



new life fellowship

Sermon Title: A Deeper Kind of Freedom

Speaker: Richard Villodas, Lead Pastor

Scripture: Luke 4:16-19

He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Luke 4:16-19 (NIV)

Sermon Outline:

In Luke 4, we see the Holy Spirit drive Jesus into the wilderness. Jesus is tempted three times in the desert by Satan, yet Jesus resists all of Satan's words and prompting. It is here that we see how Jesus was able to resist this temptation and offer us freedom. The type of freedom that Jesus Christ offers us is not what typically come to mind when we think about freedom. It is not a freedom of being free from something, but about being free for something.

The freedom that Jesus Christ offers us is one that is threefold: **spiritual, interior, and social freedom.**

Spiritual freedom comes from above. In Luke 3, Jesus is baptized and before Jesus does anything, God speaks words of affirmation over him ("You are my Son, whom I love.") The level of our spiritual freedom is equal to our ability to accept our affirmation from God. We are to position ourselves to hear the word from God, which is a gift that is given to us. Instead, we live in a world where we show how much we can produce and how much we have – waiting to receive words of affirmations from those around us. Are you listening, hearing and receiving words of affirmation from the Father?

Interior freedom comes from within. Jesus is tempted three times to be relevant, spectacular, and powerful, yet He resists all of these temptations. The desert is a place of sifting, where our motives are being tested. Jesus was clear in his internal clarity in what God called him to be. Are you living in the freedom that God has called you to be? Success is doing God's will in God's way, in God's timing. The degree in which we do this, is degree to which we are free.

Social freedom comes from proclaiming the word of God. When Jesus started his ministry, he went to the slums, to proclaim the Good News to the poor. Jesus connected the Gospel to what people were experiencing at the time. The Gospel is the message that Jesus Christ is Lord, that Jesus Christ is King. The freedom the world longs for is found in the power of the Holy Spirit. When you live in the love of the Father and resist the lies of the devil, you can offer words of liberation to others.

The freedom the world longs for is not found in the constitution choosing what we want, but is found in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus came to proclaim the Gospel to the poor. The message is Jesus Christ is Lord and in Him, those who are poor in spirit can be raised up. Jesus went to those who were overlooked and marginalized.

Jesus came to proclaim freedom for the prisoners. Those imprisoned by Satan and evil powers, and those imprisoned by a political system of domination. The way the world understands power is not how we are to exercise power. We are to exercise power the way of Jesus' disciples exercised power -- through service, hospitality and love.

Jesus comes for the physically, religiously and spiritually blind. Jesus' power is for them. He came to give the world sight to those blinded spiritually by Satan and those blinded religiously, by their own righteousness. His word and the Gospel is for the recovery of the blind.

Jesus came to set the oppressed free. Freedom in the name of Jesus Christ for those who were oppressed by society, by the religious system of the day and the many challenges of being socially marginalized.

When you look at your own life and struggles, you cannot forget the life of Jesus Christ. He is not looking for a freedom apart from us but a freedom for us. God doesn't need humanity and yet God refuses to exist without us.

Sermon Summary:

This Sunday Lead Pastor Richard Villodas leads in a sermon about a different kind of freedom. Today Pastor Rich's sermon offers us the kind of freedom offered by Jesus – one that comes from above, is experienced from within, and is expressed to the world.

Sermon Questions:

1. How does this scripture connect for you the topic that was discussed today? What words resonate with you? Why?
2. In your family of origin, were there strives to be relevant, spectacular (showing off of status) or powerful and successful? Did this differ for your family as a whole, versus what you were taught individually?
3. What does it look like for you to live in the freedom of believing you are who God says you are?
4. What temptations do you face today that pulls you away from God's freedom? Are their sins you are facing that are enslaving you?
5. How can you partner with Christ, take what he has freely given us, and offer that freedom to another? What would it look like for you to put aside your earthly freedom, and exercise the gifts of service and love that Christ asks us to offer to others?