
What does Jesus teach about ... FREEDOM?



The American flag stands for freedom. When we see *Old Glory* floating in the breeze, we feel pride in being citizens of the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave.

We celebrate freedom on Independence Day, but we enjoy our American freedoms every day. We have freedom to worship, freedom to speak, freedom to assemble, freedom to travel. We enjoy so many freedoms that it's easy to forget how those freedoms were won.

Freedom isn't free. It always comes at a price. Our flag reminds us of the battles that were fought and the blood that was shed so that tyrants and despots could not strip us of freedom.

The cross of Jesus also stands for freedom. When we see the cross, we remember how Jesus has set us free to be God's children.

Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin...if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:34,36). With Jesus we have the freedom of forgiveness. We have freedom to approach God with our prayers. We are free to love and serve God.

Apart from Jesus, those freedoms don't exist. Without Jesus we remain slaves to our passions and egos. Without Jesus we are enslaved by our sins against God, and we are chained to the consequences of our sins. Without Jesus we are shackled by guilt, bound by fear and trapped in a web of lies and despair that ultimately leads to everlasting destruction. We've made ourselves a sticky mess, from which we cannot set ourselves free.

Jesus came as our Deliverer to set us free from sin and its deadly consequences. But our spiritual freedom wasn't free, either. It came at an enormous price. Jesus suffered and died to set us free. With his blood he paid the only ransom that could release us from slavery to sin and give us the freedom to live for God.

Flags and fireworks, hot dogs and hamburgers on the Fourth of July—all these things remind us of the freedom we celebrate as Americans.

When you see the cross of Christ, let it remind you of the freedom that is yours to celebrate because of Jesus!