

Cherished-Chosen-Challenged – July 4, 2010

Freedom

“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How *can* You say, ‘You will be made free’?” Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, *but* a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.” John 8:32-36

Freedom is the word of the day as we celebrate another July 4th and the blessings which God has given us in this country. Although we have observed that many use freedom as an excuse to mock and rebel against God and His goodness, as Christians we recognize that it is truly a blessing to have the freedoms we have been given and it is ever our prayer that God will preserve those freedoms to us and to our posterity. We should not forget that many a child of God has lived or even now does live under the yoke of oppressive rulers and although we count the faithful service of those in our military as a precious blessing from God, it is not the greatness of the American people which grants us the liberty and freedom we have, but solely the gracious kindness of God. It is only by the good and gracious will of God that our soldiers, sailors, and airmen are preserved in battle and the liberty of our country is preserved in victory over our enemies. We must always commend our country and her defenders into the hands of a gracious and merciful Father. For no matter how wise, strong, or sacrificial the people of our country might be, if it suits His purpose, the furtherance of His kingdom, or the Fatherly discipline He wants us to undergo, these worldly freedoms we enjoy can be taken from us in the blinking of an eye and liberty can be vanquished from this great land.

Earthly things, yes even freedom and liberty, are fleeting and passing away. True freedom comes only through the Gospel, for only in Christ alone can one truly be set free from sin, death, hell, and the power of the

devil. Jesus tells us that we can know the truth and the truth will set us free. The truth is that we are all sinners and deserve eternal death. There is no way to sugarcoat that fact. You can ignore it. You can practice self justification. You can pontificate about the fact that life is not fair. There is still no escape. You and I will die. We are all subject to God's judgment. We all deserve to reap the punishment we have earned because of our rebellion against God.

It is also the truth that Jesus suffered and died in our place. Freedom always comes at a cost. Jesus went into battle for us that the bonds of our slavery to sin and death might be broken. No one else could do this for us. No one else would do this for us. He has procured our freedom; an everlasting freedom that cannot be taken from us, for the Son of God has made us free. Today we celebrate freedom for our country! Let us rejoice in this blessing of God. But let us not forget that there is another celebration of freedom much more important...a celebration that began in our baptism and continues every day, for we are free in Christ Jesus!

- Remember: Christ has not freed us to continue to sin, but to walk in the grace of His light. Let us not tire of doing good and so witness to others of the grace of God in our lives.
- Remember: As people freed from sin we owe thanks and praise to our God. Let us gather in His house faithfully to praise Him.

How blessed we are to be the people of God. He has chosen us to be in this place. He has prepared us for this time. He has equipped us for service to Him. **Don't wait for someone else to do it. If you wait on someone else to do it...it will never get done!** God bless you in the growth of your faith and in service to Him and His people, for your labor in the Lord is never in vain.

Pastor Jacobs

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