

“Independence”

Merriman-Webster says the word “independent” means “*not subject to control by others*” Having known and visited a number of folks in nursing home/rehab facilities the last few years, one common thread they all seemed to share was that they did not like the fact that they more or less lost all of their independence the minute they entered those facility doors.

They were told when to get up, when to eat breakfast, lunch and supper, and what to eat at each meal. If they were unable to get out of bed and move around by themselves, they had to wait for help from the nurses or aides, who were often busy helping others, so they were 100% totally dependent on others for everything. This alone makes me hope I die in my sleep!

Before becoming a Christian, this was exactly how I viewed Christianity - that if I became a Christian, I would be just like most nursing home residents - subject to the control of others and stripped of my independence! I was having way too much fun in life, and I was NOT ready or willing to give up my freedoms!

What I discovered (with a lot of help from the Holy Spirit) was that while I had the freedom and independence to do or say whatever I wanted to, I was not happy! I was not satisfied! I felt like something was missing - all the things that brought me temporary pleasure or happiness could never quite fill the void, so sometime in 1987 I said “I give up Lord - I want to do it Your way.”

Here’s what Jesus said in John 8:34-36: *“Truly, truly I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin. Now the slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever. So if the Son sets you free, you really will be free.”* (NASB) So the “fun things” I did, many of which brought me pleasure, were sinful, and even though I had reached a point where I wanted to stop doing them, I was powerless to break free from them, but when I surrendered my “independence” and asked Jesus to save me, He came into my life and set me FREE!

Romans 8:5-6: *“Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.”* (NIV) I WANT to be led and controlled by the Spirit!

Proverbs 16:3 says: *“Commit your works to the LORD [submit and trust them to Him], And your plans will succeed [if you respond to His will and guidance].”* (AMP) The best decision I’ve ever made after accepting Jesus was in 2023 when I abdicated control of every area of my life to the Lord. I am 100% dependent upon Him for everything, and what a relief that is! (I think this might be “Part 1”) Amen!