



A new creation focus through Colossians ...

Whatever You Do ...

"It was for freedom that Christ set us free," Paul reminded the Galatian brethren. Certainly freedom from sin was one aspect of the general liberty which Christ has brought to the saints. "Truly, truly, I say to you," was His gambit to the Jewish hierarchy, "everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin" (John 8:34). Could a man free himself from that slavery? Of course not; only Jesus can free the captive. "If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed," He informed them and the world (John 8:36). But in order to be so truly free, a person has to be able to

handle the responsibility that comes with freedom. If a person has the liberty to decide whether to work or not to work, he has to be able to discipline himself to labor for his food or he will starve. Spiritually speaking, then, the saint of God is free to exercise a lot of liberty in the use of his time, money, energy, and talents. The Father's idea is that if a person is mature enough for the privilege of sonship in Christ, then he is mature enough to manage himself for the glory of God.

- ◆ **Whatever** — One of the blessings that comes with freedom is the flexibility to be creative. In societies where there is no freedom, everything and everyone is regimented, and there is no room for independent or creative thought. In the freedom of being in Christ, then, the Father expects His children to show a lot of initiative and ingenuity in figuring out how to get the gospel spread, and how to make the local church function. He has given general guidelines for the individual and for the congregation in which He expects that initiative and ingenuity to operate, but there is tremendous freedom within those boundaries. "And whatever you do in word or deed," asseverates the apostle Paul, "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Colossians 3:17). *Whatever* is a big word, big enough for every saint of God to find room for his creativity and energy to operate positively for the forward movement of God's kingdom.

- ◆ **In the name of the Lord** — The expression, "in the name of the Lord Jesus," means *by the authority of the Lord Jesus*. Someone can mumble the words "in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ," but that does not mean that he is operating under the authority of Jesus Christ. The apostle is pointing out that the saint has a lot of freedom to say and to do many things for the cause of the gospel, but those things have to be said and done in consonance with the terms and tenor of the new covenant. A Christian could not be down at the local tavern drinking and getting drunk with the other patrons and legitimately claim that he was operating under the authority of the name of Jesus Christ. What is required here is absolute honesty with God, and when that honesty is operating, there are many legitimate and creative presentations and activities that can be initiated so that God's kingdom can be advanced.

- ◆ **Thankfulness** — Properly understood, it is a pleasure and a blessing to serve the living God. What higher calling could there possibly be, than to serve the great and awesome Creator? What more noble or fulfilling purpose could there possibly be than in participating in Jesus' plan of seeking and saving the lost? What else could last for all eternity other than the work and words said for the name of the Lord Jesus? For the favor of being allowed to participate, saints are "giving thanks through Him to God the Father."

Saints of the church of the living God have immense freedom to go, speak, and accomplish things for the distribution of the gospel, the saving of souls, and conservation of the Christians. What great and encouraging words: "Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." So, let's go and do!

*Saints have
freedom to go
and spread the
gospel.*

JAY WILSON