

## **America 2014 "The State of OUR Nation!"**

**Last week...** The state of the nation... Tough times, dangerous times, but we are not to despair!  
"Our country is in danger, but not to be despaired of... if we act worthy of ourselves!" Dr. Joseph Warren, founding father

***Bad things happening and we are affected BUT NOT REDIRECTED!***

**We know what we need to be doing...** Encouraging the turning of our Christian hearts toward God as a nation!  
"If My people..." **2Ch7.13-16** And if we can't, then we do individually, and together as a body called LIFE! Moving beyond "personal security" of salvation... Invading the world around us with good news of salvation... Preparing to stand in the face of persecution!

***We move forward affixed to Jesus!***

And we will do more of the same of what we've always done... "Walking worthy; appropriately and godly, according to the invitation by which you were called! **Eph 4.1** "Walking worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." **Col 1.10** Worthy, of God, Jesus, His kingdom... **1Thess 2.12, 2Thess 1.5, 11**

**We will continue to contend for and build the state of OUR nation...** by building strong believers; intimate with God, sold out to His will, willing to invade the world around them... And to leave a legacy of Life Changers as long as we have life... and Life!

**Asides...** LIFE CHANGERS has been great so far! Served 240+ students/180 different kids. A dozen interns/20 staff members/dozens of great volunteers... Lots of great stories! Many of them from parents of kids who are acting different at home! Some of them from outside our church!

***"Tell me again, what you're doing? I just don't understand it..."*** In a time when so many churches are shutting down programs for summer and losing kids attention and affection... No one to work with the kids... which speaks loudly to values/focus (to them!) ***Nothing greater than the fact that we are doing so much for our kids...*** 3 sessions of LIFE CHANGERS, 3 camps and a Mega Sports VBS!

***We are competing with the world for this generation!***

***"You're not charging anything for it? Why would you do it if you're not getting anything out of it?"***  
Depends on whose perspective you're using! Church as a mechanical, corporate organization/No!  
Church as the living body of Jesus/OH YES!

**Asides too!** The second session has had a really different focus than the first... Don't exactly know how it happened... Other than God had a different Beta test in mind than at the beginning! But second session, unsaved kids, not our kids... Classroom presentations/inspirational have been different! Can't wait to see what the finale looks like! And we need to finish STRONG! Really need men and women to sign up for third session elective classes and volunteers! Need men and women who can take the place of the first and second wave... Creatively/interactively teach skills! Artists/crafters/DIY/mad skills!

In fact... A building class/Gadgets and Gizmos (Electronics, motors, and more to discover how things work)/Cooking /Crazy Science/Art/Planting and Gardening/Fishing/Cake and Cookie Decorating/Sewing/Man's best friend or Pet care/Survival (building a fire, finding-making fresh water, what plants or bugs are ok to eat, etc)/Human Science... Sign up sheet in the Café/Now?

**The State of OUR Nation!** This “independence” weekend is filled with scriptural overtones! **Jesus came to set us free from sin and death and the hold of the devil!** “If you continue in My word, you are My disciples and you will know the truth and the truth will set you free! But we were never in bondage to anyone. Anyone who sins is the *servant* of sin. If the Son makes you free you are free indeed! He that is of God hears My words!” **Jo 8.31-47**

God be thanked that you were the *servants* of sin but then obeyed from the heart the doctrine which was delivered to you. Being then made free from sin you were made *servants* to righteousness! I’m speaking to you in simple terms; as you have yielded yourselves in the past to be *servants* of uncleanness (the end of which was death), now yield yourselves as *servants* to righteousness. Being made free from sin and becoming *servants* to God you now have eternal fruit of holiness and everlasting life! For the wages of sin was death but the gift of God is eternal life thru Jesus Christ our Lord! **Romans 6.17-23** “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. **Ro 8.2** Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the *yoke* of bondage. **Gal 5.1**

**Jesus came to set us free to serve God by serving mankind from the heart!** Though I am free from all men, yet have I made myself *servant* unto all, that I might gain the more... I am made all things to all men that I might by all means save some... and this I do for the gospel’s sake that I might be a partaker of it with you! **1Co9.19** And this is the will of God, that with well doing you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the *servants* of God. **1Pet 2.15,16**

**To this point...** Bible study on freedom... But let’s look at a deeper meaning, a higher application of the idea! In every case of our reading, the word translated “servant(s)” is “**doulos...**” *Slave!* Voluntary or involuntarily subject, subjugated, subservient... *Slaves* to sin, unrighteousness! *Slaves* to God, righteousness! In every case, we are free from being *slaves* to sin and the devil and are now *free to be slaves to God!* Paul, John, James, Peter, (Epaphras) knew this to be true and reveled in it! “*Slaves of God*” **WHOLLY OWNED! PURCHASED! BOUGHT OFF THE BLOCK!** “no longer to live the balance of our lives in the flesh to fulfill the lusts of men, but now to do the will of God.” **1Pet 4.2**

**Open a short study on knowing the freedom of being wholly owned by God! Our text is the second most known and quoted portion of scripture and some of the best ownership proofs in the Bible!**

**Psalm 23 The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want!** I belong to Him! I am the sheep. He is the owner/ protector/ provider... I will have no lack, no “reversals...” **He makes me to lie down in green pastures!** As owner He leads/determines my rise, break and distance times... **He leads me beside the still waters!** Places for refreshing/restoration/intimacy. **He restores my soul!** Recovers my vitality... By means of His own! **He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake!** He conducts me onto the right paths of rightness for the glory/fame of His name! **Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death...** And if He leads us there, being with us, it’s only a stage/phase/passing instruction... **I will fear no evil for You are with me!** If He is present in time of danger what can we fear? **Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.** Authority and sustenance... **You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies...** Maybe nervous for a moment, but let the fellowship begin and outside is forgotten! **You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.** Blessing/ refreshing/ joyous sensations. **Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.**

**Can there possibly be a more free feeling of life than when you own nothing, nothing owns you and you are owned by God?** We’ll try to imagine a little more next week!