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Evelyn Waite and Kathy Webber are collaborating on this project in an effort to encourage our Christian sisters and possibly to inspire other women to participate in this effort.

The Freedom of Choice

by Kathy Webber

God made man and gave him free choice

I have the power to choose

My Master - God or the devil

To follow Christ or self

To keep His commandments

or not

The will of God or self

To confess Christ or deny Him

His kingdom or the world

Righteousness or sin

Salvation or damnation

To be an heir or orphan

To die to live or live only to

die

To love or to be indifferent

The truth or deception

To glorify God or self

To be an instrument of use

or uselessness

Spiritual or physical

The eternal or the temporary

My final destination - heaven or hell.

(Continued in next column)

He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.

Matthew 12:30

My thoughts at this moment...I will never make it to heaven by my own power. If it were not for grace and mercy extended to me through the blood of Christ, I would be lost. And while Christ died for all men, not all men will choose to obey and submit their lives to God through Christ. God makes it easy to love Him in that He loved us first. It does not mean that we will not struggle to do what is right, but when we try and submit to His way, the blood of Christ continually washes us clean. It is the holiness of Christ through our choice of obedience that the Father sees. and it is the Holy Spirit that abides in us that seals us for our heavenly home. And the truth is...if I do not choose God, in the end I will wish I had never physically lived. I love and pray for you all.

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For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

Galatians 5:13

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Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.

1 Peter 2:16

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Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

2 Corinthians 3:17

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Let Freedom Ring

Today our country celebrates its liberty. The Declaration of Independence written by our founding fathers declared the 13 colonies to be free and independent of British rule. It took several years of armed conflict to establish ourselves as a nation, free and independent of Britain. Even after securing our freedom from Britain, the road was rocky as the fledgling nation struggled to become the mighty nation we know today.

One of the greatest freedoms in our country is the freedom to worship without fear of oppression by our government. In many countries around the world, worshipers of God are compelled to worship in secret for fear of imprisonment or even having a hand or a foot cut off. In some countries, Christians are rounded up and sold into slavery—just because they worship God. In some countries when Christians are discovered, they are used as bargaining chips to secure the release of militant criminals or they may face immediate execution. We are indeed blessed with the freedom to worship according to our consciences and our understanding of the word of God.

Yet another freedom we have is the freedom to teach the gospel to others. In Muslim dominated countries, no one is allowed to teach anything other than Muslim dogma, and daring to teach the gospel is to risk death. Paul never shrank from such dangers. In 2 Corinthians 11:24-28, he recounts the hardships he had faced as a servant of Christ: *“From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.”*

Yet at the end of his life, Paul could say, *“For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”* (2 Timothy 4:6-8)

As precious as our national independence and liberties are, they pale in comparison to our freedom in Christ. Paul says in Romans 6:17-18, *“But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been **set free** from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.”* He goes on to say in Romans 8:2, *“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me **free** from the law of sin and death.”*

Just as our nation struggled to throw off an oppressive government, we struggle to overcome sin. When we obey Jesus in baptism, we throw off those bonds and put our faith and trust in Him. What greater joy than to be free from the law of sin and death!

In 2 Corinthians 3:17 Paul tells us, *“...where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is **liberty**.”* He further encourages us in Galatians 5:1 to, *“Stand fast therefore in the **liberty** by which Christ has made us **free**, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.”*

He sums it all up in Galatians 5:13, *“for you, brethren, have been called to **liberty**; only do not use **liberty** as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”* As a nation, we are blessed to be the freest people in the history of the world. As Christians, we enjoy the greatest freedom of all—being children of God.

Have we, as Paul, suffered anything for Christ? For many of us, the worst we have experienced is someone laughing at us or getting angry with us. There are those who are disowned by their families when they obey the gospel, and that is very difficult to endure. However, few of us have suffered the severe hardships Paul suffered. That is primarily because of the freedom of religion we enjoy in this great country. Let us use that privilege to share the gospel of Christ with all those around us.

Evelyn Waite
July 4, 2004
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Freedom/Liberty Quotes

Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety.

Benjamin Franklin

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**In the truest sense,
freedom cannot be bestowed;
it must be achieved.**

Franklin D. Roosevelt

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If you would like to submit articles for potential publication, please give them or send them to Evelyn Waite via email to: evelynwa@fidmail.com. Your original work is preferred. When space is available, your submissions will be considered.

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