**SERVICE SCHEDULE for July 16, 2023**

**Announcements for the Week** Cliff Davis

**Morning Service Evening Service**

**Prayer-** Cliff Davis **Prayer-** Cliff Davis

**Song Leader**- Mark Tally **Song Leader**- Ben Wofford

**-- Comments** – Curran LaChappelle **Comments** – Curran LaChappelle

**-- Assisting –** Andy Fuller **Communion** – Ron Bailey

**-- Assisting** – Jared Davis

**-- Assisting –** Eli Hickey

**-- Assisting –** Brandon Esque

**-- Scripture –** Brandon Anderson **Scripture** – Dan Woodward

**Closing Prayer-** Phillip Dorn **Closing Prayer**- Phillip Dorn

**Wednesday Night – July 19, 2023**

**First Prayer–** Phillip Dorn

**Song Leader** – Curran LaChappelle

**Invitation –** Eli Hickey

**Closing Prayer –** Andy Fuller

**July 23 Evening Service –** Cliff Davis

**Upcoming Assignments**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **July** | **Communion** | **Cleaning** |
| **16** | Davis | Please Be Considerate |
| **23** | McIlvain | Clean the area around your seat |

**Memory Verse – 1 Peter 4:8-9**

**And above all things have fervent love for one another for love will cover a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.**

**Not Too Early to Prepare –**

**How many of you can remember the last time we hosted a Gospel Meeting? We are way past due. For this reason, we have invited one of the preachers we are supporting to come to Covington in September. Many of you may have heard about Nolan Glove. Now we will have a chance to hear lessons from him.**

**Make every effort to attend this series of scriptural lessons and be sure to bring your friends.**

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***Schedule of Services***

**Sunday: 9 a.m., 10 a.m. & 5 p.m. Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.**

**This bulletin is published weekly. Edited by Bill McIlvain.**

**Send any articles for the bulletin to Elders@covingtonchurchofchrist.com**

**Visit us on the web: www.covingtonchurchofchrist.com**



**9441 Bypass, P.O. Box 768, Covington, GA30015 --- [770] 787-1119**

**Elders: Jason LaChappelle, Bill McIlvain**

**Deacons: Cliff Davis, Darryl Griffing, Buck Phillips**

**July 16, 2****023**

***Dreamers***

1. Who told Pilate that a worrisome dream made it clear that Pilate was to have nothing to do with Jesus?

2. Who repeats the words of Joel in a sermon regarding dreams?

3. In Nebuchadnezzar’s tree dream, who is symbolized by the majestic tree that is cut down?

4. What were the 4 beasts rising out of the sea in Daniel’s dream?

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***God Wants Men To Be Free***

**By Andy Sochor**

July 4th, 1776, thirteen American colonies declared independence from the British Empire.  One of the fundamental reasons for this was the fact that each individual has been given freedom by God.

The Declaration of Independence states that all men “are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”  To this day we celebrate the birth of this nation that was founded on these principles.

As we reflect upon the principles of freedom, it is important to do so from a Biblical perspective.  God wants men to be free.  Let us notice what the Bible says about God’s desire for our freedom.

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***God Wants Men To Be Free***

**Continued**

**Free Will.**  To prove that God desires man to be free, He granted free moral agency.  This is plainly evident in the appeals made for men to choose to follow God (Joshua 24:15), to reason together with Him (Isaiah 1:18), and in the need for one to believe and obey the gospel in order to be saved (Mark 16:16; Hebrews 5:9), even being persuaded to do so (2nd Corinthians 5:11).  God desires all men to be saved (2nd Peter 3:9), but sadly, not all will be (Matthew 7:13-14).  He could have created us in such a way that we could not help but serve Him.  But then all He would have would be a group of servants that follow Him thoughtlessly or under compulsion.  This is not what God wants.  He wants us to choose to follow Him and has given us the freedom of will to do so.

**Free from Sin.**  ***“Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.  Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts” (Romans 6:11-12).***  Sin enslaves us.  Jesus came to free us from this bondage.  The Hebrew writer tells us that Jesus came to ***“free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives” (Hebrews 2:15).***  With Christ, we do not have to live in bondage to sin, ready to receive the due penalty of spiritual death (Romans 6:23).

**Free from the Commands of Men**.  When “false brethren” came in wanting to “bring us into bondage” by binding the command of circumcision upon Gentile converts, God sent this message: ***“But we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you” (Galatians 2:4-5).***  We are subject to Christ and have His word as our complete and perfect standard.  ***“Therefore no one is to act as your judge” in regard to any additional matter (Colossians 2:16).***  Many want to alter or add to the instructions that Christ has given.  We are not bound to follow them, but have been given freedom in Christ from these other doctrines.

**Free Societies**.  This country was founded upon the principle of individual liberty.  Is this something that God is concerned about?  Absolutely!  Notice the reason why we are to pray for our leaders: “***for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity” (1st Timothy 2:2).***  God’s desire is that civil authorities provide and maintain an environment where we have the freedoms to practice and teach the will of God without fear.  A free society was the most effective for spreading the gospel (1st Timothy 2:3-4).  While there are many physical benefits to living in a free country, the spiritual benefits that exist are far greater and far more important.

**With Freedom Comes Responsibility.**  God desires us to be free, but this does not mean we are free to live as we please. ***“For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another” (Galatians 5:13).***  To the Romans he said***, “But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness” (Romans 6:17-18).***

We have a divine obligation to serve God and do good to others. Let us use the great gift of freedom we have been given to carry out these responsibilities. Do not neglect to show gratitude for your God-given liberties. Pray also that these liberties might be preserved for us and our children and be extended to others as well, and that we, to whatever extent we are able, would help lead others to the freedom that God desires for us to have.

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**Answers from page 1**

1. His wife [Matthew 27:19]

2. Peter at Pentecost [Acts 2:17]

3. Nebuchadnezzar [Daniel 4:5-17]

4. A lion, a bear, a leopard, and a monster with iron teeth [Daniel 7]

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