**Free To Pursue Your Passion**

I want to read you a short story…one that most of you are already familiar with. I want you to understand that this is just the end of the story. The Hebrew people had been slaves in Egypt for four hundred years. What you are about to hear is the culmination of God springing them from Egyptian captivity. God has unleashed plague after plague on the nation of Israel until finally their king consents to allowing Israel to leave… They come to the edge of the Red Sea, only to realize that the Egyptian king changed his mind and came after them… That is where we will pick up the story.

***Exodus 14:21*** *And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. 22 And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. 23 And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. 24 And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, 25 And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians. 26 And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. 27 And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the LORD overthrew* [*F44*](http://bible1.crosswalk.com/OnlineStudyBible/bible.cgi?passage=ex+14:22&version=kjv&context=1&showtools=1#F44) *the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. 28 And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them. 29 But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. 30 Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. 31 And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses.*

What you have just heard is one of the greatest deliverances in the history of humanity. Millions of people delivered in one night. And God did not free them just so they could wander around the desert, He did not free them to be slaves of Canaanites. He did not even free them to be some kind of religious slave to Him. **49 times in the books of Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and Joshua** God tells His people His people exactly why He sprung them….

***Go into Canaan and possess the land!***

God freed them to go into the most prosperous place on the planet, possess it, live in houses they did not build, eat of vineyards they did not plant, drink the milk of herds they did not raise up… In other words, God was putting them into a position where all they had to do was live out their dreams. He freed them to pursue whatever was the deepest desire of their heart.

This is everyone’s dream. To be set free to pursue what we are most passionate about. Or so we say….

We live in the freest nation on the face of the planet. I know it is popular to criticize America these days. That is the trendy little, in vogue thing to do. The best way to become a celebrated columnist, movie maker, politician, or activist is to become a vicious raving critic of America. And we are not perfect as a nation. But this is the freest nation on the planet. The very fact that you can freely criticize this country WHILE benefitting from it speaks to the astounding degree of freedom we have. This week we celebrated that freedom. But even as we waved flags, had parades, and shot off fireworks I had to wonder, as I do every year, what we are actually doing with all of the freedom we have been handed?

God springs a nation to go pursue their passion… Stages a massive deliverance like the world had never seen before and has never seen since. And what do they do with the freedom given them?

Possess the land?

Start doing all of the things they dreamed of doing while slaves?

Start exploring the degree of life and living that was denied them while they were forced to build the Pharaohs kingdom?

God freed them, not just from Egypt, but from anything that might possibly limit them.

Over and over He tells Israel *Fear not…I am with you…You don’t have to worry about anything. I got you covered….go live your dreams. Every dream that kept you going while that Egyptian task master was beating your back is now within your grasp. You are* ***FREE!!!***

And what did they do with the freedom they had been given?

***Exodus 32:1 T****he people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.* ***2****And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them unto me.* ***3****And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron.* ***4****And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.* ***5****And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To morrow is a feast to the LORD.* ***6****And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.*

God freed them from slavery, freed them from fear, freed them to pursue their deepest God dream for life, and all they did with their freedom is fling themselves on the altar of some false god. This would repeat over and over for hundreds of years. They never pursued the God dream for them as a nation, they never lived their passion, they stumbled from the altar of one false God to another.

We live in the freest, most prosperous nation on the face of the planet. You can do and be anything you desire. Even with tough economic times, even with rocky politics and high gas prices, the opportunity in this nation is UNPARRALLED in the world. There is a reason no other country has anywhere NEAR the immigration this country has. And what are we doing with our freedom? Pursuing God dreams for our lives? Seeking significance in our world? Living lives that will leave a legacy for succeeding generations? Or have we just cast ourselves upon the altars of the false gods of consumerism, victimization, sensuality, decadence, and celebrity worship? I fear that the national freedom that has come at such an extraordinary price is squandered as we pursue things that are less than the God dream for our nation.

