

Intersections: Christianity & Today

Stan Schmidt

The Difficulties We Have with Freedom

1. Carl Sandburg wrote, “I tell you the past is a bucket of ashes.” Does that offer us a lot of freedom?
2. Does having freedom make you nervous?
3. “You are not in charge of the universe; you are in charge of yourself.” —A. Bennett
There is such a thing as being free *from*. What Bennett wrote offers you a lot of freedom from.
4. Is this true? *If I have freedom, then I am responsible.*
5. The person who is enslaved by Christ is enslaved by nothing else.
6. Is this true? *Most people seek to avoid real freedom.*
7. What is real freedom?
8. “While the state exists there will be no freedom. When there will be freedom, there will be no state.” Lenin said that!!!
9. “The man who produces while others dispose of his product is a slave.” —Ayn Rand, *The Virtue of Selfishness*, p. 125
10. Complete this sentence: If I were free, then. . . .
11. “What jailer is so inexorable [unyielding] as one’s self!” —Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The House of the Seven Gables*, p. 175
12. “You are free to do whatever you like. You need only face the consequences.” —Sheldon B. Kopp, *If You Meet the Buddha on the Road, Kill Him!*, p. 224
13. “In matters of conscience, the law of the majority has no place.” —Gandhi
14. Sister Pollard points the way to freedom: “My feet is tired, but my soul is rested.”
15. Are you as free as Colonel Lewis B. “Chesty” Puller?
During the Korean War he told his regiment, “the enemy is in front of us, behind us, to the left of us, and to the right of us. They won’t escape this time.”
16. A chain of reasoning.....
Being free means having to make choices.
Having to make choices means thinking.
Thinking means doing work—work that is much harder than physical labor.
Doing work is what many seek to avoid.
Therefore many people are made nervous by the offer of freedom.
It is much easier to follow some leader. Any leader.

