

A Deeper Sense of Honor

On this holiday we are encouraged to remember those who have played a part in securing our freedom as Americans. It is a fitting reminder for many of us who are prone to focus on holiday fun.

It is true that Independence Day is not about fun, food, and friendship. It is a day of celebration of *our* nation's independence. It is right to reflect on the sacrifices made by our forefathers. It is good to remember battles fought and won that have insured continued freedom. It is honorable to salute our flag, the symbol of our nation, and a symbol of the freedom we enjoy.

Our forefathers saw injustices and determined to make a change for the better. For some it was political injustice; for others religious; still others, both. They decided, not merely to go to a new place, but to break free from enslavement of different kinds.

Most did not come to America with a divided mind, as if to return *home* should things not go well. They came breaking ties to family, friends, and homeland. Theirs was a one-way ticket. They sacrificed. *They* paid. We should honor. We should salute.

I find a parallel to our freedom in Christ, and yet, also a stark difference. The forefathers of our great nation yearned for freedom. They set out to break free and they accomplished their goal. Yet, in contrast to our American forefathers, there was no man to lead in a revolt against sin. There was no man to rally the courage of others to oppose Satan. No one set out to a new land, a land of freedom.

The scriptures remind us that we were dead in our sins. We were powerless to do anything about our pitiful condition, even powerless to realize our profound weakness. We did nothing.

Unlike our forefathers, it was God who was moved by our sad condition. It was God who decided to act. It was God who sacrificed. It was God in the flesh who became the sacrifice. *He* paid.

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

(John 3:16 NASB)

Yet for that sacrifice we do not stand upright, chest swelling with pride, and salute.

We honor in humility . . . bowed head . . . bended knee . . . falling prostrate before His throne.

We worship.