

The Old Paths

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“Thoughts About True Freedom”

R.L. Whiteside (1869-1951)

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn. 8:31-32).

People who long for freedom usually know little of what it is nor do they know how to obtain it. An illustration or two may help us see what freedom is. A machine runs free when all parts move as the designer intended. A living thing is free when it moves unhampered in the element, or surroundings, in which God intended it to live. A fish in water, not in a net or otherwise confined, is free; for there is where God intended it to live. Out of its element it is not free. Contrary to speculative theology, man's natural element is righteousness. That is the element in which the creator intended that he should live and in which he is placed. He is not free anywhere else any more than a fish is free on dry land. By sin man, each man, brings himself into bondage. Adam's sin did not bring you into bondage to sin; you did that yourself. "Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (Jn. 8:34).

While living in sin, men are under the most servile slavery, from which there is only one way to escape. "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye

have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:17-18).

Obedience to the truth is the Lord's way of making us free from the bondage of sin. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (Jn. 8:36). But Jesus forces freedom on no one.

Editor's Note:

We have just passed another milestone in the history of our country on July 4. While folks think back to our country's founding 238 years ago, and think of those who sacrificed their "lives", "fortunes", and "sacred honor" for what we often take for granted, I thought it would be good to be reminded of our true freedom in Christ.

One who is a Christian can live in any country in the world, and still be free! Freedom in Christ is not dependent upon man's whims, nor who is controlling the government. We can be free from sin and wickedness through Christ. This is what is taught by Christ, as brother Whiteside showed us. Also, the apostle Paul spoke of true freedom in Romans 6:16-18.

In our country, it is wonderful to celebrate our freedom. As Christians, let us remember true freedom is found in Christ, now and always!

- JJ

THE FOUNDERS AND EARLY LEADERS OF THIS COUNTRY KNEW GOD

Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790)

"He who shall introduce into public affairs the principles of primitive Christianity will change the face of the world."

"God governs in the affairs of men; and if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, neither can a kingdom rise without his aid." (See: Daniel 4:32, 5:21; Matt. 10:29, JJ)

"If your riches are yours, why don't you take them with you to the other world?" (See: Matt. 6:19-21, JJ)

George Washington (1732-1799)

"Associate yourself with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation, for it is better to be alone than in bad company." (See: I Cor. 15:33, JJ)

"It is impossible to govern the world without God and the Bible."

Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)

"Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just."

Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)

"All things desirable to men are contained in the Bible."

"I am not concerned whether God is on my side or not, but I am concerned whether I am on God's side."

.... OUR COUNTRY'S
LEADERS NEED TO KNOW
HIM TODAY!

What Would Jesus Desire?

Aric Russell

In times past it was quite common to see someone with a shirt, or a hat, or maybe a bracelet that read "WWJD." This, as many of us know, stands for, "What would Jesus do?" I believe it is great to ask yourself, "what would Jesus do?" However, I think we should take that one step further and ask, "What would Jesus desire?"

If we turn to Matthew 28:19-20, we can learn exactly what Jesus desires of each and every one of us. The text reads, *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."* Let us consider this text and consider what Jesus would desire of each of us.

We first notice that Jesus desires us to become His disciples. A disciple is one who is a follower of Christ. Luke 6:40 tells us that a disciple is one who desires to be like his teacher. In this case, our teacher is Jesus Christ. Jesus also desires that we strive to live a life like He lived. Paul also told us in I Corinthians 11:1 to *"imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ."*

We also see from this passage that Jesus desires that we all be baptized. Acts 2:38 teaches that baptism is needed for the remission sins. I Peter 3:21 says, *"There is also an antitype which now saves us - baptism (not the removal of filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ."* We see

that without baptism, our sins are not washed away and we have not gained salvation through Jesus Christ. Will you do what Jesus desires and be baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:3-7)?

Lastly, Jesus desires that we keep His commandments. Baptism, you see, is just the beginning. Many think that after they are baptized they can do what they please. However, we must continue to do the things Jesus has commanded. Jesus said in John 8:31 *"If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed."* To be His disciples, we must abide in His word. That is, we must live our lives as He has instructed in the scriptures.

"What would Jesus do?" This is a very good question to ask in difficult times. "What would Jesus desire?" is a question we should ask ourselves at all times. Are you living your life to do the things that Jesus would desire of you today? Are there things in your life that you need to change in order to do the things that Jesus desires?

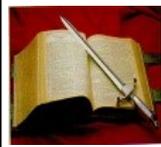
Facts Do Not Cease To Exist Just Because They Are Ignored!
Aldous Huxley, *"Proper Studies"*, 1927
English critic & novelist (1894 - 1963)

A.D. 33 OR 1906?

James P. Miller
Searching the Scriptures, April 1962

I am indebted to our beloved brother A. W. Dicus for this masterpiece of logic relative to the establishment of the church. In conversation with one of the brethren in Tampa who had revolted against the score of loyal churches in the city and divided the body to start an institutional group on the north side, brother Dicus asked this question, Can a church be a loyal congregation of the Lord's people and not contribute or believe in contributing to a human institution out of the treasury? If the brother had answered, "Yes," he then would not have been justified in starting another congregation. However, he answered, "No," to which brother Dicus replied, "Well, you will have to change the date for the establishment of the true church of Christ. You will have to stop preaching that it was established on Pentecost in A.D. 33, and start teaching that it began after the founding of Spring Hill Orphan Home in 1906." Brethren, that is not about it, as one of the old greats used to say, that is exactly it. The church of the Lord as it was known in the New Testament and as we know it today, did not give a dime out of the treasury to a human institution for some 1800 years. Are you ready to change the date?

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