

3 Things That Keep You From Freedom in the Holy Spirit

A friend named Arthur Burt once told me a story of a farmer who found an eagle with a broken wing. The farmer rescued the eagle and put it in a chicken pen. Because of its injury, the eagle was forced to live like a chicken. But it wasn't a chicken; it was an eagle with a higher destiny.

One day after its wing was healed a visitor came by and noticed the eagle. He asked the farmer for permission to return the bird to its natural habitat. With the farmer's consent, he took the bird and headed for a nearby mountaintop.

The man's first attempt to set the bird free was disappointing. The eagle flapped its wings but didn't try to take off. It still saw itself as a chicken.

Day after day the man took the eagle up on the mountain with no results. But one day there was a strong wind, and when the eagle flapped its wings, the current began lifting it upward. Suddenly, revelation hit: Eagles are born to fly! The bird rose with the wind and began to soar.

Often people are like the eagle in this story. When we go through difficult situations in life, we sometimes find ourselves in a figurative "chicken pen," living with what we should be over. We need a revelation of our true destiny—to soar in the liberty of the Spirit in every area! (See 2 Cor. 3:17.)

Take illness, for instance. Jesus made provision for our healing, but instead of appropriating it, we accept the illness—a type of chicken pen—as our lot.

This is true of other forms of bondage as well. People-pleasing is a good example. Jesus condemned the religious for

wanting the praise of men more than the praise of God (see John 12:43), but whenever we do something in order to receive another person's approval we come under the same sentence. We don't have to be ruled by people!

Self is another example—and perhaps the most difficult type of bondage to break free from. It seems that everywhere we turn in our society we are bombarded with messages that encourage us to focus on and indulge ourselves. If we fall under their influence, self becomes our master.

But where the Holy Spirit is Lord, there is freedom. In the mid-1800s, Frederick Faber put it this way, "To be free from littleness, from self-love, from secret meanness, and from the haunting of our own shame, this is to be free indeed."

When we are in the chicken pen, we think that what we know is all that is available to us; but God is calling us to a higher realm—the realm of the Spirit. It is here where we experience true freedom, rising up on the wind of the Spirit to fulfill our destiny. Like the eagle, we were born to be borne. *