

THE SECOND FOURTH OF JULY.

July 7, 2013 Various Texts by Bob Branch

BIG IDEA: *The first fourth was a declaration. The second fourth was a war!* There are lessons to learn from this in the Christian life.

COLONIAL AMERICA...

YOU-US

Before Christ...

A Declaration of Independence from a life apart from Christ!

But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ... **Philippians 3:20**

Freedom from sin, guilt, selfishness, addiction, hopelessness, past, "how it's always been!"

AMERICA ONE YEAR LATER: WAR!

YOU-US

Declaring independence always leads to a conflict of worlds.

"STAND FIRM."

Standing firm means holding onto the Lord (and your faith) in the midst of others **HATING** you. God promised this would happen.

You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. **Matthew 10:22**

Standing firm in the midst of **TEMPTATION**.

So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

1 Corinthians 10:12-13

Standing firm means holding onto the **HOPE** that something better awaits us. There is more than this life.

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. **1 Corinthians 15:58**

Standing firm in **FAITH**, not giving way to doubt and unbelief, but holding onto what God has said, even when it's costly.

Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. Do everything in love. **1 Corinthians 16:13-14**

Standing in **GRACE**, and not succumbing to a "works-based" walk with God, where he accepts you as long as you do such-in-such.

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. **Galatians 5:1**

It means holding tenaciously to **GOD'S TRUTH** in the midst of a pluralistic society where everyone's "truth" is of the same value. All truth is not equal.

Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist... **Ephesians 6:14**

Stand firm and hold fast to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter. **2 Thessalonians 2:15** (John 8:31-32)

Standing firm means striving to attain and maintain real, authentic **UNITY** among God's people, and not compromising our witness by acting otherwise.

Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel... **Philippians 1:27**