

The Word's Eye View

The Word's Eye View is a newspaper column written by
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Freedom Mandates Choice (Article 54)

Due to the over usage of many words in our modern vocabulary, some have suffered the fate of becoming rather flavorless, lacking sufficient definition. For that reason I often resort to Webster's 1828 Dictionary for a more precise explanation of the original intent of the word. This wonderful lexicon renders eight possible applications for FREEDOM, but the primary listing says, "A state of exemption from the power or control of another; liberty; exemption from slavery, servitude or confinement. Freedom is personal, civil, political, and religious."

As is often the case, one word leapt off the page and hit me full throttle...confinement. This, of course, suggests a kind of prison that drastically reduces the ability to choose. From the day when Adam and Eve chose to partake of the forbidden fruit the sacred Scriptures emphasize mankind's liberty to exercise their freewill. God made it possible for us to choose wrong and to refuse right. He does not by any arbitrary external or internal compulsion force us to be good, wise or moral. He wishes us, of our own free will, to desire and select the right fork in the road and will even go so far as to put large "bridge out" signs on the incorrect path. Real freedom, then, must by definition include the possibility of error, mistake, sin or even disaster.

One of the great destructive forces against freedom is disguised by apparent regiments of righteousness. Universal health care is a classic example. To the unobservant a plan to provide for all who are sick, maimed and malfunctioning sounds like the virtuous approach. It can be clothed with honorable platitudes that appeal to the masses, but like Swiss cheese, it is full of holes.

The individual who chooses an addiction to tobacco, alcohol, or drugs increases dramatically his odds of one day being confined to a hospital bed suffering from lung cancer, cirrhosis of the liver or a hundred other diseases. The proposed Obama plan will require those who took the right fork to forfeit a portion of their freedom by paying for the bad decisions of others. The ultimate consequence is confinement on the part of both parties. Legislated care is something that God Himself avoided when Israel was led from Egyptian bondage; He said, "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee." (Exodus 15:26) Clearly, there is a human choice involved in this admonition---do right or suffer the consequences. It was never mandated that the non-afflicted compensate for the misdeed of the offender.

Interestingly, the word "mercy" is incorporated in the name of countless hospitals across America. Jesus encountered a blind man (John 9) who inspired His disciples to ask the question, "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" They were operating under the assumption that there was a direct link between sin and this man's malady. That is periodically the case, but not always. Jesus miraculously gave the man his sight which was an act of pure mercy. It will be argued that this individual was more deserving of the miracle because no explicit connection was established between his sin and his sickness. The flip side must be considered in the maniac of the Gadarenes.

Here was a man who had been keeping company with the devils of hell for a very long time (Luke 8) and undoubtedly had a rap sheet a mile long. Christ extended the identical grace to the evil that he gave to the good.

Whatever faults the America medical system may have, it must be remembered that it was founded upon the principle of mercy. That is why it is still the best the world has to offer. When that doctrine is replaced with legislated care and payment, quality will evaporate. In God's economy mercy always trumps the law. Large endowments will cease to flow to hospitals because attitudes will perceive that "the government will take care of it." Taxpayers will lose another rung of the ladder of freedom and a great deal of philanthropy will be rerouted to Third World countries where mercy is still active and alive. Perhaps their blind are more deserving---I wonder if Jesus will leave the demons here?