

Analysing The Concept Of “Freedom” In Christianity Through the Biblical Research

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Abstract: This paper delves into the multifaceted nature of freedom within Christianity, exploring its axiological dimensions and comparing it with Islamic perspectives. Drawing heavily on Scripture, particularly passages from Galatians, Corinthians, Peter, and Romans, we examine how freedom intersects with themes of servitude, righteousness, and love. Ultimately, our aim is to illuminate the nuanced ways in which Christianity articulates freedom, offering insights applicable to contemporary discussions about morality, ethics, and spirituality.

Keywords: Source domain, target domain, Christianity, the Bible, conceptual metaphors, spirit, slavery, freedom.

Introduction: Freedom stands as a fundamental pillar in many major world religions, including Christianity and Islam. Within Christianity, freedom is celebrated as a divine gift bestowed upon humanity by the Creator. [5,28] As in Galatians 5:1, "For freedom Christ set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." This passage serves as a cornerstone in understanding the Christian conception of freedom, which goes beyond mere political or social liberties. Instead, it speaks to a deeper form of liberation – one rooted in spiritual and moral dimensions. [3,46] Central to this discussion is the distinction between external restraints and internal struggles against sin. The Bible contrasts freedom with slavery, highlighting the metaphorical chains imposed by sin and temptation. Freedom, thus, becomes synonymous with release from these bonds, leading to a purer state of being. [7,35] Moreover, the concept of freedom in Christianity extends further, linking closely with faith and obedience to God's commandments. True freedom, according to this view, entails aligning oneself with God's will and embracing righteousness.

METHODS

To investigate the significance of freedom in Christianity and its relationship with theological principles, a comprehensive approach was adopted. This involved several key steps:

Step 1: Literature Review

An extensive review of relevant literature was conducted, focusing primarily on Biblical texts such as Galatians, Corinthians, Peter, and Romans. These sources provided foundational insights into the Christian understanding of freedom and its implications for personal conduct and societal norms. Additionally, secondary scholarly works interpreting these scriptures were consulted to ensure a well-rounded comprehension of the subject matter.

Step 2: Analysis of Key Passages

Selected biblical passages were analyzed using hermeneutical techniques to uncover their deeper meanings. Special attention was paid to metaphors employed within these texts, particularly those concerning freedom and servitude. For example, the metaphor of being "set free from sin" and becoming "servants of righteousness" (Romans 6:18) illustrates the complex interplay between freedom and submission to divine authority.

Step 3: Comparative Study

A comparative study was undertaken to explore parallels between Christian and Islamic perspectives on freedom. Both religions acknowledge that ultimate freedom belongs to God, emphasizing that human beings, though endowed with considerable autonomy, ultimately exist under divine sovereignty. This comparison highlighted commonalities in how these

traditions address issues related to freedom and responsibility.

Step 4: Conceptual Metaphor Theory Application

Conceptual metaphor theory was applied to analyze the linguistic expressions used in the selected biblical passages. By examining how abstract concepts like "freedom" and "truth" are mapped onto concrete domains, deeper layers of meaning were revealed. For instance, the metaphorical association between "spirit" and "Lord" in Corinthians 3:17 demonstrates that God's presence within an individual's spirit grants inherent freedom.

Step 5: Ethical Implications

Ethical considerations arising from the studied material were explored. Emphasis was placed on distinguishing between responsible usage of freedom for loving others versus misusing it for self-indulgence. Galatians 5:13 provides clear guidance on this point, urging believers to avoid exploiting their freedom at the expense of others' welfare. By combining these methodological approaches, the research aimed to provide a thorough examination of the role of freedom in Christianity, situating it within broader theological and philosophical frameworks.

