

The Hope of Independence Day

As we look around us, whether it is through the eyes of others in our community, or what the news in its various forms tells us, even though it no longer reports just the facts but always seems to require a spin, it is possible that many of us shudder. It seems like despair is lurking everywhere. Not just in corners of the world far from us but even in our own communities.

Now more than ever we need to cling to hope, strengthen our faith every minute of every day, and follow his two most important commandments; to love Him and love every other single human being.

This weekend we celebrate the two hundredth and forty-sixth anniversary of our independence and the birth of the greatest nation ever. The historical theory goes that we sought our independence because we felt we were oppressed. We wanted religious freedom. Our founding fathers established a Constitution (of the United States) and a concept that separated church and state that serves us well and stands the test of time.

On this Independence Day I remember the women and the men who, over the centuries, have fought to secure the independence and the freedom that we so value and experience in this country today. My own father was a unique kind of war hero, never aspiring to be one, yet throughout his life all the way to the end and into his new Beginning, that's what he was, a hero. Next weekend we will lay to rest another man who was a war hero of a different war. Unlike the Great War of my father the Vietnam war was simply awful. And he was exposed to the worst of it, paying the price silently the rest of his life. And he did it for us.

I am beyond grateful for women and men like these two men. They put the needs of the greater good above their own, did the things no one else would do, many of them done in secret, and would remain so until they made their Greatest Leap.

When the weather is cool enough for me to be outside to walk or simply to sit, I have been blessed with the gentlest but steadiest of breezes in the trees. Not only does it stir both the deciduous and the conifers into a symphony of tree singing and talk, it caresses you with the softest of touches, the air filled with those who have gone before us, as they surround us totally encompassed in His love. I know they are there. For I believe what C.S. Lewis told us over sixty years ago, "Heaven is all around us. We just can't see it yet."

So I hope. And through my Faith, I believe in us, because of Him. I believe we can rise above anything, to do the one thing He wants and that is to love one another as He loves us.

We prove daily, inside this little finger of the mitten state, what our fathers of this country imagined, wanted, needed this nation to be. One that stands above all others, not because of its military might or its economic power, but because we choose, even with our differences to be Americans.

And Americans are the people that give the most of anyone, to those in greater need. This is our greatest legacy as a nation and as a people.

(over)

We **are** the light to the world. It is time we remember that we are this light and we shall not let it be dimmed by inner squabbling. It is time to regroup and remember always...

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America, When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

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...

And to remember ... the words of our Master daily

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light."

Our Lord from the Book of Matthew

Clement
clementcharles.substack.com