

TIED HANDS.

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Intent of th Story

- ✓ *God wants us to be free,*
- ✓ *Freedom is required to do good and evil.*
- ✓ *Freedom is both an opportunity and a risk*
- ✓ *We have to educate others to be responsibly free,*

Once upon a time, there lived a man who was just as normal as you and I. One day, some unknown people broke into his house, tied his hands and took him away. They told him:

“Try to understand us, we are your friends, we have tied your hands to help you to be good! With your hands tied, you will never be able to do anything wrong. Thus, you will never be blamed for any wrong or sin your might do.”

Then, they posted guards in front of his room to make sure that that his hands would remain forever tied. At the start, he felt terribly handicapped. He tried hard, desperately hard, to break the ties, but in vain. He could not.

Finally, when he realized that all his efforts were futile, he resigned himself to live on with his hand tied. After many days, he got so used to live and move with his hands tied, that he felt it to be the normal thing.

Everyday, his guards kept informing him of all the bad things - robberies, fights, murders - people with free and untied hands were doing in the outside world.

They brainwashed him to such an extent that he at last, felt grateful to his captors for having tied his hands. After all, they saved him from the crimes and evil deeds people did in the outside. He even thanked God for his “tied-hands”. He thought that to have one’s hands tied, was a blessing.

Many days later, his friends came to know of the place of his captivity. They attacked the guards, overpowered them, and broke the bonds that kept his hands tied. Then, exultantly they shouted: “You are free now! Rejoice! Use your hands again! Enjoy life!”

But alas! It was too late! His hands were unusable. By now they were shrunken and lifeless. They had withered away

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

1. Is freedom a blessing or a curse? Why?
2. Why did God make us free?
3. What are the dangers of freedom?
4. How should we use our freedom?
5. Are good people sometimes afraid of their freedom?
6. How should we educate our children to be responsibly free?
7. Does the story tell us something of the type of education given to our children?
8. What about our educational system and to training methods in our schools and colleges? Explain
9. Who are those binding the hands of our children and trainees?
10. In real life who are the guards of the story? Are they aware of what are they doing? Then, how to open their eyes?
11. What is the philosophical anthropology assumed in the parable?
12. What methods do we use to tie our children's, pupils' and trainees' hands? Indoctrination? Brainwashing? Force? Intimidation? Blackmailing? Creating feelings of guilt? Manipulation?
13. Can you mention some examples where we, aware or unaware, tie the hands of our children, pupils and others entrusted to us for their education and formation? Mention them.
14. In your life history, can you recollect some instances when your hands were tied? How? By whom? To what effect?
15. At the personal and social levels what are the consequences of tying our children's, pupils' and trainees' hands?
16. Who in real life are the friends who free us and untie our hands? You may mention them by name if you can remember.
17. How to educate our children and trainees "in responsible freedom"? Suggest ways, methods. What are the difficulties and dangers to be faced?
18. Are good people, in general, afraid of freedom? Why?
19. Can you find Gospel passages where the idea of the parable is exemplified?

THOUGHTS FOR REFLECTION

God wants us to be free:

God made us to his own image and likeness; so, God gave us a **power to think** - intellect, - a **power to love** – a heart, and a **power to take decisions** - free will.

Unfortunately, we, being limited and imperfect, can abuse our freedom and do wrong. We can sin. We can do mistakes. God cannot!

Dangers and opportunities of freedom:

Freedom is both an opportunity and a danger; we can use it or misuse it. Freedom is both boon and a curse; we can save or damn ourselves.

It we use it, heroism, virtue and holiness are possible - we please God
If we misuse it wickedness, sin; crimes and injustices, are possible – we displease God.

By giving us freedom, God took great risks, yet He wanted us to be free.

Privileges and Responsibilities of Freedom

God wants us to be his children – sons and daughters - not robot-like creatures or instinct driven animals.

Freedom makes us answerable, responsible for our actions.

Being images of God, though imperfectly, replicas of God, we have to act out of freedom while at the same time, letting others free!

We have a duty to educate others - especially those under our care - to use their freedom responsibly, and not to take it away from them.