

Free indeed

by Ross Callaghan

<http://rosscallaghan.yolasite.com>

“You will know the truth and the truth will set you free”. John 8:32
“If the Son sets you free you will be free indeed.” John 8: 36

What does it mean to be free?

- Free to do whatever you like?
- Free to choose?
- Free from slavery to people, situations, habits, sins?
- Free from legalism?
- Free from troubles?
- Purchased for God by Jesus' blood?

Freedom is not so much about external choices and behaviours – it's about the heart. It's about being free on the inside – free to do what God wants you to do – free to be what God wants you to be – “free to be me”. (*Eleutheros* means free from restraint or obligation; delivered eg. from sin or slavery).

If you are free indeed

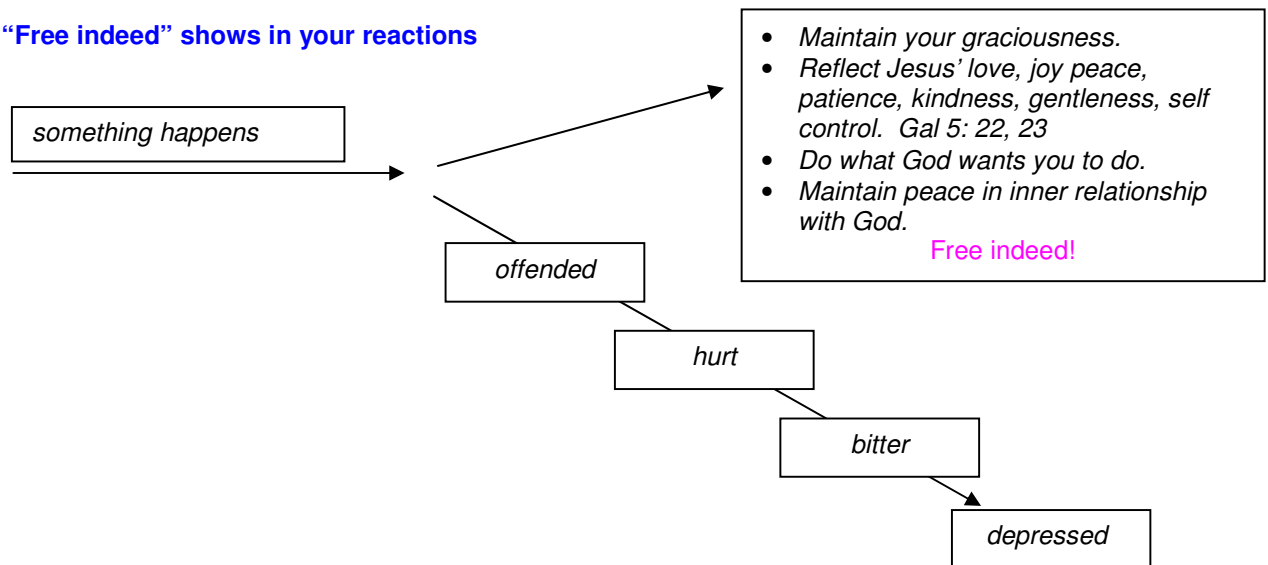
- Your heart will be at peace Proverbs 14: 30
- You will have joy in your heart 15: 30, 17: 22
- You will be at ease with yourself 1: 33 19: 23
- You life will be under control 29: 11
- You will have a “garland of grace on your head.” 4: 9

This “garland of grace” is easily sensed, especially by non-Christians. They will only respect us if it is present. We are the only Bible most people read, the only sermon they hear and, for many, their only glimpse of Jesus.

Thanks be to God who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ, and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Him. 2 Corinthians 2: 14 - 16

If you are 'free indeed' you are free on the inside! Your internal freedom shines out and is noticed because you are at peace with *God* and with *yourself*. You are then able to act in obedience to whatever God wants, and free to react with graciousness, no matter what happens to you.

“Free indeed” shows in your reactions



Being gracious in our reactions

Phil 4: 5 *Let your gentleness be evident to all*

The key word here is *epieikeia*. This word is translated: *gentleness, moderation, forbearance, lenience, considerateness, tolerance, unselfishness, fairmindedness, big-heartedness, patience, graciousness* ie. 'sweet reasonableness'.

No matter what happens you will act and react with gentleness and grace, with 'sweet reasonableness'. In other words you will have a 'garland of grace' about you, that commands respect for you, but more importantly for God, and for Christianity.

This comes from your inner freedom.

Acts 24: 4 *Paul to Felix: I request that you be kind enough to hear us*

1 Tim 3: 3 *An overseer (elder) must be above reproach ... gentle*

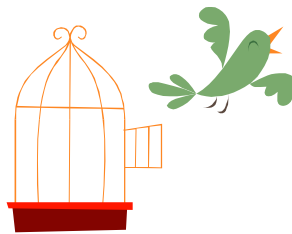
Titus 3: 2 *Remind the people to be peaceable and considerate and to show true humility toward everyone*

James 3: 17 *The wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure, then peace loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.*

So what does it mean to be free indeed?

If you are 'free indeed' you are free on the inside! You are at peace with God and with yourself. You are free to do whatever He wants you to do and free to react with graciousness, no matter what happens to you.

"If the Son sets you free you will be free indeed." John 8: 36



Discussion questions

What does it mean to be free indeed?

Why are so many Christians not 'free indeed'? Why do we hang on to bondages and hangups?

Why are reactions such good indicators of what is going on in our lives?

Why are others drawn to gracious people?

Read Matthew 11:28-30. What is the 'rest' that Jesus is talking about here? How can we experience this rest?

How would others describe you? Free indeed? Having a 'garland of grace' about you? Reflecting the nature of Jesus? Demonstrating the fruits of the Holy Spirit?