

Lord Show Me My Freedom

Mark 9:1-9; 8:34-36

I stand here today like many of you struggling to experience the freedom I have in Christ Jesus. The reality of what it means to live free can be overwhelming. Much of my hesitation to live free come from knowing that with freedom comes responsibility and at times, I get tired of taking responsibility.

Like most of you, as a child, I could not wait to get older so I could do things that teenagers did; then I could not wait to become an adult so that I could be free to do what adults did. I could not wait until I was old enough to have a girl over to my place at whatever time I wanted without having my mother come into the living room and tell me it was time for her to go home. I was not a drinker or a smoker but the same rings true for those of you who could not wait to smoke, drink, and party without regulation. For many of us the ability to do what we pleased, when we pleased, how we pleased and with whomever we pleased defined freedom.

It was only later in life that I began to understand that what I was passing off as freedom was really an overgrown adolescent idea of “having my cake and eating it too.” Freedom represented a way to escape rules for my own recklessness. The laws that existed to save my life had become oppressive in my mind and I sought to distance myself from them. When momma said, “stay away from that girl she’s gone ruin you.” I didn’t know she was talking about us being alone would cloud my judgment and cause me to have a momentary mental lapse that would have consequences for the rest of my life. However, I stand here today to say, “Lord Show Me My Freedom.”

Erwin Raphael McManus in his book called, “Uprising—a revolution of the soul”, speaks to this issue of freedom as he declares, *“Is it only coincidence that the entire journey of the nation of Israel was from slavery to freedom? And not just once, but over and over again—slaves to Egypt, slaves to Babylon, slaves to Rome. So much of Israel’s expedition through the wilderness was working out their freedom. They seemed to know neither how to cope with all their opportunities nor how to live up to all their responsibilities. God, who was their deliverer, was often treated as their oppressor.”*

In today’s story the people are faced with a tremendous opportunity; Jesus is taking an occasion to introduce freedom to the masses and He proclaims, ***“Then, calling the crowd to join his disciples, he said, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it. And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul?” (Mark 8:34-36).***

Most people don’t see how “losing and gaining” life has anything to do with being free. This brings us to our text, which is designed to help us see what it takes to really be free.

1. Some will get to see what freedom really looks like (Mk.9:1-4)
 - A. Select few are brought away from the crowd
 - 1) It pays to be close to the Lord
 - 2) It is important to be ready for whatever comes our way
 - 3) Most will have to trust and live by faith
 - B. Taken to a high place—elevated from the daily grind.
 - 1) See things from a different perspective
 - 2) Allows us to move away from routine distractions
 - C. Jesus is transformed—from an earthly figure to a supernatural one. A miracle, metamorphoo—invisible process that is begun at salvation
 - 1) We get a glimpse of what our future will be
 - 2) Access beyond earthly constraints
 - 3) Able to converse at a different level
2. Most won't know what to do when transformation (Freedom) takes place (Mk.9:5)
 - A. Human reasoning is an inappropriate response to a heavenly occurrence.
 - 1) Earthly tents don't work for spiritual beings
 - 2) Fear makes you go with what you know
 - B. God always affirms His work to remove all doubt (v.7)
 - 1) God has a clear word to calm our fears
 - 2) But we only get a taste of his power here (now).
3. With privilege come responsibility (Mk.9:9)
 - A. They were told to keep quiet about what they saw for a time
 - 1)The greater the event the more difficult to contain
 - 2)The more specific the request the more difficult to maintain
 - B. They did not fully understand the instructions
 - 1)However they agreed to the terms (faith)
 - 2)They carried out Jesus' wishes without all the details
 - C. They spoke to themselves rather than break a promise
 - 1)Sometimes it's better to keep it to yourself than to break a promise
 - 2)When all else fails share with those who have similar experiences.

Sometimes sharing things with those who have not had a like experience is like, asking blind men positioned at different points on an elephant to describe what they are touching. Each one will have a different experience depending on where he is on the elephant.