

June 2009

Cyberspace News

Michigan News



Give Me Liberty Or...

Elder Charles Moore

As he tried to convince others to fight for our nation's freedom Patrick Henry proclaimed, "Is life so dear or peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God. I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!" These words resound with great meaning for us as Americans; especially at this time of year, when we celebrate our liberty as a nation.

For Patrick Henry there were only two options liberty or death. And in a very real sense, there are only two options available for human kind. You see, in the spiritual realm there are only two choices. The first choice is spiritual liberty. The second choice is spiritual death. All people everywhere will be placed in one of these two categories. They are either spiritually alive or spiritually dead. The good news is that God has opened the way to liberty for us all. This is the message of independence that the world so desperately needs to hear. It is good news

in a world filled with bad news. The good news is that Jesus Christ suffered death so we could enjoy life. He endured death so we could enjoy liberty.

The good news begins with talk about death. That seems like a strange place to begin. But we are not talking about the reality of death in general, but the specific death of a real Person. **"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."** (Romans 5: 8) The good news is about the death of Jesus. The Gospel teaches that Jesus gave His life *for us*, by dying in our place and for our benefit.

There are three questions that we may answer by looking at His life that was given for us. The first question is "Why?" Why did Jesus give His life for us? He gave His life because He loves us and the cross demonstrates that

magnitude of the love God has for us.

The second question is "When?" When did Jesus give His life for us? Now we are not talking about a date and time but our condition. The answer is found in Romans 5:8 and 10. When did Jesus give His life for us? **8. While we were still sinners... 10. ... while we were God's enemies.** In other words, Jesus' love is so broad that it reaches even to His enemies. That was our position. And the fact that Jesus gave His life for us while we were God's enemies indicates the unlimited nature of His love.

The final question is "How?" How did Jesus give His life for us? **"Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God."** (Romans 5: 9) When we talk and sing about the blood of Christ, we are not trying to be ghoulish or gross. The blood of Christ symbolizes His life poured out to save us from the wrath of God. It reminds us that He gave everything, He gave His life. Jesus' salvation may be free to us but it cost God dearly. Our salvation cost God the death of His Son and He did it because He loves us.

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Not only does the Gospel teach that Jesus gave His life for us, it also teaches that Jesus gives His life *to us*. We are told, **"For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."** (Romans 5:10)

Jesus not only died but He rose again. He was not simply a martyr. He did not merely die for a cause. He did not simply die to give us an example of sacrificial love. He rose again in order to do a powerful work in our lives. Jesus lives in order to live in us! His life becomes our life. He not only dismisses the charges against us, He takes up His residence in us in order to empower us to live our lives in new ways.

This is what the Bible refers to as being **saved**. You see, Christ lives in order to save us completely. Salvation, you see, is an ongoing process that begins when we are **reconciled to him**, and continues until we are fully saved. Don't misunderstand this. I am not saying that you may not stay saved once you are saved. We are not talking about the security of your salvation, only the process. You see, there are three stages of salvation. Let's look at them briefly.

The first stage is justification. What happens when we are justified? Through justification we are liberated from the penalty of sin. When we are justified, our sinful record is cleared. All charges against us are dropped. We are forgiven. The righteousness of Christ is credited to our account. The penalty of sin is satisfied. Justification puts us on the road for the other two stages.

The second stage of salvation is sanctification. Sanctification is the stage where God begins to work in our lives, to change the kind of people we are here on this earth. Through sanctification we are liberated from the power of sin. As we seek to live in obedience to God and His Word, we are transformed into people who act more and more like Jesus. The power of sin over our lives is broken as this new life begins to emerge. And the more closely we follow Jesus, the less influence sin has over us.

The third stage of salvation is glorification. Glorification is something we have to look forward to in the future. The Bible teaches that one day we will be liberated from presence of sin. It is the day when Jesus Christ returns to bring all of history to a conclusion.

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June raced in and out so fast that I am still trying to catch it. School was getting out one day and camp starting the next. We all arrived safely at camp and dived in to enjoy each activity. My area is cooking so camp consists of 16 meals and each one is ticked off until we are through and packing to go home. We had good help this year as always and it kept me hopping to keep all of the kitchen folk busy. We try to prepare the food in the morning and then take about 3 hours in the afternoon for a much needed nap or swim. Our church's heartfelt thanks go out to each of you—we could not get along without any one of you! Quite a few of our staff are former campers and we love having them there. One such staffer is Trent Begeman, who headed up KP and did a terrific job. You taught him well, Ruth! (Tommy Begeman, 9 years old, was overheard saying "I like that big guy!")

