

Rom. 14:19
So then let us
follow after
things which
make for
peace, and
things
whereby we
may edify one
another.

John 8:32 And
ye shall
know the
truth and the
truth shall
make you
free.

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INDEPENDENCE DAY

by Jim Stauffer

One of the great celebrations in our nation is July 4th, the day set aside to remember the struggles for independence from the King of England and his forces. The story is one of the greatest in history where a people declared their intention of determining their own fate by leaving the land in which they lived and going to a new country where they would make the decisions concerning how to be ruled and led.

It became a battle of the inferior material of the Colonists versus the mighty army of the King. The kind of story one might consider a fairy tale if it were told before it happened. Yet those Colonists believed in the principles of freedom to such an extent that no price was too great to pay. And we know, the result was the development of the greatest nation offering freedom to its citizens in the history of the world.

A similar battle is waged daily by men of every nation on the earth as they strive for a greater freedom. A freedom many do not even understand as they fail to realize the slavery/bondage under which they currently live.

That is the reason Jesus of Nazareth uttered these words, *“and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”* (John 8:32) Looking at this passage we think of the freedom from the bondage of sin we enjoy as a result of the Savior’s work on Calvary.

Yet one of the effects of our freedom from the domain of Satan is the translation into the kingdom of Christ. Listen to the description Paul gives to this change in our loyalties and relationships. *“But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh.*

For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.”

(Romans 6:17–19) We have in the words of the apostle, changed our slavery from one thing to another.

So, let us examine the current relationship we have with Christ in view of our former relationship with sin, promoted by the devil himself.

We must understand the latter condition is a return to that in which we were initially created. This condition is one that is brought on by a new birth **(John 3:3-5; 2 Cor. 5:17)**. Through the death of Christ, God has restored our righteousness which will lead to the crown Paul describes in **2 Tim. 4:8**. Without righteousness we will spend eternity in a devil’s hell **(2 Thess. 1:8-10)**.

For this righteousness we will be persecuted **(Mat. 5:10)**, but rewarded with entrance into His kingdom where the redeemed reside **(Col. 1:13,14)**.

Many folks to this day believe the greatest form of government is the freedom that America offers its citizens. Yet, there is obviously a greater when we look at our King, Jesus Christ. Jesus is a Monarch. A Monarch who has all power and authority in heaven and on earth **(Matt. 28:18)**. Jesus is a beneficent Monarch. He sees to the benefit of His subjects. Monarchies in the history of men have not been so. They have served in the interest of the Monarch. Jesus is contrary to that image when He gave His life in order to redeem His own creation from the very clutches of an evil ruler, Satan.

Those who obey Christ have, as the Colonists, declared their independence from sin and death. No greater more impactful independence is to be had anywhere, anytime.

Jehovah: Our Rock

Man, for whom the earth was created, finds images in his surroundings and portraits in his own creations that fittingly describe and illustrate the God he knows and seeks to glorify in worship. Shields, towers, shepherds, and fortresses are just a few of the descriptive terms the psalmists have incorporated into the lyrics of their songs of praise to Jehovah.

Another one the portraits shared with the psalmists is found in the word: "rock." In these writings God is described as "*my rock and my salvation,*" "*the rock of my strength,*" and "*my rock and my fortress.*" Song writers of modern times have made ample use of this image in their hymns in which they write of the "*rock of ages,*" "*the rock that is higher than I,*" and "*there stands a rock.*" The meanings of *stability* and *security* are immediately obvious in the word "rock."

Stability.

The "rock" to ancient lyricists was plainly a symbol of stability. Large rocks were not noticeably eroded by the stormy winds and hail and rain of the natural world. Nor were they easily moved by human power and force.

Rocks were always there—firm, solid, immovable. When Jesus taught the disciples the importance of steadfastness and immovability in life as His followers He said: "*He that hears these words of Mine and does them is like unto a wise man who built his house on a rock.*" He then noted that the storms of life will not erode their faithfulness and stability to God when their lives are built on the will and wisdom of Jesus Himself—God's Son (see **Matt. 7:24-25; note also 1 Cor. 15:58**). The same image was used by our Lord Himself when with reference to the stability and unchangeable nature of His deity He said to the disciples: "*upon this rock I will build My church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it*" (**Matt 16:18**).

Security.

The rocks and clefts of the rocks in mountainous regions were sought after and fought for as secure fortresses to protect and shield nations from enemy nations. Bible students well remember the pride of the Edomites who dwelt in the cleft of the rocks. They boasted of their invincibility and security against surrounding nations, but in their arrogance they forgot about the God who created them and ruled them and all nations. To them God said: "*The pride of thy heart hath deceived thee, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground.*" Jehovah's answer to them was: "*I will bring you down from thence.*" (**Obad 3-4**).

Edom failed to recognize or accept what the psalmists and prophets acknowledge: God is "*my rock and my salvation,*" "*the rock of my strength,*" "*my rock and my fortress.*" Disciples of Jesus must grasp that as Christians they must entrust their souls to Jehovah who is their rock of stability and security—that He is their strength and protection when they face trials and tests of faith. They have an adversary, the devil, who seeks to devour and destroy them spiritually and they need protection from his lies, subtleties, wiles, and challenges.