RESULTS

Christianity, much like Islam, places significant importance on the notion of freedom. According to the Bible, freedom is regarded as a divine gift bestowed upon humankind by the Creator. Galatians 5:1 underscores this sentiment, stating, "For freedom Christ set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." This scripture highlights that Jesus, revered by Christians as the Son of God, liberated individuals from bondage and guided them towards righteousness. Conceptually, the term "freedom" here implies liberation from sin and impurity rather than physical constraints. The metaphorical expression "yoke of slavery," conversely, represents sinfulness and enslavement to carnal desires. Therefore, within Christianity, the metaphorical interpretation of "freedom" signifies genuine faith, adherence to God's teachings, and belief in His existence. Axiologically, values possess a dualistic nature, wherein every value corresponds to an opposing anti-value. In the biblical excerpt mentioned earlier, the concepts of "freedom" and "slavery" are juxtaposed, illustrating this duality. Furthermore, similar to Islamic doctrine, Christianity asserts that ultimate freedom resides exclusively with God: "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." (Corinthians 3:17) [1]. Herein lies a metaphorical interplay between the notions of spirit, Lord, and freedom, suggesting that God dwells within

the spirit of every individual, rendering it inherently free. Consequently, those who embrace liberty carry faith in God within their spirits. Moreover, the Bible underscores that while freedom constitutes a profound blessing granted to mankind, it must be utilized responsibly for acts of love rather than violence: "For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another." (Galatians 5:13) [1]. Hence, two possible conclusions emerge: firstly, employ your freedom to foster mutual affection among fellow believers ("use your freedom to love one another"); secondly, recognize that freedom may alternatively serve either selfish desires or altruistic love ("freedom can serve either for flesh or for love").

Additionally, both religious texts emphasize that despite enjoying considerable autonomy, humans remain fundamentally subordinate to the Divine will. The Holy Qur'an decrees that regardless of one's degree of freedom, one remains eternally bound as a servant of Allah. Similarly, the Bible addresses humanity collectively as "servants":

"Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God" (Peter 2:16);

"Being then made free from sin he became the servants of righteousness" (Romans 6:18).[1]

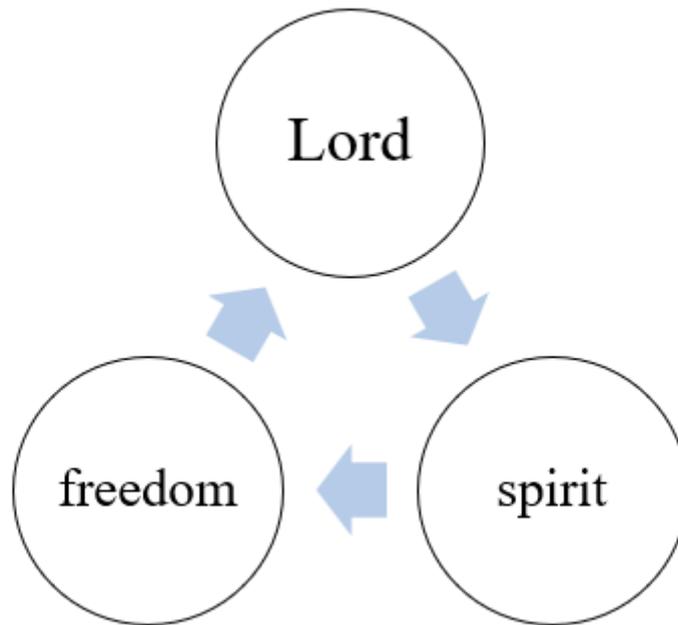
Through these verses, the metaphorical association between "righteousness" and God becomes evident, asserting that a life freed from sin and aligned with authentic faith necessitates servitude solely to God. From a conceptual-metaphorical perspective, the ideas encapsulated in these biblical passages resonate deeply within human cognition. For instance, the concept of "truth" reflects directives issued directly by the Creator, embodying irrefutable veracity. Conversely, the term "free" pertains specifically to spiritual and ethical liberties. Adherents of Christianity regard the Bible itself as the embodiment of "good news," guiding adherents along the correct path and delivering them from spiritual imprisonment. Thus, the phrase "free" can be interpreted as denoting deliverance from sinful entanglements and earthly encumbrances.