As usual we had our outlying folks in abundance helping us in every activity to keep camp going. I cannot tell you how much of a miracle camp is. Each year we have the same dilemmas as we do not know how many campers we will have, how much staff we will have and if every area of camp's jobs is filled until noon of the first day of camp. This can be hard on Director Tim Begeman and Secretary Diane. Campers start arriving at 2:00 and by supertime, we begin camp! The food is prepared also without knowing exact numbers in advance, and God surely takes over in that department. We had very few leftovers and yet everyone had plenty! We fed about 140 people per meal! There are some contests during the week—who can eat the most pancakes? The most hotdogs? The most bowls of potato soup? These are between campers and we find out the results by rumor.

Ruth Charles missed camp for the first time in the camp's 59 years of existence. David and Ruth could not get up from Florida in time this year as they had some commitments there with doctors. We missed you, Ruth, but your influence was there. You have surely paid your dues, thanks once more for all those years of service to both you and David. Camp is a big tribute to the organization back in the early 1950's. David was on that early committee who dreamed it up and started this enormous undertaking and wonderful outreach.

That is all for this month, I just want to give all the praise to God for his miraculous leading and protection during 59 years of youth camp. Praise the Lord!

Michigan Report

Aurine Moore

Ashley Begeman's graduation from Ida High School was celebrated with a party at Mike and Gemma Begeman's the following Sunday. She is working for Subway until she starts school at Tiffin University in Ohio, where she will also play volleyball. Congratulations Ashley!

Charlie and I attended the Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries' 100th anniversary dinner at the Detroit Athletic Club and were privileged to be accompanied by guests Dale and Geneva Begeman and Dave and Terrie Fedor. I was shocked that at the dinner where I was also named 'employee of the century' oops 'employee of the year'.

Youth camp was a delight this year. The work of camp begins well in advance. Diane Begeman reported how much she enjoyed calling staff references of people she doesn't already know, such as Jeff Begeman's former co-worker, now in Maryland, whose wedding they recently attended. This year, Kathy Smeltzer organized folks to loan their 'easy to read' spare Bibles for the week for campers to use in Bible study classes.

We were happy to have 85 campers this summer, our theme was "Objects that Talk" about the gospel. These included a light, food, tools for building a house, animals, and clothing. Lloyd Smith visibly illustrated these with his morning devotion presentations as a miner, chef, construction worker, shepherd and wearer of the strangest "This will satisfy Christians of ANY persuasion" outfit. Pastor Moore gave an altar call and it was wonderful to see those who came forward to commit and recommit their lives to Jesus. The

camp wrap up meeting gave a wonderful review of songs and lessons led by teachers Kathy Smeltzer, Kay Nevil, Rob Vaughn, Doug Vaughn and Joe Smeltzer. Our very own Tommy Begeman was voted camper of the year and Alyssa Riddle was voted counselor of the year.

The following week's service was a wonderful and eventful Sabbath service. Branden Carothers, who had accepted the altar call invitation at youth camp, was baptized and also asked for and received the right hand of fellowship into our local church. Then, daughters Klohie and Zohlie, were dedicated by him and Jamie. The service ended with communion, all on the same day!

Aside from all of these scheduled church happenings, life went on with interesting things. Marshalla and Jamesha Goins took time out for Jamesha's 5 kilometer race. She finished and it was a victorious experience. Nate and Joel Valentine travelled together to hear the Oakridge Boys at Renfro Valley. Gabe Vargas accepted the Variety Time challenge and played "When the Saints Go Marching In" and "Swing Low Sweet Chariot" on his saxophone. Marcia Moore had a lot of illness this month - including an enlarged pancreas and breathing problems but she made it to church yet again. Diane Begeman has been watching Book TV with husband Tim and gave us an update on a new book about Harry Truman. Carrie Smeltzer has taken her boards and is very noticeably relaxed! We're glad she is able to take a little time out before starting her internship.

Until next month, may God be with you and you with God.

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That is when we will be changed, as the Bible tells us, in the twinkling of an eye. Our weak, scarred mortal body will be exchanged for an immortal one. We will be glorified and that is when we will finally comprehend the fullness of what has been done for us. That is when we will be totally saved. Of course, the good news is that God has begun this work in us, He will never quit until it is fully accomplished.

The price of freedom has always been death. Patriots won our nation's freedom by giving their lives to secure it. Many over the years have given their lives to preserve it. Jesus died so we could live and not die. True liberty can only be found in Jesus but there's more to follow.

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Bad Facts

These responses actually appeared on real science tests. All were marked wrong:

"The pistol of a flower is its only protection against insects."

"Mushrooms always grow in damp places and so they look like umbrellas."

"H₂O is hot water, and CO₂ is cold water."

"To collect fumes of sulfur, hold a deacon over a flame in a test tube."

"Three kinds of blood vessels are arteries, vanes and caterpillars."

"To remove dust from the eye, pull the eye down over the nose."

"The alimentary canal is located in the northern part of Indiana."