Christians need God, in whom they must trust. He is the "rock of ages" that "stands" "higher" than they; the rock that shall not be moved; the rock that is cleft in whom they can hide from the evil one and find rest. Only in Him can they find stability and security for their souls when, as He has commanded them, they hear His Son and build their lives on His authority and word (see **Matt 17:5; Matt 28:18**).

L. A. Stauffer

Does The Spirit Dwell In Me Today?

The Holy Spirit certainly dwells in the Christian. Paul wrote, "*Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?*" (**1 Cor. 6:19**). To the Romans he affirmed, "*But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you*" (**Rom. 8:11**). The real question is not "if," but "how" and "why?"

Does Paul's language in the above passages demand a literal, personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit? Before we accept such a conclusion, however, we must note that the Scriptures also teach that both the Father and the Son "*dwell*" or "*abide*" in the Christian (**Rom. 8:10; Eph. 3:17; 1 John 4:12,15**). It is possible for sin to dwell in a man or, in contrast, for truth to dwell in a man (**Rom. 7:17-20; 2 John 2**). Paul exhorted his readers to "*let the word of Christ dwell in you*" (**Col. 3:16**). Jesus stated that Satan dwelt at Pergamos (**Rev. 2:13**). These passages illustrate that the words "dwell" and "abide" can refer to relationship and influence rather than location. The word of Christ, the truth, dwells in us when we study it, meditate on it and are controlled by it. Sin dwells in a man when he is controlled by it. Satan did not literally live in the city of Pergamos; rather his influence was over it and was keenly felt there. The Father and the Son dwell in us when they control our lives.

If such an understanding can be applied to these other passages which speak of various things or persons dwelling in a person, why can we not understand the passages which speak of the Holy Spirit dwelling within the Christian in the same fashion? I know of no passage which demands a literal, personal indwelling of the Spirit in the Christian. The Spirit dwells in us when we form and maintain a relationship of fellowship with Him and we do so by letting the influence of the Word work in our lives.

What does the Spirit do for us? We must harmonize our understanding of the indwelling of the Spirit with what the Bible says about the function of the Word. The Scriptures are sufficient for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and instruction in righteousness (**2 Tim. 3:16**). The Word of God is the means by which God's people are sanctified (**John 17:17**).

Even if there remains some mystery surrounding the means by which the Holy Spirit dwells in us, we must remember that such is a fact. The indwelling of the Spirit, however, was not intended by the apostles to foster controversy. Instead it emphasizes the closeness of our relationship with Deity when we live as Christians. What a wonderful thought - God abides with me and I with Him!

Allen Dvorak

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Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

Do you believe that God will affect your life in a way that will make you happy? Whether or not you are happy will be determined by what you are expecting from the Lord. God has not promised anyone that He will fulfill their wishes in a way that guarantees happiness.

The scriptures command: "*Rejoice in the Lord always*" (**Philippians 4:4**). Yes, it is a command. Regardless of our circumstances (*always*), you are to rejoice. How, you wonder. Rejoice in the Lord. That means we are to find joy in what God has done for us. Remember that this letter was written to "*the saints in Christ Jesus in Philippi*" (**Philippians 1:1**). These are people who have been sanctified in and by the Lord, whose sins are forgiven, who have promise and hope of eternal life, who belong to the Lord and are secure in Him. They have great and many reasons to rejoice in the Lord.

The joy spoken of in Philippians is a joy that can only belong to those in Christ. Those in Christ who value what they have received from the Lord can and will *rejoice in the Lord always*. Some in the Lord worry too much about this world and this life. Rejoicing in the Lord does not come easy for them. However, the greater their focus on and appreciation of the Lord, the easier it is for them to rejoice.

Turn to the Lord and rejoice in Him always!

Don Bunting

Question:

Do you realize there are many things men accept as truth because they believe they are in the Bible? They believe God spoke about and taught these things.

Let me offer an example of such that has been believed by men for years.

Did you know the Bible, God's word, never mentions a Pope? And never mentions Peter as such? Yet men have believed this for years. We all know saying something over and over does not make it true.

Things like this are discoveries made when one actually studies the Bible. Would you enjoy such a study? We would love to assist in any way we can.

We offer either in home studies in person or by way of Correspondence Courses.

Call me, Jim Stauffer at 913-620-0563, Evangelist at the Lenexa church of Christ

We believe in worshiping and serving the Lord as He has instructed in His word.

Psa. 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

Visitors welcome

We conduct in home Bible Studies

We offer Correspondence Courses

Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer

Elders: Ron Peck and Jim Stauffer

Deacons: Bill Miller

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Sick in need of Prayers:

Alma Baumgartner, Jan Patrick,
Denese Goring, Pat Gaines,
Brooklyn Boyer, Tracy
Richardson, Gerry Sandusky,
Randy Harshbarger, Jordan
Moody, Don Craig, Tina Brofft,
Ken Green and Rick and
Debbie Billingsly.

Bible Classes:

Sunday Morning - Hebrews -
Jim Stauffer

Wednesday Evening - 1&2
Peter and Jude - Ron Peck

Sunday Sermon: Temptation
and Sin



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10