

Pastors Perspective March 2022

Why do we long for Freedom?

By Pastor Tim White,
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I walked up to a table and asked if I could sit there, and the person replied, “Go ahead, it’s a free country”? Francis Scott Key called America the “land of the free and the home of the brave” in what became our National Anthem. Likewise, our First Amendment asserts our most treasured God-given rights by using the term “freedom.”

Our Founding Fathers codified into our founding documents that the right to live in freedom comes to all humanity from God, not from any form of government. Furthermore, they made it clear that the role of the government is to safeguard the God-given rights and freedoms of its citizens. And so, that colloquialism (“it’s a free country”) is what our nation’s Founders’ sought to establish – and they did much more than talk about it.

Unlike other “revolutionaries,” most of our Founding Fathers were wealthy and lived comfortable lives. They had everything to lose by challenging the oppressive King George and his mighty war machine, but they did so with a firm resolve by pledging their “lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.” Most of them lost their fortunes, and some lost their lives, but all gained a unique place of honor in American history – because they valued “Freedom” more than life.

However, the importance of freedom for humanity did not begin in 1776. As far back as the 5th century before Christ was born, the Greek playwright Euripides is said to have authored the statement: “I would rather die on my feet than live on my knees.” A poetic version of that statement comes from Jimmy Cliff, who wrote: “I’d rather be a free man in my grave than to live life as a puppet or slave.”

The Canadian Truckers’ Convoy is called the “Freedom Convoy.” Similar rallies and convoys have sprung up in other countries supporting the Canadian truckers, including France, Australia, Finland, and the Netherlands. And of course, on Feb. 23rd, the United States version of the Freedom Convoy began heading to Washington D.C. from California. So wherever these oppressive and overreaching mandates and lockdowns continue, the people are now saying “Enough!” and “We want our freedom back!”

As I write this, the capital city of Ukraine is under attack by Putin’s armies, and there is not much hope that the Ukrainians can hold out against the vast Russian war machine. By the time you read this, a lot will have transpired – I pray for the brave Ukrainians. Their bravery is inspiring as thousands of civilians take up arms handed out by the government to defend their land and freedom. Their declaration is, “Ukraine will not kneel... We will push the b*****s from our land.”

What drives people to arise at the risk of their own lives to defend and protect their freedom? Why do human beings have such a strong and deeply rooted desire to be free? And I

am not referring to a “freedom” to do whatever one wants, but instead, one that recognizes the importance of being accountable for one’s actions and respectful of their neighbor’s rights.

I suggest that “freedom” was hard-wired into our very DNA at creation. God’s original intention for creating human beings was for a relationship with Him. From the very beginning, God gave humanity the freedom to make its own choices. The Creator did nothing to prevent Adam and Eve from eating the fruit of the forbidden tree because, without their ability to choose freely, there could be no real relationship.

Can any human relationship be genuine without each person having the freedom to decide if they want such a relationship? Real love (including friendship/brotherly love) for someone else is a free choice, and when the freedom to choose to love is removed, love is too.

Freedom is at the core of Jesus’ purpose in this world. In Luke 4, Jesus reads one of the prophecies about the coming Messiah from Isaiah 53:18-19 that uses words like, “proclaim liberty to the captives...to set at liberty (freedom) those who are oppressed.” Then the Apostle Paul writes, “It is for freedom that Christ has set you free... You, my brothers, were called to be free” (Gal. 5:1, 13).

This “freedom” spoken of in the Bible is much deeper than citizenship in a free country. Unfortunately, many who live in a free country are not free in their hearts and minds. The effects of evil, abuse, and the consequences of their own bad choices can enslave a person for years. Moreover, the weight of our guilt for our sin before a holy God knows no boundaries.

We long to be free because our Heavenly Father created us to be free. Jesus declared, “If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36). He came to provide a path to freedom from all these different forms of oppression, guilt, and condemnation through repentance (to change the mind/direction) for one’s sin and a commitment to follow Him for the rest of their life. Millions have found true freedom through Christ, and if you have not yet, I pray that you will soon.

God bless you, America, and the people of Ukraine.