



## Rick Barton Ministries

July 2023

### True Freedom!

**“And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”** (John 8:32) Two key words jump out of that simple verse, don’t they? What “truth” is Jesus referring to, and what is the “freedom” He promises? I remember flipping through television channels on a ministry trip and watching a performer sing, “What is truth?”, over and over again. I practically shouted at the tv, “It’s Jesus!”. And of course, it is. Jesus said He is the way, the TRUTH and the life. We also know God’s word, the Bible, is the unfailing, inerrant, truth as well. (John 14:6, 17:17). When we commit our lives to Jesus, His Holy Spirit opens our hearts to His word, and we can understand truth. Not the ever-changing “truth” of the world, but real, unchanging truth!

But what about “freedom”? Are we free to do whatever we want? As followers of Jesus, we are set free from the bondage of our sinful desires and past attitudes. But does that mean we are now free to live as we like, regardless of the truth we are shown in Jesus and God’s word? The Apostle Paul addresses that very question in Romans 6. Yes, we are freed from the bondage of sin (v. 7), not to return to our old self-directed lives, but to new Spirit-led lives! (v. 17-18) “Real freedom is not to live as we want, but to live as we ought!” That kind of freedom can be experienced regardless of our circumstances. May we and our nation once again fix our eyes on Jesus and live in true, Christ-centered freedom!

**June happenings:** By God’s grace, during the first half of June we held 3 Celebrations of Life, 1 wedding, 3 Saturday night worship services, three 5 Minute Theologian classes, and preached one Sunday in Tin Cup CO. One Saturday we finished a Celebration of Life and arrived exactly 4 minutes before the second service was to begin. The two services were in two different towns. Whew!

After the second service we drove to Colorado Springs and flew to Los Angeles where we are spending 2 wonderful weeks with four of our grandchildren, and their parents 😊.

**1<sup>st</sup> Responder New Testaments and Devotionals:** Requests keep coming for 1<sup>st</sup> Responder New Testaments and Devotionals from around the country. This month they went to WY and NY. Please pray that the Lord Jesus will use each copy to His glory!

**Family:** We are enjoying two weeks in the Los Angeles area with our two sons, Tim and Steve, and their families. The grandkids are growing so fast and are such blessings! I confess I'm guilty of allowing ministry to fill our schedule to the expense of family time, so Melva and I decided to "make time" to visit. Fortunately, we have a wonderful team of folks in Gunnison willing and able to cover our absence.

**Upcoming-Lord willing:**

- July 1 I take part in the Celebration of Life for a 1<sup>st</sup> Responder in Gunnison CO
- July 9 Tin Cup Community Church followed by a wedding.
- July 13-15 Serve as Rodeo Chaplain-Gunnison CO
- July 16 Cowboy Church Gunnison CO
- July 23 Sargents CO Community Church
- July 30 Grace Fellowship-Lake City CO
- August 28-30 RBM Board Meeting-Colorado Springs CO
- September 3 Tin Cup Community Church
- September 30 Celebration of Life-Gunnison CO
- October 1-4 Hebron Baptist Church-Bentonville MS

**Finances:** "A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed." (Proverbs 11:25). For over 50 years Melva and I have been amazed and grateful for the generous support of God's people. Because of your faithful giving, we have been able to pay our bills while ministering freely, provide God's Word to 1<sup>st</sup> Responders, and support missionaries, widows, and others. Thank You!

**Prayer Requests:** For the anointing of the Holy Spirit to be upon us as we share His glorious gospel; especially for me to have boldness, and seekers to respond to the Savior. For our daughter Rebekah and husband Nick to place Jesus at the center of their lives and family. For continued healing of Melva's blood clots. For the Lord's healing of my knees.

Every time we face difficult situations, we find strength in remembering that you are praying for us!

**We give thanks to God every day for you!** May He bless you abundantly, Rick and Melva

*Rick + Melva*



Preaching in Tin Cup, CO



Freedom is never free!  
In honor of our veterans at the Gunnison cemetery.



Our weekly Five Minute Theologian class