

## The Price of Freedom

Freedom is a precious gift from God. We enjoy our freedom only to the extent that we resist those things that encroach upon it. Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence for the United States, a country founded on the value of freedom, proclaimed that, “the price of freedom is eternal vigilance.”<sup>1</sup> What then is freedom? Knowing how to get it and how to make the right choices to help us keep it, motivate us to continually fight for it, both for ourselves, for others and for future generations.

### Getting Free

As a gift to us from God, freedom can never be taken for granted or we will simply not have it. Paradoxically, we can only receive true freedom by not seeking it for ourselves. Teddy Roosevelt served as President of the United States at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He explained it this way: “The things that will destroy America are prosperity at any price, peace at any price, safety first instead of **duty first**, the love of soft living and the get rich quick theory of life.”<sup>2</sup> To get free, people need to prioritize doing their own duty first, before indulging in gratifying their own self-interests. Our first duty in getting free is to give ourselves wholeheartedly to God. Second, we must lay down our lives to serve others. Jesus taught us to follow His perfect example: For even “the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”<sup>3</sup>

Spiritually, we are set free when we believe that Jesus died for us and accept His atonement for our sins. Guided by His Spirit, we then learn to live both selflessly and responsibly within the safe parameters outlined in His Word. Both natural and spiritual laws give us healthy and necessary boundaries for our freedom. Man-made laws govern our actions, to protect society from harm and help us to live at peace with each other. On a higher and deeper level, spiritual laws govern and protect our hearts, so we can continue to have peace with God. Getting free depends on how we choose to live our lives.

### Choosing Right

In its most fundamental sense, freedom is the right to choose. Our understanding of freedom determines how we will use it, either for good or for evil. As Jesus served those He came to save, we also choose to serve those around us; our families, our churches and our fellow citizens. So, we exercise our freedom to serve others. As we use our God-given freedom for good, we reap the benefits, including

healthy relationships, peace, joy, a sound mind and eternal life. This perpetuates freedom.

Sadly, many fail to understand the true basis for freedom, resulting in a selfish misuse of freedom by making wrong choices. "Pro-choice" is costing us an entire generation, as abortions continue at an alarming rate. One out of every two marriages in Canada end in divorce and, after one year of a separation or divorce, half of the children of divorced or separated families never see their fathers again.<sup>4</sup> Our prisons are filled with those who have made wrong choices. Too many despairing souls make their ultimate wrong choice, to end their own lives. Those who refuse to use their freedom for good are bound to lose it for good.

## Fighting for Freedom

Former United States President Ronald Reagan rightly warned: "Freedom is a fragile thing and is never more than one generation away from extinction. It is not ours by inheritance; it must be fought for and defended constantly by each generation ...."<sup>5</sup> The brave and selfless Canadian soldiers now in Afghanistan understand what it means to fight for freedom. During a national media interview this Canada Day, Corporal Nick Bulger gave a poignant description of why we must fight for freedom.<sup>6</sup> He explained how our soldiers are bringing hope for Afghanistan's future, "Especially when we're driving down the streets in the rural areas, to look down into the eyes of the children that are there, you get a different perspective. All you see is the war and the destruction and stuff like that, but then when you see those kids running through the streets without a care in the world ... being here makes a huge difference." Only two days after this interview, Corporal Bulger lost his life for this hope he envisioned for the next generation, when he was the victim of a roadside bomb. Prime Minister Stephen Harper extended condolences to Corporal Bulger's family and stated: "Remarkable Canadians like Corporal Bulger will be remembered for their dedication and ultimate sacrifice for peace and freedom."

Soldiers valiantly choose to fight for national freedom. Jesus won the spiritual battle for our eternal freedom, by freely laying down His life for us. While freedom is a gift from God, it costs us everything. Jesus taught: "For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it." Praise Him!

Marianne Novoselac just released her first worship CD "PRESENCE" and is the author of "Praise: The Gateway to Miracles." To order your copies, please go to [www.miraclepraise.com](http://www.miraclepraise.com).



Through music and teaching, Marianne Novoselac passionately shares how praise brings breakthrough, a message of hope and healing for victorious living. Her CD "Presence," recorded at Gaither Studios, and book, *Praise: The Gateway to Miracles*,

help believers experience God's manifest presence in their everyday lives. Marianne is also a regular contributing author to the Evangelical Christian, Canada's largest circulation Christian magazine. To learn more about Miracle Praise Ministries, visit [www.miraclepraise.com](http://www.miraclepraise.com).

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.monticello.org/jefferson/biography.html>, <http://sc94.ameslab.gov/TOUR/tjefferson.html>, <http://freedomkeys.com/vigil.htm>, June 16, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> <http://freedomkeys.com/vigil.htm>, June 16, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 20:28, NIV.

<sup>4</sup> <http://ezinearticles.com/?The-Costs-of-Rising-Divorce-Rates-Across-The-US&id=1003126>, <http://www.divorcerate.org/divorce-rates-in-canada.html>, July 15, 2009.

<sup>5</sup> <http://freedomkeys.com/vigil.htm>, June 16, 2009.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.cbc.ca/world/story/2009/07/03/soldier-afghanistan.html>, July 10, 2009.