

Celebrate

July 4th is a day of celebration in the United States (U.S.). Many commemorate the occasion with fireworks, cookouts, or displaying an American flag. Are there any biblical reasons Christians can find to celebrate a day like Independence Day? At least four reasons (among many) may be offered...



To whom was it said: "Do you understand what you are reading?"

Bonus: What happened next?

1) Have Gratitude for Religious Freedom. The U.S. offers significant religious freedom for all people to freely worship. Yet, we the people must guard that freedom carefully. The U.S. continues to function as a world nation offering the most religious freedom. Is that chapter in U.S. history coming to a close?

It is said that more than one-fourth of the nations in the world (53) include some form of legal restrictions or religious prohibitions toward practicing Christian activities. In many places across the globe, a person can lose a job, be arrested, or even be sentenced to death for following Christ. And yet, currently, in this nation, we can attend the religious institution of our choice, openly read the Bible on our own or with others, and even pray to God in public. Despite the ongoing legal challenges to certain Christian activities in the U.S., this nation provides a high degree of religious freedom. The freedoms we enjoy are certainly something to celebrate.

2) Display Appreciation for Those Who Defend Our Freedom. Christians can thank God for those who serve and have given their lives to defend our freedom. This includes past military veterans, current military personnel, as well as honoring their family members.

We often forget our freedom of religion and other freedoms can only continue if our nation is protected and national interest in doing so continues. While this does not mean we have to agree with every military decision or conflict, we can be thankful for all those who have served and continue to serve this nation.

3) Offer Thanks for the Opportunity to Freely Participate in Government. We can thank God for the opportunity to participate in the democratic process of our nation. While politics has often been viewed negatively, governing leaders are ordained by God (see **Romans 13**) and are to receive a measure of honor from those who follow Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, our nation offers the ability to participate through voting, advocating for issues important to our values, and even the option to campaign for political office. Contrast this situation with Emperor Nero who led the Roman Empire during the New Testament period and you will quickly appreciate the opportunity to have a voice within the political process. Voting is a privilege of freedom.

4) Freely Share Thankfulness for Peace with Neighbors, Family, and Friends. We can express appreciation for a nation at peace. In many nations worldwide, today, the home and community may exist under a dangerous threat of civil war. Many live in fear of being attacked by rebels. And if you were a Christian living in some parts of the world, you may be forced to flee for your own personal safety.

Despite tense violence within the U.S., this nation currently remains free of war within its own borders. Most Americans take this situation for granted, yet people worldwide may long for a night of rest without fear of attack. We can take a moment or two to thank God for the peace He provides our family, our community, and this nation.

The prophet Jeremiah informs us we can seek the good of the city where we live and work. And even better, we can impact those around us with the love of Jesus Christ! Why? Because "He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, **so that they should seek the Lord**, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and have our being..." (see **Acts 17:26-28**)

Please pray for every "celebration" to be peaceful and safe.

To all our visitors: *Please feel free to participate!*

You should expect to hear singing with voices only, a few "family" announcements, prayers spoken, and see the Lord's Supper offered, then free-willed giving, and gospel preaching from the Bible.

Any response is up to you and will be kindly received.

We are glad you decided to worship God with us on this first day of the week!

Bday/Anniv Lunch: 2nd Sunday...

Friday Bible Study: from 7 to 8 PM! We are studying some New Testament commands of God for us today...

NMCCH: We are waiting to hear of the next item to gather.

Ladies Day: Saturday at 8:30

(7/20), Grand Avenue, "Women Working Together Harmoniously."