

Liberty
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Good morning, Lighthouse, are you ready for the Word of God this morning?

This is Memorial Day weekend.

What that usually means is that several of our folks will be gone off travelling, but it also means that we often get to meet some new folks who are visiting our area and are looking for a place to worship the Lord.

To all of our guests today, we want you to know you are welcome and that we are glad you are here.

As we begin this morning, let me read you a little Memorial Day History:

The custom of honoring ancestors by cleaning cemeteries and decorating graves is an ancient and worldwide tradition, but the specific origin of Memorial Day, or Decoration Day, as it was first known, are unclear.

In early rural America, this duty was usually performed in late summer and was an occasion for family reunions and picnics. After the Civil War, America's need for a secular, patriotic ceremony to honor its military dead became prominent, as monuments to fallen soldiers were erected and dedicated, and ceremonies centering on the decoration of soldiers' graves were held in towns and cities throughout the nation.

After World War I, the day expanded to honor those who have died in all American wars.

In 1971, Memorial Day became a national holiday by an act of Congress: it is now celebrated on the last Monday in May.

Many brave men and women of our military have fought and died to preserve for us the freedom we enjoy in this country today. It is fitting that we honor their courage and willingness to give their lives for this noble cause.

The freedom that transcends far beyond what a nation can provide for its citizens has also been provided for us at the expense of someone's life. That someone is Jesus, God Himself - with both the willingness to give it and also the power to take it up again.

John 8:31-36

31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, **If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;**

32 **And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.**

33 They answered him, **We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?**

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: *but* the Son abideth ever.

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

I. Real liberty.

A. Free indeed.

1. Most Christians really don't understand the amazing freedom that we have once we come to know Jesus.

2. And sadly, there are a lot of folks, including preachers, who don't really want you to know.

3. "Free indeed" means:

alēthōs

al-ay-thoce'

Adverb from [G227](#); *truly*: - indeed, surely, of a surety, truly, of a (in) truth, verily, very.

4. Christians are free to do right and we are also free to do wrong; as a fact, you all have proved this to be true because all of us have done some of both this past week.

5. Our liberty does not remove the consequences of our actions, even though we are free to choose those actions.

B. When Jesus saved you, He placed no strings on the deal.

1. [John 5:24](#) Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

2. "And shall not come into condemnation". What does that mean? **It means that you are free from any threat of ever being condemned again.**

3. [Hebrews 5:9](#) And being made perfect, he became the author of **eternal salvation** unto all them that obey him;

4. And how do we obey Him?

[1 John 3:23](#) And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ...

5. [Hebrews 7:24-25](#)

24 But this *man*, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.

25 Wherefore he is able also to **save them to the uttermost** that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

C. Some people have such a hard time believing what may well be the most important truth in the Bible.

1. "You mean all I have to do is put my trust in Jesus and I'll be saved, even if I _____?" (And then the list of various sins begins.)

2. The short answer to that question is **yes!**
You will be saved regardless of what you may or may not do.

3. The Bible is filled with names of those who did pretty much everything on your sin list and God says they are in heaven today.

4. Some of you are thinking, "How can that be?"

5. It is actually quite simple: your salvation is not based on who you are or what you may or may not do.

6. **Ephesians 2:8-9**

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

7. Your salvation is based on Who Jesus is and Him alone; according to what He has done when **He died for our sins** and was buried and rose again from the grave!

8. Salvation has always been the same.

Isaiah 43:21-25

21 This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.

22 But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel.

23 Thou hast not brought me the small cattle of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacrifices. I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense.

24 Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices: but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities.

25 I, *even I*, *am* he that blotteth out thy transgressions **for mine own sake**, and will not remember thy sins.

D. Most people view liberty in reverse.

1. The truth is that before we are saved:

2. We are in bondage to sin, self and Satan.

3. In Christ we are now free to serve the Lord.

4. **Romans 6:17-18**

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

II. Real liberty is necessary.

A. In our ultimate purpose in life of bringing glory to God, our liberty may well be the most important component.

1. Our God is a God of love and He refuses to be served out of fear.

2. Once you have placed your trust in Jesus to save you, you are going to heaven NO MATTER WHAT!

3. For new Christians, God has a whole string of New Testament commands...all designed for your good and for His glory.

4. The first one is to love the Lord with all your heart.

1 John 4:19 We love him, because he first loved us.

B. When we get ahold of that first command, obedience to all the rest are motivated by that love.

1. You get baptized because God commands it, you love Him, and thus you choose to do it.

2. You tithe and give because God commands it, you love Him, and thus you choose to do it.

3. You put your talents and gifts and abilities to work for the Lord in the Church because God commands it, you love Him, and thus you choose to do it.

4. You don't **have** to do any of these things; you are going to heaven anyway.

5. And for the very reason that you don't have to do any of these things; glory to our Lord and creator abounds when you do!

6. Yes, God pours out blessings when we obey Him...and that is wonderful...but that is not why we do it.

7. We freely choose to obey, just because we love Him.

III. Real liberty must be protected.

A. There are many who would try to bring you back into bondage.

1. As the Churches of the Gentiles throughout Galatia began to prosper, Satan sent Jews, false prophets, teaching that one must be circumcised and keep the law in order to be saved, challenging their faith in Christ.

2. To which Paul responded:

Galatians 3:1-3

1 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

3. Paul admonished them further in

Galatians 5:1-7

1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

7 Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

4. If Satan can get you to depending on your works either to get or to keep your salvation, he will have succeeded in cheating the Lord out of the glory that would otherwise be the Lord's through your life.

B. Even otherwise well-meaning preachers and pastors can rob you of your liberty.

1. Being originally from a somewhat legalistic Church background, I am very familiar with this.

2. Preachers often come up with a list of sins that are their personal pets. It used to be:

a. women wearing pants.

b. Attending Hollywood movies.

- c. Bathing suits and public swimming.
- d. Short dresses.
- e. Short shorts.

3. And the list goes on and on.

4. Usually gluttony, paying our debts, not tithing or whatever is their own particular sin problems don't make the list.

5. These sins (and some of them are not sins at all) are hammered to the point of making you feel less than Christian if you should do them.

6. Yes, we should abstain from all appearance of evil.

7. Yes, we should dress modestly and with sexual distinction.

8. Yes, we should in every way guard our Christian testimonies.

8. However, and I want to say this particularly to all of our preachers and teachers here today, God **IS** in the business of loving us into right living, **NOT** in the business of pushing us into it with intimidation or fear.

C. Worldly Christians are welcome here.

1. If we do our job and do it well, we are always going to have a healthy supply of dresses that are too short and jeans that are too tight and bosoms that are trying to get out and all the other things that go with that.

2. You know, just like it was with many of you right after you got saved.

3. And little by little as they are consistently loved and as, staying under the Word, they learn to love Jesus even more and more, those issues go away.

4. Folks, we can preach and teach the truth without being condemning.

Ephesians 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, [we] may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ:

5. Fact is, that with a few exceptions, I simply don't have the right to tell you what you may or may not do or what you should or should not wear...YOU ARE FREE and I have no business violating your liberty.

6. God, on the other hand, does have the right to tell you what you should and should not do; and He will, when and as you are able to bear it.

Conclusion:

I want you to live Godly in Christ Jesus.

And I want you to receive and enjoy all the blessings that come with and from that.

But here, we're not going to try and shame you in to it. We're just going to love you until you get there and then just love you some more after that.

You know, the way Jesus has loved each and every one of us.

So,

Galatians 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.