of.

***"...And how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without preaching?"*** (v 14).

You have to hear about it. right? *You've got to hear about God and Christ—the Word—Their plan and the Truth!*

Verse 15: “And how shall they preach, unless they be sent?....”

- Who's being sent?
- Who's the Light of the world?
- What's the Church?

“...Accordingly, it is written, ‘How beautiful *are* the feet of those who announce the Gospel of Peace, and those who announce the good news of good things!’” (v 15).

Isn't that true? *The ones who bring this Gospel of Peace and Good News!* What a great announcement that is. It has an effect in this world today. But certainly in the thousand-year period and on into the Kingdom. But it's going to have a huge effect then on all those that we're going to be able to serve and help.

Verse 16: “But all have not obeyed the Gospel, because as Isaiah said, ‘Lord, who has believed our report?’”

So there will be hopefully many, many who believe but some may not believe and some may not choose to follow God.

Verse 17: “So then, faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing through *the* Word of God.”

That's the only way it can be done. It comes by hearing right? But hearing through the Word of God. That's the only way. Again, *the glory goes back to God continually!* That's why it's important that we know God's Word, all of us. Again, to be a Light to help anyone God may bring to us to help, because we don't know who God may bring to us at any time that we are influencing. We're setting them free, *because there is a freedom in the hearing of the Truth!* Christ talks about that.

John 8:31: “Therefore, Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, ‘**If you continue in My Word, you are truly My disciples**’”

So another thing that we know identifies the disciples of Christ and those who belong to Christ *is the love that we have for one another!* But yet, *continuing in the words of Jesus Christ, His Word, is another identification of his disciples!*

Verse 32: “And **you shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall set you free.**”

There's the Truth that we have. But this Truth we have it helps set others free, too. Because there's this power within God's Truth. *The world is*

*in the middle of a lie*, but this Truth is a power and we possess it and we're able to share it with others, and it truly sets others free.

Something that's important for us just to keep in mind in James 2. As we read here we just want to think about what is seen in us.

James 2:14: “My brethren, what good *does* it do, if anyone says *that he* has faith, and does not have works? Is faith able to save him? Now then, if there be a brother or sister who is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; be warmed and be filled,’ and does not give to them the things necessary for the body, what good is it?” (vs 14-16).

Verse 17: “In the same way also, faith, if it does not have works, **is dead by itself**. But someone is going to say, ‘You have faith, and I have works.’ *My answer is:* You prove your faith to me through your works, and **I will prove my faith to you through my works**” (vs 14-18). So, *it has to be seen in us!*

- our faith
- what we pronounce
- what we talk about
- what others hear.

*But then there needs to be something that's seen:*

- works
- things that we do
- our faithfulness
- our consistency

*That's part of it! So, both those components need to be seen in us and it has an impact!*

I want to talk about for a moment *the freedom of hope!*

1-Peter 3:15: “But sanctify the Lord God in your own hearts, and always *be* prepared to give an answer to anyone who asks you the reason for the hope *that is* in you... [then there's a way here to do it]: ...with meekness and reverence.”

Again the glory goes to God. Our attitudes are humble towards what we know and what we understand. Always having reverence and meekness in this and how we answer but there is a hope that lies within us. There is a reason behind our hope and at times we're asked: What is that? And at times God may lead us to have conversations or give input to others as well. As we'll see later, God does lead us into these opportunities to help other people.

*But hope is a powerful thing!* We can put hope into the minds of people. It's like a seed. A lot of things I'm talking about here, as far as giving people freedom, it's like a seed we put in their mind. Maybe it'll have value later but nonetheless by what

people see and what they hear from us *we are placing some freedom within them* whether we realize that or not.

Acts 8—We're going to read about Philip here.

Acts 8:26: "Now, an angel of *the* Lord spoke to Philip, saying, 'Arise and go toward *the* south, on the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza, which is *in the* desert.' And he arose *and* went. And behold, an Ethiopian man, a eunuch, one in power under Candace... [here's a man who has authority under Candice] ...the queen of *the* Ethiopians, who was over all her treasure and had come to worship in Jerusalem" (vs 26-27).

