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Lakeland Hills Leader

"Liberty & Justice For All"

By Chuck Richardson

The pledge of allegiance penned by socialist minister Francis Bellamy was originally intended to be used by citizens of any country and thus as adopted by the U.S. in its present form: *"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with **liberty and justice for all.**"* And as we come to 245 Years of Independence we will hopefully reflect upon the remarkable accomplishment, considering the record of world history, that there is liberty and justice for all, in the main, in this country.

The United States of America is now in the midst of vitriolic division threatening to destroy independence from which we may not recover, and I don't want to imagine the destruction of this precious and fragile freedom, but alas, this is the way of the world, therefore, we must reconcile to the subjugation and bondage in pursuit of the world's liberties and justice, for they are passing away (1John 2:15-17). But I am persuaded there is *"liberty and justice for all"* that cannot be taken away. Notice the admonishment of the apostle Paul: *Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. {Galatians 5:1}*

Jesus would read aloud from Isaiah to his hometown synagogue, these words:

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." {Luke 4:18-19}*

Jesus left his audience in rapt attention, speechless, and in awe with His reading of this text (verse 20). And he said: *"Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." {verse 21}* And upon that declaration the worshippers marveled at His gracious words (22). Paul concluded that all who were baptized have put on Christ, therefore are, *Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. {Galatians 3:29}* You see, *"Liberty and Justice for all"* is realized in Jesus Christ and that through baptism into Him, nothing can separate us from God (Romans 8:31-39).

My friend, we can live free of helplessness in Christ, and with this assurance find the peace that surpasses all understanding (Philippians 4:7), though we be jailed and afflicted in the flesh (Acts 16:25), our "liberty and justice" comes from God, and He will free us of our sins, and execute justice on our behalf against our enemies.

Be comforted in this *"liberty and justice"* since we're but pilgrims and sojourners in this land (Hebrews 11:9-10). Jesus' audience in the Nazareth synagogue did not want the liberty and justice He offered, though they marveled in awestricken amazement of His gracious words, they were much too satisfied with their chains much like their fathers in the wilderness (Numbers 14). Therefore, it is no wonder men are satisfied just the same with their chains while struggling for temporal liberty and freedom that is passing away. Brethren let us stand fast in the liberty found in Christ.