

What does the Bible Say About... The Declaration of Independence?

July 4, 2021

The Question Behind the Question:

- American Christians have always struggled with the line between _____ and _____.
- Faithful patriotism celebrates the ways our nation serves the values of the _____.
- Faithful patriotism requires us to know the difference between _____ values and _____ values.

Self-Evident

- Equality is not _____—we are _____ in every measurable way.
- Equality seems _____ because our culture is deeply shaped by the _____.

Equal

- Human beings are equal because they are all made in _____. (Genesis 1:26-27)
- Your value is not _____—it is _____. (James 3:8-10)

Rights

- God does not give his people _____—he gives them _____. (Exodus 20:1-17)
- Our mission is not to defend _____ divine image, but to honor the divine image _____. (Matthew 5:38-47)

Life, Liberty and Happiness

- As bearers of God's image, we are called to pursue _____ above all. (Matthew 6:31-33, Colossians 3:9-11)
- Pursuing _____ may require that we give up our life, liberty or happiness for the _____. (Luke 9:57-62)

Conclusions:

- We can rejoice that the Declaration reflects the _____ witness to the _____ of every human being.
- We can be grateful for the freedom we have to pursue the _____.
- We must use that freedom to serve the _____, not _____. (Galatians 5:13-14)

Discussion Questions

1. Getting Started:

- What did you find most interesting about the sermon this week? The most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling?
- What did you do for the Fourth of July?
- Imagine attending a church service in another country where they celebrated their own nation. How would you feel? (In Canada? Great Britain? Russia? China?)

2. Into the Bible (Read 1 Peter 2:11-17)

- Why does Peter call his Christian audience “foreigners and exiles” in verse 11?
- What are the two reasons Peter gives us for submitting to “every human authority?” Why is submission important?

- What does Peter mean by “live as free people?” How can we do that while also living “as God’s slaves?”

- How do the four instructions of verse 17 fit together? Why does Peter choose those four instructions?

3. Going Deeper

- As American Christians, what can we celebrate about our country? What do we need to repent of?
- How can we live like foreigners and exiles in the world? What needs to change?
- What does it look like to honor the image of God in (all) other people?