

Celebrating Our Spiritual Independence Day Galatians

Introduction:

1. Independence Day, commonly known as the **Fourth of July**, is a federal holiday commemorating the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, which declared our independence from the Kingdom of Great Britain.
2. What an incredible, wonderful day that was in history. I know that every person here is thankful for the freedom that we enjoy nationally. What a blessing and privilege.
3. But, did you know that for the believer there is an even greater Independence Day? This is the day when Jesus Christ took our sins upon Himself on the cross and paid for them in full. This is the believer's Independence Day.
4. Every believer should celebrate our spiritual Independence Day. This is what the book of Galatians is all about. There were religious teachers that were coming into these churches and attempting to keep them in bondage. They did not want them to walk in freedom.
5. Notice what Paul exclaims in Galatians 5:1. "*Stand fast*" means "to stand firm; don't budge an inch." Celebrate your liberty in Christ and don't let anybody keep you from it.

Why was Paul so adamant about celebrating and living in our liberty in Christ?

First, our Independence Day means freedom from our sins. 1:4

1. There is a song that says, "O happy day, O happy day, when Jesus washed my sins away."
2. We have been **delivered** from this evil world and **seated** in the heavenlies. It's all because Christ gave Himself for our sins. The cross is our Independence Day.
3. Look at verse 3. The only reason that the grace and peace of verse 3 can be offered is because Christ "*gave himself for our sins.*"
 - His sacrifice was voluntary. John 10:18
 - His sacrifice was given out of love. Galatians 2:20
4. "He gave himself for **our** sins."
 - God is a holy God and cannot condone sin. Our sin had us bound and condemned.
 - Sin must be judged, and the penalty is death. Romans 6:23
 - But God is not only a God of justice, He is a God of love. So God came to earth and paid our sin debt for us on the cross. 2 Corinthians 5:19, 21
5. When the sinner believes on Jesus Christ and accepts Him as Savior, a complete change of identity occurs. Our freedom from our sin means deliverance!
 - Just as our country was delivered from the bondage of England, Christ delivered us **from** this present evil world. This world is deserving of God's judgment and is racing 100 miles per hour towards God's judgment and wrath. We are living in Satan's world system.

- We live in a world of godlessness, crime, violence, blasphemy, lust, sin, wickedness, dishonesty and a disregard for God and His moral law. But, we can rest assured, payday is coming!
- But those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ have been delivered from this present world and the wrath that will come upon it.
1 Thessalonians 1:10, 5:9
- But that's only part of it. God has also made us members of a new kingdom. Colossians 1:13; 2 Timothy 4:18

Second, our Independence Day means freedom from the law.

1. There were religious teachers that had infiltrated these churches, and they were bringing in false doctrine. They were teaching believers that in order to **stay** saved, they must keep the Old Testament law system that God gave to Israel through Moses. 2:4
 - This law consisted of over 600 commands. How many people do you think kept the law perfectly? Only one: Jesus Christ.
 - This is why Peter (Acts 15:10) and Paul (Galatians 5:1) both called the law a yoke of bondage. These religious teachers were placing all these religious rules on people, and nobody could keep them. It created an impossible standard.
2. But, Paul reminded these believers that Jesus Christ delivered us from the bondage of the law. He kept it fully, and Colossians 2:14 says that Christ then nailed it to the cross.
3. The cross is our Independence Day. We have been set free from the law, and now walk with God on the basis of our personal relationship with Jesus Christ. 2:19, 3:13, 24-25
4. In Galatians 4:4-5 we see that we are delivered **from** the law but brought **into** the family of God. We no longer have to live by law, but by a daily walk with and faith in Jesus Christ.
 - We have been given something better than the law. We have been given God's very Spirit to indwell us. 4:6, 5:18
5. They were trying to bring these believers back under the Old Testament law system, and thereby lead them away from a personal walk with Christ. Paul says, "No, don't let them do it, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free."
6. Religion is all about trying to keep people bound to its religious rules and requirements, and they are accepted based on how well they keep them. Paul says, "They are trying to put you into bondage. The Christian life is not about religious externals; it is about an internal relationship and walk with Jesus Christ."

Third, our Independence Day means freedom from fleshly lusts.

1. The cross is our Independence Day, but part of that independence means freedom from our own selfish and sinful pursuits, and to now live unto Christ.
2 Corinthians 5:15

2. No longer do I have to live in bondage to my own selfish desires. No longer do I have to live with the miserable mentality that it is all about **me**. Notice 5:13-15. I am now free to serve others, free to love others, free to forgive. What inward joy this kind of life brings.
3. Christ has set me free from the penalty of my sins, Christ has set me free from the bondage of the law, and Christ has set me free from ME. Many times, we are our own worst enemy. Our self-centeredness causes contention in our relationships, it causes us to indulge in fleshly lusts that end up bringing us into deep bondage and misery, it causes pride and arrogance, and it brings unforgiveness and internal bitterness.
4. The cross sets me free from all that. Because of Christ's finished work, He has given us His very Spirit to live inside of us. Do you know what happens when I yield to His Spirit within me? Look at 5:16. His Spirit sets me free from the self-centered misery in 5:19-20.
5. This is why Galatians 5:24 says that when we belong to Christ, we have crucified the flesh along with its affections and lusts. I can **choose** to bring myself back into the bondage of my fleshly lusts, but I don't have to. I have been set free. I can walk in the Spirit. 5:25
 - I can now live a different way. Now, my life can be characterized by 5:22-23.
 - Oh, what joy this brings to our lives.

In Conclusion:

1. Instead of carving out the Declaration of Independence, our forefathers could have made a decision to come back under the bondage and tyranny of England.
2. But, they made a decision. We will stand fast in the liberty that has set us free. We won't budge an inch.
3. Today, I am so happy to be able to tell you that spiritual liberty was won for us 2,000 years ago on the cross of Jesus Christ: freedom from our sin, freedom from the law, and freedom from our own fleshly lusts. But, you must make a decision whether or not to walk in that freedom or to allow Satan to bring you into bondage.
4. Here is my advice to you, and I will use the words of Paul in Galatians 5:1: *"Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free."*