**Do You Know That You Are Free?**

Opening Scripture

*2 Corinthians 3:17-18 AMP*

*[17] Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty [emancipation from bondage, true freedom]. [18] And we all, with unveiled face, continually seeing as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are progressively being transformed into His image from [one degree of] glory to [even more] glory, which comes from the Lord, [who is] the Spirit.*

**Introduction**

We recently finished observing the Fourth of July, a holiday meant to celebrate America’s freedom from Great Britain’s Rule over the colonies. We also recently celebrated what is known as Juneteenth. A brief history of June twenty, on June 19, 1865, about two months after the Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox, Va., Union Gen. Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, to inform enslaved African-Americans of their freedom and that the Civil War had ended. General Granger’s announcement put into effect the Emancipation Proclamation, which had been issued more than two and a half years earlier on Jan. 1, 1863, by President Abraham Lincoln. Both of these holidays are intended to be days of celebration centered around freedom from bondage, **however, tonight I want us to focus on how the events that inspired the Juneteenth holiday parallel the reality of the believer’s freedom from sin (repeat for emphasis).**

*Colossians 1:11-14 NLT*

*We also pray that you will be strengthened with all his glorious power so you will have all the endurance and patience you need. May you be filled with joy, [12] always thanking the Father. He has enabled you to share in the inheritance that belongs to his people, who live in the light. [****13] For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, [14] who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins.***

**In order for man to be free from the bondage of sin, His freedom had to be bought, obtained because we were born into slavery due to Adam’s sin...and that freedom was won/purchased/obtained for us through Christ’s victory over death, hell, and the grave when he took upon Himself the sin of mankind, pay the penalty for the sin, and rose from the grave on the third day.**

**We cannot walk (live this life) in victory over sin unless we know that we have truly been set free from it.**

**How do we live a life where we can practically experience victory of sin?**

*Romans 6:4-11 NLT*

*For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives. [5] Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was. [****6] We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. [7] For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin.*** *[8] And since we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him. [9] We are sure of this because Christ was raised from the dead, and he will never die again. Death no longer has any power over him. [10] When he died, he died once to break the power of sin. But now that he lives, he lives for the glory of God.* ***[11] So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus.***

**Point One: Acknowledge the Proclamation of Your Freedom**

(Looking back at the history of slavery here in America) The Emancipation Proclamation issued by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863, had established that all enslaved people in Confederate states in rebellion against the Union “shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free.”

However as we know from history, even though Confederate General Robert E. Lee had surrendered at Appomattox Court House in Virginia April 9, 1865, slaveiry had remained relatively unaffected in Texas—until U.S. General Gordon Granger stood on Texas soil and read General Orders No. 3:

“The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free.”

(Expound on what that must have been like-then refer back to Romans 6)

(Romans 6:6, John 8:36)

*John 8:36 KJV*

*If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*

*Psalm 107:1-2 KJV*

*O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. [2] Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;*

(Expound on the power of proclamation-refer back to how the slaves in Texas did not know about their freedom until a proclamation was made

*Romans 10:14 NLT*

*But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?*

**Point Two: Think and Believe Like You Are Free**

It has been said that after people have been in bondage for so long, they tend to identify with their oppression. They lose their ability to see themselves as free.

After you have heard the proclamation of your freedom from sin and accept it as truth, then the process of exercising that freedom begins.

*Romans 6:16 NLT*

*Don’t you realize that you become the slave of whatever you choose to obey? You can be a slave to sin, which leads to death, or you can choose to obey God, which leads to righteous living.*

(reinforce the reality that we are made righteous solely by our faith in Jesus’ finished work, but righteous living or living in a way that looks like a righteous person)

**Stockholm syndrome, psychological response wherein a captive begins to identify closely with his or her captors, as well as with their agenda and demands.**

This is why knowing that your true identity changed once you received Jesus is so important. If you don't however being able to enjoy the life of victory that belongs to you requires us to respond with corresponding action to God’s Grace.

*Romans 12:2 NLT*

*Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.*

**Point Three: Accept Your New Identity & Live Like a Free Person**

*2 Corinthians 5:16-21 NLT*

*So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now! [17] This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! [18] And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. [19] For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people’s sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. [20] So we are Christ’s ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, “Come back to God!”*

*[21] For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.*

**Just like it took the freed slaves of this country to begin to think and act like a free man in order to experience Freedom, so it is with us as of Jesus.**