

Dear Friends,

We are very much grateful to God for keeping all of us safe and sound to serve HIM in various capacities. August is the eighth month of the year in the Julian and Gregorian calendars, and the fifth of seven months to have a length of 31 days. It was originally named *Sextilis* in Latin because it was the sixth month in the original ten-month Roman calendar under Romulus in 753 BC, and March was the first month of the year. About 700 BC, it became the eighth month when January and February were added to the year before March by King Numa Pompilius, who also gave it 29 days. Julius Caesar added two days when he created the Julian calendar in 46 BC, giving it its modern length of 31 days. In 8 BC, it was renamed in honor of Augustus. According to a Senatus consultum quoted by Macrobius, he chose this month because it was the time of several of his great triumphs, including the conquest of Egypt.

This is a special month for Indians. In this month we celebrate our Independence Day. In this particular month we should think seriously about the way we can preserve this freedom that we enjoy. We hear so many unwanted things about our leaders and their selfish nature. In this month we should very seriously think of being faithful to our nation. To be faithful to our country we should follow some discipline in our life.

In Deuteronomy 6:21 we read that "we were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the Lord brought us out of Egypt with mighty hand.... He brought us out from there to bring us in and gave us the land that he promised...." As Christian Though we claim to be a redeemed group of people we are still waiting for the Promised Land. Whenever we pray the Lord's Prayer, we pray for the Lord's Kingdom to come. Though we have prayed this prayer for more than two thousand years we have not experienced these Kingdom qualities in our life.

The reason for this failure is clearly spelled out in Acts 8: 23 that says 'for I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin'. Though Jesus died for our sins Two Thousand years back, till today we are not freed from the sinful nature. Because of its dominant nature in us we failed miserably and we continue to be the slaves.

Further in Galatians 5:13 we read that 'you, my brothers, were called to be free but do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love'. And again, because we do not love one another we are not up to the standard; we are always below the standard that can be seen by reading Luke 22:24 (A dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest). Though they were called and trained by Jesus, the disciples could not resist the temptation.

We all are sinners, though we claim to be righteous and holy. This has happened because of our selfish nature; we are not ready to sacrifice ourselves. Discipline and sacrifice both are needed to be free from the clutches of sin. So, as we celebrate the independence of our country let us thing of our characters, the freedom which we enjoy is bought by sacrifices and to continue to enjoy freedom let us love one another as we love our selves as Jesus said.

God Bless you
Yours in His service,
Bethesda Ministerial Team