

Washington church of Christ

27 Grand Avenue, Washington, NJ 07882

Phone: 201-546-1284

washingtonnjchurchofchrist.com

The Washington Messenger

Volume 4 – Number 4

January 25, 2015

Order of Services Sunday February 1, 2015

Song Leader	David Osinski
Prayer	Bob Celentano
Preaching	Bob James
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	Arnold Thompson
Prayer for the Cup	Brian Jeffries
Prayer for the Collection	Glenn Montgomery
Assisting at the Table	Bobby Celentano
Morning Closing Prayer	Bill Duryea
Evening Opening Prayer	Derald Sanchez
Announcements	Stan Thompson

Schedule of Weekly Services

Sunday Morning Bible Classes	9:30 am
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 am
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 pm
Wednesday Evening Bible Classes	7:30 pm
Thursday Morning Bible Study	11:00 am

You will be free indeed!

Wikipedia posts that Independence Day was a major constituent of the American Revolution, which itself initiated a series of social, political, and intellectual transformations in early American society and government. Americans rejected the oligarchies (government by the few), which was common in aristocratic Europe at the time, championing instead the development of republicanism based on the *enlightened understanding* of liberalism. Among the significant results of the revolution was the creation of a representative government responsible to the will of the people.

It is largely due to this disdain for monarchy in government that we as Americans today enjoy many "freedoms" that are the envy of most other nations. And, while these freedoms can be good and beneficial in the secular realm, they can create a state of mind that is *deadly* in the spiritual realm. It seems that our nation has not been able to confine its disdain for monarchy in government to the secular realm only, and has sought freedom from God's sovereign rule.

Freedom from the autocracy of secular government may be gained in various ways ... freedom from the *wages of sin* can only be gained one way. We read in the eighth chapter of the Book of John;

To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?" Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. (John 8:31-36 NIV)

In this passage Jesus spoke of spiritual freedom in a way that some of the Jews did not understand.

The New King James translation renders John 8:31...

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.

One abides in the Word of Christ by making it the rule of his life. In other words, obedience to the Word is the same thing as abiding in the Word. This makes one a true disciple of Jesus and leads to genuine knowledge of the truth, which is God's Word (John 17:17). Jesus continued by explaining the meaning of true freedom. Specifically, one is free when sin no longer rules over him, and when the Word of Christ dominates his heart and life.

If there is a connection between secular and spiritual freedom, it could be said to be in the statement ... "One is free, not when he can do what he wishes to do, but, when he wishes to do, **and can do**, what he should do."

Jesus further stated that "everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin."

In His statement, "Every one ... is a slave of sin", the subject is qualified by *who commits sin*, or *he who is constantly doing sin*, which might be rendered *he who lives in sin*. Such a man is called a slave of sin. He is a slave, because he has been overcome and taken captive by his master, sin, and is unable to deliver himself from this bondage.

Our Lord paints a picture of a chained prisoner with the iron band around his leg, which is fastened to a chain which is cemented into the wall of a dungeon. He cannot break the chain. On the contrary, every sin he commits draws it tighter, until at last it crushes him completely.

These Jews regard themselves as free men, when in reality they were slaves without any freedom at all.

To this point, Jesus had been picturing them as slaves in chains, lacking all true freedom. Now ... changing the figure slightly ... he dwells upon another aspect of this condition of slavery.

A slave may enjoy the privileges of his master's house for a while, but not forever. At any moment he may be dismissed or sold. The Jews, who prided themselves upon their descent from Abraham, needed to bear this in mind. The old dispensation with its special privileges for Israel had ended. Abraham's true children will remain in his household and enjoy its privileges permanently, but Abraham's slaves (think of Hagar, Galatians 4:21-31) will be driven out. Only a son enjoys freedom. If therefore the Son of God makes them free, **they will be free indeed**.

This proposition was conditional, and it left the responsibility with them, but the action of making them free with Jesus!

The freedom given by Christ is the only real freedom ... it is freedom from slavery to sin, in contrast with the freedom of which the Jews were thinking ... and it is always freedom **plus**.

You see, when an accused man is declared not guilty, he is free. Likewise when a slave has been emancipated, he is free. But the judge or the emancipator does not, as a rule, adopt the freed individual as his own son. But when the Son makes a man free, he can rejoice in the glorious freedom of sonship.

And how does the Son make one free?

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5 NIV)

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. (2 Corinthians 3:17 NIV)

Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir. (Galatians 4:6-7 NIV)

So as we recognize the Fourth of July, have we asked ourselves whether we are truly free? ... free in the way that really matters. Are our lives free from the spiritual ravages of sin?

We are, if we have given our lives to Christ, and as humble and obedient servants we abide in His Word. For it is in this way only will we find freedom!

Hear the words of the Apostle Paul...

Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. (Romans 6:16-18 NIV)

Our Prayer List...

For Spiritual Responsiveness – Those studying with us in the Thursday morning Perkin's Study ... All of our wayward members

For Physical Healing – Ellen Jinks ... Mary Jinks ... Marleen Jinks Lee Redd ... Bill Duryea's Parents ... Mary Jinks ... Kathy Syracuse (Fair Lawn)

For Wisdom and Good Judgment – The Leaders of our congregation ... the leaders of our nation

For God's Care and Good Providence – Our young people away at college ... Our young people here at Washington ... our members who are traveling ... the men and women in military service ... our congregation ... the Evangelist and Teachers We Help Support

EVENTS AND NOTES

- ▲ OUR NEXT PERKIN'S THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY WILL BE JANUARY 14TH AT 10AM. ALL ARE WELCOME TO PARTICIPATE WHENEVER YOU CAN ... MORE IMPORTANTLY INVITE THOSE WHO MAYBE SEEKING JESUS! [HTTP://WWW.MEETUP.COM/THURSDAY-MORNING-BIBLE-STUDY-AT-PERKINS-IN-PHILLIPSBURG-NJ](http://www.meetup.com/Thursday-Morning-Bible-Study-at-Perkins-in-Phillipsburg-NJ) ... CHECK IT OUT!