

Land of the Free?

This weekend many Americans celebrated Independence Day. July 4th is the day that we celebrate the adoption of the Declaration of Independence.

This historic document is our nation's most cherished symbol of liberty. At a time where these states were under British jurisdiction and oppression, the people of the United States desired freedom! Here is a part of this declaration:

“all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.”

Freedom is what they desired...exemption from constraint or control. The freedom that they were seeking was their God given freedom.

“all men are created equal, that they are endowed (furnished, equipped) by their Creator with certain unalienable (non-transferable) Rights”

So while they are being oppressed by the British, they are claiming that our Creator, Almighty God, has given us rights that are our rights, they can't be given to another. These rights are non-transferable! Therefore, we are claiming those rights for ourselves and our people!

Among these rights are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. I think they were on to something here! I'm going to take a few minutes to look at these “rights”

LIFE - everyone has the God given right to life, but what is life? For many it is just the state of being alive and beyond that it is doing what they want to do. It's my life, I'll live it as I please.

Whether or not people have freedom does in fact have a great impact on whether or not they have life! If you are not looking in the right place for life, it is difficult to find it.

Matthew 7:14

14 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

There are few who find it because there are few who look for it. Life is not how much money you have or how famous you are. Life is not just finding where you fit in. Life is in Christ!

Matthew 10:39

39 He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.

Giving up the things of this world for Jesus....that is life. But this is contrary to the American dream. In America we have freedom, I can pile up money and have anything I want!

John 5:40

40 But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

Are you willing to come to Jesus? Are you willing to follow Him instead of society? Are you willing to do things that aren't the popular thing to do?

John 10:10

10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

We get told by the media, what is cool, what is exciting, what is life, sexual immorality, alcohol, rebellion. Those are the very things that steal, kill, and destroy life. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. He came to bring life. A life of peace, joy, love, self-control, perseverance, godliness! So that we may not only have life but abundant life! A full life!

John 17:3

3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

Eternal life is knowing God. Abundant life or a full life comes by knowing Him! So it is your God given right to have life and to have a full and abundant eternal life, by knowing Jesus!

LIBERTY - everyone has the right to liberty or freedom! But what is freedom? Is freedom what you have when there is no one to tell you what to do? When you can truly do what you want? That is what the world thinks.

2 Peter 2:19

19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage.

The very people that tell you freedom is doing your own thing, doing what you want and what you think is best, those same people are in bondage themselves.....

I've heard it said before "why would I want to be a Christian, then I have to follow all of your rules! That doesn't sound very freeing to me!"

The Word of God says otherwise!

Psalm 119:45

45 And I will walk at liberty,
For I seek Your precepts.

God's commands are put in place for our freedom. We are born corrupt in a corrupt world. We are not born free. Did you choose to be born into sin? Did you choose to be bound by your corrupt nature? The truths of God bring freedom!

Romans 8:20-22

20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; 21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.

Because of man's sin, we are in a cursed world! The entire universe has suffered the consequences of human sin.....but it is only temporary because God has provided hope of deliverance. There will be a day when creation will be set free from enslavement and will share in the same freedom as the children of God.

2 Corinthians 3:17

17 Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

We desperately need the Holy Spirit in our lives, in our marriages, in our homes, in our church, in our city, state, country, world! Without the Spirit of God there is no freedom....

Galatians 5:1

5 Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.

Persevere in the freedom that Jesus has given you. Don't give up and go back to the bondages of sin. It's not worth it, even if it seems easier! We have been given freedom for a reason...

Galatians 5:13

13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

Christ doesn't set us free so that we can satisfy the flesh, freedom is not a replacement for morality, we are free that we may serve one another. Love others!

PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS - everyone has the right to happiness, right? But what is happiness? Is happiness getting the “things” you want in life? Would you be happy if you just simply have life and liberty?

There are some things that lead to happiness that would make some people happy but not everyone. Happiness is the agreeable sensations which spring from the enjoyment of good; that state of a being in which his desires are gratified. Since people have different desires, different things can lead to happiness, right?

Psalm 127:4-5

4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior,
So are the children of one's youth.
5 Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them;

A quiver full of children can bring a man happiness! Children are a blessing from the Lord, they should bring happiness. Others may not desire to have their own children and they are just happy for TJ....

Psalm 128:2

2 When you eat the labor of your hands,
You shall be happy, and it shall be well with you.

When you work hard for something, when you labor for it, you are happy when you reap the rewards. Those are a couple of things that bring happiness to some people but maybe not everyone.

But there is something that everyone has a longing for, something that will make everyone happy....Happiness is The agreeable sensations which spring from the enjoyment of good; that state of a being in which his desires are gratified. There is a desire that every single person has whether they want to admit it or not, and whether they recognize it or not....

Psalm 144:14-15

14 That our oxen may be well laden;
That there be no breaking in or going out;
That there be no outcry in our streets.
15 Happy are the people who are in such a state;
Happy are the people whose God is the Lord!

We find happiness when we allow Jesus to be LORD!

Psalm 146:5

5 Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help,

Whose hope is in the Lord his God,

There is happiness knowing that God is there, that when we need help, He is there. Happiness is placing our hope in Christ!

Proverbs 3:13

13 Happy is the man who finds wisdom,
And the man who gains understanding;

What is more frustrating than lacking understanding. I don't like things that I can't understand. It drives me crazy, and oh how happy I am when God gives me wisdom to understand a situation!

Proverbs 16:20

20 He who heeds the word wisely will find good,
And whoever trusts in the Lord, happy is he.

When we obey the Word of God and trust Jesus.....we will be happy. I didn't say everything will be perfect, I said we will be happy.

So when the United States desired their God given rights of Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness, they desired independence, freedom from tyranny.

Freedom is what the people wanted then, and freedom is what the people want today! After all, this is the land of the free right? Isn't America the place people go so that they can be free?

What are Americans free to do? Well...whatever they want! Thomas Jefferson wanted his God given freedoms but the people of today want a freedom to do what THEY want.

There is a problem with that.....

Galatians 6:7

7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

This country is reaping what it has sown! When we as a country compromise righteousness over and over and over, what can we expect but a more sinful generation?

Proverbs 14:34 (NLT)

34 Godliness makes a nation great,
but sin is a disgrace to any people.

The United States of America started as a great nation, but sin is leading to its disgrace.

We are moving from one nation under God to one nation under the wrath of God!

Are we really the Land of the Free? Or the Land of the Chained?

We are not even in a country that turns a blind eye to sin, but in a country that supports and encourages it!

abortion
homosexuality
divorce
religion
pornography
feminism
pride
witchcraft
drunkenness
gambling
entertainment - music, TV
love of money

This is a list of what most would call “freedoms” that we have a right to as citizens of the United States of America.

I would submit to you that these “freedoms” are the very things that bind us in the chains of the enemy....SIN! The United States of America IS a sinful nation.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10

9 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:19-21

19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

“When a man is denied the right to live the life he believes in, he has no choice but to become an outlaw.”

— Nelson Mandela

As more of our God given rights are taken away we have to become outlaws! We have to stand for the righteousness of God. No more compromise. Are you willing to stand? Are you willing to fight for freedom?