

STAND FAST IN THE LIBERTY!

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JULY 4, 1776

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**Signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776,
by Thomas Jefferson, Ben Franklin, John Adams, & Others**



Source: <https://www.familysearch.org/en/blog/why-do-we-celebrate-4th-of-july>

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JULY 4

On **July 4, 1776**, the United States adopted the Declaration of Independence, announcing the political separation and **LIBERTY** of the 13 American colonies from the transatlantic rule of Great Britain.

This year on July 4 is the 246th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. In **2026** the **250th** Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence will be celebrated.

The **FIRST** annual celebration of July 4 was held in the original cradle of American independence, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1777!

In 1870, the United States Congress declared the 4th of July as a Federal holiday.

Today, the United States is seen as a bastion of **freedom** around the world!

Statue of Liberty



Source: <https://www.nps.gov/stli/index.htm>

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glow world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses **yearning to breathe free**,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

--*Emma Lazarus*, Nov. 02, 1883

GALATIANS:

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THE MANIFESTO OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

The Christian faith originated from the Jews according to the Abrahamic promise (Genesis 17:7): **Land, descendants, blessing, and redemption.**

“If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.” (Gal. 3:29)

The Jewish Christians insisted on “works”, including circumcision, kosher food, dress codes, and other religious rules they sought to impose on other Christians.

(Peter's vision of the 'unclean' in Acts 10: 9-15; Paul's “One in Christ” doctrine (Gal. 3:28)

The Apostle Paul admonishes these “Judaizers” by preaching that Christ has set us free from all forms of bondage, including traditional religious rituals for salvation.

“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” (John 8:36)

The message of the Book of Galatians is that believers are justified by FAITH in the Lord Jesus Christ and are not to be enslaved by the shackles of religious traditions.

“Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. 5:1); “For by Grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Eph. 2: 8-9)

STAND FAST!

Stand fast therefore in the liberty
wherewith Christ hath made us
free, and be not *entangled again*
with the yoke of bondage.

(Galatians 5:1)

STAND FAST!

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Phalanx of Roman soldiers exhorting fellow-soldiers in the frontline to "Stand Fast"



Source: <https://spartacus-educational.com/ROMmilitary.htm>

BONDAGE OF MAN

As humans, we experience many layers of bondage:

- Warfare and conquest have enslaved peoples.
- Within society, class and caste hierarchies abound.
- Religious superiority often encourages persecution.
- Oppressive regimes crush liberty through brute force.
- **Everyone is born in slavery to congenital sin** (Rom. 3:23).

FREEDOM IN CHRIST

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Only the Lord Jesus Christ can truly make us free:

- “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you **free**.” (John 8:32)
- “...Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is **liberty**.” (2 Cor. 3:17)
- “If the Son therefore shall make you **free**, ye shall be **free** indeed.” (John 8:36)
- “For the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made me **free** from the law of sin and death.” (Romans 8:2)

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(Galatians 5:1)

WE SQUANDER OUR LIBERTY IN CHRIST WHEN OUR....

- Liberty in Christ is **UNUSED**
- Liberty in Christ is **MISUSED**
- Liberty in Christ is **ABUSED**

LIBERTY UNUSED

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Our Liberty in Christ is **UNUSED** when we:

- **DO NOT** exercise the power of the **Holy Spirit** in our bodies and lives.
 - “...the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (1 Cor. 3:16)
 - “...Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is **liberty**.” (2 Cor. 3:17)
- **FAIL** to be bold witnesses for Christ at every opportunity.
 - “**Freely** ye have received, **freely** give.” (Matt. 10:18; 2 Tim. 4:2)
- **CHOOSE** not to swim against the sinful and corrupt values of the world.
 - “Be not conformed to this world: but be ye **transformed**.” (Rom. 12:2)
 - “I **press** toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 3: 14)

LIBERTY MISUSED

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Our Liberty in Christ is **MISUSED** when we practice:

- **ENVY:** “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other(s) better than themselves.” (Phil. 2:3)
- **SELFISHNESS:** “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.” (Phil. 2:4)
- **MALICE:** “As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.” (1 Peter 2:16)
- **CARNALITY:** “Use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh; but by love serve one another.” (Gal. 5:13)

LIBERTY ABUSED

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Our Liberty in Christ is **ABUSED** when we:

- Become **stumbling blocks** to the weak inside & outside the church.
“But take care that this **liberty** of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.” (1 Cor. 8:9)
- Use our liberty in Christ as a **covering for evil**.
“Act as **free** men, and do not use your **freedom** as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God.” (1 Pet. 2:16)
- **Consciously and persistently** practice sinful activities.
“Everyone who practices sin also practices **lawlessness**.” (1 John 3:4)

HOW SHOULD WE USE OUR LIBERTY IN CHRIST?

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- **SERVANTHOOD:** “For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty....by love **serve one another.**” (Gal. 5:13).
- **FRUIT-BEARING:** “But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your **fruit unto holiness**, and the end everlasting life.” (Rom. 6:22)
- **DISCIPLESHIP:** “But whoso looketh unto the perfect law of liberty, *and continueth therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a **doer of the work**, this man shall be blessed in his deed.” (James 1:25)
- **CRUCIFICTION OF SELF:** “I am **crucified with Christ**: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” (Gal. 2:20)
- **SACRIFICE:** “I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a **living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable unto God.” (Rom. 12:1)