



INSPIRATION FOR THE *UP* RELATIONSHIP

*Lift*

I WILL *LIFT* UP THE CUP OF SALVATION  
AND CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD.

PSALM 116

# INSPIRATION *for the* “UP” RELATIONSHIP

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Saving Private Ryan, Band of Brothers, Enemy at the Gates, Windtalkers, and Pearl Harbor. These are just a few of the most recent attempts to capture the breathtaking battles of World War II and the soldiers who fought in them. What was it that made these movies so special since other cinematic records had already been made? One obvious contributing factor was the amazing realism due to improvement in filmmaking. Another factor, and much more important, was that the generation who fought in WWII is passing away at an alarming rate. We are losing those who could tell the story firsthand.

When my family arrived in Atlanta nine years ago, one of the first and

most enjoyable couples we met were Calvin and Rena Showalter. They have been welcoming people to our worship and fellowship assemblies for decades. They both always have a smile, warm hug, and that unique ability to communicate Christ's love in an instant. They are also part of the Greatest Generation. Upon the 230th anniversary of our country's Declaration of Independence, I asked Calvin and Rena to reflect on what freedom means to them, and especially freedom in Christ. I hope their thoughts inspire you as they do me to give ourselves fully to Christ in our quest for true freedom.

*Don McLaughlin*

*In June 1944 I was drafted in the army. I completed my basic training, went to Europe and directly into combat (Battle of the Bulge) to fight for the freedom of our country. It was with much pride I could serve our country. I wasn't in my foxhole but a brief time when I realized so many of my freedoms were missing.*

*Among my treasured freedoms were prayers and reading my New Testament (carried in pocket) when possible. I knew with all the horrors of war that God was my refuge and strength.*

*When I returned home after a reunion with my family, I knew I needed Christ as my Savior. I immediately was baptized.*

*Through all the past years I have continued to thank God for His protective care during the war and years since. He has blessed me beyond measure with all the earthly freedoms, and freedoms I have in Him! Let us count our many blessings of freedoms, especially on Independence Day!*

*Our freedoms are so numerous I feel we don't know how to fully appreciate them. We are so blessed and can easily take them for granted.*

*The gospel is freedom. In Galatians 5 we are urged not to depend on salvation by our own works, but on the mercy of Christ. We must remember that we do not save ourselves – Christ saves us. This is the core difference between freedom in Christ and spiritual slavery. In no way have we been liberated to do evil, either as citizens of our blessed nation, or as citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven.*

*Fear God – Honor and Love our King.*

*Calvin Showalter  
First Sergeant,  
99th Infantry Division*



# ONLY FOR THE WEAK

Avalon Lyrics CCLI 184877

Some say it's rules and regulations  
And trying to always be right  
No room for mistakes in the  
choices we make  
For only the strong survive  
But it's not about perfect performance  
Or resolution of will  
It's all about surrender  
Giving up  
Being still  
It's only for the weak  
For the faint of heart  
Those driven to their knees  
Those who live with scars  
There's power from beyond  
We're certain where it's from  
And that's our source of strength  
Before we follow Christ

We need to be advised  
It's only for the weak  
He welcomes the worn and the weary  
All who are wounded by sin  
And just as we are, we can fall in  
His arms  
Rest and find shelter in Him  
Seems like each day is a battle  
With burdens and struggles to face  
And only in our losing  
Do we truly see how much we've  
gained  
The Father always starts  
Within a willing heart  
Open to how He moves  
As His spirit is poured  
He will do so much more  
Than we dreamed He could do.

## PSALM 119:41-48

41 May your unfailing love come to me, O LORD,  
your salvation according to your  
promise;

42 then I will answer the one who  
taunts me,  
for I trust in your word.

43 Do not snatch the word of truth  
from my mouth,  
for I have put my hope in your laws.

44 I will always obey your law,  
for ever and ever.

45 I will walk about in freedom,  
for I have sought out your precepts.

46 I will speak of your statutes  
before kings  
and will not be put to shame,

47 for I delight in your commands  
because I love them.

48 I lift up my hands to your  
commands, which I love,  
and I meditate on your decrees.

# REFLECTION

JOURNAL

## *on your* "UP" RELATIONSHIP

The common ground in any discussion of slavery and freedom is that we all agree that it's best to be free. Those who emancipate the enslaved become our heroes. Some forms of bondage are more obvious than others. What are some private or personal ways that people experience bondage? \_\_\_\_\_

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Even though we all want to be free, not every path leads to lasting freedom. What is the difference between an escape and true freedom? On the other hand, sometimes the road to freedom is surprising. Take a moment and reflect on some areas in your life where you are currently in bondage.

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Peer pressure is a common form of bondage. The psalmist confesses his temptations to be enslaved by others opinion of him. (119:42) *Can you relate to this?* But this is when the psalmist reveals the surprising path to freedom. Carefully read verse 45. Note that the psalmist finds freedom in the law (precepts) of God. In what ways might it seem surprising to find freedom in law? \_\_\_\_\_

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How could submission to God's law actually assure you greater freedom not less? \_\_\_\_\_

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What role does trust play in submitting to God's law in order to be set free from bondage? \_\_\_\_\_

What promises of God help build your trust in Him? \_\_\_\_\_

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After reading verses 43-48, how are you making those promises part of your daily life? \_\_\_\_\_

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# FREE AT



In 1901 Bill Miner got out of San Quentin Prison, where he had served 33 years in all. It was his third stint, and both previous times he had barely sniffed free air before landing in jail again.

Miner was a Wild West legend. He had robbed his first stagecoach at 16. He is credited with first using the line that has played on thousands of Westerns: “Hands up!” Stagecoach passengers called him the Gentleman Bandit because he never shot anyone and he spoke respectfully, using “Sir” and “Ma’am.”

