

NEWSLINE

Great Smoky Mountains Church of Christ

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Independence

Freedom. What would you pay for it? What does it mean to you? Do you take it for granted? For what price would you sell it?

Occasionally we hear of someone who has traded their freedom for a few minutes of fun or greed. No longer do they have control of their own lives. In their attempts to exercise their "freedom", they have destroyed it.

Independence is a championed American heritage. We value our choices, our ability to determine our own course of action. Driving our automobiles, investing our money, speaking our thoughts, living wherever we please...these are symbolic of our "rights" as citizens of this country.

Often I hear persons in relationships talk about how others attempt to control them. Frequently teenagers say to me, "I can't wait until I'm 18!" He wants "out of the house" so he can make his own decisions, have whomever he wishes as friends, do anything he wants to do without parental interference. Of course, there may be no plan for employment, but he wants freedom!

What does freedom mean to you as a Christian? How has your life changed because Christ has given you freedom? Many Christians don't see their lives as free...they feel burdened and weighed down by the obligations of Christian living. They see what they have given up, the habits, the relationships, and all the changes they had to make to follow Jesus.

Christian freedom means that we have been released from real bondage...from sin-controlled prisons where we surrendered our choices, we were slaves to destructive habits, sinful pride dominated every decision, and we had no power to escape. For some of us, we knew the horrors of that prison; for others, there was a false sense of security and pleasure.

The apostle Paul, who spent some of his life in a Roman prison, said, "For freedom Christ has set you free." He then warns that we must not use that freedom as an excuse for sinful behaviors.

Christian liberty is freedom "from" as well as freedom "to"...freedom from sin and its enslaving power. It is freedom from spiritual death. It is also freedom to experience a new life, a new relationship, a new beginning, and new possibilities. It is the freedom to become all that God created us to be.

What price did this freedom cost? It cost the blood of God's own Son. Grace is not cheap. Freedom was bought with a price which we could not pay.

—Al Behel

Other News

-**Larry Barnett** is in LeConte Medical Center, Rm 328. He had several episodes of passing out on Friday. It appears that he has a blocked artery and is suffering from arrhythmia. They are awaiting further decisions from his doctor.

-**Directory Updates:** You should be receiving a copy of the new directory soon from Linda Behel in PDF format. Please review your information and make any additions or corrections and send these to Linda at lbehel@ix.netcom.com. Please do not hit reply as this will send it to everyone one in the church group.

-**Grief Support Group**—Patty Adair is offering a grief support group. Anyone who has experienced a significant loss of any kind may find the group beneficial. Please see Patty if you would like more information.

Food Contact For Month: Leah Turner

Elder Contact for Month: Marc Hayes (1-731-608-4148)

Sermon Topics: A.M. - "To Set Men Free" (Luke 4:16-24)

P.M. - "The Power of Little Things"

Interpreter for deaf and hearing impaired available for AM and PM worship

Our Known Sick

-**Dez Anderson**— still suffering with multiple health issues. Keep praying. God is listening and answering.

-**Sheryle Elkins**—is continuing chemotherapy. Her last scan showed a slight enlargement of one spot in her lung. Please keep praying.

-**Bill Valentine** is recovering from esophageal cancer surgery. Please keep praying for Bill and Gail.

-**Bill Green**—suffering from several health issues.

-**Jean Compton**—is recovering at home.

-**Kathy May** battling ongoing health issues. She is still in Baxter.

-**Pauline Swallow** is dealing with cancer. Keep praying for her.

-**Jerry and Jeanette Dyer**— they face several challenges.

-**Kenny Jones** is home and is recovering from recent issues of falling.

Friends and Family News

-**Lida Cliett**, Rick's aunt, very ill with heart failure complicated by cancer. Her sister is Rick's stepmother, **Billie Cliett**, who is also suffering from low sodium levels and extreme vertigo.

-Joyce Keyser's cousin, **Maegan White**, brain surgery, and she is not doing well but rather continues to experience pain and suffering.

-**Sue Hayes sister, Joyce**, recovering from a fall.

-**Sue Hayes' sister-in-law, Jane Hufford**, is suffering with a recurrence of Leukemia. She especially requests prayers that a bone marrow transplant donor be found for her. She lives in Nashville.

-**Pat Thomas**, friend of Linda Valentine and other members here, had bladder cancer surgery recently. Pat lives in Brentwood, TN.

-Brenda Scott's niece, **Nita Watern**, has liver cancer and is receiving chemotherapy. She lives in New Madison, Ohio.

-**Judy Watkins and husband Jim**—continuing health issues. (Rick Cliett's sister and husband).

-**Dee Lewis**, friend of the Clietts, stage four cancer (6th occurrence)

-**Rick and Ginny** are still visiting new grandson in Vancouver, BC.

VBS—JULY 15 & 16

Please mark your calendars and plan to participate.

Christianity & Mental Health Series—Al will lead a study on Wednesday nights beginning July 6.

Special Events

Men's Prayer Session
Monday mornings at 8:30

Wednesday Night

Al Behel will lead a special study for the next four weeks

Sunday Adult Class

I Timothy—Al Behel

Times of Services

Sunday A.M.

Bible Study 9:30 AM

Worship 10:30 AM

Sunday P.M. 6:00 PM

Wednesday 7:00 PM

Building Fund

Loan balance as of 06/03/16 is **\$1,007,433.30**. Extra contributions to reduce the loan debt are needed and appreciated. Envelopes are available in the pews.

Nursery

Located across main foyer. Closed circuit TV allows viewing and participation in worship.

CDs and DVDs of Sermons are available free at sound booth. Also available on the website at: www.greatsmokymountainschurchofchrist.com.