

A Deeper Sense of Honor

At this time of year we are encouraged to remember our independence and those who have played a part in securing our freedom as Americans. It is a fitting reminder for many of us who are more likely to focus on holiday fun.

We will probably enjoy fun, food, and friendship, but that is not what Independence Day is about. It is a day of celebration of our nation's independence. It is good to reflect on our independence and the sacrifices made by our forefathers. It is good to remember battles fought and won that have insured continued freedom. It is honorable to salute our flag, the symbol of our nation and a symbol of the freedom we enjoy.

Our forefathers saw injustices in their land and determined to make a change for the better. For some it was political injustice; for others religious oppression. They decided to break free from enslavement of various kinds. To do this they also left their past behind.

It would seem that most did not come to America with a divided mind. In other words, they did not think they would simply return home if things did not go well. They came to the new land breaking ties with family, friends, and homeland. They boarded ships knowing that it was a *one-way ticket*. They sacrificed. They paid. *We should honor. We should salute.*

I believe there is somewhat of a parallel to our freedom in Christ, and yet, also a stark difference. The forefathers of our great nation yearned for freedom. *They* set out to break free and *they* accomplished their goal. Yet, in contrast to our American forefathers, there was no man to lead in a spiritual revolt against sin. There was no man to rally the courage of others to oppose Satan. No one set out to a new land, a land of freedom.

The scriptures remind us that we were dead in our sins. We were powerless to do anything about our pitiful condition, even powerless to realize our profound weakness. *We did nothing.*

Unlike our forefathers, it was God who was moved by our sad condition. It was God who decided to act. It was God who sacrificed. It was God in the flesh who became the sacrifice. He paid.

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.
—John 3:16 (NASB)

Yet for that tremendous sacrifice we do not stand up straight, with chest out and then with pride snap a crisp salute.

Rather, in humility we honor...with heads bowed...on bended knee...

Then falling face down before God's throne...
We worship.

"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." ¹³And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever." ¹⁴And the four living creatures kept saying, "Amen." And the elders fell down and worshipped.

—Revelation 5:12-14 (NASB)