

Winds of Change



Where I live in the Midwest, March is a time of change. The days are often filled with gusty winds ushering in the latest warm front or cold front. I'm never quite sure what the weather will bring from one day to the next. One day I may be outside luxuriating in a sunny, beautiful 65 degree-day, but 24 hours later I may be scuttling back inside with snow flurries dusting my hair.



Changeable March weather



Maybe you're at a time in your life right now that is matching the March weather. Perhaps you feel like you're being buffeted about by opposing forces that you can not control. Whether it's your job, your health or a relationship that's causing the upheaval, it's an unsettling, even scary feeling. Well,

fortunately, God does not leave us alone to weather these changes. He has given us a comforter who is, interestingly enough, compared to the wind. Acts 2 introduces the Holy Spirit in this way: *“And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting”* (v. 2).

The Holy Spirit filled each believer and changed his or her life completely. It was through the Spirit’s power and guidance that the disciples were able to preach and heal and minister to others. And it is through the Spirit’s power that God also wants each one of us to live out our lives as well. If we let God’s Spirit guide us through the “winds of change” seasons in our lives, we can be assured that God will bring us through and grow us through every situation in our lives.

What’s God changing in your life right now? Let’s commit to praying about these changes and seeing how God wants to use them to change us. We’ll talk about this some more in the next post. Until then, pray on!

True Freedom

“Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.” John 8:36

True Freedom

By
Jane VanOsdol

“You stay here, and I’ll be back in a few minutes,” my relative Max said to me as he went with the East German police into a building. It was the summer of 1980. I had just graduated from high school and was visiting relatives in Germany. Max had taken me into East Berlin to meet a friend of his, and we were trying to return back to the West side after a few day’s visit. An armed guard marched around and around the car as I waited for Max. I eyed the guard as I pondered the events of the last few days. Nothing in my life had prepared me for the palpable oppression and depression I experienced in East Berlin. The moment we crossed the border, everything was drab and lifeless—the countryside, the buildings, even the people seemed gray and lifeless. I had even looked back behind us, trying to figure out what had happened in the last few feet to cause such a change. It slowly settled on me that this was the result of a government that robbed people of their basic

freedoms. I had to guard every word that came out of my mouth—even inside our friend's apartment—as I quickly learned the first day.

The minutes ticked by as I sat in the car. After 20 minutes I decided I had to go find him. I opened the door and started for the building, wondering what the guard would do. At that moment, Max flung open the office door and strode out, motioning me back into the car.

It wasn't until we were on our way down the road that he spoke. Because I was an American, they made up some violation that Max had supposedly committed and assessed him a hefty fine. They pulled us over one more time and fined us again before we made it back to West Berlin.

Never before had I recognized the true worth of freedom in America. My eyes were suddenly opened to the value of my country compared to this stifling existence that I had lived for only a few days, that many others were trapped in forever. Likewise, I came to recognize a few years later the ultimate gift of freedom given by Jesus. After I had spent a few miserable years wallowing in the drab gray prison of my own sinful ways, how could I not choose the One who came in, rescued me from myself and took me over the border into freedom?

Every July 4th reminds me anew of the blessing of my country. And every day lived with Jesus reminds me to be thankful for my freedom in Christ.

Prayer: Dear Lord, we thank You for the blessing of America. Help us not to take for granted what so many others have died for. Thank You for the ultimate sacrifice You made on the cross that freed us from our sins and reconciled us to You. Amen.

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