

FREEDOM'S WALK

ROMANS 8:1-4

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INTRODUCTION: Yesterday, our nation celebrated Independence Day. It is a day set aside to celebrate our freedom as Americans and to reflect upon what it means and what it cost for us to be free men and women. Those of us who have trusted in Jesus Christ have a greater freedom to celebrate - freedom from bondage to sin, its tyranny, and from a debt that we could never pay. As believers, we are called to walk in the freedom that is ours through the Spirit of God and to remember the cost of that freedom. So today, with the help of the Apostle Paul, we will see the price of freedom and the walk of freedom in our Lord Jesus Christ.

I. The Price of Freedom

A. Our national liberty did not come cheap. Just over 643,000 American soldiers have given their lives in various wars since the birth of our nation in the pursuit and defense of freedom. Perhaps this is best expressed in a tribute entitled "The Price of Freedom" concerning those who fought in distant lands defending our freedom... "Some were ready and prepared; others were so young and so naive. Some of them chose to serve our country, others had no choice, and they were called to serve. As they hugged and kissed their loved ones bye, their hearts were heavy and tears filled in their eyes. Not knowing if they would be coming back home, or if they would die, it was all so unknown. As they prepared to fight for our freedom, we prayed to God for their safety. They all left their loved ones, and their lives that they had known. They departed to an unfamiliar land, risking their lives and making so many sacrifices. Being away from family and friends, giving up what most can't even comprehend. The horrors and atrocities that our veterans faced and endured. You may not ever know or totally understand. They protected our rights, our freedom, and the rights of others, so that we could have and enjoy freedom in our land. Some came home to a Hero's welcome, others didn't come home at all, and they made the ultimate sacrifice. Some came home and were disgracefully shunned; others have been forgotten. All of our veterans served our country, with great pride and true honor. There is a price for freedom, which they ALL so graciously paid. They ALL greatly deserve to be remembered and honored. After all.... They are truly America's Heroes!" (Written by ~ HTxRose)

B. Our spiritual liberty was most costly. We had a debt of bondage that we could not pay.

Romans 5:6-8 - "For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person – though perhaps for a good

person one would dare even to die - but God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

1 Peter 1:18-19 – "...you were ransomed...not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ..."

II. The Walk of Freedom

A. We are called to walk as free men and women in the Spirit. Romans 8:4 – Because of what Christ did for us – in our place, we can now be "...those who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Colossians 2:6-7 – "Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving."

B. Walking as free people is only possible through the Spirit. To fail to walk in the freedom of the Spirit is to become enslaved again. We become entangled in the legalism of the law. **Galatians 5:1** – "For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." We often get caught up in rules and regulations. Rules blunt the appetite for Christ. Joy is found in walking in the freedom of the Spirit.

Eugene Peterson wrote: "There are people who do not want us to be free. They don't want us to be free before God, accepted just as we are by his grace. They don't want us to be free to express our faith originally and creatively in the world. They ... insist that all look alike, talk alike and act alike, thus validating one another's worth. Without being aware of it we become anxious about what others will say about us, obsessively concerned about what others think we should do. We no longer live the good news but anxiously try to memorize and recite the script that someone else has assigned to us. We may be secure, but we will not be free."

Sometimes we needlessly become in bondage to sin. Listen to what Paul says in Romans 6:16 – "Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?"

Harry Houdini, the famed escape artist issued a challenge wherever he went. He could be locked in any jail cell in the country, he claimed, and set himself free in short order. He always kept his promise, except for one time when something went wrong. Houdini entered the jail in his street clothes; the heavy, metal doors clanged shut behind him. He took from his belt a concealed piece of metal, strong and flexible. He set to work immediately, but something seemed to be unusual about this lock. For thirty minutes he

worked and got nowhere. An hour passed, and still he had not opened the door. By now he was bathed in sweat and panting in exasperation, but he still could not pick the lock. Finally, after laboring for two hours, Harry Houdini collapsed in frustration and failure against the door he could not unlock. But when he fell against the door, it swung open! It had never been locked at all! But in his mind it was locked, and that was all it took to keep him from opening the door and walking out of the jail cell.

Sometimes we forget the price of our freedom.

In **2 Peter 1:4-9** the apostle writes that because of what Jesus has done for us we should supplement our faith in Him with qualities such as virtue, knowledge, self-control, steadfastness, godliness, brotherly affection and love. He writes “whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins.”

Jesus had to pay a price for our freedom just like our forefathers paid a price for the freedom of this nation. Yes, Jesus paid the ultimate price for our freedom and we can read about it in **Acts 2:24**, “But God raised Him from the dead, freeing Him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on Him.” True freedom comes from the resurrection of our Lord and Savior. Without it there would be no reason to believe in Jesus or celebrate our freedom. For I believe that if the cross did not happen, then there wouldn't have been a 4th of July that declared our Declaration of Independence. And though our nation celebrated our freedom, I pray today, as every day, that all of our brothers and sisters in Christ will celebrate their freedom from the bondage of sin.

God bless you, believer! God bless America! In Jesus. Amen.