

Religious Freedom

Speaking to the Constitutional Convention on June 28, 1787, Benjamin Franklin spoke these words: "I have lived, sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth—that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an entire empire can rise without His aid?"

God said: "Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? Yet my people have forgotten me days without number" (Jeremiah 2:32). We live in an age when more and more voices are being heard on every side in an effort to silence God—to quiet Him and make Him irrelevant to America's public life.

Far from following the advice of today's civil libertarians, our founding fathers on many occasions publicly called upon their nation to fall down on bended knees and give thanks to Almighty God.

In America we have been the undeserving recipients of God's most bountiful hand. Let us not become guilty of a most grievous sin—the sin of ingratitude. James wrote: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17).

Every generation is obligated to learn from the past mistakes of others. In a real sense, the former generations will weigh in on the outcome of their successors. Jesus said: "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee Bethsaida! For if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you" (Luke 10:13-14).

Religious freedom, while we still have it, is a privilege that so many people have not yet really learned to appreciate. For the person who is not a Christian, it is a squandered blessing. Some wrongly conclude that religious freedom is the freedom not to become a Christian. Technically, that's true. But the fact is, the principle of religious freedom is unnecessary if you do not want to become a Christian. You can be a slave and not become a Christian. Religious freedom really shines, however, when such freedom allows you to become a Christian and to become free of the bondage of sin and death (Romans 8:2). That is the true spirit of religious freedom.

Is that kind of freedom really working for you?

- Howell Ferguson, via *House to House*

"And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

Don't criticize the Bible — let the Bible criticize you.

News & Notes

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES: Worship, 10:30 a.m., 5:30 p.m., and Wednesday Bible Study, 7:00 p.m.

SUNDAY BIBLE CLASSES TO RESUME: Next Sunday, Dec. 5th, 9:30 a.m. for ALL ages.

FACE COVERINGS REQUIRED: For EVERYONE in ALL of our assemblies regardless of where seated.

SYMPATHY: To Nancy Hadley and family at the passing of her sister Linda Morgan. God bless and comfort Nancy at this difficult time.

WV CHRISTIAN PAPER: Today is the last day for new or renewal subscriptions. Group rate is \$8.00 per year (12 issues). Sign-up sheet on the table in the foyer. Give your subscription money to Rico or one of the Elders.

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY: Each Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. including next Tuesday, Nov. 30th which was inadvertently omitted from the November calendar.

MEN'S BREAKFAST: Next Saturday, Dec. 4th, 8:00 a.m. at EJ's.

PANTRY: Noodles.

PICTURE GALLERY OF PAST MEMBERS: Submit pictures (black and white or color) to David Malcomson.

PRAYERS REQUESTED: Dakota & Skyler Durbin (Iris Durbin's granddaughters). Jean Varrato-covid with ventilator (Jason Wright's aunt). Claudette Miller, 362 Arroyo Village Road, New Cumberland, WV 26047. Cards will be delivered to her in Weston. Bob Noland, 1180 CR 1356, Ashland, OH 44805.

SICK & SHUT-IN: **STONEWALL JACKSON HOSPITAL, WESTON, WV:** Claudette Miller. **AT HOME:** Willard Burdine-covid, Joe Rhodes-covid (son of Jenny), Melvin "Pete" Reed, Jim Hadley, Marilyn Miller, Randy Beagle, Barb DeLong, David McCoy, Marlene Evans, Russell Martin, Jean Haught (Skip's mother), Emma Rine, Rick Beck. **IN FLORIDA:** Ilene Rayl.

See God in Nature?

The voice of nature is important regarding the revelation of the will of God.

It can proclaim "God is," but not "God said." It can disclose the face of God but not the mind of God. Man may descend into the depths of the earth, walk the floors of the oceans, and set his foot on some distant planet, but the revelations of his journeys will not contain one word of God's will for his life. The world of nature has no knowledge of sin, Christ, Calvary, or redemption. Man may reach the world of nature, but only the Holy Spirit can reach the mind of God. That search has been made, and its results have been recorded in the Bible.

- Frank Chesser (via *House to House*)