

BEING FREE IN A FREE WORLD
Apologetics and Counseling
Ružomberok, 23rd November 2013

0. INTRO: UNDERSTANDING FREEDOM

- The problem of freedom is complex... freedom for who? – prisoners? children at school? Christians? = each group, given freedom, will act differently
- Freedom is an emotionally charged topic
- Free Will; Free Thought; Free Life
- negative vs. positive freedom
- External vs. Internal freedom
- Humans are fallible → Necessity of Freedom

0.1. THE “MYTHOLOGY” OF FREEDOM – UNDER OPPRESSION

- Patric HENRY:¹ "Give me liberty, or give me death!" is a quotation attributed to Patrick Henry from a speech he made to the Virginia Convention in 1775, at St. John's Church in Richmond, Virginia,
- The *National Anthem of Uruguay*: Libertad o con gloria morir!
- During the *Siege of Barcelona* (25 August 1713, 11 September 1714)² the Barcelona defenders and the Maulets used black flags with the motto "Live free or die", in Catalan: "Viurem lliures o morirem"
- The motto of *Greece* is "Liberty or Death" (Eleftheria i thanatos)

- A ty mor ho! — hoj mor ho! detvo môjho rodu, kto kradmou rukou siahne na tvoju slobodu; a čo i tam dušu dáš v tom boji divokom: Mor ty len, a voľ nebyť, ako byť otrokom.³ (famous Slovak poem proclaiming “choose death before slavery!”)

0.1.1. FORMS OF SLAVERY/BONDAGE BEHIND THE MYTHOLOGY

0.1.1.1. FORCED LABOUR

- Richard Re, writing in 2002, stated: Conservative estimates indicate that at least 27 million people, in places as diverse as Nigeria, Indonesia, and Brazil, live in conditions of forced bondage. Some sources believe the actual figures are 10 times as large. (Richard Re, A Persisting Evil: The Global Problem of Slavery, Harvard International Review, 2002s.)⁴
- black slavery; poverty (DOSTOYEVSKY); extortion (→ Marxism)

0.1.1.2. POLITICAL/RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

- genocides;

0.1.1.3. EXPLOITATION OF LABOUR

- → Marxist mythology

0.1.2. "NATURAL RIGHTS"

- We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created **equal**, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are **Life**, **Liberty** and the pursuit of

¹ American attorney, planter and politician who became known as an orator during the movement for independence in Virginia in the 1770s. (Wikipedia)

² War of Spanish Succession.

³ http://zlatyfond.sme.sk/dielo/83/Chalupka_Mor-ho/1

⁴ http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/slavery/modern/modern_1.shtml

Happiness.⁵

- Article 1.⁶ All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.
UN
- Article 2. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.
- Article 3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.
- Article 4. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.
- Article 5. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

0.1.3. → THE MYTHOLOGY OF LIBERATION

- change of laws → good kings – folk lore

0.1.3.1. HISTORY

- escape → from family; from home; from country; from culture; → Exodus (people were given freedom in one night but it took them forty years to be able to embrace it)
- revolutionary change of government → revolutions; wars; → *The Velvet Revolution; The French Revolution; American Revolution;*

0.1.3.2. LITERATURE

- poetry:
- Dumas: *The Count of Monte Cristo;*
- Tolstoy: *War and Peace* (Russia)

0.1.3.3. MUSIC

- Beethoven: *Fidelio;*
- Verdi – *Nabucco; V.E.R.D.I., acronym of Vittorio Emanuele, Re D'Italia, Nabucco*
= it's natural that one desires freedom (if not, something's wrong with him/her)
= freedom is something rooted deep in men's hearts

0.2. CONTEMPORARY TEXTS – WRITTEN IN FREEDOM

0.2.1. SONGS

ČLOVEČINA – Elán

*Pár priateľov, ktorých už dávno mám
pár priateľov, s ktorými nie som sám
vždy voňajú človečinou
takých ľudí mám rád*

*Pár správnych miest, kam sa vždy vrátim
rád*

*rád dám sa zviest' ľuďmi čo chutia
správnou slinou, ľuďmi činov
človečinou dám sa zviest'*

*Tam nikto pred nikým sa na nič netvári
dvere sú otvorené*

čisté sú slzy aj víno v pohári,

všetko je dovolené

Na mene nezáleží a ani na veku

nikto ti nepovie nie

*Tu váhu má len keď dáva človek človeku
a každý to vie*

*Pár priateľov, ktorých už dávno mám
pár priateľov, s ktorými nie som sám*

⁵ <http://www.ushistory.org/Declaration/document/>

⁶ <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/> (The Universal Declaration of Human Rights)

*vždy voňajú človečinou
takých ľudí mám rád*

= famous Slovak pop song where the singer longs for people who believe that **“everything is allowed”** and **“no one tells you ‘no’”**

= a need of a place where nothing is forbidden – a place where one would feel at home

