

American Pastors Network



2025 LIBERTY SUNDAY | *Sunday, July 7, 2025*

Threats to Our Liberty

SAMPLE SERMON

WHY LIBERTY Sunday?:

Each year, APN encourages churches to set aside a Sunday, around the 4th of July, to discuss the topic of **LIBERTY**. As we have defined in the past, we believe liberty is essential for freedom and independence and that until we experience liberty, neither are truly possible. **LIBERTY** is the throwing off of oppression, bondage, duress and control of those with evil intent. One must attain their liberty from enslavement and tyranny and then we are free people.

This idea of liberty is key to our spiritual lives as well as our national lives. Christ came to bring “liberty to the captives” and Paul wrote that prior to coming to faith in Christ we were slaves to sin and trapped in the domain of darkness. Once we experience liberty from our sin and the control of Satan through Christ, we are free and can enjoy the fruits of freedom. The same was true in 1776. As you read the Declaration of Independence, it is clear that England, and especially the King, had the American people in bondage, repression and subjugation. At times, he loosened his grip and allowed the citizens of the U.S. to experience “pseudo-freedom” yet through brute force, taxation and coercion, his heavy hand snuffed out any signs of liberty. The founders knew their fight was first to secure “liberty” first and then freedom would follow. In both illustrations, our liberty was bought with a price, the precious blood of those willing to give their lives for another’s liberty.

It is that spirit and the need to make these connections that APN encourages pastors and churches to highlight this very important concept of **LIBERTY**. We would encourage you to look at past Liberty Sunday themes, where we defined liberty, discussed the courage needed for liberty to be experienced and then last year we focused on laws that liberate. We never advocate “political activism” yet we do believe that pastors and the pulpit’s of America are key to educating and to clearly explain the unique privileges we have had in the United States and its rich history of religious liberty. Taking a Sunday and devoting it to this type of teaching and instruction will have long term effects on the Christian citizen. We hope that Liberty Sunday will become a regular part of your church’s calendar.

2025 Liberty Sunday Focus: Threats to Liberty

Liberty is a cherished gift and it cannot be squandered or taken for granted. What we enjoy today could be gone tomorrow. Most times nations and spiritually speaking Christians lose their liberty and don't even realize it has been siphoned away. The slide from liberty to bondage is subtly dangerous. Consequentially, we have witnessed in the past few years a real assault on our liberty as Americans and in many examples to our religious liberties. This is not an exhaustive list, and we would strongly encourage you to include additional ideas and illustrations. Nevertheless, we have identified some common threats to our liberty. Interestingly, these threats have bearing on both our country's liberty and can be applied to our faith as well. So, what are the threats to liberty?

1. **Twisting of the Truth** – Jesus said that the “truth will set you free.” At the core of preserving our liberty we must know the truth and turn a light on any error or lies. When a nation traffics in falsehoods, revisionist history, post-modern thinking and moral relativism, our liberty will be under assault. When “experts” tell us that $1 + 1 = 3$ we are trafficking in lies. When we say that a child in the womb is not a life or we call it a “fetus” a lie has been spoken, and our liberty is threatened. When a man can be a woman, that is confusion and when deception is accepted as gospel truth, it will lead us into intellectual bondage and capture our hearts, minds and emotions. When the Word of God is not accurately communicated or we begin substituting it for good ideas, moral pep talks or man's opinions, our spiritual liberty will slip away. To ensure liberty prevails we must demand and seek truth above all else.
2. **Authority Roles Ignored or Consolidated** – One of the protections for our liberty are the God-ordained authority structures that protect society. The home, government, church and work all play a role in keeping order and protecting liberty. Throughout the New Testament we have example after example on how God uses authorities to guide us, protect us, uphold righteousness, praise law keepers and punish wrongdoing. Our liberty will be at risk when we disregard or de-emphasize the importance or refuse to acknowledge the divine authorship of these authorities. Yet another failure is when we surrender any of these authorities to another one. Each authority must remain distinct, separate and free to exercise its leadership in its unique area of life and society. When the government takes over the role designed for parents, liberty is on life support and about to perish. If one authority seizes power from the rest, a monarchy will be thrust upon our lives and liberty will be taken. God designed four authorities so that no single human (sinful and imperfect) leader would rule our entire lives. If we ignore authority or allow consolidation of power, anarchy will reign and ultimately destroy our liberty. For further illustration, it is why as a nation we have three branches of government. We call it “checks and balances.” Yet when the three authorities in our Republic become corrupted, liberty will be lost. As Christians we must fully understand and be taught with clarity God's authority structures and how they work separate but together. Also, we need to hear warnings of why it is dangerous when the government oversteps its authority and tells churches, businesses and the home how they need to operate and function. Parents' rights in our education system is a real example of this threat. Over regulation on businesses is another. And harking back to the days of COVID and the restrictions placed on churches, again, this was a threat to our liberty. Authorities are good and should uphold liberty, when exercised as God intended.

