

Scripture of the Week:
HEBREWS Chapter 11

What Are You Doing With Your Freedom?

by Mattie Ann Callier-Spears

"Free at last! Free at last!" — the immortal words taken from Martin Luther King's speech, "I Have a Dream."

January 18, 1988, has passed, and all the celebrating of the day and its themes are ringing in our ears, our hearts and our minds.

There are 364 days until next year's celebration — or are there?

As Dr. Hosea Williams said, "Use this time to rededicate yourselves to the dream" — the full meaning of the dream.

Freedom — is liberation from the control of some other person or some arbitrary power; liberty; independence. I now ask the question — "What are you doing with your freedom?"

King says, "God is interested in the freedom of the entire human race." Do you know that you can lose this wonderful freedom that you have because of ignorance and apathy? Yes! You can continue to go on through life with a false euphoric sense of gratification — doing nothing — saying nothing. You get a great big nothing out of life. So . . . if there is nothing being done when you stick your head outside, don't complain. Instead, ask yourself, "What did I do?" You can lose your freedom when you don't care. You surrender leadership to other forces; you let others call the shots.

You can lose freedom when you have no self confidence. If we want Jesus as a friend, we must first see in us what Jesus sees in us.

Freedom! Oh! Freedom! What are you doing with it?

Are you abusing it? The Bible says that the wages of sin is death, and the gift of God is eternal life. Are you abusing your freedom with sinful ways and deeds? Are you lying, cheating, stealing, physically and mentally hurting others, and still expecting to be free? If your answer is "Yes", then you need spiritual help.

Are you giving excuses for answers that sound like: "Yes! After I . . ."; "Yes! When I . . ."; "Yes! As soon as . . ."; and/or "Yes! But . . .?"

God has given us a gift to choose when making a decision on "Freedom." We are free to win. We're, also, free to go to hell — if we choose to. We must accept the re-

sponsibility to think and to live.

God has given us marvelous freedom. I am free to make my world that which I choose it to be. Today, consider carefully the effect of your thoughts, words, and actions on your life, your world, and the people in it. Choose to help make your world the one that God created it to be. Ask God for guidance and strength in making decisions, knowing that God never fails us.

Yes, right choices are ours to make. We must choose to listen to divine guidance; choose to act as a peacemaker, showing compassion and understanding to those in need of a friend. We must choose to share a portion of our abundance with others and to deal honestly with all people — no matter what race they may be.

Then, we must choose to help make this world the one God created it to be. Choose the Kingdom of God and divine righteousness. Divinely guided in making right choices, we become a blessing to our world, and we're blessed in return.

"Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Romans 12:2)

You must say to yourselves, "I will not be controlled or mesmerized by fads of the day," — especially the teenagers. We can allow ourselves to become trapped by cultures and fads.

You choose your values. Yet the question lingers — "How can I be assured that the world will be a little better when I'm gone?" How? Use your freedom wisely. Don't abuse it.

We have been saved by Jesus' unselfish death; and, when He rose again, He sent the comforter that we might not go through life confused and distressed, lost or in turmoil.

We will never lose what we always use. You can lose an investment, but never a gift.

Everyone has the freedom to be a Christian, to go to hell, to be a good person, to go to heaven, or just sit out life and do nothing.

What are you doing with your freedom?

RELIGION



Altar Call

by Mattie Ann Callier-Spears

KBOO radio station has begun a new program, "Altar Call", featuring Rev. Robert E. Houston, Sr., to be heard every Saturday night.

This portion of the program is a part of "Black Rock '88" programming hosted by J.W. Friday.

During the 11:00 p.m. - 11:30 p.m. portion, contemporary gospel music is played, and then from 11:30 to midnight, the Rev. Houston preaches for the remainder of the hour.

"Altar Call" was originally conceived by J.W. Friday after his own commitment to Jesus Christ. In the past few months, he has played strictly gospel music during that time frame.

Beginning on 12-19-87, the Rev. Houston was added to give the program a totally spiritual outreach and ministry. Since Rev. Houston began his radio ministry, telephone calls (over 100 per program) have been received from the Portland area, Washington State, and as far south as Salem, Oregon. Letters

have also been received from inmates at the Oregon State Penitentiary, who have expressed their thanks for the programming received. "The gospel message cannot be confined to a specific church building or by a specific medium," says Rev. Houston.

Rev. Houston is completing work on his bachelor's degree in Theology at the United Theological Seminary and serves as the administrative assistant to Rev. Johnny Pack, IV, at the Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church. He is also a nationally-known preacher. He has preached throughout Oregon, Washington, California, Arizona, Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Mississippi. Rev. Houston held positions within the National Baptist Convention of America Youth Department.

J.W. Friday and the Rev. Robert E. Houston, Sr., wish to encourage the community to listen and support the KBOO "Altar Call" program (at 91.7 on your FM radio dial).



Carney New GPAE President

Rev. Glandion Carney was elected president, and Dr. Leo Thornton was elected vice president, of the Greater Portland Association of Evangelicals which met Thursday at Warner Pacific College. Former President Randy Roth has accepted a pastorate in California.

The Association includes more than 100 churches and ministries. It is affiliated with the Oregon Association of Evangelicals, and with the National Association of Evangelicals which was organized in 1942 and includes 43,000 churches from 70 denominations.

Carney is senior pastor of Maranatha Community Church in Portland. He succeeds the late Dr. John Garlington. He is also chairman of Leadership '88, working with author Rebecca Pippert to organize what they say will be "an historic conference to energize emerging Christian leaders for the next four decades." Before he came to Maranatha, Carney was director of Christian Leadership Development for World Vision, U.S. He also has directed inner-city work for Youth for Christ International, and pastored an Illinois church. He is the author of a book on urban ministry.

Thornton is the retired president of Western Evangelical Seminary.

Ours For Free

So many things in life are far Beyond our meager means,
A long hoped for vacation,
Just for a change of scenes.
A penthouse with a terrace
That boasts a lovely view,
A cottage by the sea side,
...Just dreams for me and you.

And yet there is so much within
This world we can afford,
We all should welcome each
new day,
And no one should be bored.
For while it's true we might
not get
To see a foreign land,
Or sail across the ocean,
There's something just as
grand,

And every bit as beautiful,
Within each passing day,
That only costs us something,
...If we let it slip away.
Very much within our reach,
And meant for us to share,
Once-in-a-lifetime moments,
Encountered everywhere.

A tender smile, a gentle touch,
Night wind through the trees,
Sunrise, sunset, autumn
leaves,
What can compare with
these?
Flowers by a roadside,
A treasured memory,
I think the very best in life,
Is what God gives for free.

by Grace E. Easley

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