

***“Free To Be Faithful!”***  
***1 Peter 2:13-17***

**Introduction:**

1. What Does It Mean To Be Free?
  - What Does It Mean To Have Liberty?
2. Just Ask The Citizens Of Iraq, After Their Liberation From The Regime Of Saddam Hussein!
  - They Might Know What It Means To Be Free!
  - **IE:** In March Of 2003, Our Nation Was Poised For War! Armed With The Patriotic Determination That Came From 9/11, Over 100,000 Troops Assembled In Kuwait, Waiting For The Order To Invade! The Target: Iraq! The Dictator: Saddam Hussein! The Crimes: Support For Terrorism, Both Outside & Inside His Own Country! On March 20, It Began! From The Air, Sea, And Land -- Over 100,000 Troops Swarmed Into Iraq, Quickly Overpowering Their Enemies, And Made It To Baghdad Itself! By May 1, In Just Over 1 Month, The End Of Major Combat Operations Was Declared! Saddam Hussein & The Rest Of His Regime Went Into Hiding, But The People Of Iraq Went Into Celebration Mode! Many Statues & Symbols Of Saddam Hussein Were Toppled Over & Destroyed!
  - They Were Liberated! They Were Free!
  - But How Free Were They?
    - Were They Free From All Authority? From All Laws? From All Responsibilities?
  - Of Course Not!
    - But They Were Free To Be A Faithful Citizen Of The Newly Formed Iraq!
2. Peter, Too, Understood The Meaning & Limits Of Liberty!
  - But, In 1 Peter, He Is Not Talking About Political Freedom, But About Spiritual Freedom!
  - Because With Salvation Comes Freedom & Liberty!
  - In Galatians 5:1 - “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage!” (Paul)
  - So, What Does It Mean For A Christian To Be Free?
3. ***A Christian Is Free To Be Faithful!***
  - This Is What Peter Will Teach Us Today, In 1 Peter 2:13-17!
    - Remember, In 2:12 - He Reminded Us That You Are To Be “Having Your Conversation Honest Among The Gentiles!”
    - And, Starting In 2:17 Through Chapter 3, He Gives You Specific, Practical Examples Of How To Live As The “Strangers & Pilgrims” That You Are, As A Christian!
  - First Example: Our Relationship With Civil Authority!
    - Read 2:13-17!
    - The Key: The Command To Submit! (2:13)
    - “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man!”
      - “A Voluntary Acceptance Of A Position Of Obedience To A Superior Or Authority!” (Hiebert)
      - And Not Just Any Authority – Your Civil Authority! – “Ordinance” - Human Institution Of Authority! – Your Government! Local / State / Federal!
  - **IE:** Think About When Peter Wrote This!
    - The Empire: Rome!
    - The Emperor: Nero - 54-68! Ruthless! Had His Own Mother & Step-Brother Executed! Known As The Emperor Who “Fiddled While Rome Burned!” Who, After Being Blamed For The Fire Himself, Which Destroyed Much Of The City, Blamed Christians - And Had Them Thrown To Dogs, Crucified & Burned! And It Was Probably Under Nero’s Reign, When Peter Himself Was Condemned To Death & Crucified Upside-Down!
    - It Is Hard To Understand This Kind Of Submission!
  - But It Is Even Harder To Understand: How Can I Be Free & Have Liberty & Yet Have To Submit? Even To The Kinds Of Authorities Like Nero? Or Like Ours?
4. Peter Wants You To Know:
  - That You Are Free, As A Christian!
    - But Christian Freedom & Liberty Does Not Mean You Are Free From All Authority / From All Laws / From All Responsibilities!
  - You Are Free To Be Faithful!
    - Gives Us 5 Areas Of Faithfulness:

\* A Christian Is Free – To Be:

**1. Faithful To The Lord!**

- 2:13a - “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake!”
  - There Is 1 Authority Figure That We All Continue To Have A Hard Time Submitting To!
    - Not Parents! Not Bosses! Not Church Leaders!
    - But The Government!
    - It Is One We Cannot “Pick & Choose” & One That We Will Always Have Over Us!
  - Peter Uses Your Submission To The Authority Of Your Government As A Test For Something Deeper!
    - Even Your Own Submission To The Lord!
    - We Are To Submit: “For The Lord’s Sake!”
    - “Christian Obedience Is Motivated By Loyalty To The Lord!” (Hiebert)
  - And When You Submit To Your Civil Authorities:
    - You Are Being Faithful To The Lord!
- To The Lord’s Instruction!
  - Even Jesus Said: Matthew 22:21 - “They say unto him, Caesar’s. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s!”
- To The Lord’s Illustration!
  - Matthew 17:24-27 - “And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? / He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? / Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. / Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee!”
- For The Christian: Submission & Freedom Go Hand-In-Hand!
  - Your Treatment Of Human Authority Is A Reflection Of Your Treatment Of Divine Authority!
  - How You Treat Your Government Is How You Are Treating Your God!
  - Romans 13:2 - “Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation!”
- You Are Free! To Be Faithful! To The Lord!

**2. Faithful To The Law!**

- 2:13b-14 - “Whether it be to the king, as supreme; / Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well!”
  - Our Responsibility Is To Submit To The Law & The Lawgivers In Our Government! Whoever They Are!
  - These Verses Give 2 Classes Of Authority:
    - Supreme Authority - Like A King!
      - Or A President! Or Congress!
    - Subordinate Authority - Like A Governor!
      - Or Mayors / Councils / Police!
  - Because Their Authority Has Been Given To Them By God!
    - Romans 13:1 - “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God!”
- Authority To Restrain Evil!
  - “Punishment Of Evil-Doers!”
- Authority To Reward Good!
  - “Praise Of ‘Good-Doers!’”
- This Is The Two-Fold Function Of Any Government!
  - **IE:** The President Has A Lot Of Responsibilities - But, Primarily, He Is The “Chief Law Enforcement Officer” - The Head Of The Executive Branch!
  - This Is One Of The Main Reasons God Has Given Them Authority!
    - And One Of The Main Reasons We Are To Submit!
  - How You Treat The Laws Of Men Reveals How You Will Treat The Law Of God!
    - If You Will Not Restrain From Disobeying Practical Laws, You Will Not Restrain From

Disobeying Moral Laws!

