

Submission

I heard an elderly French screen actress say in a TV interview: "I will submit to no one." Maybe so, but she does have a lifetime addiction to tobacco.

Living for self leads to slavery to our sinful nature. Jesus said that everyone who sins is a slave to sin. (John 8:34)

Peter in his second letter talks about people who promise others freedom but are, themselves, slaves of depravity – "for a man is a slave to whatever masters him." (2 Peter 2:19) There are people out there who have become slaves of something, and now they want to drag you into that same slavery. They make it look and sound attractive, but don't you fall for it.

The truth is: true freedom can be had *only in Christ*. Human nature thinks just the opposite.

We think freedom is found as far as possible *away* from Christ.

If we are honest, we discover there is no freedom outside of Christ, no freedom without him. Why? I think it's because he is our Maker and he put us together that way. He made us dependent – preferably on him. Without him, we malfunction. We get into trouble. We become slaves of sin.

Why is it that the more I surrender and submit to God, the freer, the more complete and the more fulfilled I feel?

Jesus said that if he, The Truth, makes you free, you shall *certainly* be free. (John 8:31,32,36)

In 2 Cor. 3 (17) Apostle Paul says that wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

And James teaches that Christ's perfect law of love produces freedom. (James 1:25; 2:12)

Both to the Romans (8:2) and to the Galatians (5:1) Paul testifies that Christ not only set him, but all of us, free.

In Romans 8:21 he speaks of our liberty in Christ as being "glorious," and we can say *Amen* to that! There aren't enough words to describe the liberty we have in Christ: excellent...magnificent... splendid! The ultimate! The way it was meant to be.

It's interesting that we are not only to submit to *God* but also to one another – out of reverence for Christ. And we should certainly obey our leaders and submit to *their* authority. (1 Cor. 16:16; Eph. 5:21; Heb. 13:17)

It is also interesting that we are cautioned, we are warned, not to *abuse* our freedom in Christ. I would add that if you abuse it, you will lose it.

Paul to the Galatians: You were called to be free, but do not use your freedom to indulge the *sinful* nature. (Gal. 5:13)

"Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants

of God.” (1 Peter 2:16)

In reality, you *will* be a slave... *of* or *to* something or someone. There is no such thing as absolute freedom from everything and everybody. You were made free from sin to become a slave of righteousness. (Rom. 6:18,22)

James (4:7) says the only way of avoiding submission to the devil, is to submit to God.\\Paul writes to the Romans: He that is *dead* to sin is *free* from sin. (Rom. 6:7) That is, we reckon, we consider ourselves to be dead to sin but alive to God. In a nutshell, we are Christ's slaves, says Apostle Paul. (1 Cor. 7:22)

When we submit to Christ, another wonderful thing happens: in him we discover our true, rightful identity. Outside of Christ, we have a false identity. *In* him...and only in him... we become who and what he intended us to be. ◇◇◇