Analysis

Christianity, like Islam, is a religion that elevates freedom to a high value. After all, the Bible emphasizes that freedom is a gift given to man by the Creator. "For freedom Christ set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." (Galatians 5:1) [1] This verse refers to the fact that Jesus, whom Christians consider the son of God, introduced God to people and led them on the right path. That is, the

conceptual explanation of the lexeme “freedom” meant “freedom from sins, purity.” The conceptual metaphor “yoke of slavery” meant “sinfulness, slavery to the flesh.” It follows that in Christianity, the conceptual metaphor “freedom” means “true faith, belief in the existence of the Creator and following his instructions.” In axiology, the category of value is considered to have a bipolar structure. That is, every value has its anti-value. In the above passage from the Bible, we can see that the concepts of “freedom” and

“slavery” are contrasted with each other. Like Islam, Christianity also emphasizes that absolute freedom is a characteristic of God: “Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.” (Corinthians 3:17) [1] In this, the concepts of spirit, Lord, and freedom are metaphorically used for each other. That is, God is in the spirit of every person, and the spirit is free. Whoever is free, has faith in God in his spirit. This can also be seen in the following hierarchy:



In addition, it is emphasized that freedom is a great gift given to humanity, but this gift should be used for love, not for bloodshed: “For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. (Galatians 5:13)” [1] This leads to the conclusion “use your freedom to love one another” (use your freedom to love one another). In addition, one can also understand the conclusion that “freedom can serve either for flesh or for love” (freedom can serve either for blood or love). While the Holy Quran stipulates that no matter how free a person is, he is still considered a slave of Allah, his servant, the entire humanity is referred to as “servants” in the Bible: “Live

as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God” (Peter 2:16).[1] Being then made free from sin he became the servants of righteousness (Romans 6:18).[1] The conceptual metaphor of “righteousness” refers to God, and it is expressed that a person who is free from sin and follows the true faith should serve righteousness, that is, God alone. This is another emphasis on the fact that absolute freedom belongs only to the Creator. Based on a conceptual-metaphorical analysis, the idea

conveyed in the above passages in human thinking can be perceived as follows:

Source domain (free men)

Target domain (servants) |



Postulate: People are free. Free people are servants of God

The concept of “truth” in this line refers to what is said by the Creator. That is, the actions He commands are the true truth. The lexeme “Free” refers to spiritual, moral freedom. Those who believe in the Christian

religion know the Bible as the “good news” that guides people to the right path. After all, it is a source that saves people from spiritual captivity and clarifies their minds. The concept of “free” in this verse can be

understood as “freedom from sins and worldly burdens”.

DISCUSSION

The findings presented highlight the centrality of freedom in Christianity, analogous to its prominence in Islam. However, distinct interpretations arise when considering the nature and scope of this freedom. Unlike secular definitions of freedom, which often focus on individual rights and autonomy, Christianity contextualizes freedom within a framework of divine revelation and spiritual transformation. One critical insight derived from the analysis concerns the dichotomy between freedom and slavery. The metaphorical language employed in the Bible underscores the tension between spiritual liberation and moral enslavement. Freedom in Christianity does not imply license but rather liberation from sin and alignment with God's will. This contrasts sharply with modern liberal notions of freedom, which tend to prioritize individual choice over communal obligations.

Another intriguing aspect arises from the metaphorical connection between spirit, Lord, and freedom. The assertion that "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" suggests that true freedom originates from divine indwelling. This idea challenges conventional wisdom by positing that inner spiritual freedom supersedes outward conditions. It also raises questions regarding the compatibility of Christian ideals with pluralistic societies, where diverse views on freedom coexist. Overall, the exploration of freedom in Christianity reveals a rich tapestry of theological, ethical, and sociopolitical dimensions. Future studies might benefit from investigating cross-cultural comparisons, empirical surveys, and interdisciplinary collaborations to shed light on these complex dynamics.

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