So, if you can think of a person being set in that position over the all the treasures of Ethiopia under Candice and he certainly was a person that had power in this world so to speak.

Verse 28: "And was returning; and he sat in his chariot, reading *the book of* the prophet Isaiah."

So you can maybe picture this. Here's this person sitting there and traveling back home and he's reading.

Verse 29: "Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go near and join yourself to this chariot.'"

Sometimes we read these things that talks about the Spirit said to Philip go and do this. When we read this we just know that God is involved in this and directing Philip to do something here.

We think about ourselves our times that God is involved in directing us to do things. We may not know at that time what we've done and then sometimes we may know exactly what's going on. But God through his Spirit leads us to do certain things.

Verse 30: "And when Philip ran up, he heard him reading *the words of* the prophet Isaiah, and said, 'Do you understand what you are now reading?' And he said, '**But how am I able to understand, without someone to guide me?**'...." (vs 30-31).

Isn't that what we just read back in Rom. 10? *There needed to be **a hearing** to help bring **understanding**.*

"...And he besought Philip to come up and sit with him. Now, the passage of Scripture that he was reading was this, 'He was led as a sheep to slaughter; and as a lamb *is* dumb before the one who is shearing it, so He did not open His mouth. In His humiliation, His judgment was taken away; and who shall declare His genealogy? For His life is taken from the earth'" (vs 31-33).

Verse 34: "And the eunuch answered *and* said to Philip, 'I pray you, about whom does the prophet say this? About himself, or about another?' Then Philip opened his mouth and, beginning from this Scripture, preached to him the Gospel *of* Jesus. And as they were going down the road, they came upon a certain *pool of* water; and the eunuch said, 'Look, *there is* water! What is preventing me from being baptized?'" (vs 34-36).

Philip had preached the Gospel of Jesus from that point and I say it forward. So he got to hear and there was a calling there being given to this eunuch.

Verse 37: "And Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart...'"

A primary condition for everyone who goes into covenant with God and Christ have to get to: ***a belief with all the heart!***

"...it is permitted.' Then he answered *and* said, 'I believe *that* Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' And he commanded the *one driving the* chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him" (vs 37-38).

So again, what I'm reading is here is in the case of Philip and the eunuch or us. We never know how God may be using us to help others to set others free.

I'm going to read a couple other examples here also. I want to what a wonderful thing there for Philip though to be able to be involved with that eunuch and his conversion and his baptism. We're going to read a couple examples here:

Acts 16:9: "And a vision appeared to Paul during the night. A certain man of Macedonia was standing, beseeching him and saying, 'Come over to Macedonia *and* help us.'

So again, how God works but there was something there Paul received right during the night. His vision that there was something he was required to go do.

Verse 10: "And after he had seen the vision, we immediately sought to go into Macedonia..."

When he got that it's like we need to go! This is what God's leading us to go do and:

"...concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the Gospel to them... [a combination of God and Jesus Christ] ...Therefore, after sailing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and on the next day to Neapolis; and from there *we went* to Philippi, which is *the* primary city in *that* part of Macedonia, *and* a colony. And we

stayed in this city *for* a number of days. Then on **the day of the weeks**..." (vs 10-13)—which we know is Pentecost!

There's seven Sabbaths complete so this was the day of the weeks the 50<sup>th</sup> Day on Pentecost.

"...we went outside the city by a river, where *it* was customary *for* prayer to be *made*; and after sitting down, we spoke to the women who were gathered together *there*" (v 13).

So that's where they were led to and they had an opportunity to preach to the women gathered there by that river.

Verse 14: "And a certain woman who worshiped God was listening; *she* was named Lydia *and* was a seller of purple from *the* city of Thyatira; whose heart the Lord opened to receive the things spoken by Paul."

That's an important key right there to remember when it comes to *God's calling and leading anyone into Covenant with Him through Christ!*

There is a drawing that God has for those he calls. There is an opening of the heart, of the mind, for these things to be received. So that's a very important verse to remember and think about when it comes to God calling and what eventually hopefully leads to baptism. An opening of the heart, an opening of the mind.

Verse 15: "And after she and her household were baptized, she besought *us*, saying, 'If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house *and* lodge *there*.' And she constrained us."

