

PENTECOST 5

FREEDOM AND THE FOURTH OF JULY

JULY 5, 2020

MATTHEW 11:16-19; 25-30

On this fourth of July weekend, I think of the profound love of country that my Dad gave to me. I was five when Dad returned from WWII with a wounded, shattered leg. He kept telling Mom and me that he and millions of other American soldiers fought so that his little boy would not have to go to war. I loved, admired and respected my Dad and his love of country.

Today, 73 years later, I read the words of Jesus, "But to what shall I compare this generation. It is like children, sitting in the marketplaces, and calling to their playmates, 'We piped to you and you did not dance. We wailed and you did not mourn.'"

I once thought of Dad's heroics (a bronze star) as a gift of American freedom. How we have taken that freedom for granted! Today we cry out and fight for freedom and the 1st Amendment by claiming "We have a right to not wear a mask!" Dad's purple heart bleeds and screams WHAT...THAT'S WHAT I FOUGHT FOR?

Today our freedom fight is over trivialities, politics, and tribes. In the midst of our pettiness, the corona virus rages.

A voice is heard in Ramah
Weeping and great mourning
Rachel, weeping for her children
And refusing to be comforted
Because they are no more (Jeremiah 31 and Matthew 2)

Can we change our freedom fight? Can we come together as a nation, as we did in WWII and afterwards?

We can begin the fight with these words of Jesus, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden...Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart." (Matthew 11:28-29)

The corona virus has exploded. It is December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor, once again. The US and the world have been attacked. I want to love my country again. My whole country, all the people. I want my country to be unified. I want our fathers once again to save us. I first turn to my brother Jesus and beg him to go to the Father and lead us once again into the jungles and deserts and cities, where the virus lies in wait, and help us and our fathers to defeat the enemy. Our well-being is at stake. Our unity is at stake. Our freedom is at stake.

Prayer: Dear Lord, give us true freedom once again. Bring us to you and to the Father. Protect us from all evil. Bring health to your creation. Amen.