



Freedom
from
Religious
Bondage

Edison Macusi

Freedom from *Religious Bondage*

Finding freedom in the House of the Lord

Edison Macusi

True religion is the practice of the presence of God in one's life. There is no greater demonstration of faith than a man who walks with God in the good times and even in the bad times; a man tempered by trials, strengthened by His grace and devoted to humility. But what happens when religion has become a byword for an institution rather than a walk of faith or a pilgrimage with God? In this book you will learn how to walk with faith, overcome religiosity and be set free to live the abundant life God has called you for.

“It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.”
Gal. 5:1 (NASB)

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PREFACE

Religion dominated the world since the middle Ages. It controlled kingdoms and governance, as well as its decrees could bring fear and panic not just to the ruling monarchs but even to the least of the peasants. People can become religious for so many reasons. But a true religion who has it? In this book we will explore together how the bondage of false religion can actually oppress man and release the beast within him. In these last days we will also witness God's increasing display of His healing love not just to the physically afflicted but even those tormented within their bodies and emotions. Freedom is the cry of every human heart. Religious bondage can be the cruelest form of oppression a man can undergo. It releases the beast within every human being and unleashes all unholy desires.

In our country, many people are led to believe that every sect and every form of religion leads to the same God we worship. They promise joy, freedom from misery and poverty. Yet, they minister law and death, if not sacrilege to the person of Truth and Love. They claim to be free...and yet their lives show increasing bondage.

True freedom comes from the heart. A man set free from religious bondage will walk in truth and power that can shake this world like Paul the apostle did. If we claim to be free...we will be as free as the birds flying in the air. What they have is a simple faith, that every day is a new day and that God will not

forget them. This faith only comes from deep within, when one has been set free. Jesus came not just to seek the lost but also to set free even those bound by false religion. He came to bring life and release freedom to the captives.

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Chapter 1

A Journey to Freedom

The life of Abraham points to us a poignant example of what God can do to a man willingly given to Him. Abraham was never a perfect man, but his faith and patience in the Lord won him the title, “A friend of God”. The account of the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11 declares of the man,

“By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign *land*, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.” (Heb 11:8-10)

To Abraham, when the Lord knocks, he simply yields and opens up his heart before Him. He willingly obeyed the voice of God, His nudging. In the Scriptures it says, “he went out, not knowing where he was going” (Heb 11:8). Freedom to most of us is feeling free, feeling we can do everything we want. My former teacher wisely commented about this, “Your freedom ends, when the freedom of another is in jeopardy”. I thought before that freedom is mainly being free from imprisonment. So when I went to study in college, I carried

that definition not until I met some radicals in the University of the Philippines whose definition starkly contrasted mine. They thought freedom means freedom from all restraint in the global community; freedom from capitalism; freedom from imperialism. Freedom thus means many to different people, but the best form of freedom is being set free from inner oppressions one has struggled with for many years.

My experience in UPLB

College years can be the best or the worst years of one's life depending on how you spend it. In our college, invitations from different organizations flooded my pocket from fraternities to academic organizations and to Christian ministries. Each one tried to convince me of their mission and vision, their ways and traditions to persuade me to join their ranks and make a difference in the society. One of these organizations is the League of Filipino Students who ardently invites all freshmen who are willing to fight for the country's freedom from imperialism. They call us to a noble cause, to fight for freedom from oppression of the enemy which was always the United States. One time while in the corridor of our dormitory one student asked me to join their organization, I flatly refused. My refusal was not because I love imperialism but because I know that beyond the veil of all other "isms" that we observe here in our society, the root is not found in cutting off imperialism. My inkling was, if we fight against imperialism, we indeed fight for a noble cause, yet this was just a symptom of what had gone wrong. People can impose their right on others or gobble their business because they

have more money. And we can continue to denounce that indeed imperialism and capitalism can be evil; but more than flailing at the branches, I thought, the best was to remove the root of all evil which is sin permeating the society. The greatest radicals this world had ever known will not be Karl Marx or Vladimir Lenin or Mao Tse Tung...rather, it would be the ones who had and who continue to cut off the root of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. They would be the most humble and noble souls this world has ever known. They won't be found sitting in King's Palaces or enjoying the luxury of a vacation in the Mediterranean or in the Bahamas but will be found working in the most humble and destitute areas of this world showing forth the love of their Captain and Master. The journey to freedom is thus the journey of cutting off the influence of this tree in one's life, in one's neighbors and in one's country. This is the journey I have chosen and would choose to remain. This was also the journey which the patriarch Abraham chose to walk when God called him from his birthplace to Canaan.

Abraham's journey

Abraham was of a different spirit. When God spoke to him while still living with his father's house and under the comforts of his relatives, he chose to obey God.

“Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make

your name great; And so you shall be a blessing.” (Gen 12:1-2)

Previous to this, the Lord confounded the language of the world (Gen 11:7) as the people wanted to build a skyscraper that reaches to the abode of God. They wanted to reach God according to their own chosen method. These people were blinded by the god of this world (2 Cor 4:4) and thought they could reach Heaven by their own chosen ways. Isn't this familiar? We want to be independent from the dictates of anyone? We want a kingdom of our own, a city we can call with our own names. And even in the ancient of times such as in the land of Shinar or Babylon, people haven't been any different from us. They are just as stubborn and hard headed.

This was the world where Abraham hails from. It is a world which was already divided in language, culture and practice as a result of trying to reach God by their own ways. In the Philippines and in many Asian cultures, the nuclear family and the extended family are very cohesive. Most of the new couples would still be found living with their families. This is cultural and I do not mean it is evil to be found near your families. The Bible tells us that Abraham lived close to his family. There are advantages and disadvantages of living close to your extended families. I can cite three main advantages: immediate help and advices during the pregnancy of your wife, care when the baby is born and care during sickness. Thus it brings comfort and help to many start up families. The disadvantages can be as compelling as the advantages:

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