So again just an example of how Paul and Silas there and the others traveling with them had the opportunity through the preaching for those to hear, and then God had opened their minds and their hearts and they were converted. We'll continue on in this chapter and read another example but I want to kind of drop down now to v 22.

Breaking into the story here we know why Paul was in that area. There was a certain woman there that had a demonic influence and she used divining and she used this divining to help the ones she worked for receive an income and she was following Paul and Silas and the others around and Paul cast this spirit, this demon out of her through the name of Jesus Christ. When this happened the ones who were gaining a profit from her realized what had been done and that's something we can take note of in this world today.

There are those in this world still today that do this very same thing. They used demonic spirits

and powers to create profitability for others and they know it. It happens today, too!

But anyway, when that went away that power for them to receive a profit and money they were really upset and they knew it, and they were mad at Paul and they were mad at Silas over this so let's break into the story here in:

Verse 22: "Then a multitude rose up against them, and the captains tore off their garments, *and* commanded *that they* be beaten with rods. And after laying many stripes on them, they cast *them* into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them safely" (vs 22-23).

Let's just keep this in mind that the jailer was commanded okay you need to keep them keep them safe. Didn't want them to get out of this prison they were putting being put into it was the jailers responsibility for this.

Verse 24: "After receiving this command, he threw them into the inner prison and secured their feet with stocks. But about midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing praises to God, and the prisoners were listening to them" (vs 24-25).

So, can just kind of imagine maybe being there here's Paul and Silas and they've got their wounds, and I'm sure they're in pain, but for their comfort they're praying and singing, and sometimes I think about when I read this, us and in the future we don't know what may come for any of us.

Imprisonment may come for some of us we don't know. But maybe at that time comes we can think about some of these Scriptures here and certainly be praying ourselves and maybe be singing hymns. But we are to focus and think about God's Word and many people before us have gone through a lot of difficulties. So, they're singing here but the prisoners are listening it's quiet and it's midnight and they're listening to what they're doing.

Verse 26: "And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so *great* that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors opened, and the bonds of all were loosed." *Everybody was loosed set free.*

Verse 27: "When the jailer awoke from his sleep and saw the doors of the prison open, he drew a sword and was about to kill himself, supposing *that* the prisoners had escaped."

Think about that! The jailer knew he was responsible for these men for their safekeeping and their imprisonment. He was personally tasked with that under that authority, and he knew what was going to happen to himself. He gave himself the sentence of death. He was going to take his own life.

Just think about that. If he would have done that how horrible that would have been. Somebody would have had later on to go back to his wife and his family and say your husband and your father is dead. Killed himself! But that didn't happen here. It says:

Verse 28: "But Paul called out with a loud voice, saying, 'Do not harm yourself; for we are all here.' And after asking for lights, he rushed in and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas" (vs 28-29).

What's happening here? Well we know there's a calling being offered here. There was an opening of the mind and of the heart, and Paul and Silas were directly involved in this.

Verse 30: "And when he had brought them out, he said, 'Sirs, what must I do, that I may be saved?'"

Total change of attitude, a change of mind and change of heart here. Repentance was coming. *Repentance was being done at that time!*

Verse 31: "Then they said, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, you and your household.' And they spoke the Word of the Lord to him, and to all those in his house" (vs 31-32). *Again a speaking of the Word of God!*

Verse 33: "And he took them in that hour of the night, and washed *their* wounds; and he and all his *household* were immediately baptized. Then he brought them into his house *and* laid out a table *for them*; and **he rejoiced with all his household, who had believed in God**" (vs 33-34).

So just think about that, what all transpired that night? From the example that Paul and Silas said with their praying and their singing to the jailer:

- because of all the prisoners being set free
- because of the earthquake
- because of their chains and their bonds falling off
- because of the doors opening

Then the jailer looked like he was going to take his life but then quickly things turn around and he has repentance and they move into baptism and covenant with God. Not only him but his whole household. So, quite a bit happened there in that one night!

Paul and Silas had a lot to do with that. So, we look at these things for an example for us again and what we can do to set others free and help them.

