



Our Purpose is to expand God's Kingdom, as we reach, teach, disciple and activate people for our Lord Jesus Christ.

Morganton First Church of God Weekly Schedule

Communion in the Prayer Room	9:00 a.m.
Sunday School:	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evenings	6:00 p.m.
Power House Youth and Prayer Service	
Wednesday Fellowship Supper	5:45 p.m.
Wednesday Small Groups	6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Evening Services	7:00 p.m.
Adult Bible Study, KidsPlace & PowerHouse Youth	

Our Website: www.mfcog.com



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PROCLAIMER



OUR PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

Stand Fast in Liberty

Freedom and liberty are concepts that man has struggled with for millennia. In the U.S. we even have a statue to one and a bell to the other. The writer to the church at Galatia states (5:1), "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage." What is this liberty that is spoken of by Paul? Freedom to express oneself? Freedom to bear arms? Freedom to choose?

In America we value freedom. It is worth fighting for. It is worth defending. We talk of "someone giving the ultimate sacrifice" for our freedom.

Jesus was the most liberated man who ever walked on earth. He gave the ultimate sacrifice. But His liberation was not for political purposes. It was not for self-gain or self-interest. His sacrifice was made so that man -- you and me -- could be free from sin. His standard of behavior was "What does my Father want me to do?" Did that cramp His style? Absolutely not! It gave Him freedom: from bigotry, from fear, from envy and jealousy, from hatred and strife, from back-biting and gossip. The list goes on. Not only freedom from..., but also, freedom to...: love, teach truth, be open and honest (there was nothing to hide, or to regret, or to wish had not happened or been said). Freedom to stand in the face of Pilate and say, "You don't take my life; I give it willingly."

When you take a stand for freedom, is it for personal gain? Or, is it for truth and honesty and love and for the good, not only of self, but for everyone. We can mistake freedom for the opportunity to "lay into someone else," either directly, or indirectly. Freedom of expression? Yes? Perhaps? Maybe not? Might it just be that what we purport to be freedom could be entanglement "again with a yoke of bondage?" You see, Christ has offered us freedom. Satan offers us entanglement in bondage. Really, the choice is ours. Freedom or bondage.

When the writer says, "Stand fast..." he is saying, "You choose." Choose to stand fast in liberty, the consequences of which are a clear conscience, no regrets, loving relationships, no hypocrisy, peace, joy, kindness.... Permit me to offer a litmus test. Measure everything you speak and do against this question: "Does this produce liberty or entanglement in bondage? It might just be that we choose liberty. And in so doing we become freer ourselves. God bless you in your disentanglements.

Pastor Don