

Christmas at the Movies: Let It Go: Freedom Is Found in Release

Dr. John Carmichael

[Heb 12:1 NASB95] 1 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

- In Frozen, Elsa sings “Let It Go” at the moment she stops hiding, stops striving, and stops living under fear and shame.
- But while Elsa isolates herself, God’s version of “letting go” doesn’t lead to isolation. It leads to freedom, healing, and restoration in His presence.
- Many believers are saved, Spirit-filled, and faithful, but still bound because they’re holding onto things God never asked them to carry.
- At North Church, we believe true freedom is found not by running away, but by running to Jesus.

What are some things that we need to let of that is keeping us from freedom?

Here are five things to let of to walk in the freedom God has for you.

I. Let Go of Sin - It Entangles, Not Empowers

- a. [Heb 12:1 NASB95] 1 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,
- b. Sin promises control but produces bondage. It drains spiritual authority and dulls sensitivity to the Holy Spirit.
- c. When we look at these verses together we see the commandment and the empowerment to let go of sin.
 - i. [Rom 6:11-14 NASB95] 11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, 13 and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin [as] instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members [as] instruments of righteousness to God. 14 For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.
 - ii. [Rom 8:13 NASB95] 13 for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.
- d. Jesus wasn’t born just to forgive sin, but to break its power. [Mat 1:21 NASB95] 21 "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."
- e. Application: Name it honestly before God. Repent fully, not partially. Replace sin with Spirit-filled obedience. Know that God has freed from the connection that your sin made to the curse.
- f. “I don’t manage sin. I release it.”

II. Let Go of Bitterness - It Poisons the Soul

- a. [Eph 4:31-32 NASB95] 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.
- b. [Heb 12:15 NASB95] 15 See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;
- c. Bitterness grows underground before it shows above ground. You may be justified, but still imprisoned.

Christmas at the Movies: Let It Go: Freedom Is Found in Release

Dr. John Carmichael

- d. Unforgiveness blocks the flow of the Spirit. Healing often begins when forgiveness is released.
- e. Application: Forgiveness is a step of obedience before it's a feeling. Release the person into God's hands, even if they never apologize. Ask the Holy Spirit to heal the wound beneath the anger.
- f. "I refuse to let yesterday control my tomorrow."

III. Let Go of Fear - Perfect Love Drives It Out

- a. [2Ti 1:7 NASB95] 7 For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.
- b. [1Jo 4:18 NASB95] 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.
- c. Fear is not from God, it is a spirit that limits obedience and silences faith. Fear does not come from God, and it does not get the final word.
- d. The baptism of the Holy Spirit produces boldness, not retreat ([Act 4:31 NASB95] 31 And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and [began] to speak the word of God with boldness.).
- e. Application: Identify what fear has been controlling. Replace fear-filled thoughts with God's promises. Pray until peace replaces panic.
- f. "I move forward in faith, not backward in fear."

IV. Let Go of Doubt - Faith Requires Release

- a. [Jas 1:6-8 NASB95] 6 But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, 8 [being] a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.
- b. Doubting will keep you from receiving from God.
- c. [Mar 9:24 NASB95] 24 Immediately the boy's father cried out and said, "I do believe; help my unbelief."
- d. Unbelief is something to be honest with God about. His mercy will help you while you seek to grow in faith.
- e. God honors honest faith, even mustard-seed faith, when it's surrendered to Him.
- f. Application: Bring your questions to God, not away from Him. Speak faith out loud. Ask the Spirit to strengthen your inner man
- g. "Lord, I believe, help my unbelief."

V. Let Go of the Past - God Is Doing a New Thing

- a. [Isa 43:18-19 NASB95] 18 "Do not call to mind the former things, Or ponder things of the past. 19 "Behold, I will do something new, Now it will spring forth; Will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, Rivers in the desert.
- b. [Phi 3:13-14 NASB95] 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of [it] yet; but one thing [I do:] forgetting what [lies] behind and reaching forward to what [lies] ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
- c. Past failures, past pain, and even past victories can keep you from what God is doing now.
- d. Your past may explain you, but it does not define you.
- e. Application: Stop rehearsing what God has already redeemed. Break agreement with shame and regret. Step into your next season by faith.
- f. "My past is redeemed; my future is secure."

Christmas at the Movies: Let It Go: Freedom Is Found in Release

Dr. John Carmichael

- **You can't step into the freedom God has for you while holding onto what He's asking you to release.**
- **Elsa sang "Let it go" and walked into isolation. Jesus says, "Come to Me" and leads us into freedom.**
- **Letting go is not weakness. It is worship.**
- **Whatever you release into God's hands, He redeems, restores, or replaces.**