

Freedom:

The absence of subjection:
the ability to do as one pleases



Paul wrote to the Galatians; “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery” (Galatians 5:1). As Christians, we are free from subjection; we can choose to do what we want. It is incredible to have such freedom—many people in the world do not have the freedom we, in the “Western World” have. And spiritually, those who are not Christians are in bondage to sin and death, they really don’t have a choice—they are in *subjection* to sin and the flesh.

Yet, with freedom, comes responsibility. “You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; a rather, serve one another in love. The entire law is summed up in a single command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” (Galatians 5:13-14). Very often, people use their freedom in selfish ways, but the Bible teaches that our freedom should lead us to make the choice to give of ourselves and love others. Christ has set us free, yet we can become enslaved to self and our own desires. Choosing to love others—and in marriage—choosing to love one above all others is not bondage, but freedom.

Author Henry Cloud wrote, “Marriage is not slavery. It is based on a love relationship deeply rooted in freedom. Each partner is free from the other and therefore free to love the other. Where there is control, or perception of control, there is not love. Love only exists where there is freedom.” Yes, we must have the choice to extend love or not extend love to our spouse. Yet, when we withhold love, when we do not die to self for our spouse, are we living in freedom? Or in bondage to self and our own desires?

Live in freedom—*do you as you please*, but use your freedom to *serve your spouse in love*. Yes, it seems paradoxical, but there is great freedom in dying to self! Just as Jesus chose to give up the freedom of His Godhood, to come to earth to die for you, you can choose to die to self and love your spouse as God wants you to.

Helpful Resources: *Fortified Marriages Resource page:* www.fortifiedmarriages.com

Articles to check out: *Marriage and Personal Freedom* by Kirk VanOoteghem - marriagemoment.org
The freedom of marriage in Christ by Drs. Michael and Kendra Holmes - hhjonline.com