



THE VISITOR

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Glorious Freedom

*It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.
Galatians 5:1*

Romans 8:18-21

In Romans 8, Paul uses the phrase "the freedom and glory of the children of God" to refer to both the present reality of God's children and a future in which hope becomes realized and suffering is only a distant memory. This glorious freedom is based on our relationship to our Father God as his children.

The opportunity of being God's child, as opposed to being a servant or slave, is an invitation to a life of freedom. God's forgiven children are free from the condemnation of sin (Romans 8:1-2). The power of canceled sin means that hell no longer has a claim on our soul. We are free from sin and its eternal condemnation.

We are free from slavery to sin as well, free to serve God joyfully. Complete freedom is the ability to do whatever we want to do. This freedom occurs when our hearts have been so changed by God that we follow the Holy Spirit and actually desire to do what pleases the Father. Genuine freedom involves doing what we were designed to do, being who we were created to be.

The wonderful combination of freedom and glory is the norm for believers who have experienced the radical forgiveness of grace through Christ and are eager to serve together with fellow sons and daughters of God in the Father's kingdom.

Prayer

We praise you, O God, for the redemption and freedom of our souls. Help us to use our freedom to be Christlike in serving you and others.

In Jesus' name.
Amen

**Church Office Closed on Monday,
July 5th** in observance of
Independence Day

Communion Service
Sunday, July 4th

Dear Konnoak Baptist Church Family,
I have now served on staff, along beside you, for 2.5 years as Minister of Pastoral Care. Due to circumstances, I will be moving from my home in Kernersville to be near my son who lives in Bessemer City. **My last day of service to Konnoak will be on Wednesday, August 11, 2021.**

Thank you for your love, faithfulness and prayers!
Dennis Hester

Dear Konnoak Church,
I have entered a season of change and the Holy Spirit has made clear that my assignment with you all is complete. I am entering a sabbatical where I will be spending time with the Lord, listening for my next steps and His calling. I submit my resignation with mixed emotions and deeply saddened to conclude this chapter in my life. **My last Sunday will be July 11th, 2021.**

Sincerely, Alex

Happy Birthday

July Babies!

7/13 - Taylor Maddry
7/17 - Betty Osborne
7/27 - Bill Beck
7/30 - Herman Cruz

**CLASS OF
2021**

Congratulations to **Samantha Medley** upon graduating from Walkertown High School. Samantha will be attending Appalachian State University in the fall.

Budget Reports	
June	July
Tithes & Offerings = \$7,505.00	Tithes & Offerings = \$6,682.00
Expenses = \$7,354.57	Expenses = \$9,501.63

Beloved,

John 8:36 Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

We prepare ourselves to celebrate the highest holy day in our nation's calendar -- the 4th of July. It is a day when collectively we can reflect upon and memorialize the ongoing fight to expand freedom's call to all of the Creator's children. For some groups there are many battles left to fight -- but the 4th gives us the opportunity to celebrate the strides that have been made and look forward to the hopeful expectation of more. Never before in history has a people had the luxury that we are afforded to self determination, liberty, and individual rights. And for this we give thanks.

However, secular, political freedom is quite different from spiritual freedom. When Christ died on the cross He purchased our freedom from sin. We who were once slaves to satan and the flesh have been redeemed. But our freedom is not the opportunity to make decisions for ourselves, to live as we deem fit, to pursue individual goals. In fact, the freedom that Christ affords is the freedom from sinfulness through the slavery to grace. Many times in his letters, Paul reminds the saints that their master is the Lord Jesus. And that the choice they have is to either follow His orders, His commands, His will -- or be in sin. What a difficult conundrum -- we celebrate our freedom in Christ -- but that freedom is slavery to the gospel. Contemplate this month your servitude to Christ and whether you are experiencing the freedom He affords to do His will.

Alex

A Time of Celebration

Please join us on Sunday, July 11th after the morning service to celebrate the service of Alex Stryker here at Konnoak as we wish him a fond farewell.

This will be a hotdog fellowship and the church members are ask to supply desserts.

