

The Scary Lies Some Christians Tell

“Follow your heart.”

“Do what makes you happy.”

These are scary lies being spread by Christians today. I see these phrases all over Facebook, shared by Christians who have followed Christ all of their lives, or at least for more than half their lives.

And yet, while they have walked with God enough years to make them a “spiritual adult,” they still have not discovered the lie hidden in these simple phrases.

We think that freedom is being able to do what makes us happy. Doing what our heart tells us we should do. And yet the Bible has a very different picture of freedom.

I sat in the auditorium listening to the speaker address those who were planning to enter full-time ministry. Having grown up in a pastor’s home, I was well aware of the points the speaker was making but they annoyed me; in particular the point he made—that as believers, we are held to a standard of holiness.

A higher standard.

I was so tired of hearing that. In recent years I had become envious of my friends who seemed to have a pretty good relationship with God and yet didn’t live at the “high standard” I did.

I was tired of constantly having to walk away from an activity because it included something with which our family didn’t agree.

For once, just once, I wanted to be able to relax and have fun without that voice in my head telling me that I needed to walk away.

After the session, I cornered the professor and blurted out my frustrations; which sounded more like a whiny child screaming, "It's not fair!"

"I just want to have some freedom," I vented.

Somehow, despite my parents careful instruction, I had begun to believe the lie that freedom is the ability to do what I want.

That's a dangerous lie, because the Bible instructs us that our natural desire is bent on sin and destruction. Our hearts are bent toward evil. Furthermore, Proverbs warns us over and over of the danger of being right in our own eyes; or in other words, exercising the freedom to "follow our hearts"—one of the most purported lies in the body of Christ.

I walked away that day and chose to follow my definition of freedom.

I followed my heart ... right into the enemy's trap.

What followed were two of the darkest years of my spiritual life. While continuing to acquire biblical knowledge, I daily walked in utter foolishness. In my freedom, I closed my heart to wisdom and the consequences were severe. Two years later I came to my senses, but it would take another severe blow to truly drive home the truth that freedom is not doing what I want to do, but the ability to live within the confines of godly wisdom by doing what I ought to do.

Wisdom.

Proverbs is the instruction book for the wise and in chapter 13 we see two clear contrasting images of those who choose to

live wisely and those who choose to live without restraint.

“He who guards his mouth preserves his life, but he who opens wide his lips will have destruction” (Prov. 13:3).

But there’s a deeper lesson to be learned in Proverbs 13:13:

“Whoever despises the word will be destroyed, but he who fears the commandment will be rewarded.”

There is a great temptation in the body of Christ today to assume that anytime we speak of the law, righteousness and holiness that we lack love and grace, or that we are being judgmental and condemning.

And yet, all throughout Proverbs we see that those who fear the commandment (yes *the commandment*) and live righteous and holy lives—are rewarded, live in peace and enjoy God’s blessing!

So then, how is it that the very thing that brings us peace, blessing and reward is also judgmental and void of grace and love?

It is simply not possible.

It is human nature to want to throw off the confines of God’s commands and erase the boundaries of righteous and holy living.

It is humanistic thinking that elevates our own heart above God’s Word that was given to guide and direct it, because our hearts are so prone to wander into sin.

It is deception that points the finger at those who fulfill the command to love the law, fear the commandment, walk righteously and live holy, and calls them judgmental, critical and unloving.

Why?

“The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death” (Prov. 13:14).

Did you see that?

When we choose to embrace true freedom—the ability to live within the confines of wisdom, choosing to do what we are commanded by Scripture to do—we find *life!*

Jesus said that He came to give us life. Not just life, but *abundant life!*

Do we want God’s favor and blessing in our lives? We must learn to walk in wisdom; and the beginning of wisdom is learning to fear the Lord.

Today I choose freedom: Living within the confines of wisdom; not doing what I want but choosing to do what Scripture commands me to do.

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