



A MATTER OF FAITH

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I was watching the HBO series "John Adams" on television the other night when I was reminded how costly freedom is. Being so far removed from the birth of this nation, it is easy to forget how it came about. It is also far too easy to forget the great price men like John Adams paid to see the dream of the United States of America realized.

The founding fathers laid their wealth, safety and lives on the line. They risked everything for the cause of building a free nation. They could have chosen a much easier path but they valued freedom above their own interests. They were passionate about liberty and fought tirelessly to

achieve their task.

In the book of John chapter 8 Jesus talks about free-

gious leaders of his day. They had established themselves as religious authorities and ruled harshly. The message of freedom was dangerous to their power structure. It threatened to topple the structure that put them high above everyone else.

Freedom is a key compo-

ntrol others. They beat people over the head with a Bible even though what they are doing completely contradicts the very words in the book they wield as a weapon.

Jesus said knowing the truth, himself being the truth, would set people free. He proclaimed "I am the way, the truth and the life." He is the truth that we can know in through that relationship be set free. With that God given freedom, we can choose to love God. This freedom allows us to not only love God but love others as well.

Freedom has a cost. Like the many struggles the founding fathers endured, freedom does not come easy. This is much more so with our spiritual freedom. It cost Jesus his very life.

The fight for freedom never ends. There are those trying to sell the idea that we should surrender some of our freedom for greater

good. They want to control us to achieve their own agenda. They have been preaching this message long before the days of John Adams. It is sugar coated poison. It is a pathway to slavery and death. We were created to be free and live out our lives with the ability to think, speak and act freely. When freedom is taken away, so is our

humanity. We are reduced to lesser beings. It is out of freedom that we can be all that God created us to be. Absent freedom, we will never be what we were designed by God to be.

I hope we will always have the stories of men like John Adams to remind us of how precious and critical our freedom is and how we must fight for it daily.

Freedom

dom - To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." He also added this, "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." The Son he was referring to was himself. These excerpts are taken from an argument that Jesus was having with the reli-

gion of any relationship. No one can force someone to love them. Men can force the fellow man to do just about everything, but love is a free choice that cannot be coerced. That is why freedom is so critical to having a relationship with God.

There are far too many instances where people have abused the message of Jesus and using his name tried to manipulate and con-

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