

THREE QUESTIONS OF FREEDOM

Apologetics

Zavadka, 19th February 2022

רוח אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה עָלַי וְעַן כָּשַׁח יְהוָה אֹתִי
 לְבָשָׁר עֲנוּיִם שְׁלַחֲנִי לְחַבֵּשׁ לְנַשְׁבְּרֵי-לֵב
 לְקַרְא לְשָׁבוּיִם דְּרוּר וְלְאַסוּרִים פְּקַח-קוּץ

Isa 61:1 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;

Τῆ ἐλευθερίᾳ οὖν ἡ χριστὸς ἡμᾶς ἠλευθέρωσεν, στήκετε, καὶ μὴ πάλιν ζυγῶ δουλείας ἐνέχεσθε

Gal 5:1 For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery

OUTLINE

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- 0.2. HISTORY OF FREEDOM
- 0.3. CHRISTIAN FREEDOM

1. FREEDOM FOR WHOM?

- 1.1. FOR ALL
- 1.2. FOR THE ABLE
- 1.3. FOR ADULTS
- 1.4. FOR MORAL PEOPLE
- 1.5. FOR HOLY PEOPLE

2. FREEDOM FROM WHAT?

- 2.1. YOU CANNOT BE FREE FROM...
- 2.2. YOU NEED TO BE FREE FROM...

3. FREEDOM FOR WHAT?

- 3.1. LIMITS
- 3.2. GOOD LIFE
- 3.3. KINGDOM OF GOD

4. TO REMEMBER**0. INTRODUCTION**

- (The three questions we need to ask if we want to be really free.→ identity; hindrances; purpose)
 - philosophical problem: determinism; compatibilism; fatalism;
 - AUGUSTINE "Please tell me whether God is not the author of evil" (*On the Free Choice of the Will*)
 - LUTHER *De servo arbitrio* (against Erasmus) ; CALVIN *The Bondage and Liberation of the Will* (against Pighius)
 - EDWARDS *Freedom of the Will*; WESLEY *Free Grace* (against Calvinism) ...
 - → open theism controversy today
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- [HEINE *English Fragments*] "Freedom is a new religion, the religion of our time."

Our liberty today is, in so many ways, unprecedented. Where shall we live? What will we do for a living? Shall we be members of traditional religions? Of traditional families? To a degree that previous

generations could scarcely have imagined, we answer such questions pretty much as we please. In these respects, the future has never seemed so underdetermined and unconstrained.

- philosophical ↔ practical question of freedom (theory ↔ politics) → society, law, politics, ethics
- FREEDOM: [ACTON] “the development of liberty is the soul of history.”
- liberty, equality and fraternity → political thought since the French Revolution
- Kant → Rousseau ~ Newton; Hegel → “freedom emerged with Rousseau” ... (“Freeing man from sin”)
- HAYEK *The Road to Serfdom; The Constitution of Liberty*;

0.1. FORMS OF FREEDOM

- OUTWARD ↔ INWARD freedom → Human Rights ()
- physical (freedom of movement) → against slavery (Spartacus); oppression (); injustice;
- speech/expression (information;) → against censorship; (Prague 1968 → the right place to be...)
- political (elections; political activity; forming parties, interest groups) → against totalitarianism; (Os Guinness → “the golden triangle of freedom” (1) freedom → (2) virtue → (3) faith → (1) ...)
- economic (property; economic activity) → against communism;
- religious → freedom *for* religion (confession; proselytizing) → against religious oppression; (Roger Williams 1603-1683 and Puritans → banished in 1635, Rhode Island)
- freedom *from* religion → free thinking
- psychological (feeling free;) → Skinner (behaviorism)
- happiness; serenity; purpose; meaning; significance; acceptance; ability...
- [FROMM] → economic liberalism, political democracy, religious autonomy, and individualism,

0.2. HISTORY OF FREEDOM

[David Schmidtz and Jason Brennan: *A Brief History of Liberty*]

- The Rule of Law: AD 1075 → Religious Freedom: AD 1517 → Freedom of Commerce: AD 1776 → Civil Liberty: AD 1954 → Psychological Freedom, the Last Frontier: AD 1963
 - FROMM *Escape from Freedom*,
 - [POLANYI *The Logic of Liberty*] ...submission to impersonal obligations. Its prototype is Luther facing the hostile Assembly at Worms with the words, “Hier stehe ich und kann nicht anders”. Such surrender to moral compulsion is certainly a form of liberation.
- Mortimer Adler research (1958-61): (1) self-realization, (2) self-perfection, (3) self-determination
- [Os GUINNESS] Political/civil liberty: (1) American revolution of 1776 ↔ (2) French revolution of 1789 → which do we want?

0.3. CHRISTIAN FREEDOM

- John 8:34 "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin.
- Rom 6:16 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?
- 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.

1. FREEDOM FOR WHOM?

- humans ... of course
- human dignity → What is it? [better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. (J.S.MILL *Utilitarianism*)]

1.1. FOR ALL

- the ideal: "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." → duties! (*Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948)
- equality of nationality; race; social status; gender...

