

# Grace Tidings



A Newsletter of Avalon Grace Church

July / August 2020

## GUARANTEED FREEDOM - IN CHRIST

Dear Friends and Members,

In the United States we enjoy a level of freedom that is not found in many parts of the world. Each year on July 4<sup>th</sup> Americans celebrate that precious freedom and independence with barbecues, picnics, and family gatherings. Every Sunday and throughout the week, we get to worship God in the place of our choice because we live in a free society. There are no barred windows or doors in a free society, no censoring of God's Word or free speech, no secret police, and so on. We are so accustomed to our civil, physical, and personal freedoms that we sometimes take them for granted as if freedom is a guaranteed right forever. History shows otherwise, of course, that freedom can be taken away. Ronald Reagan was right when he said, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We don't pass it on to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States where men were free".

As followers of Jesus Christ, we know that civil and personal freedoms are blessings from God

and can be temporary. Yet they are secondary to the transcendent, spiritual freedom we have in Christ. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, and freedom to prisoners." (Isaiah 61:1)

A person can possess all the civil and personal freedom the world has to offer but be spiritually enslaved. Sadly, most Americans are in the grip of spiritual bondage today; they are spiritually dead. On the other hand, as believers, we can be denied our secondary freedoms yet be spiritually free.

The Apostle Paul understood secondary freedoms. Paul's invoking of his Roman citizenship status led to his first face-to-face meeting with Caesar (Acts 25:11 - 12, 21) and his civil rights as a Roman citizen helped to acquit him of all charges against him. Yet, Paul was more concerned about our freedom in Christ than jail time:

(continued on Page 2)



**AVALON GRACE CHURCH  
3801 GUILFORD ROAD  
NAPLES, FLORIDA 34112  
(239) 774-4214**

**Email:**

**[avalongracechurchofnaples@gmail.com](mailto:avalongracechurchofnaples@gmail.com)  
[www.avalongracechurch.com](http://www.avalongracechurch.com)**

**Pastor Phillip McClellan, Jr.**

**All Are Welcome!**

**Sunday Worship 10:30 AM  
Children's Sunday School 10:45 AM  
Wednesday Evening Bible Study 7:00 PM**

**"And to make all men see  
what is the fellowship of the mystery,  
which from the beginning of the world  
hath been hid in God, who created  
all things by Jesus Christ: . . ."**

**- Ephesians 3:9**

# July 4th - Our Nation's Birthday



*"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people He choose for His inheritance."*

*-Psalm 33:12*

*"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."*

*- 2 Chronicles 7:14*

## GUARANTEED FREEDOM - IN CHRIST

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery" (Galatians 5:1) and "More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ." (Philippians 3:8).

Our spiritual freedom is no different today. It is a gift from God, purchased by the blood of His Son and with that freedom comes the responsibility of sharing the gospel with our friends, neighbors and family, just as they did in the infancy of the church. While our liberty in Christ frees us from sin, it does not free us to sin. Paul warns: "You, my brothers, were called to be free, but do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather serve one another in love" (Galatians 5:13).

As we celebrate our freedoms and America's birthday this year, let us hold fast to the greatest freedom of all that can only come from Jesus Christ. It is the only freedom that can be guaranteed – sealed by the Holy Spirit, and Jesus is the only Authority that can guarantee it – forever.

Enjoy your Fourth of July holiday!

In Christ, Pastor Phil

**A**lmighty **GOD**, we make our earnest prayer that Thou wilt keep the United States in Thy holy protection, that thou wilt incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government; and entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another and for their fellow citizens of the United States of America at large. And finally that Thou wilt most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility and pacific temper of mind which were the characteristics of The Divine Author of our blessed religion, and without whose example in these things we can never hope to be a happy nation. Grant our supplication, we beseech thee, through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen

George Washington's prayer  
was adapted from his  
Circular Letter to the Governors of the  
United States,  
April 30, 1789

On July 4, 1776, the leaders of England's thirteen North American colonies signed a document known as the "Declaration of Independence", proclaiming America's freedom from British rule.

