

"FREEDOM"?

In John 8:32 Jesus told the Jews, *"and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"*. These arrogant, self-righteous Jews replied, *"We are Abraham's seed, and have never yet been in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?"* (John 8:33). They considered themselves to be free however Jesus said, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Every one that committeth sin is the bondservant of sin"* (John 8:34).

I was reminded of this exchange between Jesus and the Jews as I watched a news report of a protest. The reporters were interviewing some of the people (mostly women) who had made a trip to Washington to march in protest against any effort to change the law which now makes abortion on demand legal. The statements made by these individuals indicate that they have about as much understanding of "freedom" as did those first century Jews.

One young lady, when asked why she had participated in this march said she thought "every woman should have the freedom to decide whether to have a child or not have a child." This is an example of how those guilty of sin seek to cloud the issue. The issue is not whether a woman should have the freedom to decide if she will or will not have a child. The real issue is whether a woman, or anyone else, has the right to take the life of a child AFTER its life has begun within its mother. If the mother's "freedom" includes the right to terminate the life of her unborn child because she doesn't want a child where does this "freedom" end? Is it limited to just the first few months following conception? What about this woman's "freedom" after she experiences all the responsibility of feeding, bathing and changing diapers following the birth of a baby? What if she decides then that she doesn't want a child? Surely we can see that once that child is conceived the woman has passed the time of deciding whether she will or will not have a child. From time to time we read or hear about the body of a newborn baby being found in a dumpster or some other trash container. The community is outraged that any mother would discard her baby in such a manner and criminal charges are placed against her. However, if this same mother had done the same thing three or four months earlier she would have been simply exercising her "freedom." How inconsistent can we be?

Another lady, when asked why she joined in this march, said, "It's about freedom; a woman's freedom to do what she wants to do." This is the attitude many have concerning freedom. The thought of God or right and wrong does not even enter the picture. Self is "god" and personal desire is the only standard of right and wrong. As Jesus stated to the Jews of His day, this is not freedom at all but is in fact the greatest bondage of all, bondage of sin.

The only real freedom is the freedom we have in Christ, i.e., freedom from sin. Paul said, *"Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered"* (Romans 6:16,17).

In Romans 1:28 Paul tells us why men would engage in such ungodly acts. He said *"they refused to have God in their knowledge."* It remains so today. When man rejects God he turns from the only source of true freedom.

✍ James Hahn