

November 13, 2020

Dear Members and Friends,

What a time of uncertainty that we are living in right now, especially when focusing on the current elections in the United States. But this has an overall effect on the world scene, according to biblical prophecy. That which is going on in the US at this moment is utter chaos, confusion, corruption, and to think that anything remarkably good will come out of these elections, whoever the next president is going to be, is wishful thinking filled with desperate hope. The core values which this country once put down on paper 225 years ago seem nonexistent today. A very important document was signed in the US which stated this:

"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."

These are the famous memorable words that Thomas Jefferson laid down back in 1776 as the core values of the United States of America in what is known as the Declaration of Independence. They still stand at the head of the US Code to this day.

However, the present day does not seem to harmonize with this statement, as we see immorality all around us. This comes as no surprise, as this has been going on for many, many years, but we see how things are getting worse—not just here, but the whole world is affected. Just imagine how the world will react if Donald Trump is in fact re-elected, even after Joe Biden has now been declared to have won? And even if this is the case, to think that Mr. Trump would be out of the picture for the future is very unlikely. Ultimate damage for this nation has not been completed yet. Too many factors are still prophesied to take place which haven't occurred yet on the world scene.

What used to be the foundation of the United States is not the case anymore. Where in fact is equality, where is freedom? When focusing on God's people, is there really a freedom of religion anymore, or freedom of speech, or freedom to assemble without the "fear of offending" someone, especially in light of the coronavirus debacle? It is remarkable that God has created all of us equally—meaning that we all have the ability and the same choice to follow Him and His Way of Life. God has called out specific people at this time, like you and me within the Church of God, with the special responsibility of proclaiming the Truth, but the time will come when every single person will ultimately have the chance to know and understand what we are experiencing now.

When it comes to what we believe in, no one should be able to take that away from us, as long as we are determined, making sure that our choices are the correct ones. This country still enjoys the freedom of religion, but the way things are going, that may very well not be the case anymore for long, as the Book of Revelation shows. We also read in 2 Peter 2:18-22 how false teachers will deceive many people, and this is something that we in the Church need to be cautious about as well.

As quoted above, three specific words are mentioned in the Declaration of Independence, and God talks about the same specific words that we should abide by and experience, namely Life, Liberty and Happiness. God tells us in 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 that the Lord is the Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

God explains to us what it is that we need to be doing to draw closer to Him in order to gain our

freedom. It is quite simple but difficult to do by human standards. Notice what Christ said in John 8:32-36: "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' They answered Him, 'We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, "You will be made free?'" Jesus answered them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.'"

Laws change in this world. Since the Declaration was written, so many things have happened in the meantime. Times are not getting any better, as more and more laws are created or changed that affect society, which is certainly not in accordance with God's spiritual laws or the Way that He operates. God's spiritual Law has been the same then, now and will continue to be so in the future. "But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does" (James 1:25). Do we want to be part of this perfect Law?

Christ has to make us free through the repentance that God the Father offers us. When we sin, we are not free but slaves to sin. However, one may think that we are also slaves when we submit to God and His Way. But there is a big difference. Being a "slave of sin" does not bring forth good fruit, and it will lead to death. Being "slaves to righteousness" brings everlasting life. Which one do we choose? If we want to have our freedom, we must obey God (compare Romans 6:16-19). And only when Jesus Christ returns to establish His Kingdom here on earth will we finally experience TRUE freedom and liberty.

We can say that we have signed our very own Declaration of Independence, but not of this world. We have devoted our lives to God; we look to divine protection and our lives are in God's hands, for our citizenship is not of this world (Philippians 3:17-21).

God asks us to choose life and reject death (Deuteronomy 30:15-16, 19-20). The life that God is offering us is everlasting life (Matthew 19:17). It requires that we keep His commandments.

This, in turn, leads to true happiness. Proverbs 29:18 says, "...happy is he who keeps the law." In John 13:17, Christ confirms that we are happy when we do the right things (*Authorized Version*). And Psalm 144:15 says that "happy are the people whose God is the LORD!"

When Thomas Jefferson wrote about Life, Liberty and Happiness, he had our physical condition in mind. God is using the same words but He is not just referring to our physical life, but also, and more importantly, to our eternal existence. This is the most vital aspect we need to consider, for whatever happens in the near future, let us continue to have God guide and direct what we need to be focusing on. Let us not make the mistake of falling into a false sense of security, for if we get sidetracked, we could become vulnerable. This is exactly what Satan wants to happen to God's people—to catch us off guard like a thief in the night.

Let us continue to be vigilant with ALL our faith in God, and we shall see what will happen next.

In God's service and with Christian love,



Michael Link