

Summer Traditions Celebrate Freedom

TALK IT OVER

Key Scripture

³ “Never have any other God.” Exodus 20:3 (GW)

³ Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings, who cannot save. ⁴ When their spirit departs, they return to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing. ⁵ Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God. ⁶ He is the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them— he remains faithful forever. ⁷ He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets prisoners free, ⁸ the Lord gives sight to the blind, the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down, the Lord loves the righteous. ⁹ The Lord watches over the foreigner and sustains the fatherless and the widow, but he frustrates the ways of the wicked. ¹⁰ The Lord reigns forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the Lord.” Psalm 146 (GW)

⁸ Christ died for us while we were still sinners. This demonstrates God’s love for us.” Romans 5:8 (GW)

²² Now you have been freed from sin and have become God’s slaves. This results in a holy life and, finally, in everlasting life.” Romans 6:22

¹³ You were indeed called to be free, brothers and sisters. Don’t turn this freedom into an excuse for your corrupt nature to express itself. Rather, serve each other through love. ¹⁴ All of Moses’ Teachings are summarized in a single statement, “Love your neighbor as you love yourself.” Galatians 5:13-14 (GW)

¹⁷ Honor everyone. Love your brothers and sisters in the faith. Fear God. Honor the emperor.” – 1 Peter 2:17 (GW)

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Start talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- What are your 4th of July celebration plans?
- The world record for hot dogs eat in 10 minutes is 74. How many do you think you could put away?

Start thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- Read Romans 6:22 – how much freedom do we have in Christ? How would God define freedom?
- What would a political climate look like in which all parties agreed to 1 Peter 2:17?

Start sharing. Choose a question to create openness.

- Why do you think that we sometimes find ourselves vilifying people of differing political persuasions?
- God rules humanity through both the church and the government (this is called the “Two Kingdoms” doctrine). In what way does he use each?
- Do the political statements you’ve made on social media pass the 1 Peter 2:17 test?
- Some churches have the American flag in their sanctuaries. What are the pros and cons of doing so?
- Countries worldwide have been debating whether or not to take in more refugees, and weighing the risk of offering mercy. How can scripture inform our approach to this discussion?

Start doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- What’s a political position that you find difficult to understand. How can you learn more about why others hold that view?
- What’s one thing you can change in order to fare better on “the parking lot test” (whether or not others are likely to be excited to see you when they run into you, and come over to talk).
- Who are you going to invite to your July 4th festivities?

Start praying. Be bold and pray with power.

- “God thank you for the freedom you give in the Gospel. Help me to be a person whose faith is shaped by your word, and whose politics are shaped by faith. May I be a person of peace, whose words and actions align with your heart. Amen.”

Trios: Split into same-gender groups of three for 15 minutes:

- What has God’s Word been teaching you this week? Is there anything you need to repent of?
- What’s something you’d like someone else to check in with you about this week?
- How’s your weekly 3-2-1 challenge going?