

Weekly Word

July 7, 2008

By Mary Ruth Stone

Devotion

Justification Is By Faith

Our 4-year-old granddaughter loves to run through our house with her arms spread and say, "I'm running free!" That is her way of expressing the achievement of a widespread if not universal human desire—to be free. Not only individuals long to be free, but nations do as well. Many wars between nations have at their root the desire to be free. When national freedom is achieved, the pivotal date of that achievement tends to be celebrated from that time forward. (Several countries of the world have such celebrations in the month of July. Accordingly, *Weekly Word* will feature freedom this month.)

No achievement of freedom can compare with the freedom that comes to a person when he or she is reconciled to God. Along with that reconciliation comes freedom from bondage to Satan and freedom from slavery to sin. The only way such reconciliation and freedom can be accomplished is by faith in the Son of God.

Jesus said, "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

The Apostle Paul described a man who had not yet found freedom in Christ. "For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. . . . For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. . . . O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" (Romans 7:15, 17, 19, 20, 24).

The very next verse, however, gives the path to true freedom: "I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (vs. 25a).

"But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed . . . even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe" (Romans 3:21-22).

Scripture

"But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for 'the just shall live by faith'" (Galatians 3:11).

This 'n That

"Embrace the lavish reality of divine grace . . . that heals, restores, covers, forgives, renews, and abounds. What true freedom!"

— Julie Ann Barnhill

" . . . four essential freedoms: . . . freedom of speech and expression . . . freedom of every person to worship God in his own way . . . freedom from want . . . freedom from fear."

— President Franklin D. Roosevelt, U.S. House of Representatives, January 6, 1941)

Prayer

Lord,

Fill my soul with faith so that my spirit can be truly free. Amen.

Resting in Him,
Mary Ruth