= a need of friends and fellowship

I WANT IT ALL – Queen

*Adventure seeker on an empty street
Just an alley creeper, light on his feet
A young fighter screaming, with no time for doubt*

*With the pain and anger can't see a way out
It ain't much I'm asking, I heard him say
Gotta find me a future move out of my way
I want it all, I want it all, I want it all, and I want it now*

I want it all, I want it all, I want it all, and I want it now

*Listen all you people, come gather round
I gotta get me a game plan, gotta shake you to the ground*

*But just give me, huh, what I know is mine
People do you hear me, just gimme the sign
It ain't much I'm asking, if you want the truth*

Here's to the future for the dreams of youth

I want it all (give it all - I want it all)

I want it all (yeah)

I want it all and I want it now

I want it all (yes I want it all)

I want it all hey

I want it all and I want it now

*I'm a man with a one track mind
So much to do in one lifetime (people do you hear me)*

Not a man for compromise and where's and why's and living lies

So I'm living it all, yes I'm living it all

And I'm giving it all, and I'm giving it all

Oooh oh yeah yeah - ha ha ha ha ha

Yeah yeah yeah yeaah

I want it all

It ain't much I'm asking, if you want the truth

Here's to the future

Hear the cry of youth (hear the cry of youth) (hear the cry of youth)

I want it all, I want it all, I want it all and I want it now

I want it all yeah yeah yeaah

I want it all, I want it all and I want it now

Oh oh oh oh oooh

And I want it - now

I want it, i want it

Oooh ha

= desire for freedom expressed in an extreme way – “Get out of my way!”

= why are we not satisfied with fellowship (the Slovak song – longing for friends) but we want everything and we want it now?

0.2.2. RELIGION

THE NINE SATANIC STATEMENTS

- 1. Satan represents indulgence, instead of abstinence! (La Vey – the founder of the satanic church)
- “Licence they mean when they cry Liberty” ; (samopaš myslia, keď "sloboda" kričia)⁷
- **2 Peter 2:19** They *promise them freedom*, but they themselves are *slaves of corruption*. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved.
- ORWELL ↔ HUXLEY – *totality*, vs. *banality*
 - Drugs = feeling free... really free?
 - Commercials! – “if you have everything you’ll be happy” – in reality we tend to be more and more unhappy

⁷ MILTON, J. *Poems* p. 82

1. THE CONFLICT

- “Half the misery in the world comes from trying to look, instead of trying to be, what one is not.”⁸

1.1.1. FORMS OF SLAVERY IN A FREE SOCIETY

- discovery of the *deeper* problem → society (ROUSSEAU); family (psychologists); human nature (ethics)...

[FROMM] The achievement of **wealth** and **comfort** for all was supposed to result in unrestricted happiness for all. The trinity of *unlimited production*, *absolute freedom*, and *unrestricted happiness* formed the nucleus of a new religion, Progress, and a new Earthly City of Progress was to replace the City of God. ... The failure of the Great Promise, aside from industrialism's essential economic contradictions, was built into the industrial system by its *two main psychological premises*: (1) that the aim of life is happiness, that is, maximum *pleasure*, defined as the satisfaction of any desire or subjective need a person may feel (*radical hedonism*); (2) that *egotism, selfishness, and greed*, as the system needs to generate them in order to function, lead to *harmony and peace*.⁹

1.1.1.1. CULTURAL OPPRESSION

- customs expectations → hypocrisy
- domination; manipulation; threats;
- fears; paranoia;

1.1.1.2. PHYSICAL ADDICTIONS

- alcohol; drugs; sexual perversions...

1.1.1.3. SPIRITUAL BONDAGE

- habits – addictions to psychological vices
- "...the domain of Duty, another the domain of Public Spirit, another the domain of Good Form; but I prefer to look at it as all one domain, for it has one and the same characteristic throughout — it is the domain of Obedience to the Unenforceable. The obedience is the obedience of a man to that which he cannot be forced to obey. He is the enforcer of the law upon himself."¹⁰
- fears; occult; sects...

- Reputation is often as great a fascination upon men as sovereignty, and is equally destructive to the freedom of thought and examination.¹¹

1.1.2. TWO WAYS OF RESPONSE

1.1.2.1. BLAMING OTHERS

- blaming society (ROUSSEAU);
- Adam blamed Eve – and God...
- blaming parents (modern psychology)

1.1.2.2. FINDING PROBLEM IN ONESELF – NEED FOR INTERNAL FREEDOM

- "Freedom's just another word for nothin' left to lose"¹²
- my past decisions – consequences of wrong choices
- my desires – harmful to others; harmful to myself ()
- my imaginations – expecting impossible (insatiable)
- "Epictetus was born the son of a slave woman in Hierapolis in Phrygia some time between 50 and 60 CE. His lameness and period of enslavement undoubtedly contributed to the development of his conception of happiness as freedom. This *freedom is not bodily, financial, or political*, but rather

⁸ MACDONALD, W. *The Flight of the Shadow*, p. 5.

