

## Liberty

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**2Corinthians 3:15** But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their (Jews) heart.

**2Corinthians 3:16** Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.

**2Corinthians 3:17** Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

The apostle takes some facts about the spiritual blindness of Israel to provide us with a profound message about the great truth of freedom that is our inheritance because of the Holy Spirit.

Only those who understand what it means to come from a state where they were blind rejects out in the cold, to a place where they are accepted in Christ as beloved of God the Father, can begin to grasp the hugeness of this message in v. 17. In fact, even having spiritual understanding, we are not good at getting the full glory of this message. The liberty we have through the intercession and work of the Spirit is so great that Paul warns us in **Gal. 5:13** not to use that liberty as an occasion to the flesh, but rather that we are to use the power of love to serve one another.

Our text says simply that where the Holy Spirit is, there is liberty, or freedom. There is no explanation about that liberty, and that is what we want to look at today. There is a virtual world of suggestion in what the Apostle was thinking when he used the word liberty. So, how is it that where the Holy Spirit is, there is liberty?

I. Where He is as a Spirit of illumination, there is freedom from former blindness and darkness;

- Illumination, or shedding light on something, makes us think of the great gift of eyesight we have. How do we see the things around us? There are certain features in our eyes and in how they are connected to our brains that translate light and objects into images and concepts. Without this eye-brain connection, vision would not be possible.
- The person who does not have the Holy Spirit for spiritual illumination is like a person with a faulty connection between his eyes and brain...there is no spiritual clarity in what is seen.
- ▶ Remember (**John 3**) Nicodemus' visit to Jesus by night. In that visit

Nicodemus made a statement when Jesus said a man must be born again to see the Kingdom of God: **John 3:4** “Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?”

- ▶ Nicodemus understood natural birth, and he did not reject Jesus teaching about being born again although he was skeptical (he says in v. 9, “...how can these things be.”), but he tried to relate a spiritual birth to a physical birth and understand what Jesus was saying without the right kind of vision.
- ▶ Do you remember the incident (in **Mark 8**) where a blind man is brought to Jesus, and Jesus leads him out of town, spits on his eyes, asks him what he sees? The man answers, “...I see men as trees walking.” This is a great type of how people without Holy Spirit illumination see spiritual things. The clear view escapes them.

II. Where He is as the Spirit of regeneration and sanctification, there is liberty, that is freedom, from the bondage of sin and captivity of Satan;

- Bondage, or slavery, is about ownership; those who are slaves to sin are owned by sin, and are kept captive in it by Satan.
- In cultures where slavery is enforced by law, a slave does not get free from his master unless he is sold to another master, or unless he dies.
- The freedom brought by the Holy Spirit’s work in regenerating us and setting us apart to God brings a release from being the slave to sin.
  - ▶ **Rom. 6:7** For he that is dead is freed from sin.
  - ▶ **Rom 6:6** Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we **should not serve sin**.

III. Where he is as the Comforter, there is freedom from the fear of hell, wrath, and condemnation, and there is the freedom to be hopeful and optimistic in a world of evil and decay:

- A criminal on death row has one primary thing to obsess about; it is the certainty of his coming execution. People without the freedom the Holy Spirit gives have only one thing to face in eternity; everlasting wrath
- Believers are freed from that. They can walk in the liberty of knowing that the Holy Spirit upholds them, that Christ’s blood paid the penalty of God’s wrath for them.
- In the world, there is disappointment, despair, loss, sorrow, and certain death. The best a person can hope for is to have the necessities of life, maybe some luxuries, and to die a peaceful death. But, every one of these things are temporary comforts and aren’t even sure things...every one of them could be lost in a world like ours...in a moment.
- Those who lack the liberty of the Holy Spirit’s presence know they must face

life's troubles and uncertainties and find some kind of help to cope by looking to the things of the world. But, believers can and do know the Holy Spirit's comforting, encouraging, strengthening presence in facing such thing. They can be sure that God will take care of them, and regardless of how things go, they are kept, guarded, protected by the power of an Almighty God.

IV. Where he is the Spirit of adoption, there is the freedom of children with a father;

**Rom. 8:15** For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the **Spirit of adoption**, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

- The awesome God who has power of life and death, the power of creating out of nothing, the absolute rule over all creation has become the head of our family to us!
- To be able to approach the great God as a familiar parent is by itself, almost unfathomable
- God, who made the worlds, has been pleased to arrange by the adopting power of the Holy Spirit, to call us children! That is liberty!

V. Where he is the Spirit of prayer and supplication, there is liberty of access to God with boldness,

- **Rom. 8:26** Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.
  - Think about a worm trying to communicate with us. Think how totally unequipped it would be to do so! A worm tries to tell you that it is hungry...or cold...or needs help to get from point A to point B. How will it tell you that? Let's suppose you understood not only how incapable a worm was to communicate with you, but you also cared to communicate with it. Suppose you had a way that you could think like a worm, and hear a worm talking, and understand what it said. Imagine what a fantastic capacity that would be on your part. And imagine what an absolutely priceless thing that would be to the worm! Talk about liberty. The worm could just say, help me find a great section of dirt to dig in! Please guard me so no bird flies down and eats me! Please give me a warm place to live! And if you don't want to put me in a warm place, please give me a warm coat! And could we talk together a lot. Please write me a book in worm language about what all you have done! Give me the ability to understand what you have written.