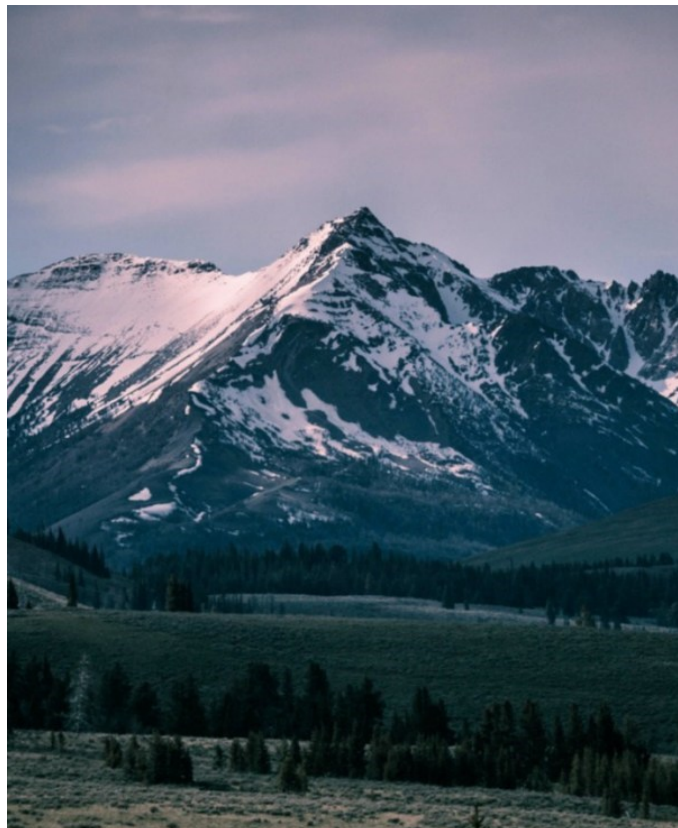


Cries of Freedom

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Sing a song of freedom!

It's almost time to celebrate July 4th, so I thought I'd share some thoughts on freedom with you today. I got to thinking about all of the aspects of freedom that we have as Americans and as Christians.

When we contemplate freedom, we think free of control. We are free of the power that someone or something may have over us. That's a wonderful thing to reflect on both when we think about it in relation to America, but also in relation to Jesus, who can free us from the chains and bonds of sin.

One of the things I began thinking about was the *cries of freedom*. You know—those things that just cry out and shout freedom!



American Cries of Freedom

When I reflect on the *cries of freedom* in relationship to America, I think of some things that just scream a homage to our freedoms and liberties as a country.

The Star Spangled Banner

First, I think of Francis Scott Key as he wrote the words to that poem which eventually became, *The Star Spangled Banner*. I think of him out there on that boat watching that lone American flag as he heard the bombardment of fire upon Fort McHenry in Maryland during the War of 1812.

*O! say can you see by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;
O! say does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?*

Those words are still a cry of freedom even today.

Fireworks

I think of how we celebrate July 4th with fireworks. I love those and I have such fond memories of going to the park when I was little with my family, and we would all sit and watch those fireworks together. I also have fond memories of taking my own kids to see fireworks, especially when they were little, and their eyes would light up in amazement.

All those kabooms, bangs, pops, and all those sparkles and colors in the air are a shout to freedom.

America, The Beautiful

Next, I think of the words to *America the Beautiful*.

Did you know that song was based on a poem by a lady named, Katharine Lee Bates? She wrote it when she took a trip to Colorado Springs, Colorado, in 1893. From what I have read about her, she was inspired by several things on that trip, but she was especially inspired when she saw Pike's Peak.

Her original words when viewing that scene was, "All the wonder of America seemed displayed there, with the sea-like expanse."

*O beautiful for spacious skies,
for amber waves of grain;
for purple mountain majesties
above the fruited plain!
America! America! God shed his grace on thee,
and crown thy good with brotherhood
from sea to shining sea.*

That's such a beautiful cry of freedom because the words to that song stick in our minds and our hearts when we think of our beautiful country.

The Bill of Rights

One of the things I am most grateful for as an American is the *Bill of Rights*. Aren't you? All of our basic freedoms as Americans are listed there. Freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and so on from there.

We are so blessed that our forefathers had the foresight to put those into place. What a cry to freedom!

There are many other things that cry freedom about our great country, such as our flag, the Statue of Liberty, the Liberty Bell, and many more. I'm so grateful for each of those things that cry freedom.



Bible Cries of Freedom

When I look in the Bible, I see men and women who were relieved of their burdens, their ailments, and sometimes even their fear because of Jesus freeing them from those things. These people gave some *cries of freedom!*

Saul's Cry

I think of Saul (Paul) on the road to Damascus and how he met Jesus. Paul immediately preached the Gospel of Christ after he was blinded and could see again. You can find his story in Acts 9. Preaching was Paul's cry to freedom!

And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. Acts 9:20

The Leper that was Healed

Look at the leper that was healed in Luke 17. There were actually ten lepers healed by Jesus that day, but one turned back and praised God and thanked Jesus. Thanking Jesus was that man's cry to freedom!

And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. Luke 17:15-16

The Lame Man that was Healed

Remember the lame man that Peter healed through the power of Christ? His story is found in Acts 3. After this man was healed, he leaped and praised God. Praising God was his cry to freedom!

And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God: Acts 3:8-9

The Possessed Man

One of my favorite stories in the New Testament is where Jesus heals the man possessed with demons in Mark 5. This is such a remarkable example of how Jesus



can free us. This man spent most of his time in real chains because he was so crazy from being possessed. Nobody could tame this man and free him from the demons until Jesus came along. After Jesus took away the unclean spirits, this man wanted to go with Jesus, but Jesus wanted him to go tell his story to others. This man truly had a cry for freedom!

Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel: Mark 5:19-20



Musings

I hope you enjoyed musing over these *cries of freedom* with me today. I am so thankful for my freedom as an American, but also as a Christian. I'm so grateful that Jesus gave His life for me as a sacrifice for my burden of sin. Jesus is the One who can free us!

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. 1 Peter 1:24

This verse in 1 Peter reminds me that I can give my cry of freedom in relationship to Christ by how I live.

