

– Continued from page 1 –

eternal life in Jesus, one must, somewhat paradoxically, die first – that is, die to sin. *“We were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin”* (Romans 6:4-6).

Liberty is in Christ. As His ministry began, Jesus stood in the synagogue of Nazareth and read aloud from the prophet Isaiah: *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed”* (Luke 4:18). When His neighbors continued staring at Him after He sat down, Jesus told them, *“Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing”* (21). Christ is the one whom Isaiah foretold of, who would liberate those in captivity. He spoke similarly in Jerusalem, *“If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”* (John 8:31-32). His hearers failed to grasp His intent, replying, *“We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, ‘You will be made free?’”* (33). Not only did they not realize He spoke of spiritual bondage, but they overreacted, insisting 400 years of Egyptian enslavement never happened, nor, for that matter, 70 years of Babylonian and Persian captivity; they completely overlooked the fact they were then under Roman domination! The Teacher was patient, though, explaining, *“Whoever commits sin is a slave of sin”* (34). Freedom in Christ is freedom from sin. Emancipation from sin slavery is not freedom from bondage altogether, but the liberty to select a better Master. *“To whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness”* (Romans 6:16). A slave to righteousness has been liberated from the captivity of sin. *“Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty”* (2nd Corinthians 3:17).

Happiness is in Christ. The English word “happiness” is rooted in the word “happening,” and is thus circumstantial. The founders were intentional in the choice of this word for the Declaration inasmuch as the English philosopher John Locke had written of the inherent rights of “life, liberty, and property” – indicating a deliberate shift toward a

– Continued on page 3 –

THE NEW TESTAMENT CONCEALED

Perry Hall

On the sixth day, God created man. On the seventh, He rested. All this after on the first day, God said, *“Let there be light.”*

On the sixth day, God incarnate died as a man. On the seventh, He rested. After this, a great light appeared at the tomb as He who is the Light of the world walked out of death.

The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed; and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed.

– Continued from page 2 –

broader concept of personal fulfillment in America’s founding charter. Therefore, Americans are free to pursue circumstances of their own choosing. Some translations of Scripture do use the word “happy,” but the same Greek word is more often rendered as “blessed.” Thus, Jesus preached, *“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you”* (Matthew 5:3-12). Circumstances that would not be considered desirable in the world are, nonetheless, favored in Christ because of the pending reward. Similarly, He said, *“In Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world”* (John 16:33). There is much more than happiness in the Lord. There is present cheer because there is lasting peace, internal peace.

While Americans can be thankful for the unalienable Rights set forth in the Declaration of Independence, Christians everywhere can be thankful for the Life, Liberty, and Blessedness secured in Jesus the Lord. Those outside of Christ ought to contemplate what they are missing.

**"WHAT MUST I DO
TO BE SAVED?"**

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"THE ASSEMBLING OF
OURSELVES TOGETHER"**

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.

**"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN
ANY TRESPASS...
RESTORE SUCH A ONE"**

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN"

PROVERBS 25:11

"Never ruin an apology with an
excuse."

– Benjamin Franklin

GIVE ME THE BIBLE

KDNF 840AM

Sunday @ 9:00 a.m.

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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JULY 6TH, 2025

LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

Bryan Matthew Dockens

On July 4th, the United States of America celebrated Independence for the 249th year. Famous within the Declaration of Independence are the words: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." Thomas Jefferson was careful not to limit the unalienable Rights endowed by the Creator, but enumerated certain Rights among them as representative of the entirety: Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. Whether or not these Rights are enjoyed by all men under the "Governments instituted among Men," they are Rights bestowed by God through His Son, the Lord, Prince, and King over all – Jesus Christ.

Life is in Christ. John asserted, "God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life" (1st John 5:11-12). Eternal life provided in Christ is the only alternative to the death that sin brings. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:22-23). That death is not the death all men face when earthly life ends, but the second death, which is hell. "The lake which burns with fire and brimstone... is the second death" (Revelation 21:8). In order to escape the second death and receive – Continued on page 2 –

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