⁹ FROMM, E. *To Have Or to Be*, p. 2.

¹⁰ [g:www2.econ.iastate.edu/classes/econ362/hallam/NewspaperArticles/LawandManners.pdf](http://www2.econ.iastate.edu/classes/econ362/hallam/NewspaperArticles/LawandManners.pdf)

¹¹ HUME, D. *Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences*, In: *Essays I*, p. 182.

¹² Janice Joplin & Kris Kristofferson

the only freedom which can, if the individual musters sufficient self-discipline and self-determination, never be lost. It is *freedom of the mind, freedom of assent, desire, and volition*. Though a person's body can, because of its nature, belong to another, Epictetus' resolute conviction was that one's mind is always one's own."¹³

There are things which are within our power, and there are things which are beyond our power. Within our power are **opinion, aim, desire, aversion**, and, in one word, whatever affairs are our own. Beyond our power are body, property, reputation, office, and, in one word, whatever are not properly our own affairs.¹⁴

No man is free who is not master of himself. (Epictetus *Fragments*)

What, then, is it which makes a man free from hindrance and his own master? ...it is the knowledge of how to live.¹⁵

- HUME: *Dialogues*

Labour and poverty, so abhorred by every one, are the certain lot of the far greater number; and *those few privileged persons, who enjoy ease and opulence, never reach contentment or true felicity*.¹⁶

1.1.2.3. SERENITY PRAYER

The original, attributed to Niebuhr, is:

God, give me grace to accept with serenity
the things that cannot be changed,
Courage to change the things
which should be changed,
and the Wisdom to distinguish
the one from the other.

Living one day at a time,
Enjoying one moment at a time,
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace,
Taking, as Jesus did,
This sinful world as it is,
Not as I would have it,
Trusting that You will make all things right,
If I surrender to Your will,
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life,
And supremely happy with You forever in the next.

Amen.

2. THE CHRISTIAN ANSWER

- **Rom 7:24** Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

2.1. NAMING THE PROBLEM (BIBLICAL HAMARTIOLOGY)

- man is not in peace with himself/herself (conflict with God → conflict with oneself)

2.1.1. ENMITY WITH GOD

- *imago dei* → created for God → hamartiology
- **James 4:4** Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

¹³ STEPHENS, W. O. *Stoic Ethics*, p. xiii.

¹⁴ EPICTETUS *Enchiridion 1*.

¹⁵ EPICTETUS *Discourses IV:60-66* p. 265

¹⁶ HUME, D. *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, p. 129

- **1Cor 7:23** You were bought with a price; do not become *slaves of men*.

2.1.2. SLAVERY

- sin → slavery **John 8:34** "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a *slave to sin*."
- the Fall → need for regeneration **John 3:5** "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

2.1.3. FEAR

- **Heb 2:15** deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to *lifelong slavery*.

2.2. DEFINING FREEDOM (BIBLICAL ANTHROPOLOGY)

2.2.1. ONTOLOGICAL HIERARCHY

- human nature → biblical anthropology (dicho- and trichotomy)
- free to sin? → **1 Peter 2:16** Live as *people who are free*, not using your *freedom as a cover-up for evil*, but living as servants of God.

2.2.2. MEANING IN LIFE → LIFE ACCORDING TO CREATION

- **Rom 6:16-19** Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient **slaves**, you are **slaves** of the one whom you obey, *either of sin*, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to **righteousness**?¹⁷ But thanks be to God, that you who were once *slaves of sin* have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed,¹⁸ and, having been set free from sin, have become *slaves of righteousness*.¹⁹ I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as **slaves** to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as *slaves to righteousness* leading to sanctification.

2.2.3. LIFE WITH GOD

- Faith (Heb 11:6)
- Love (Mk 12:30)
- Hope **1Tim 4:10** For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God,

2.3. BECOMING FREE (BIBLICAL SOTERIOLOGY)

2.3.1. THE TRUTH

- **John 8:31-32** "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples,³² and you will **know** the **truth**, and the **truth** will set you **free**."

2.3.1.1. NEGATIVE FREEDOM → FROM GUILT

- forgiveness → freedom from guilt → freedom of access; reconciliation

2.3.1.2. POSITIVE FREEDOM → TO BE RIGHTEOUS

- deliverance → freedom from the power of sin → freedom to live

2.3.2. THE SON

- **John 8:35-36** The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever.³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.
- the blood of the Cross

2.3.3. THE HOLY SPIRIT

- **Zec 4:6** Not by strength or by might, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of Hosts.
- **2Cor 3:17** ...where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.
- **Isaiah 61:1-2** The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to *the poor*; he has sent me to bind up the *brokenhearted*, to proclaim *liberty to the captives*, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;

3. CONCLUSION

- The real fight for freedom begins when we are free to do as we like.
- The real problem is our relationship with God.
- The real liberation is only in Jesus, the Son of God.