



The Kingdom Perspective

The Paradox of Freedom

Hello, this is Pastor Don of Christ Redeemer Church. Welcome to The Kingdom Perspective.

The Bible suggests to us that our freedom in Christ is a kind of paradox.

Perhaps, no one articulated this paradox better than the great Martin Luther. In one of his most famous works, “The Freedom of a Christian” (1520), he begins his piece with two seemingly contradictory statements:

- A Christian is an utterly free man, lord of all, subject to none.
- A Christian is an utterly dutiful man, servant of all, subject to all.

Now, how in the world can a person be both subject to none, and subject to all? This can only be understood through the paradox of the gospel.

Biblically speaking (and Luther totally got this), a Christian is not someone who merely follows religious rules. No. A Christian is someone who is “in Christ”—they find their true and full identity in Jesus and what He has done for them.

And who is Jesus? Two central truths:

- First: He is... the sovereign and free Lord of all creation. Jesus is under no obligation to anyone. He’s the judge; we’re the sinners. He could take us out of existence this very second and He’d be no less Lord of all. But also...
- Second: this same sovereign and free Lord became for us... Servant of all by freely choosing to die for our sin.

You see, although Jesus is lord of all, subject to none, yet, out of love, He gladly became our servant that He might win us to Himself.

So it is for those in Christ. We are subject to none but Christ. Yet, for Christ’s sake we gladly make ourselves servants to all that we might win them for Him.

Something to think about from The Kingdom Perspective.

“For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.”

~ 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 (ESV)

For more see:

Martin Luther: Three Treatises (Fortress Press), 1970).

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