



July 2020 Newsletter



Are We the Land of the Free?

According to the Star-Spangled Banner, the United States is the “land of the free”. But is it? Just look back over the images we have seen in the news on TV and the internet over the last three months. First there was COVID-19. The images we saw were of people who did not appear to be enjoying freedom. There was national panic, with people all masked up and staying at home and to themselves. Their fear of the pandemic was tied to their fear of death. In fact, fear was holding them captive!

Then, due to a horrific event that was captured on video and went viral across our country and the world, we had the onslaught of protests, and rioting, and looting. From the action captured on video to the protests, rioting and looting; all gave evidence that we are not free, but rather are deeply enslaved to sin! I found it interesting that in defining what it meant for America to be the land of the free a gentleman stated it was because we are free to do whatever we wish. Boy, is that a lie of the devil!

The reality that we seek to instill in the men at Bridge Street Mission is that we are born in sin, and incapable of breaking out of its hold on us. **Hence, we are not free!** In doing whatever we wish, we are pleasing ourselves, which is based on the sin of pride and selfishness! Real freedom is to be out from under the yoke of sin and pleasing self - and free to please our Creator God! And that freedom can only come from Jesus, who destroyed the power of sin and death over us!

“Jesus answered, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.’” He was responding to a group of people who thought they were free, because they had never been enslaved to anyone. But then He would go on to tell them,

“So if the Son (referring to Himself) makes you free, you will be free indeed.” John 8:34,36

How can He say that? The reality is that He addressed both sin and death. We read in **Romans 3:23** that all of us have sinned and **Romans 6:23** that such sin earns us death. But then we read of Jesus’ love for us in **1 John 4:10**: *“This is real love—not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son [Jesus] as a sacrifice to take away our sin”—to set us free from slavery to sin!*

Earlier in **1 John** (chapter 3, verse 8), we read that “...*the one who practices sin is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.*” That meant Jesus had to address sin and death so we could have complete freedom!

In **Hebrews 2:14,15** we read that Jesus became flesh and blood, so that through His death He would render the devil powerless—he who had the power of death, in order to free us from slavery to the fear of death! Now that is FREEDOM indeed!

It is God’s desire that everyone avail themselves of this FREEDOM, as He offers it to everyone without reservation. It has been exciting to see several of the men here at our Sober Living Facility come to obtain and experience this freedom! We thank you for your investment, both prayerful and financial, that has resulted in God getting glory through changed lives, freed lives! Yes, we have men who are now experiencing real freedom!

In His Service—by His grace for His glory,

Todd Van Ryn

Executive Director

AT·A·GLANCE®

July 2020

All events begin at 6:00:

July 10: Movie Night. Free pizza, popcorn, & movie. This month’s movie - **Heritage Falls.**

July 17: Music Night. Free meal with special guest-- **Music For Christ Ministries-Jon Lokemoen.**

July 24: Prayer Night. Free light meal and prayer.

Weekly programs:

Free lunch is served weekdays from 12:00-1:00.

Celebrate Recovery meets every Thursday at 6:00. Free meal and class.

Special Financial Need: As part of our desire to help our guests gain skills that can give them opportunity for employment, we are working on offering a welding class to interested residents. We have arranged for an instructor, and we are raising \$5000 for equipment.

