



Newsletter

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Franklin Road Baptist Church

Christ is our Message . . . The Bible is our Text

That time of year – for much rejoicing

Pastor Andy

It's that time of year again. That time of year where it seems to be no problem to blast fireworks off and distract drivers on the third most heavily trafficked road in the state – or in between houses – or throw them out of cars – or wrap several together and light them as one (which is very dangerous by the way).

It is that time of year where it is ok to have tongs for the grill in one hand and a lighter for the fireworks in the other – or eating nothing but cracker jacks all day for nutrition - or dressing your cat up in a stars and stripes outfit is socially acceptable – or getting to watch 25 food consuming professionals eat as many hotdogs as possible in 10 minutes in the “Nathans Hotdog Eating Contest” on Coney Island.

But it is also that time of year to celebrate that on July 4, 1776, the thirteen colonies claimed their independence from England, my personal favorite 4th of July activity is watching thousands of people flood into the surrounding area of where a firework show is going to happen. It doesn't matter who you are (young, old, rich, poor, good, or troublesome) everyone enjoys, together, for 25 minutes the “bombs bursting in the air”. It is a celebration of Independence.

You know, if you are a Christian, you have a “dependence day” that deserves celebration more than one day a year. For me, it was July 26th, 1996 (I was 15). The day I realized I could not live my life by my rules, efforts, and arrogance anymore. The day I realized that my Savior died so I wouldn't have to live with my own strength.

Romans 3:21-25a says, But now apart from the Law *the* righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²² *even the* righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; ²⁵ whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith.

Verse 24 says that we are justified (a legal term for being vindicated – declared righteous in God's eyes) which is a gift of grace. I was released from the bondage of sin and now rely on the salvation of my Savior! There is celebration that needs to happen. People need to know the excitement that comes from being free of sin.

I probably won't blind drivers with fireworks, or dress my cat up, or eat 54 hotdogs in celebration, but I can speak the good news of eternal life.

Much like Phillip in Acts 8:5-8- ⁵ Philip went down to the city of Samaria and *began* proclaiming Christ to them. ⁶ The crowds with one accord were giving attention to what was said by Philip, as they heard and saw the signs which he was performing. ⁷ For *in the case of* many who had unclean spirits, they were coming out *of them* shouting with a loud voice; and many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed. ⁸ So there was much rejoicing in that city.

Everyone knows one day a year who proud independent Americans are – and they should. Shouldn't everyone know every day of the year that we are forgiven, dependent Christians?