

Let My People Go

This article is from the "Edifying the Body" section of the Church of God Big Sandy's Web site, churchofgodbigandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of July 2-3, 2011.

By Lenny Cacchio

LEE'S SUMMIT, Mo.—Finish this sentence: "Let my people go . . ."

You'll recognize those words as those coming from Moses' mouth to Pharaoh's ears. They were God's demand to free the Israelite slaves and thus became a rallying cry for those of us who love freedom.

Yet the sentence quoted above is incomplete. "Let my people go" is a phrase closely identified with the Passover and freedom from the slavery of Egypt. For Christians, not only does it look to the freeing of the people of Israel from bondage, but also the freeing of all mankind from the bondage of sin through the sacrifice of the Passover Lamb without blemish (1 Peter 1:19; 1 Corinthians 5:7).

But freedom from bondage is only part of the story. The rest of the story is found in the rest of Moses' words: "Let my people go that they may serve me."

Freedom is a wonderful thing, but it is not the ultimate good. When we have freedom, it must be exercised for a greater cause than freedom for its own sake. Experience enough generations of freedom defined as doing whatever we please or, in biblical parlance, whatever is right in our own eyes, and you'll get a world like that of the last days in the book of Judges.

Read the 19th through 21st chapters of Judges to see what a society of unfettered freedom produces, a society that has forgotten the purpose for freedom. Read either that or tomorrow's newspaper.

The fact is, the path of freedom without responsibility leads to chaos, which in turn leads back to slavery. We are meant to have freedom so that we can reach our true God-given potential.

The point we can take from Moses' full statement is that freedom from sin, while great in its own right, is simply not enough. In fact, that's why some 50 days after the Exodus the Israelites found that Moses had led them to the foot of Mount Sinai, where they were about to receive the Ten Commandments. The Commandments taught them how they were supposed to serve God.

Put differently, the Israelites were given a law that would ensure their liberty. It defined how free men and women were to live together in such a way that everyone's rights could be respected.

Freedom is not enough. Ironic, is it not, that we are made free so we can serve a better Master?