3. Abusing our Liberty and Misusing our Freedoms thus Bringing on Unnecessary Legalism –

Liberty is a wonderful thing and it allows us to experience freedom. Freedom of choice. Freedom to produce and generate wealth. Freedom to experience fun, pleasure and pursue happiness. However, without prudent expressions of that freedom and when we forget to place guardrails around our freedom, we may move into excessiveness and abusive behavior. Even though we might have the freedom to push the bounds of our liberty and claim license in matters of choice, it may backfire and cause authorities to begin clamping down on liberty in general. In addition, many times when there are excessive liberties taken, either throughout the community or even in the church, many times legalism will follow. Man will attempt to use human means and manufactured efforts to control and curtail behavior. Legalism religiously or worse by enforcing laws and regulations under the guise of reclaiming liberty never ends well. With that in mind, the third threat to liberty is to understand that if we don't carefully, introspectively and wisely use our freedoms, it may backfire and lead to liberties being stripped and added incumbrances being laid on us. Even in the churches of Galatia, after the grace of the Gospel was proclaimed, the shackles of legalism ascended upon the once liberated people. This same thing can happen in the life of a nation.

4. Idolatry that leads to Financial Dependence – Liberty allows us to pursue wealth and enjoy the fruit

of our hands. Without discipline and an understanding of stewardship, debt and an unhealthy dependence on things, can often lead to freedom being lost. The squandering of what we have or the compulsion to want more can leverage us and we wake up financially in bondage. Once that occurs and we become a borrower and as the Scriptures tell us, we become a slave to those who own us. The idolatry and love of money can pave the way for our liberty to be bankrupt as well. Good management of what we have assures us that our liberty will remain intact. Over spending, accumulating of debt, forgoing giving to God because you are strapped financially are snares that will trap us and we will sadly be tempted to trade our precious liberty. Right now, in America, people's financial picture looks bleak. There is a case to be made that there are forces at work to drive up costs, lure us into debt and inflict the nation with a monetary crisis. But the same can be said for the people of God. This is a very practical threat to address on Liberty Sunday.

5. Failure to Stand up for Others Whose Freedoms are Being Seized – Our liberty may not

be threatened at first, but others may be targets as we watch. People of different races, religions, family structures, and economic status may be isolated from the rest of us and separated from the rest of society to be put under bondage. Examples of this would be the rise of antisemitism in America, the rejection of traditional marriage and family structures, even homeschoolers. There is insidious action occurring in our country to take away certain groups of people's rights. We may not be directly or personally affected and so we do not feel it necessary to speak on their behalf. But we have a choice. We either make our voices known and stand up for the one being mistreated or remain silent and recognize that we might be next. Just remember, once a sub-group of humanity is stripped of their liberty, it is like a set of dominos falling and we will experience that same painful outcome. One of the great threats of liberty is the fact that those attempting to take away our liberty are counting on the rest of us saying nothing! They count on our failure to question actions taken upon others. Yet when we protest, question and let those trying to steal liberty know that we see them and understand what is happening, they will run and hide. All people's liberty is my liberty.

- 6. An Unwillingness to Fight and Treasuring Safety and Security more than Liberty** — From time to time in life, we must bear the cost of liberty. We may need to fight. It may cost us our lives and fortunes as did our founding fathers and as did our Savior and Apostles when it comes to the Gospel. One of the debilitating aspects of Western culture is that we value safety and security. It is why an event like 9-11 paralyzed our nation and threw us into such collective turmoil. The idea of a terrorist blowing up buildings where I might work was devastating. When that happened we wanted peace restored and guaranteed, which to be honest cannot be guaranteed. But in our attempt to regain safety and security, we were willing to abandon and offer up some of our liberties. I am not sure what was worse, the initial violence or the longer lasting forfeiting of liberty. That same principle plays out spiritually. Although we have Christ and heaven is guaranteed, it does not mean we will not experience trials, troubles and turmoil while on earth. We must fight and struggle and remain diligent and vigilant. This final threat of liberty can be seen in the mirror each morning. It is you and me and our willingness to realize that today I may be asked to fight for liberty, and it may be costly and difficult. Yet if we try to avoid pain and reduce personal costs, liberty will be surrendered.

HOW TO PREACH THIS SERMON?

As you can see, this will not be a classic expository or textual message. It is purely a topical message, with the big idea to raise a warning flag about potential enemies that could take away our national and spiritual liberty. As I have considered teaching this there are three key steps I would take:

- A. Start by defining liberty and demonstrating why liberty is essential as a follower of Jesus Christ and as an American citizen.** There are ample ways to illustrate and explain why liberty is so important.
- B. Work through the list of threats methodically.** One of the things that we have NOT done for you is offer up various Biblical passages under each point. Be assured, as a pastor, you should be able to identify numerous passages that highlight each of the threats listed. What I would not do is get too deep into exegesis or theological development of each passage used. I would use selected passages as illustrations of these threats. Again, that is not how we normally preach, but in this context and with this type of material you will need to adapt your preaching style to effectively communicate this material.
- C. Incorporate current situations or events to keep the material relevant.** I have not offered up a lot of “news out of the headlines” because by the time you read this they would be “old news.” Again, this is where you will need to do a little work and look for issues that you can point to that have been happening in our country that would be an example of the threats to liberty. Also, there may be a very specific situation happening in your community which will make this an even more relevant point for your people to ponder.

ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS TO INCORPORATE

As we have done in the past, there is some great faith based, patriotic music that could be used for Liberty Sunday. We have a list of links to those songs and recommend you plan to use one or two during the service.

Also a few years back, I actually wrote out a **PRAYER FOR LIBERTY** that could be used in the service. You could pen your own prayer or use the one we have provided. However, it is important to thoughtfully and intentionally consider how and what you want to pray for this day.

Finally, almost every year I participate in Liberty Sunday, I use the Max McLean rendition of the reading of the **DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE**. You can download the reading which includes the words and background music from YouTube. It is powerful and for the most part your people probably have never read the Declaration. It also provides a great background of how liberty was threatened when our nation was founded.