As a note here, when it comes to baptism a lot of times in the Church, what we've practiced with baptism, it takes some time:

- you need to understand what you're doing
- you need to count the cost
- you need to make sure you understand the Scriptures and what that covenant means

That's a good thing to do. But as we've seen here in the examples, *baptism can happen very quickly!* Whether it was the eunuch, or Lydia, or the jailer in his household, **repentance:**

- the opening of the mind
- the changing of the heart
- the calling God gives

Can come quickly and it can come by something just like we saw here with the jailer, something that came into someone's life as a trial or a difficulty.

But then it led to this change and it was quick. It happened that quickly, but again it was based upon belief. God opening their minds, **belief in God and Jesus Christ and a repentance in accepting God and Christ**, but particularly Jesus Christ as the *personal* Savior to be delivered from this.

So we can have the that kind of influence brethren on people the same way. Well there's a way we use this freedom, because we have a freedom, don't we? All of us! Whether we meditate on that a lot or not, we've been given a freedom that others don't have.

Galatians 5:13: "For you have been called unto freedom, brethren..."

We didn't get called into bondage into this world. We got **called into freedom into the bondage of righteousness!**

"...only do not *use* this freedom for an occasion to the flesh..." (v 13).

That's not how we use our freedom. **It's the Spirit that gives Life, the flesh profits nothing!** So this freedom that we've been given we use this freedom:

- towards the Spirit
- the power of the Spirit
- the fruits of the Spirit

*That's how we are to use this freedom!*

"...rather, serve one another with love" (v 13).

There's a lot there to meditate and think upon, but that's how we use this freedom is to serve others. Serve one another in love for the whole Law



is fulfilled in this commandment: ***you shall love your neighbor as yourself!*** Brethren, that's something for us to consider the freedom we have!

But how do we use that freedom? Well, at times we hold others accountable within the Church. Also in the world sometimes we have opportunities to hold people accountable ***to give people freedom from this world from this darkness*** so they can hear something that they need to hear.

Let's go back to Jude. We'll read about the things we can be doing here I should be doing in Jude.

Jude 20: "But you, beloved, *be* building up yourselves on your most Holy faith, praying in *the* Holy Spirit."

But we saw from Paul and Silas. they were definitely praying in the Holy Spirit!

Verse 21: "*So that* you keep yourselves in *the* love of God..."

That's why we pray in the Holy Spirit because we need to keep ourselves in a certain way and that's in the love of God.

"...while you are personally awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Now on the one hand, show mercy to those individuals who are doubting; but on the other hand, save others with fear, snatching *them* out of the fire, hating even the garment *that has been* defiled by the flesh" (vs 21-23).

Whatever situation we're put into to help others to give others freedom we have to use discernment, and then we look to God to give us guidance in helping these things and He does.

But we show mercy to some and some we pull them out of the fire and we have the ability at times to do that and that's certainly giving freedom.

Recently my wife and I were up in a TSC store in the town I live in and doing a little shopping and happened to see a fellow walk by.

I recognized him but he had grown up a lot since I'd seen him before, I used to do business with his dad and his dad and I would stand in his barn and his dad was a minister in a Protestant church. I can tell you being a minister in a Protestant church the type of minister he was there was a lot of knowledge he had. But there are a lot of things he didn't have that we know of because God shined upon us and put the Truth within us. But there was a lot of things that his dad did understand and we had a lot of good conversations about God and the Kingdom and God's Word.

I enjoyed the time with his dad his name was Jerry he was good guy to spend time with and I gave him a book one day one of the CBCG books: *Occult Holidays or God's Holy Days—Which?* I gave that to him to read because at times we would talk about some of the pagan holidays and he had understanding of their origins and they didn't keep those things in this church that he was a minister of.

But his son who at that time was probably a teenager and he would hang out with us. He'd listen and he would get involved in some of the conversations, but nonetheless, at that time he was just listening to what his dad said and maybe what I said.

So, what was going on there? ***A hearing of the Word, a planting of the seed, a potential freedom!***

So fast forward to Rhonda I being in TSC here recently I saw I saw this fellow walk by that was grown up and now he has a wife and some small children and he walked by me and then he came back and he said, 'Do you know who I am?' I said, 'You're Jerry's son,' and he said 'yes!' So we talked for a little bit. He said, 'Are you still a Seventh-Day Adventist? I kind of smiled I said, 'Well, no I'm not a Seventh-Day Adventist but I do keep the Sabbath and keep the Holy Days also.'