- You Are Free! To Be Faithful! To The Law! Both Man's & God's!

3. **Faithful To God's Longing!**

- His Will! 2:15 - "For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men!"

- How Many Are "Searching" For God's Will For Their Lives? These Statements Are Wonderful! Tell Us Specifically What God's Will Is! Teaches Us That God's Will Is Always Found In God's Word!

- God's Will Is For Us To Submit To Human Authority!

- Why? Gives A Couple Of Reasons:

- To Serve Our Authorities!

- "With Well Doing!" (2:14 - From A Noun / 2:15 - Verb)

- Similar Word For Those They Are To Reward!

- God Wants To Use Your Submission & Obedience To Make An Impact On Your Authorities!

- Not Just For Social Benefits!

- But For Spiritual Benefits!

- How Can God Use Your Testimony If You Break The Laws Of Men?

- Instead, They Will Have More To Accuse You Of!

- To Silence Our Accusers!

- "May Put To Silence The Ignorance Of Foolish Men!"

- "Silence" - To Muzzle!

- When You Submit To & Obey Your Authorities:

- You Will Not Give Them Any Ammunition For Their Accusations!

- You Are Free! To Be Faithful! To The Will / Longing Of God!

- For You To Serve Your Authorities "With Well Doing!"

- For You To Silence Your Accusers!

- And Point Them To The Answer For Their Ignorance & Foolishness!

4. **Faithful In Your Liberty!**

- 2:16 - "As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God!"

- Remember: For The Christian, Liberty & Submission Go Hand-In-Hand!

- The Right Of Your Christian Liberty!

- "As Free!" - God Has Given You Real Freedom!

- "All The Servants Of Christ Are Free Men; They Are Free From Satan's Dominion, The Laws Condemnation, The Wrath Of God, The Uneasiness Of Duty, And The Terrors Of Death!" (Matthew Henry)

- But Your Liberty Is Not A License To Sin!

- You Are Free From Sin! Not Free To Sin!

- The Righteousness Of Your Christian Liberty!

- "Not Using Your Liberty For A Cloke Of Maliciousness!"

- You Must Not / Cannot Use Your Christian "Liberty" As A Covering / Disguise For Doing Things That Are Wrong!

- "Christian Liberty" Is Not An Excuse Or Defense For Depravity! There Is No Excuse / Defense!

- The Responsibility Of Your Christian Liberty!

- "But As The Servants Of God!"

- "Servants" - Doulos - "Slaves" / "Bond-Slaves"

- With A Different Master! A Good Master!

- 1 Corinthians 7:22 - "For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman; likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant!"

- Christians Will Only: "Find True Liberty In Faithfully Doing His Will!" (Hiebert)

- You Are Free! To Be Faithful! In Your Liberty!

- "Christian Freedom Consists Not In Freedom From A Master, But In The Voluntary Submission To God As Our Rightful Master!" (Hiebert)

- You Are Free To Be Faithful To God!

5. ***Faithful In Your Lifestyle!***

- 2:17 - "Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king!"
  - Peter Finishes This Section With 4 Strong But Succinct Commands! All Relate To Respect To Authority!
  - From General To Specific, We Are Commanded To:
- "Honor All Men!"
  - The Freedom God Gives Us Is Not So Much For US, As It Is For OTHERS! So That We Can Develop Relationships That Have An Eternal Impact!
    - Freedom Brings Opportunity! **IE:** The Land Of Opportunity!
  - To Have Respect For The Lost!
    - One That Is Based On Their Value On Being Created In The Image Of God! & Bring To The Lord!
- "Love The Brotherhood!"
  - To Have Respect For The Laborers!
  - A Deliberate Love – Not A Feeling, But A Choice!
    - Wanting Their Best! God's Best!
- "Fear God!"
  - To Have Respect For The Lord!
  - Remember: If You Respect The Authority Of God In Your Life, You Will Respond To The Authorities God Has Placed In Your Life!
    - As Solomon Said: Ecclesiastes 12:13 - "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man!"
- "Honor The King!"
  - To Have Respect For The Law!
  - This Is The Conclusion Of This Section In 1 Peter!
  - To Honor Your Authority, You Must Submit To Your Authority!
    - This Refers To The Person In Authority & The Position Of Authority, Not Necessarily The Policies Of The Authority! Scripture Teaches The One Exception: Acts 5:29 - "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men!"
    - "Normally Duties To God & Caesar Do Not Conflict, And Christians Can Obey Both; But In Special Cases Their Higher Loyalty Is Clear!" (ECB)
- You Are Free! To Be Faithful! In Your Lifestyle!

**Conclusion:**

1. How Do You Respond To Authority In Your Life?
  - Specifically, How Do You Respond To The Civil Authority & Government In Your Life?
2. As Americans, We Say That We Are Free!
  - But, This Freedom Has Limits, Doesn't It?
  - You Are Not Free To Harm Or Injure Someone!
  - You Are Not Free To Break Laws Without Consequences!
  - You Are Free To Be A Faithful Citizen!
3. As Christians, We Have Been Set Free!
  - But It Too Is A Freedom To Be Faithful!
    - Faithful In Your Relationships! Responsibilities! Respect!
  - How Are You Using Your Freedom In Christ?

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