

“Stand Firm Therefore”

Galatians 4:28-5:1

BIBLICAL DYNAMICS OF PERSONAL FREEDOM

1. There is a spiritual reality that permeates our daily life (as followers of Jesus). Galatians 4:28

- “You are children of promise.” → IDENTITY
- “Promise” requires faith.
- Freedom is born out of our identity.

→ If we do not know our identity, we will not live in the freedom of who God made us to be.

2. Freedom was born out of persecution. Galatians 4:29

- At that time... Genesis 21:9. The son of Hagar was laughing in a mocking way at the birth of Isaac.
- So also it is now... the apostle Paul, Galatians & the issue of circumcision.

3. Christ has set us free... to be free! Galatians 5:1a

- Freedom is a priority for the God of the Bible. Exodus 5:1

4. Freedom must be maintained. Galatians 5:1b

- Stand firm therefore!
- Do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

THREE CURRENT THREATS TO OUR CIVIL LIBERTIES

1. “Re-writing the narrative” of our history and of current events.

- Attack & undermine the Framers of the Constitution.
- The tactic: If the ‘framers’ were wrong, then the ‘frame’ (US Constitution) must be wrong as well.

2. Infringements on freedom of the press.

- The press (social media especially) is limiting free expression and exchange of ideas.
- Silencing people based on “disinformation.”
- False stories are circulated. (Ref. sources: *The Washington Post*, April 7, 2021 and April 19, 2021)
- Proverbs 18:17: *The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him.*

3. Distortion of the “Establishment Clause” of the 1st Amendment.

→ “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...”

- Our country was founded upon religious freedom.
- Thomas Jefferson’s idea of “a separation of church & state” from a letter to Danbury Baptist Association in Connecticut.

→ Seeing the “bully” dynamic.

→ Standing up to the “bully” dynamic.

Phil. 3:19: But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) was a deist, but that does not mean he utterly discounted the Bible. On the contrary, he said, "The Bible is the cornerstone of liberty."

Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) was a skeptical unbeliever, but he believed in prayer. He inaugurated the practice of prayer before deliberation, which still prevails in Congress.

George Washington (1732-1799) gave strong testimony of faith. In a small prayer book composed when he was about twenty years old. Washington wrote:

O most glorious God...remember that I am but dust, and remit my transgressions, negligences and ignorances, and cover them all with absolute obedience of thy dear Son, that those sacrifices (of sin, praise and thanksgiving) which I have offered may be accepted by thee, in and for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ offered the cross for me...Direct my thoughts, words and work; wash away my sin in the immaculate blood of the Lamb; and purge my heart by the Holy Spirit.

John Witherspoon (1723-1794), president of the College of New Jersey (now Princeton) and the only clergyman to sign the Declaration of Independence wrote, "He is the best friend to American liberty who is the most sincere and active in promoting true and undefiled religion."

Andrew Jackson (1767-1845), seventh president of the United States, said, "The Bible is the rock on which our Republic rests."

Daniel Webster (1782-1852), the great American statesman and orator, said, "There is no solid basis for civilization but in the Word of God. If we are to abide by the principle taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering...The Bible is a book...which teaches man his own individual responsibility, his own dignity, and his own equality with his fellowman."

William McKinley (1843-1901), twenty-fifth president of the United States, declared, "The more profoundly we study the wonderful Book, and the more closely we observe its precepts, the better citizens we will become, and the higher will be the destiny of our nation."

Calvin Coolidge (1872-1933), thirtieth president of the United States, in a speech commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence: "A spring will cease to flow if its source be dried up; a tree will wither if its roots be destroyed. In its main features the Declaration of Independence is a great spiritual document. It is a declaration not of material but of spiritual conceptions. Equality, liberty, popular sovereignty, the rights of man — these are not elements which we can see and touch. They are ideals. They have their source and their roots in the religious convictions. They belong to the unseen world. Unless the faith of the American people in these religious convictions is to endure, the principles of our Declaration will perish. We can not continue to enjoy the result if we neglect and abandon the cause."

Ronald Reagan (1911-2004), fortieth president of the United States: "Within the covers of the Bible are the answers for all the problems men face."