

July 05, 2009

Communion and Collection, Sunday 2nd Service

This weekend we celebrated America's Independence and the freedom we enjoy because of it – freedom so significant and so real that we can easily take it for granted... religious freedom, freedom to assemble, freedom of speech... great personal liberty.

We know though that this freedom is not free. It comes with a high price, with significant sacrifice, paid for with blood. In the movie, ***Saving Private Ryan***, multiple people sacrificed so that one could escape death and live. ***You are*** Private Ryan.

Many people have given their lives, have shed their blood, and gone through hell so you could enjoy physical freedom and independence. More importantly, Jesus did this for *you* so that you could escape death, enjoy spiritual freedom, and have **LIFE!**

We can honor the sacrifice of those who fought for us, those who shed blood, those who gave their lives, the **ONE** who gave up Heaven. We can honor that sacrifice, like Private Ryan, by embracing and celebrating our freedom – by **LIVING.**

Prayer for the bread

O Great and Holy Father in Heaven,
We praise you for your love, your mercy, your grace.
We thank you for your rich and wondrous blessing that you lavish on us.
Thank you, thank you for the blessing of freedom in this great country!
Thank you, thank you for Jesus,
for the freedom and **LIFE** you have given us in Christ!!
Thank you for this bread that represents Christ,
the Bread of Life that was broken for us, sacrificed for us, paid for us,
so that we may escape death and enjoy life.

Prayer for the wine

Holy and wondrous God of Heaven,
You are awesome and amazing.
We come to you again exercising the privilege of prayer,
the freedom you have given us to communicate with the Creator of the universe.
We thank you for this cup that represents the blood that was shed,
the price that was paid, the hell that was endured, the battle that was won, the
victory that grants us freedom and life.
Help us to always remember and honor this gift.

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Collection

I Timothy 6:17 : “Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God who richly provides us with everything **for our enjoyment.**”

For years I missed those last three word: “**for our enjoyment.**”

Again, god is giving us the gift of freedom and life. To honor Him, we need to **LIVE**, to enjoy the live and freedom he has lavished on us, to *shine*.

In one of John Eldridge's books there is a quote, “Don't do what you think the world needs, do what makes you come alive because the world needs people who are alive.”

When you **LIVE**, when you are *alive*, it is a *gift* to those around you.

Now we have an opportunity to financially support the sharing of this freedom, of this *life*.

GIVE by **LIVING**. **LIVE** by **GIVING**.

Prayer for the collection

O Mighty Jehovah,
Giver of all good things, of life, of freedom, of hope and love:
Thank you for these riches and for this opportunity now
to show gratitude and love for you and love for those around us
by giving back, by sharing some of the wealth you have given us.
Help us always honor you above the blessings you give us.