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Freedom True and False

*F*reedom is not unlimited choice. Society is crumbling because people are living as though freedom means the rejection of all external restraints. Restraint is linked with inhibitions, and in an age of permissiveness, no one dares to admit to inhibition. As long as freedom is defined by inner determinants—urges, sensations, drives, and desires that one "must" express—chaos will ensue.

Society has abandoned the notion of objective metaphysical or spiritual truth. How strange this is! In science, which has become modern man's religion, only what can be objectively measured is considered open for investigation. Values, being intangible, are not scientifically knowable, but are considered purely subjective and personal. Only what one feels or experiences has worth. In this view there are no guiding laws or principles, but there is one absolute. That absolute is that there are no absolutes. You are the captain of your own ship. The new freedom is complete autonomy, but it is an impossible goal. And even if autonomy were attainable, is it desirable? All

around us we see people adrift on a sea of limitless alternatives, and the consequences are devastating. Like sailboats without rudders, they drift, lose control, and inevitably capsize.

Standing opposed to this is Christian freedom. This freedom is internal and external, both in our thought life and in our actions. Christians do not act as though people are autonomous. God establishes our freedom within boundaries. We are free to make choices. We are free to follow an external standard, or we may choose to make our own whims our standard. But choices have consequences.

The question is: What kind of freedom will we choose? What consequences are we prepared to accept? Will we choose a freedom that has no fixed values to guide it? Or will we choose a more blessed freedom that guides us into an abundant life? Will we look to the One who created human life to reveal the way to us? Ultimately, this freedom to choose the life we were made for is the only freedom that counts.

Study Guide

1. What kinds of chaos ensue when we define freedom by inner desires, drives and urges?
2. Have you ever noticed that "there are no absolutes" is an absolute statement? If this thinking is all around us, how might it have influenced our own thinking?
3. Christian freedom is based on the fact that the God who created us knows the best way for us to live. How is this different from seeing humans as robots?
4. How might Christian freedom be both "inner" and "outer"?