

“WITH A GREAT SUM OBTAINED I THIS FREEDOM”

INTRODUCTION

Many have viewed the movie BRAVEHEART, which portrays Mel Gibson as Wallace in his effort to free the Scots from King Edward Longshank of England, who was known to hammer the Scots. The film vividly portrays the efforts of Wallace to free the Scots, and the efforts of Longshank to capture Wallace and have him beg for “mercy” before being put to death. Wallace was betrayed by a friend, and was captured and tortured. While Longshank lay on his death bed waiting for the news of the cry for mercy from Wallace, Wallace finally yelled out, not for mercy, but the word “FREEDOM”.

On July 4, 1776, the declaration of Independence was signed, declaring our FREEDOM from the rule and tyranny of the British. Each year we observe this day as a day of celebration. The word “freedom” is found only one time in the King James Version of the New Testament, and is used by an uninspired “chief captain”, recorded in Acts 22:26. He said to Paul, “With a great price obtained I this freedom”, referring to his own Roman citizenship. The Greek word is *politeia*, which means “citizenship.” This reminds us of the great price Americans have paid for its political freedom, from its battles with the British, and other wars through the years. This man's statement is the title for our lesson at this hour, as we think of our own freedoms in America, and making special application of freedoms we have in Christ, wherever we might live. The chief captain paid a great price for his freedom, reminding us of the great price Jesus paid for our freedom, and the sacrifices we have to make to enjoy it.

DISCUSSION

I. 1st, let's consider the NEED FOR FREEDOM.

- A. The history of mankind has been one of “bondage”, or a loss of freedom.
 - 1. The Jews were in bondage for some 200 years in Egypt as their nation was being formed, and later came under Babylonian captivity, and along with Christians, under the Roman tyranny.
 - 2. Slavery has been a scourge over the land for centuries, and still is being practiced in some parts of the world.
 - 3. The WORLD today is in bondage to **SIN**, and needs to be made free.
Rom. 3:19, 23; 1 John 5:19
 - a. There are SO many areas where our minds and bodies can and often do become enslaved to sin.
 - b. These are the basic areas of enslavement that are affected.
 - 1) There is enslavement to tobacco, marijuana, heroine and other drugs that begin with **one** experiment, and destroy both souls and bodies.
 - 2) Then, there is the practice of viewing pornography that addicts the mind to corrupt illicit or perverted sexual activity, bringing disease, rape and corruption of the mind to many young and old alike. 2 Tim. 3:8; cf 1 John 2:15-17; 2 Pet. 2:14
- B. Heaven recognized this need, and send Jesus to make man “free.”
 - 1. Immediately upon His baptism and temptation, He went into a synagogue in Nazareth and read from the Old Testament about His own coming to bring freedom. Luke 4:16-21
 - a. This was followed by some divine instructions from Jesus.
 - b. As a result, the first effort to kill Jesus was put into force, as they led Him to brow of a hill in Nazareth to cast Him down, but He went through midst and went His way.

2. Jesus did not come into the world to bring national or physical freedom, but to bring inner freedom of the souls of mankind, from the evil one.

II. 2nd, let's consider the MEANS OF FREEDOM.

- A. Freedom comes through the message of **WORD of truth** which contains the instructions for accomplishing freedom. John 8:31, 32
 - 1. The means of freedom is the word or truth of CHRIST.
 - 2. The application of the instruction comes through “knowledge” OF that truth.
 - a. Just to lay a Bible on the table, or put a New Testament into the pocket of an individual, does **not** bring freedom.
 - b. One must “know” and submit to the instructions found therein. John 8:32; 2 Pet. 2:21-22
- B. Then, freedom is said to come FROM the **“Son of God.”** John 8:36
 - 1. What we DO to obtain freedom does not mean we deserve it, or have earned it, and it cannot be taken away.
 - 2. This freedom is a **“gift from God.”** Rom. 5:15-16; 6:23 (cf ASV)

III. 3rd, let's consider the AREAS OF FREEDOM.

- A. The Jews were freed from the bondage of Moses' law when Jesus died on the cross. Gal. 3:19; Col. 2:14
 - 1. Paul uses the marriage law of God to illustrate how the law which had died, had allowed the Jews to be married to Christ.
 - 2. Here Paul uses the word “free” to illustrate when a woman is “free” or “not” free to marry upon the death of her husband. Rom. 7:1-4
- B. All mankind today is in need of freedom that relates to the soul.
 - 1. Christ can free one from the **bondage of sin.** Rom. 8:1-3; 6:17-18
 - 2. Christ can free one from the **guilt of sin.** Rom. 3:19; Jas. 2:10
 - 3. Christ can free one from the **power of sin** by His blood. 1 John 1:7; Rom. 6:12
 - a. We are empowered to overcome Satan and temptation to sin. Jas. 5:7; 1 Cor. 6:12; 10:13
 - b. As Christians, we have God on our side, along with His word and promises. Rom. 8:31
 - 4. Christ can free us from the **practice of sin.** Psa. 119:9-11
 - 5. Christ can also free us from the **fear of death.** Heb. 2:15; Mat. 10:28; Psa. 23:4

CONCLUSION

- I. Finally, we can anticipate **ETERNAL FREEDOM.**
 - A. This will come only after a faithful Christian life.
 - B. In the eternal city of God, we will be safe and secure, for the devil and former problems will be in the past. Rev. 20:10; 21:4; 22:17
- II. Do you really want all these freedoms?

