

Law or Liberty?

Yesterday our nation celebrated its 244 birthday. Our national motto is: "the land of the free and the home of the brave." As Americans, we often pledge to be: "one nation under God, with liberty and justice for all."

The question I ask is this: If we are free, do we also have to be under law? Or, if we have liberty, do we also have to have law? Many people today would answer, "No!" Many people who want their freedom and liberty, do not want law - man's law and especially God's law.

But, it doesn't work like that. Even our nation's forefathers who fought and died for liberty, also wanted us to be a people of law. The same ones who wrote the Declaration of Independence, also wrote the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights containing laws. Our liberties are built upon law.

So, is it law or liberty? The truth is, it's both. True liberty comes with law. We are free from sin in Christ (Galatians 5:1), but we also have to live a certain way according to the law of Christ (Galatians 6:1). Jesus gave us "the perfect law of liberty" (James 1:27). When we obey Jesus' law, we get Jesus' liberty. - *Chris Reeves*

Freedom Quotes

- Freedom is not really free; there's a cost (price) for all freedom.
- Freedom cannot simply be bestowed; it must be achieved.
- Freedom must not simply be claimed; it must also be maintained.
- For freedom did Christ set us free (Galatians 5:1) ... use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh (Galatians 5:13).

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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

Tried As Gold

*“But he knows the way that I take;
When he has tried me, I will come
forth as gold”
- Job 23:10 -*

The Old Testament character named Job was a real man. He was a family man, a wealthy man, an honorable man, a marked man, and a married man (Job 1-2). Job is described as a righteous man in Ezekiel 14:19-20 and a patient man in James 5:10-11.

This man named Job who had a great character was tested by God and Satan. He was allowed to suffer greatly, but in the end he remained faithful to God and he was rewarded (Job 42). Job described his trials and testing as being tried as gold (Job 23:10).

In Bible times, ore would be heated in a fire to separate the precious metals (like gold) from the slag or waste. This process was called “smelting”. Let’s see what it meant for Job to be tried as gold. Let’s ask ourselves: “Am I being tried and tested and will I come forth as gold?”

Job was tested greatly. He was deprived of his possessions (1:13-17). He was deprived of his children who died (1:18-19). He was deprived of his

health with boils from head to toe (2:7-8; 7:3-5; 16:16; 19:20; 30:17,30). He was deprived of his wife who suggested he curse God (2:9). He was deprived of his inner well-being with emotional distress (2:13; 3:24-26; 7:13-16; 30:17). Job was deprived of his friends who falsely accused him (13:4; 16:1; 19:19). Finally, he was deprived of his social standing in the community as one of the important leaders (29-30).



Job was also deprived of his proper understanding of God. He never lost his faith in God, but he did question God and accuse God of some things. He said:

God is shooting at me (6:4)
God is harassing me (7:11-12)
God is unjustly inflicting me (9:17)
God is killing me (13:24)
God is hiding from me (13:24)
God is hurting me (16:7-14; 19:8ff)

Why was Job so successful during his time of suffering? Why did he come forth as gold? First, Job had built his life on God before his testing and trials came. He was a faithful worshipper of God for himself and his family before the problems came (1:1,5,20-22; 2:10).

Second, Job was a man of great moral character (31:1ff).

Third, Job looked beyond this life to the next - the resurrection day (14:14; 19:25-29).

Fourth, Job was willing to listen to God and be corrected (38-41).

Fifth, Job had a dogged determination to trust in God and do what God said (42:1-17).

Job was not the only one who was tried and came forth as gold. There were others. For example, faithful Israelites were tried and they were found to be as gold (Dan. 11:35; Zech. 13:9; Mal. 3:3). The Lord’s church was also tried and the faithful will come forth as gold (James 1:2-12; 1 Peter 1:6-7).

Friend, how will you be found after being tried and tested? As gold?

- Chris Reeves -