

## Freedom from Bondage

Luke 9:30-31

February 12, 1973, will forever be etched in my mind. It was our second year in seminary, and the Vietnam War was slowly winding down. The impact of that war had its effect on most everyone, and to most it was very personal. Never before was man's inhumanity to man made more real, gut wrenching, and sickening as for the first time the reality of war was instantaneously brought into the home of every American. Never before had a war become more personal—the horrors of napalm bombs, live executions, dismembered bodies of living troops, and the brutality put upon the P.O.W.'s.

It was 1971. Linda and I purchased the infamous P.O.W. bracelets. Every day we as a family would pray for the two men whose names were engraved on our bracelets. We prayed for their safety, spiritual salvation, and release not knowing if they were dead or alive. My bracelet bore the name of a Captain Jerry Allen Singleton.

In late 1972, the North Vietnamese, Viet Cong, and other Communist captors in Southeast Asia were forced to uphold the Geneva Accord on Prisoners of War which prompted the gradual release of U.S. prisoners. Those released would be flown to the Philippines. We huddled around our 13 inch black and white TV as each prisoner exited the plane as their name was called. But no Jerry Singleton. Then about 1:30 in the morning on Feb. 12, 1973, we heard "Captain Jerry Allen Singleton." One can not describe the emotions and volume of tears we released knowing "Jerry" was free from his prison and bondage after being shot down on September of 1965. It had been eight years. Little would I know that just 5 years later, Captain Jerry Singleton would graduate from Dallas Theological Seminary and become a chaplain.

Only those who experienced the confinement of the tiny "tiger cages" and the unbearable heat and humidity can ever know the hopelessness of such bondage. They were trapped, confined to the present, and isolated in constant torture. None would ever be able to identify with such hopelessness.

And yet, most of us here (to one degree or another) find ourselves trapped and imprisoned by present circumstances. Some are facing life-threatening illnesses. Some feel desperate and trapped in disintegrating marriages; others have lost jobs or soon may lose jobs in a depressed economy. Our young church family members find themselves rejected and alone for living their faith with integrity. Many of us feel our value is no greater than our last performance or victory.

The fact is, we are a part of a culture that is enclosed/in bondage to a present circumstance which offers little hope. Often we feel too imprisoned by the present to even imagine a future.

It's at this point that an authentic, personal Christian faith offers an exhilarating hope that defies imagination. It is a reality that not only sustains through the present but creates a contagious anticipation for the future.

Paul said it so well in Romans 8:18-21 as we consider the freedom revealed in the transfiguration of Christ.

## **Life Response**

1. This week MEMORIZE and MEDITATE on Romans 8:18, *“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”*
  - (a) Make a list of your present “sufferings”
  - (b) Read verse 18 in the context of Romans 8. What do you see in Paul’s perspective of “the glory that is to be revealed” and its effect on his handling of his suffering?
2. It would seem Hebrews 10:19-24 has a great value in the lives of Christians who live in bondage and demands of the present world. How do you picture yourself as an encourager? Who do you know who needs genuine encouragement right now? Ask God to make you aware of “who” and “how” you can encourage today.
3. We have highlighted only seven out of many freedoms that come out of the transfiguration. It is a transfiguration that begins in the heart and is revealed in the life. Read Romans 12:1-2 and decide what you must do.

*“As we surrender body, mind, and will the Lord transforms (transfigures) us from within so that we are not conformed to the World.”*

- Dr. Warren W. Wiersbe

### **The Significance of the Transfiguration:**

The Event Itself -

1. The most spectacular reflection of the glory of God.
2. The most defining revelation of the coming kingdom.
3. The most definite declaration of Jesus as the Son of God.

Answers the question: Who do you say that I am?

### **The Substance of the Event -**

Luke 9:30-31 “...speaking of His departure”

- Departure --- Exodus
- Reveals Jesus’ attitude
  - (a) Personal – Provides His return to His rightful place.
  - (b) World – Provides forgiveness for the world.
  - (c) Believers – Provides hope for the future.

The substance of the transfiguration gives us a picture of the second coming of Christ to establish eternal kingdom and liberate (depart, exodus) us from the bondage of this present world.

### **7 Freedoms from Bondage: (In light of the Transfiguration)**

1. Frees us from the bondage of darkness.  
Luke 9:30-31 Conversation of Moses, Elijah, & Jesus.  
\* the coming suffering of His departure shortly after the Transfiguration.  
Romans 8:18

The Challenge: To shape my thinking about present suffering with the anticipation of His glory to be revealed to me.

2. Frees us from the bondage of apathy.  
Luke 9:32 Peter, James, & John had been overcome.  
Peter – 1 Peter 4:7  
John – 1 John 2:15-18  
James – James 5:8

The Challenge: To live with an anticipation of being in His presence at any moment.

3. Frees us from the bondage of doubt.  
Luke 9:20 “Who do you say that I am?”  
Luke 9:35  
1 John 5:13  
John 1:14

The Challenge: To live in absolute confidence knowing I am a child of God for eternity.

4. Frees us from the bondage of complacency.  
\*2 Peter 1:12-13 (Points back to transfiguration)  
Philippians 3:10<sub>ff</sub>  
2 Corinthians 3:16-18  
2 Corinthians 4:16-18

The Challenge: To commit myself to consistently grow in the knowledge of God, His Word, and His glory to be revealed.

5. Frees us from the bondage of discouragement and isolation.  
The “event” provided support, encouragement for perseverance through difficult times.  
Hebrews 1:1-3  
Hebrews 10:1-24

The Challenge: To see the image of God in each person created while I encourage them as one indwelt by God’s glory.

6. Frees us from the bondage of temporal routine of life.  
John 17:1-4            How did Jesus glorify the Father?  
John 17:22-24        What does it mean to glorify Christ?  
\*from temporal existence to eternal purpose

The Challenge: To become so consumed with the purpose of Christ that I might present Him and eternal life to those around me.

7. Frees us from the bondage of eternal Hell.  
2 Peter 3:7-18  
Revelation 20:11-15  
Romans 12:1-2

The Challenge: To build every aspect of my life with a view of residing in the glory of His Kingdom for all eternity.

