

Weekend of July 5

Be blessed today!

How was your holiday weekend? I hope you found a way to reflect on our forefathers, who initiated this grand experiment we know as the United States of America, and give thanks to the Father above who has superintended our growth to this day.

Freedom is a valuable gift, which everyone wants, but too few cherish. Of course, absolute personal freedom is impossible, for one person's freedom will inevitably clash, at some point, with someone else's freedom. So, what could be of higher value than personal freedom? The answer is, personal responsibility.

A sense of personal responsibility toward others is the only thing that can preserve and develop freedom for all.

We are born (and born again) into community. No community is perfect, of course, for every community is a mixture of diverse people, with sometimes conflicting purposes. And community will quickly die, if it is not cherished and preserved by strong intent. Selfishness must be surrendered.

The second generation of the human race asked, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Most of us know how that story ended. We must find a way in our day to answer a resounding "Yes."

Preserving freedom is seldom convenient and never without effort, which makes it worthy of celebration (and fireworks!).

By the way, we enjoyed wonderful freedom of worship last Sunday under the canopy of redwoods, and again beside the creek where Negar was baptized in water, to the cheers of spontaneous onlookers. Then followed a feast, with games and warm conversations, well into the afternoon.

Think about this: *Too many of us view liberty as something that "just is." But liberty is unimaginably costly. The Son of God gave His life to initiate our freedoms. And millions of men and women since have given themselves to preserve or regain that liberty.*

SERMON:

"The Price of Liberty"

Liberty for all... at what price? What are you doing with your liberty?