

SHACKLES ON YOUR FEET

February 8, 2021

2 CORINTHIANS 3:17 NIV - (17) Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

Paul declares that the Lord is a Spirit. He is talking about the Holy Spirit, one of the three members of the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit. In addition to being Christ, the Lord is also the Spirit. Paul has described in the previous verses the one and only way by which the veil of separation between human understanding and God's glory is removed. It happens when a person "turns to the Lord" by trusting in Christ's death in their place for the forgiveness of their sin. Sin is what holds the veil in place, and forgiveness of sin is what removes the veil.

The power to remove that veil and open human minds to God's glory comes through the Holy Spirit. Paul adds that where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom from the veil that keeps people from seeing God's glory. Through faith in Christ and the power of the Spirit, the veil is removed and God's glory is revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. That freedom from spiritual blindness or hardened minds is the difference between life and death.

The quest for freedom is a theme found throughout the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. Just three chapters into the story of God's creation, humanity gave up its freedom by choosing to rebel against God. From that time forward, the perfect freedom God created in the Garden of Eden was gone, and the long-term effects were both physical and spiritual.

The Old Testament of the Bible records how God's people lost their physical freedom time and again as various empires overtook them (most notably the Egyptians, as recorded in the book of Exodus).

The loss of physical freedom was often tied to spiritual disobedience like worshiping false gods. But time and again, the one true God forgave His people and rescued them. When God freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, He was foreshadowing the arrival of Jesus Christ, who came to free humanity from sin—the spiritual slavery that leads to death.

Today, many people are living in spiritual slavery without realizing it. They chase false gods of money, success, personal comfort and romantic love—only to realize they still have an emptiness that can't be filled by any of those idols or gods. Only with a relationship with Christ, the true and living God.

SCRIPTURE READING: JAMES 1:26

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK: God does not want a religion without a relationship tied to it. Because then it is an event.

"A JOURNEY OF THE HEART"