

SOMETHING TO PONDER

FREEDOM **JUSTICE**

These words were written in Philadelphia and ratified in the Declaration of Independence on July 4th, 1776. ***“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed...”***

I look past the masculine pronouns and apply these principles to all people no matter their sex and race. Our nation was conceived by people who were predominantly Christian but came to this new world from Europe in many cases for religious freedom. Although the founders did not establish a state religion the declaration of Independence clearly recognizes the creator as God.

Frederick Buechner wrote the following about Justice.

“IF YOU BREAK A GOOD LAW, justice must be invoked not only for goodness’ sake but for the good of your own soul. Justice may consist of paying a price for what you’ve done or simply of the painful knowledge that you deserve to pay a price, which is payment enough. Without one form of justice or the other, the result is ultimately disorder and grief for you and everybody. Thus justice is itself not unmerciful.

Justice also does not preclude mercy. It makes mercy possible. Justice is the pitch of the roof and the structure of the walls. Mercy is the patter of rain on the roof and the life sheltered by the walls. Justice is the grammar of things. Mercy is the poetry of things.

The cross says something like the same thing on a scale so cosmic and full of mystery that it is hard to grasp. As it represents what one way or another human beings are always doing to each other, the death of that innocent man convicts us as a race, and we deserve the grim world that over the centuries we have made for ourselves. As it represents what one way or another we are always doing not so much to God above us somewhere as to God within us and among us everywhere, we deserve the very godlessness we have brought down on our own heads. That is the justice of things.

But the cross also represents the fact that goodness is present even in grimness and God even in godlessness. That is why it has become the symbol not of our darkest hopelessness, but of our brightest hope. That is the mercy of things. Granted who we are, perhaps we could have seen it no other way.”

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Christ came to save people from the sins of tyranny, injustice, greed, and cruelty of every kind. The cross is the symbol of our liberation from these sins. Let us remember that we are endowed with certain inalienable rights and we are to practice and preserve these rights fought for by the founders of our nation.

“But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-falling stream.”

(Amos 5: 24) Jesus lived and died for Justice to flow for everyone. We vow in our Covenant of Baptism to seek and serve him in all whom we meet. Social Justice is not political; it is the preservation of human rights, as Jefferson wrote that all people are endowed by God with the rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Carry the cross, and share the light that eradicates fear and injustice. God bless America, and may God bless us all.