

Sermon Notes July 2, 2023 5th Sun after Pentecost
Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church – Dade City, Florida
“Free in Christ Jesus!”

Memory Verses:

Psalm 119: 160 “¹⁶⁰ The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever.”

Romans 7:24-25,8:1-2 “^{24b} ... Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!... ^{8:1}There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ²For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.”

Independence Day ... How might understanding of our freedoms be based /connected with our freedom as Christians?

Jeremiah might encourage evaluation of who we listen to or who we look to for deliverance from bondage or for peace in our lives.

Parallels between God’s judgment and promise to Judean captives in Jeremiah’s day and in Romans 6:23...

Psalmist looked to the LORD for deliverance and salvation & remembered God’s great mercy...pointed to truth/ the Word of God.

“If you abide in My Word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” --Jn 8:31ff. “...if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.”

What are some of the freedoms we enjoy today as Americans?

Freedom of speech ... Freedom of Religion

Doctor Richard G Lee, editor of the American Patriot’s Bible © 2009 quoted John 8:36 as one of the biblical truths that formed the foundation of American values ... in article on the Bill of Rights.

Dr. Lee wrote: During the debates on the adoption of the U. S. Constitution, some of its opponents, including prominent Founding Fathers, argued that it failed to protect the basic principles of human

liberty. While the constitution spelled out the new government's delegated powers, it did not define the citizens' rights or insure that the federal government would not infringe on the most basic of civil rights at a later point in time, as the British had done before and during the Revolution. In their formal ratification of the Constitution, several state conventions either asked for or understood that such amendments would be offered. The Bill of Rights ...

Without the Bill of Rights, basic human rights such as the freedom of religion and of speech, the freedom to assemble and to petition, the right to a free press, and the right to keep and bear arms could have potentially been denied or repressed. The Bill of Rights prohibits unreasonable search and seizure, cruel and unusual punishment, and compelled self-incrimination. In federal criminal cases, it requires indictment by grand jury for any capital or infamous crime, guarantees a speedy public trial with an impartial jury composed of members of the state or judicial district in which the crime occurred, and prohibits double jeopardy. In addition, the Bill of Rights reserves all powers not granted to the federal government to the citizenry or states. After over 200 years, the United States Supreme Court still frequently hears cases related to the Bill of Rights. ... Freedom "of religion" lies within the balance.

In Romans, Paul introduces the impact of the law in our lives. Next week ... more about our freedom in Christ Jesus.

As the law confronts fallen human nature, it accuses and condemns, revealing sinfulness and the unreachable standard of God's holiness. Faithless people may be driven to sin and despair by the law (vs. 5), But thankfully, Paul reminds in Romans 7:4 the law was fulfilled by Jesus' obedience and sacrificial death. Earlier in 6:3-5, Paul affirmed unity with Christ Jesus in baptism, ... free from law's condemnation.

Another Biblical Foundational truth ... Romans 8:2 "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free..." relates to The Declaration of Independence...that the 13 American colonies were "free and independent states" and that "all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved." In it, our Founding Fathers were quick to

acknowledge God as the source of our rights, and they were wise to not separate God from state. The placement of Judeo-Christian values and biblical morality into our founding documents and laws was clearly intentional. As Benjamin Rush, one of the Founders, said, “Without (religion) there can be no virtue, and without virtue there can be no liberty, and liberty is the object and life of all republican governments.”

“People cry for ‘Freedom, but there can never be Liberty without a moral law. There can be no objective standard for law without a moral Law-Giver. Freedom without Jesus is another form of tyranny.”
-- Israel Wayne

Jesus came to serve us by giving his life on the cross and rising for us. Freed from sin we can now serve God. ...having freedom to be the people He created us to be.

Kari Jobe’s contemporary Christian song: “Love Came Down.” was sung by Angie Smith on the 12th season of American Idol.

Chorus: Love came down and rescued me, Love came down and set me free, I am yours. (Lord) I’m forever yours. Mountains high or Valleys low, I sing out and remind my soul I am yours. I am forever yours...I am yours...All my days, I am yours. ... Jesus, I Am Yours.

Let’s Pray:

Heavenly Father, Thank you for the truth of your Word. Lord Jesus, thank you that you are the Way, the Truth and the Life and that you have freed us from the law of sin and death that we may freely serve you and others in Your Name. Amen.