He said, 'I've been reading and you know the Sabbath is the day we should keep, that's Saturday, that's the seventh day. We should be keeping that. We also should be eating clean foods, do you do that?' I said, 'Yeah we do that!'

So, what's happening there? What am I observing? ***Potentially, God opening up somebody's mind!***

He went on to talk and said, 'I've been talking to my dad in the church and I'm trying to explain these things to him that we should be doing, but they won't listen to me.'

Unless God again opens your minds to these things you may not be able to listen or understand, but he was beginning to understand some things. So, I had a good conversation with him that day but as we drew towards the end of the conversation he said:

"Well, you know I'm gonna be in the Kingdom and thankfully God's grace and the grace of Christ will cover me. I may be least in the kingdom but it'll cover me for the things that I'm doing now that I basically shouldn't be doing.'

So, I had an opportunity there maybe some of us face these opportunities where I could leave somebody in bondage to that teaching to that understanding that all we have to do is look upon the

grace of Christ the grace given to us and we can still continue to live and sin where Paul says plainly 'where grace is applied should we continue sinning? MAY IT NEVER BE!'

So, I had the opportunity there to let him believe that or set him free. The obvious choice was I had the opportunity to set someone free, and I told him, 'No that's not how it is; once you come to an understanding of the Truth in these things. that Christ died and gave His life for the remission of sins. ***But we're no longer go walking those things once that understanding comes to us!*** We are to live by God's Word.'

He asked if he could call sometime and maybe come to services with us sometime. I said 'Yeah, certainly, if you got any questions or need anything call me.' Sometime I'm hoping to get a call from him where he wants to know more and maybe I'll see him and perhaps ***God's extending a calling to him*** and he'll answer that call, I hope.

But again, I bring that up as an example for all of us we never know what situation we're going to be put in to help others. So, when those situations come that God presents because there's no doubt in my mind as Rhonda and I talked about that later ***God brought that opportunity for that to happen!***

For that to be talked about when those things happen and we have an opportunity to leave somebody in bondage or to help set someone free. *We always want to pick setting someone free through the Word of God, through the Truth, and God's Spirit will lead us to do this!*

Romans 8:18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time *are* not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation itself is awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God" (vs 18-19).

Think about that! Who are the sons of God? *They're waiting for it's waiting for us!*

Verse 20: "Because the creation was subjected to vanity, not willingly..."

This darkness that covers the earth, all that's going on. It was this earth this world was subjected to that! Satan and his rebellion and with his demons in that spirit that's here this whole world is held captive to all that!

"...not willingly but by reason of Him who subjected *it* in hope" (v 20).

That's all we read about earlier in Peter, ***a reason for our hope*** subjected by reason by God. This is subjected in hope there's a hope coming.

Verse 21: "In order that the creation itself might be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God."

So that's part of our calling is to be involved in ultimately what Christ did to set everyone free and have the opportunity for freedom from the bondage of this world. We'll play a big part in that, and we can play a big part in that now.

So, brethren, ***we have freedom through Christ let's use this freedom we have to help others in this life we're living in now and to look forward to ultimately and completely helping others in the Kingdom of God!***

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 6:17-19
- 2) Isaiah 60:1-3
- 3) Ephesians 2:1-2
- 4) Ephesians 6:10-12
- 5) Isaiah 61:1-2
- 6) Hebrews 2:14-15
- 7) Psalm 102:18-20
- 8) Matthew 13:12, 16-17
- 9) Matthew 5:14-16
- 10) Isaiah 42:6-8
- 11) Hebrews 4:14-16
- 12) Romans 10:14-17
- 13) John 8:31-32
- 14) James 2:14-18
- 15) I Peter 3:15
- 16) Acts 8:26-38
- 17) Acts 16:9-15, 22-34
- 18) Galatians 5:13
- 19) Jude 1:20-23
- 20) Romans 5:18-21

#### Also referenced:

Book: *Occult Holidays or God's Holy Days—Which?* by Fred R. Coulter

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