



SHIELD OF FAITH

"Take Up the Shield of Faith" - Paul

Monday September 16, 2019

Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. — 2 Corinthians 3:17

There is Liberty

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God was very good to us. I left Mt. Airy on Wednesday of last week about midday. I was sick with the flu. I drove until 4:30 in the afternoon and got a Motel 6. Slept through the night and felt better in the morning. Continued the trip at 9 AM and made it to Maine at 10 that night.

God met with us in Maine. We were able to keep all our commitments while there, and pulled back into the driveway in Mt. Airy at 8 PM Saturday night. I spent most waking hours driving. Maine is a long way from North Carolina!

We were blessed to make it all the way on Saturday. The rental car that we used for a portion of the trip experienced a flat tire at 4:30 Saturday morning on the interstate in Massachusetts. A problem that could have significantly delayed us became just a 90 minute stop along the side of the road thanks to George the AAA guy. Thank you Jesus.

We live in a free country. We can travel our roadways unmolested by roadblocks and the constant threat of being asked for papers or searched. Why is that?

A Christian consensus respecting what it means to be a good citizen remains in place. It is weakening, but it is still active. Our national pledge is "In God We Trust." Politicians make their pledge to be loyal to the nation on a Christian Bible. Christianity defines who God is for American citizenship.

But this is only true for the common people. And it is true in the background, not in the foreground of their thinking. We take it for granted.

The consequences of this adjustment in our thinking are starting to show. The adjustment has come over decades.

Our verse above is an example. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty." Paul wasn't talking about political or religious liberties in that verse. He was talking about the freedom to choose righteousness. The Spirit of the Lord causes our hearts to know the LIBERTY in God's Law. The veil that covered the face of Moses is removed and we discover the liberty that can only be found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

This is not liberty to sin. It is Godliness with contentment. Paul writes in the verses leading up to our verse, "For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory."

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Our Christian constitutional republic created a unique social order that aspired to loose the liberties of righteousness without the heavy hand of government or the law. Christianity would not be imposed from above. Order would emerge from the righteous conduct of the people. The Federal Government would not operate a Church, nor would it interfere in religious matters. That would be left to the States.

But underlying this idea of a United States of America was a Christian consensus on what is right and what is wrong. For the nation to have any unity at all it would have to build on what Christianity created in the Europe from which the American colonists came. America rejected the religion of the pagan Indians they encountered when they arrived. They had no interest in their tribal social and religious order. They wanted to build on the English common law system and Christianity that worked so well in Europe.

In the late 18th century we threw off the idea of a monarchy and moved ahead with a written constitution. The states all created their own constitutions. Many states acknowledged God in their constitutions, and some elevated a Christian denomination.

Christian ideas defining good and evil created a unified social order respecting contracts, intellectual and real property rights, sexuality and family life. This order was nurtured and respected from the bottom up until World War II. After that the Christian consensus started to disintegrate. The idea of liberty was untethered from God and it was personalized. Every American was taught that individual liberty meant smoking pot and having unrestrained sex. If it feels good do it.

God and liberty got a divorce. And now we're starting to live with the consequences — a Godless law that condemns, that is full of judgment from the top down. If the people don't choose goodness on their own then there is only one alternative. Order must be imposed from above.

The philosophies of the 18th and 19th centuries are bearing their rotten fruit. One of the greatest philosophers of that period, Friedrich Nietzsche, coined the phrase that made it to the front page of TIME magazine in the twentieth century — God is Dead.

Indeed He is now dead in our social order. It does appear, however, that a resurrection of a kind is underway. I am observing that a characteristic of the nationalist populist rising in the West is a respect for the history and traditions of our civilization. Along with that interest is a fresh respect for religion — especially Christianity. The globalist utopians are not giving up without a fight, but they do appear to be losing.

We serve the God of the resurrection. Jesus Christ was killed. He was God. He rose from the dead to give all men who turn to him new and eternal Life. It may be that Americans will turn back to him, and that our Christian constitutional republic can be revitalized.

Regardless, Satan doesn't get to win in the end. God wins. God is always working through every event. Give your heart to God and you will find peace. You will discover true liberty.

Amen.