

Liberty or Liberation

Independence Day, a time to celebrate freedom, a liberation that did not come easy or without a great price. In order for the people of America to be able to celebrate this special day, there were those who paid dearly; it cost them their lives. The liberation of a country and its people; how sweet it is! But I wonder; did you know that even though the country was liberated, the people are still enslaved by a powerful master? That is right - they are! And who is that powerful master you may ask?

The Bible calls it a sin nature, something everyone is born with; it is that part of a person that makes them do things that are wrong, bad, and against God. The sin nature abides in the heart of a person and from there come the issues of life. It is what causes a person to lie, steal, swear, drink, murder, do drugs, beat their wife and children, commit fornication and adultery, and so much more. “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:” {Mt 15:19} “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.” {Mark 7:21-23}. “For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.” {Romans 7:14-20}

People are held captive by this powerful master and they do not even know it. The all powerful master will eventually be the destruction of a person for there is a price to pay and it has eternal consequences. The sin nature is like leprosy; it always destroys {2 K 5:1-14}. Leprosy in the Bible is often referred to as a type of sin:

- {a} It begins small - Lev. 13:2-3; 1 Cor. 5:6
- {b} It causes separation - Num. 5:2-4; Isa. 59:2
- {c} It is contagious - Pr. 4:14-15; Eph. 5:11
- {d} It is incurable - Jer. 13:23
- {e} It is unclean - Isa. 1:4-6;
Luke 17:11-19
- {f} It proves fatal - Ro. 6:23; 5:12

The eternal consequence of sin is eternal damnation in the place the Bible calls Hell. **“For the wages of sin is death;”** {Rom. 6:23a}

But guess what - it does **not** have to end that way because God has made a way of escape from it. It can be healed by Jesus Christ - Heb. 9:22; 1 Jn. 1:7

A. God offers: “but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” {Rom. 6:23b}

B. God provides: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” {John 3:16}

C. God declares: “For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” {John 3:17}

D. God warns: “He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” (John 3:18)

The answer to this is found in the Bible, God's Word; this is **NOT** what a man says but what God says and that is important to understand.

A. You **must** be born again (saved) “. . . “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” {John 3:5}

B. You **must** have conviction for sin which comes from the Holy Spirit “And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me;” {John 16:8-9}

C. You **must** repent “For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.” {2 Cor. 7:10} It is **NOT** enough to just be sorry for getting caught (little children do this); it is a matter of being so sorry and realizing that it is wrong and never wanting to do it again. It means to turn away from it; to have such a change of mind (heart) that leads to a change of action; living right according to God's Word.

D. You **must** have faith and take God at His Word “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” {John 6:37} It's like having the simple faith of a child.

E. You **must** be forgiven “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” {1 John 1:7-9}

F. You are never rejected “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” {John 6:37} A person who truly repents and come to Jesus for salvation is **never** rejected; that person is always received and forgiven.

When a person repents of their sin and put their faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, God says in His Word that this person is now a new person: “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” {2 Cor. 5:17}, that they have a new heart, “Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.” {2 Cor. 1:22} (The heart is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit and the Lord), and that the body becomes a new temple “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?” {1 Cor. 6:19}.

It is possible for you to celebrate the American Independence Day; that special day when everyone celebrates and enjoys the country's liberation and still be enslaved by the sin nature. It is more important to have your soul liberated and forgiven by Jesus Christ and no matter what ever happens to this great country of America, you will still be a free person - free in Jesus Christ!

-Richard A. Ciarrocca