The 4th of July is celebrated annually in the U.S. with parades and fireworks displays.

As Christians, when we put our faith in Jesus, it is as if we are signing a "Declaration of Dependence", expressing our total dependence on Jesus for our salvation trusting in His death on the cross, burial, and resurrection in this dispensation of God's grace.

### DECLARATION OF DEPENDENCE A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



My salvation and my honor depend on God;  
he is my mighty rock, my refuge.

— PSALM 62:7 NIV



“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (KJV)

“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;” Ephesians 6:18 (KJV)

God promises us in His Word that He hears every word that we pray to Him. Like a loving Father and parent, He is waiting, ready, and willing to listen to our worries, concerns, and needs. Whether we are seeking forgiveness, strength, or healing or are praying for our family, friends and neighbors, a lost co-worker or family member, prayer provides the channel to communicate with God and receive supernatural strength and power!

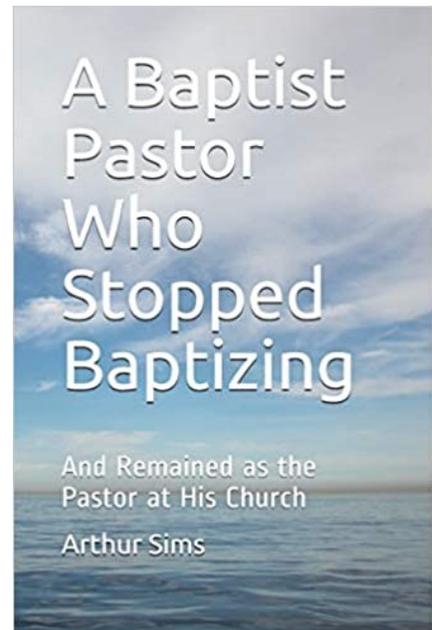
**Please remember to check out Pastor Art Sims book, “A Baptist Pastor Who Stopped Baptizing” which is available at Amazon.com.**

**Why would a Baptist pastor stop baptizing? Being a Baptist how could he? What could cause him to do it? If he did do this, would it be possible to continue as the pastor at his church? This is a true story. Read what happened. How could these things take place? What can be learned from this story?**

**In this 58 page book, Pastor Art Sims explains that it was in the 10th year of his pastoral work that a crisis arose resulting in water baptism being discontinued in his ministry.**

**Throughout his ministry Arthur’s desire has been to understand and abide by the teachings of Scripture.**

**Whether agreeing or disagreeing with the thoughts and actions of this pastor, his esteem for the Bible is evident in this story.**





**Avalon Grace  
Church  
of Naples, Florida**

**JULY**



- 9th **Judy Asher**
- 10th **Charles D'Amore**
- 14th **Richard Smith**
- 19th **Jaclyn Sims**
- 27th **Janice Smith**
- 28th **Jocelyn Barrett**

# July 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4 <i>July 4th</i>
5 9:30 Breakfast 10:30 Worship 10:45 Child. SS	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 10:30 Worship 10:45 Child. SS	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 10:30 Worship 10:45 Child. SS	20	21	22	23	24	25
26 10:30 Worship 10:45 Child. SS	27	28	29	30	31	

**HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY  
TO YOU!**



**AUGUST**

- 3rd **Avery Stevens**
- 7th **Maggie Forbes**
- 24th **Yvonne McClellan**
- 28th **Judy Anderson Sims**
- 29th **Bruce Sims**

# August 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 9:30 Breakfast 10:30 Worship 10:45 Child. SS	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 10:30 Worship 10:45 Child. SS	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 10:30 Worship 10:45 Child. SS	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 10:30 Worship 10:45 Child. SS	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 10:30 Worship 10:45 Child. SS	31					