

Your Surrendered Step Into Real Freedom

Poor doggie. July 4 is a day of torture for him. My friend's puppy had to be protected from the noisy fireworks that blasted his furry ears.

For him they were a nightmare; for me, the sound of July 4 fireworks reminds me of a dream come true.

New Citizen of the United States

A few decades ago, my parents chose to make the U.S. our home. Soon after, we received our residency papers, and five years later, the big day arrived.

We entered a large courtroom. The red, white and blue of the American flag covered the front wall.

"Raise your right hand," the immigration official instructed my family and me. And with gratitude bursting in us, we pledged our allegiance to the United States. At the same time, we renounced our allegiance to our native country of Bolivia.

My Citizenship in God

Oh, how I wish I had made that same pledge giving my allegiance to God's plans and His will. I didn't. Instead, I vowed to follow my own.

And, with misdirected passion, I crafted the blueprint for my life—get married, have healthy beautiful children, enjoy financial security, serve God and watch our grandchildren grow up around us with love overflowing.

That was the path to happiness I envisioned, and the plans I designed. But God had a different path. His didn't match my own. And that's when the battle began. I clung to my plans and

resisted His.

Have you done that? You formed simple expectations, nothing extravagant, nothing complicated. And when least expected, your world turned upside down with disappointment dragging with it unwanted heartache.

The reason? Our plans have great intentions, but flawed expectations. They hold a specific image of what life should be but lack the foresight of what life often brings.

Good News

Sweet freedom begins when we let God's will rule. We allow His will to dictate our moments, order our days and design our future.

To accomplish that, He invites us to step in the courtroom of His love. Raising our right hand, we pledge to renounce those unrealistic dreams, those flawed plans. And turn our allegiance to His plans instead.

And should nights turn lonely and the black of sadness close in, those plans of His speak tranquil reassurance to our soul.

Jesus gave us the secret to that tranquility. He came to His knees with similar sorrow and, in the midst of pain, He said: "‘Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me. Nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done'" (Luke 22:42).

He relinquished to God's will. He gave up His own. He stepped away from His desires and invited God's instead.

What were the results?

He suffered still, but victory came. He was crucified, but glory followed. He took His last breath, but when He came back alive, He breathed in us life eternal.

And today in the midst of all the ugliness of life, we do the

same. We declare, “Not my will, but yours, Lord.” And His will takes over. Makes the way. Opens doors. Erases fear. Heals the wounds. Pours grace and makes the impossible possible.

What will it take for you to surrender and pledge your allegiance to God’s divine will? {eoa}

Janet Perez Eckles *is an international speaker and the author of four books. She has helped thousands conquer fear and bring back joy.*

This article originally appeared at .