Let’s bring it a lot closer to home. It is easy for us as Christians to sit back and lob criticisms at a nation for squandering it’s freedom, whether that nation is Israel of the scripture or America. But what about us? We know the ministry of Christ is to free us…

***Romans 8:2*** *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*

***II Corinthians 3:17*** *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty…*

***Luke 4:18*** *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach deliverance to the captives, to set at liberty them that are bruised,*

And that freedom and liberty has no limitations…

***John 1:12*** *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God,*

You are free to live the God dream for your life. You are free to passionately pursue what God has purposed for your life. And what are you doing with that freedom? Using it to pursue anything less than what God births in your heart is worse than a crime.

Samson was anointed by God with supernatural strength. In an time when all of his countrymen lived in fear and oppression his strength made him a national hero. Where they all feared and kowtowed to the oppressors he lived free. He did what he wanted, when he wanted. And with the freedom God birthed a dream and passion in him. A dream of a free Israel. But like so many before Samson never used freedom to live the dream… He laid his head in Delilah’s lap.

Saul was God’s anointed and chosen king. He was the first king of Israel. On his head was not only the crown, but the anointing of God. God took him from being an obscure farmer and released him into his destiny. But in the course of his life he becomes obsessed with chasing down the boy hero, David, and killing him. David at the time was a grubby outlaw with a pack of rabble that followed him. Saul spent months in pursuit of David, Saul used the kingdom resources to try and chase him down. While the enemies of Israel encroached on the borders Saul completely lost focus and his life became consumed with chasing David. And at one point David poses a question…

***I Samuel 24:*** *14 After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea?*

Look at who you are, and what you could be doing, and then look at what you are doing with your life. You are chasing dead dogs and fleas! Are you serious?

Your freedom came at the price of the blood of the Son of God. Is your current existence what He freed you for? How passionate are you about the life your are living and how passionately are you living it?

***I Peter 2:9*** *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people;*

That is who you are. That is what you are.

What are you chasing that has diverted you from the purpose of God? What flea has so captured your imagination that you have allowed it to become your passion instead of God?

What dead dog have you developed an appetite for that has now lured you off the throne that was meant for you?

Do you know what you should be doing?

*Ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:*

Your life should be a blazing testimony to the glory of God in your life. How you live, what you do with your days, what you pour your heart into should all show the glory and praise of God and unto God. When you live the passion placed in your heart by God, whatever that God given passion is, your life is an ongoing praise unto God.

Israel freed to live a God dream cast themselves into the bondage of idolatry.

America, more free than any nation ever, enslaving itself to decadence.

Saul, free to rule, chasing fleas and dead dogs.

Samson, free to fight against the tyranny of his age, laying his head in a trap.

Christians freed by the blood of Jesus living self indulged, insignificant lives.

I guess the question is simply, what are you doing with the freedom you celebrate? Are you living God dream birthed in your heart? Are you filled with passion about the purpose of your life? Or are you just pursuing fleas? The tragedy of a graveyard is not that it represents numerous lives now ended, but it represents numerous destinies never lived.

Paul summed the whole choice facing Christians up so beautifully in Galations.

***Galations 3****:26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*

*27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. 4:1 Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; 2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. 3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: 4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. 8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. 9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?* ***4:31***  *So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.* ***5:1*** *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.*

How can you go back to what you were before? If you are free, don’t go back to what held you captive before. Pursue the thing for which God freed you….

***Philippians 3:12*** *But I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.*

Paul said, I was apprehended by Christ…and not just for my salvation…but He made me free so I would be free to pursue that thing…

What is…that thing…for you? For me it is raising up a church that is unique…a 1st century church that is truly book of Acts, but can connect with the 21st century. What is the thing for you? What do you want to do for the glory of God? What do you burn to do so that the praise of God flows out if your life?

Mentor young people?

Act?

Sing?

Build a business that is ethical and Godly so you can bless the kingdom of God?

Help single parents?

Counsel broken, wounded people?

That dream is why He made you free. Pursuing anything less is Delilah’s lap, it is an idol altar, it is a flea hunt. It is a dead dog feast.