1.2. FOR THE ABLE

- What means freedom for people "...who are half-naked, illiterate, underfed and diseased (?) ...they need medical help or education before they can understand, or make use of, an increase in their freedom." (Isaiah Berlin *Liberty*, p. 171)
- independent; self-existent;
- dependence requires GRATITUDE → "bound by gratitude"

1.3. FOR ADULTS

- !! → it works both ways: freedom presupposes adulthood and adulthood is bred only in freedom... (allowing for mistakes)
- definition of adulthood → "Adulthood is denoted by a mature repertory of interpersonal behaviors and the capacity for genuine love, a state wherein "the other person is as significant, or nearly as significant, as one's self" (Ewen *Theories of Personality*)
- social responsibility - integration of conflicting information - awareness of interpersonal and emotional influences on knowledge

1.4. FOR MORAL PEOPLE

- 'Freedom for the pike is death for the minnows' (Tawney *Equality*, 182)
- Vaclav Havel's amnesty in 1990
- [Wiki] Havel's first amnesty of January 1990 was the largest post-war amnesty, freeing around 23,000 people, two-thirds of the total prison population of 31,000, on the grounds that they had been convicted by a communist court system. However, critics claimed that this amnesty led to a significant increase in the crime rate: the total number of crimes doubled, as did the number of murders. Several of the worst crimes in the history of the Czech criminology were committed by criminals released in this amnesty. Within four years of the Velvet revolution (and following another two amnesties declared by Havel), criminality had more than tripled since 1989.

1.5. FOR HOLY PEOPLE

- **Isaiah 33:14** The sinners in Zion are afraid; trembling has seized the godless: "Who among us can dwell with the consuming fire? Who among us can dwell with everlasting burnings?"
- **holiness** → **freedom from negative inward constraint...**

2. FREEDOM FROM WHAT?

→ Orwell *1984* (political totality)

- (Isaiah Berlin: negative [from coercion] and positive [for action] freedom...)
- **Rom 7:24** Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

2.1. YOU CANNOT BE FREE FROM...

- God → even unbelievers are being shaped in their character by the kind of *god* they do not believe in...
- reality → creation
- law → rules of interaction; → not to prosper at other people's expense (although see the Indians' view of European society stratification...)
- social management/organization
- responsibility

2.2. YOU NEED TO BE FREE FROM...

- persecution; oppression; “social tyranny” (John Stuart Mill)
- lies → “great sham” (humbug) [FROMM]
 - **John 8:31-36** So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, “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.” ³³ They answered him, “We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free?’” ³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who **commits sin is a slave** to sin. ³⁵ 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
- SELF → self-deception; god-complex (“You shall be as God”)
 - [COLSON *The Good Life*] Living a good life begins with exposing the great lies of modern life.
- fear → **Prov 29:25** The fear of man lays a **snare**, but whoever trusts in the LORD is safe.
- addiction → from substance abuse to workaholism
- sin → **Romans 6:18** having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness

3. FREEDOM FOR WHAT?

→ Huxley *Brave New World* (manipulation)

- differentiation between liberties: (speech, association, worship, and choice of profession ↔ use of income...)

Lord ACTON:

Liberty is not the power of doing what we like, but the right of being able to do what we ought.

- [Gabriele KUBY] *The Global Sexual Revolution Destruction of Freedom in the Name of Freedom*,
- **self-limitation** → virtue...
- [Isaiah Berlin *Liberty*, p. 166] “If men never disagreed about **the ends of life**, if our ancestors had remained undisturbed in the Garden of Eden, the studies to which ... **Social and Political Theory** are dedicated could scarcely have been conceived.”

3.1. LIMITS

- (“negative liberty”) limits of SELFISHNESS → John Stuart Mill
- [MILL] “ask yourself whether you are happy, and you cease to be so. The only chance is to treat, not happiness, but some end external to it, as the purpose of life.” (*Cambridge History of English Literature*)

3.2. GOOD LIFE

- definition → entertainment? permanent holiday? unrestrained pleasures? (power; sex; wealth...)
- division → “them” ↔ “us”??
- division → “flesh” ↔ “spirit” (**Romans 7:18** For I know that **nothing good dwells in me**, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out)

3.3. KINGDOM OF GOD

- **Living in line with the purposes of God.** (WHO IS GOD? → God as the source of all joy, goodness and meaning.) → **“saved to serve”**
- **Rom 12:1** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies** as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.
- **1Cor 6:20** ...**you were bought** with a price. So glorify God in your body

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- **Mt 6:33** But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you → Rom 5:1; 2Cor 3:17 (**Luke 1:74** that we, delivered ..., might serve him without fear)

4. TO REMEMBER

- To be free means to understand freedom in accordance with the purposes of God.
- Freedom of fear is in the forgiveness of sins as a gift from Christ because of Calvary
- God gives freedom through the Holy Spirit who enables us to follow Christ willingly out of love.