When Bill Miner emerged from prison at age 58, his long hair had turned gray and most of his friends had either died or disappeared. Stepping into a new century, he had

a new lease on life. No stagecoaches were left to rob. The Wells Fargo company had sold their horses and invested in something he had never seen, steam trains.

Miner tried various odd jobs, but most work seemed degrading and boring to a former stagecoach robber.

The old restlessness returned. One afternoon, in a Seattle theatre, he watched the movie *The Great Train Robbery*, and discovered a new career, or at least a new twist on an old one. The Gentleman Bandit, at age 60, became The Grey Fox. He went on to mastermind six train

robberies, and probably more, until the Mounties tracked him down in British Columbia.

Three separate times Bill Miner had a chance for a new start. The last time, he had

I WILL WALK ABOUT IN FREEDOM,  
FOR I HAVE SOUGHT OUT YOUR  
PRECEPTS. I WILL SPEAK OF YOUR  
STATUTES BEFORE KINGS AND  
WILL NOT BE PUT TO SHAME, FOR  
I DELIGHT IN YOUR COMMANDS  
BECAUSE I LOVE THEM. I LIFT UP  
MY HANDS TO YOUR COMMANDS,  
WHICH I LOVE, AND I MEDITATE  
ON YOUR DECREES. PS 119:45-48

# LAST

by Sandra Mackey

entered a new city in a new century, with no one around to remind him of his reputation. Yet inevitably, he went back to the familiar ways of crime.

We're a lot like that, aren't we? Too often we follow the path of least resistance and return to old familiar ways, even if it is these same old habits that have kept us imprisoned. We get a new start, only to squander the opportunity and end up right back where we started. In the immortal words of the comic strip character Pogo, "We have met the enemy, and he is us."

Freedom is defined by Webster as "the condition of being free of restraints." Few people have ever been completely free. Almost everyone has been restrained from doing everything they might like to do because it would infringe on the rights and freedoms of others. Sometimes we are restrained by laws or customs, or, perhaps by our own physical and mental limitations. But, there is within each of us the yearning to be free to do as we please. We don't like it if someone tries to restrain us.

*(continued on back cover)*

I am honored to be chosen to contribute to this month's Lift as we celebrate the 230th birthday of our nation on the 4th of July. We are the oldest democracy in the world and the freedoms we enjoy as Americans are unparalleled. Unfortunately, many have died in defense of our freedoms and we always honor them in their ultimate sacrifice. . . As a former soldier, I have witnessed countries in which the biggest gun ruled supreme. Peace in their homeland was a foreign concept. Vietnam was a prime example. Serving there in the late 1960s, I saw a beaten, worn and tired country for which most Vietnamese saw little or no hope for the future. Most, particularly, the small villagers would go about plowing their rice fields seemingly oblivious to tomorrow. It was indeed sad to witness but as I learned, it was their way of dealing with a war that pitted the north against the south, family against family and brother against brother. Sound familiar? Yes. Our own civil war, and now Afghanistan and Iraq.



As Americans, hopefully we will never again be confronted with a situation like the Civil War. We can all truly thank God for founding fathers who had the wisdom and the vision to construct a constitution that guarantees our individual freedoms regardless of race, religion or creed. So what is freedom? Freedom to me is couched in that document that I swore to defend as a young ROTC graduate over 40 years ago. We are truly the most blessed citizenry on earth.

Freedom in the homeland is important, but the freedoms we enjoy in Christ are paramount. In our spiritual realm, we are not bound by laws or a constitution, but by an allegiance to our savior who died for us nearly 2000 years ago. Jesus paid the price, too. Freedom through His death wiped away our sins and assured us eternal life. In Him we have also the freedom to enjoy life, our families, our Christian brothers and friends. These freedoms have been such comforts to Cindy, me, and our daughters (and now their families) as we have traveled within the US borders and abroad.

Yes, we should all reflect on the freedoms we enjoy as Americans on this, our nation's birthday, but the boundless joys we have in Christ are unsurpassed and make us all so proud to be citizens of the Lord's Kingdom.

*Buck Womble  
Brigadier General, Retired*



# FREE AT LAST (continued from page 6)

Even an infant becomes frustrated if his hands or feet are restrained so that he cannot move freely. We seem to have a natural hatred of restraint, which may be as strong as our love of freedom. However, free people are alert to recognize that the right of a person to swing his fist ends where his neighbor's nose begins.

Some of us have trouble understanding that to have freedom, we must give up some freedom. We exchange the brutal freedom of the savage for the higher freedom of civilized man. Freedom without respect for wise authority is dangerous to the free man and to his neighbors. Authority rests on a premise of true knowledge and on a source of justice. Religious truth, great philosophy, and true scientific knowledge are all authorities. Courts of law and just political leaders are also authorities. A person who recognizes no authority but

his own desires tends to abuse his freedom, and may lose it altogether.

Moral freedom means the ability to choose between right and wrong, and to tell the difference between good and evil. People often wonder if following God's law will restrict them, but actual experience shows that God's law liberates—by freeing us from the destructive impact of sinful behavior, and by introducing us to the mind-expanding realm of God's wisdom. We will find release from repetitive destructive behaviors that have imprisoned us when we recognize that the prison door has been opened and we can walk out and sniff the sweet air of freedom because of Christ. Why in the world would we choose to be bound by sin and legalistic limitations when we can bask in the freedom and abundant life in the Spirit of God? ☺



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EACH EDITION OF LIFT IS CREATED TO INSPIRE  
OUR READERS TO GIVE THEMSELVES FULLY TO GOD.

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