Devotional

Four Things the Bible Says About Freedom

1. People have been searching for it for thousands of years.

The quest for freedom is a theme found throughout the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. Just three chapters into the story of God's creation, humanity gave up its freedom by choosing to rebel against God. From that time forward, the perfect freedom God created in the Garden of Eden was gone, and the long-term effects were both physical and spiritual.

The Old Testament of the Bible records how God's people lost their physical freedom time and again as various empires overtook them (most notably the Egyptians, as recorded in the book of Exodus). The loss of physical freedom was often tied to spiritual disobedience like worshiping false gods. But time and again, the one true God forgave His people and rescued them. When God freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, He was foreshadowing the arrival of Jesus Christ, who came to free humanity from sin - the spiritual slavery that leads to death.

Today, many people are living in spiritual slavery without realizing it. They chase false gods of money, success, personal comfort and romantic love - only to realize they still have an emptiness that can't be filled by any of those things.

2. God's answer to our loss of freedom has always been Jesus Christ.

When Jesus began his short period of ministry on the earth, He announced He was the One that God's people had been waiting for since the fall of humanity. He did this by reading a particular passage from the book of Isaiah - a passage his listener's knew was referring to the Messiah, or the Savior of the world.

The words had been written hundreds of years earlier and spoke of a new freedom that was coming in the future. When Jesus stood up to read, He was saying the future had arrived. Liberty would come through Him.

*"And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim **liberty** to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at **liberty** those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.'*

And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:17-21, emphasis added).

3. Jesus came to free us from death, sin and anything that enslaves us.

The core message of the Christian faith - the Gospel - is that Jesus Christ rescues us from the slavery of sin and offers true freedom in this life and beyond.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

The Good News - the best news ever - is that faith in Jesus frees us from the death we deserve for sinning against God. It frees us from the punishment that would be inflicted upon us at the end of our lives for the evil things we've thought and done. While Christ followers still battle sin, they are no longer slaves to it. Through the power of Christ, His people can be set free from the bondage of greed, vanity, pride, addictions, abusive behavior, gluttony, selfishness - and any other sin under the sun. Here's what Jesus said about the freedom He offers:

"If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:31-32).

"Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever, the Son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free you will be free indeed" (John 8:34-36).

4. God gives us freedom to choose our own path.

God created human beings, not robots. We don't have to accept the freedom He offers us through Jesus Christ. He gives each person the free will to accept or reject His salvation. But the Bible warns that hell is a real place where real people end up when they knowingly reject the truth.

Likewise, those who choose Christ are not forced to obey Him at every turn. But God makes it clear: the best life is one that's devoted to honoring Him. As the Apostle Paul explained to some of the first Christians:

"All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. 'All things are lawful for me,' but I will not be dominated by anything" (1 Corinthians 6:12).

"For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another" (Galatians 5:13).

Final thoughts on freedom

From cover to cover, God's Word points to freedom in Christ. And God doesn't leave us wondering how to grab hold of the freedom He offers. It starts with acknowledging our brokenness - and admitting we are slaves to sin. And it ends with choosing Jesus and following Him daily. He can break the bonds of slavery and lead us to true freedom, now and forever.

Choose Jesus today, and find out what true freedom feels like.

Moses Word Search

E K A N S A M U G N N I Q R P
T N E M D N A M M O C S M E R
F I R S T B O R N I D R I V E
S S E N K R A D D T O A R O D
S H E P H E R D P C O E A S A
M I R I A M Y T L E L L C S E
H O A R A H P A A T B I L A L
N O R A A Y C E G O D T E P C
U V O G G C Y S U R S E S O M
P N R E S L A V E P F L I E S

**AARON
BLOOD
COMMANDMENT
DARKNESS
EGYPT
FIRSTBORN
FLIES
ISRAELITE
LEADER
MIRACLE**

**MIRIAM
MOSES
PASSEVER
PHARAOH
PLAGUE
PROTECTION
SEA
SHEPHERD
SLAVE
SNAKE**

