

STATUE OF LIBERATION THROUGH CHRIST

Questions and Answers

WHAT IS HER NAME?

Her name is The Statue of Liberation Through Christ (a.k.a. The Lord's Lady Liberty). The crown indicates that she stands as a queen. She is a prophetic symbol of the biblical personality of Queen Esther, who intervened and pleaded with the King for her people to be saved from destruction. Therefore, we also call her Queen Esther, as she points the way to America's deliverance from destruction.

WHAT DO THE SYMBOLS ON THE STATUE MEAN?

- A) **THE CROSS** demonstrates God's love for humanity by offering His Son for our salvation. The Statue of Liberty represents America exalting Christ and recognizing that He alone is the way to God and the source of true liberation in all areas of life (Luke 4:18; Acts 4:12; 1 Corinthians 8:6).
- B) **THE GOLD SEVEN-SPIKED CROWN** demonstrates God's benefits for man when he receives Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Each spike reflects one of the seven redemptive names of God. These names reveal His character.
- 1) God is our Provider – **JEHOVAH JIREH** – Philippians 4:19
 - 2) God is our Healer. - **JEHOVAH RAPHA**- Matthew 8:17; 1 Peter 2:24
 - 3) God is our Peace. – **JEHOVAH SHALOM** – Philippians 4:7
 - 4) God is our Victory. – **JEHOVAH NISSI** – 1 Corinthians 15:57
 - 5) God is always Present. – **JEHOVAH SHAMMAH** – Hebrews 13:5
 - 6) God is our Righteousness. – **JEHOVAH TSIDKENU** – Romans 3:22
 - 7) God is our Sanctifier. – **JEHOVAH M'KADDESH** – Hebrews 10:10
- C) **THE TABLETS OF STONE** represents the Ten Commandments and the importance of God's laws in society to establish morality and values. Scripture says that if we reject God's laws, then He will reject us (Hosea 4:1-3, 6).
- D) **THE BROKEN CHAIN** is wrapped around her left ankle and hangs over the left edge of the pedestal. It symbolizes freedom of any and all bondage. It is God's desire to see mankind liberated in every area of life (Romans 8:15,21).
- E) **THE TEAR** represents Lady Liberation's despair over America's rapid decline from its Judeo-Christian values. She weeps for our nation's self-destruction as the protective hand of God is removed. Yet, she realizes that there is still hope for America if we return to God through Jesus Christ (Luke 19:41; John 11:35).
- F) **THE DOVE** symbolizes the Holy Spirit. The Word of God says that where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (Luke 3:22; 2 Corinthians 3:17).
- G) **THE PEDESTAL** holds the empty tomb of Christ inside. Without the resurrection, there could be no liberty. Her stand on the pedestal also represents our stand against every test and trial the enemy throws against us (1 Corinthians 15:12-18; Galatians 5:1; Ephesians 6:13).
- H) **THE SYMBOLS OF GOLD** are: the cross, the crown, the words on the tablets of stone, and the broken chain. No metal has been more frequently mentioned in Scripture than gold. In Hebrew, gold indicates purity and refinement. Gold is also a metaphor that indicates how valuable our faith is to God. Scripture says that our faith, when it has been tried, is more precious than gold. Lady Liberation tells us that, through Christ and the liberty we possess, we shall emerge from every trial as pure gold (1 Peter 1:7). For those who serve God in purity and honor, God calls them vessels of gold (2 Timothy 2:20).

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO CREATE THIS STATUE?

The three crosses featured at Bellevue Baptist Church provided the original inspiration. I heard of how people's lives were touched by God at the sight of those crosses. We wanted to erect an exhibit piece on our church property that would also affect people for the Lord, yet, we wanted it to differ from the total cross concept.

The second inspiration came from the Buddha statue that received so much attention in December 2004. In the same way the Buddha statue paid homage to Buddhism, we wanted a monument that would exalt Christ in a unique way. There is no god greater than the Christian God of the Bible, Christ the Lord (1 Corinthians 8:4).

HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED ON THE STATUE PROJECT?

This is the culmination of a four to five year journey from the vision's conception to its completion. It started one evening when I saw the Bellevue crosses while returning home from Nashville on I-240. Later, I saw the Statue of Liberty featured in a television commercial. At that moment, I envisioned the Statue of Liberty with a cross in her hand.

WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF THIS VISION?

When World Overcomers Church first moved into the Winchester building in June 2001, we wanted an exclusive place dedicated for prayer on our grounds and a place where our prayer ministers could pray for the city and community. We tried to acquire other surrounding buildings, but their prices were simply too high. The original vision was for a prayer garden that would feature a replica of Christ's tomb inside and a space for people to come and pray with Christ's resurrection on their hearts and minds.

This prayer garden, coupled with the vision of the Statue, became a great match. We knew that the inside of the pedestal would be the ideal place to build the prayer garden tomb.

The prayer garden will not be complete until after the Fourth of July.

WHAT IS THE STATUE'S MESSAGE?

The message is: America (represented by the Statue of Liberty) belongs to God. It proclaims that Christ is the true source of liberty: spiritually, emotionally, physically, relationally, financially, and intellectually. The Statue reminds this nation that it was founded on Judeo-Christian values and urges America to return to them. It says: America, bless God if you want God to bless America.

HOW TALL IS THE STATUE?

The statue stands a total of 72 feet from the top of the cross to the foundation, or ground. The pedestal alone stands at about 20 feet. From the statue's pedestal to the top of the cross is 52 feet.

WHAT IS THE WEIGHT OF THE STATUE?

Excluding the pedestal, the Statue weighs about 12,000 pounds.

WHAT MATERIALS WERE USED IN THE STATUE'S CONSTRUCTION?

The Statue was constructed of foam based in fiberglass, supported by steel.

ISN'T THIS DEFACING THE STATUE OF LIBERTY?

This is not the Statue of Liberty. It is the Statue of Liberation Through Christ. People create derivatives of symbols all the time. The Statue of Liberty has been used to promote guns, sex objects, flowers, and other items. *Planned Parenthood Federation of America Inc.* used the statue as a symbol to promote condoms. However, this is what I call a Christian derivative of the Statue to send a message to America about its relationship with God.

Keep in mind, Christ has also been defamed in many ways through movies, television programs, photographs, books, magazines, etc. Yet, nothing is ever said about it.

- A) The United States Copyright Office has extended us a valid copyright on the image and name.
- B) The United States Trademark Office has extended us trademark rights to the image. Therefore, the United States government has given its approval of the image.

Remember, all liberty begins with God, not with the nation. It is God who grants us our freedoms. God's Word says that nations are formed for one purpose: to seek after Him. Once a nation moves away from that purpose, it will begin to degenerate (Acts 17:26-27). God, His cross, and His Word are greater than our national symbols. When people talk of venerating national symbols above God, then there is a problem. The nation should never be exalted above God.

All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.

Isaiah 40:17

She does bear a striking resemblance to Lady Liberty; however, the two statues are very different. Lady Liberty has not been defaced. She still stands in New York Harbor; nobody has touched it. However, it is our right to express our definition of true liberty. After all, isn't that what Lady Liberty stands for: the freedoms of speech, expression, and religion.

WHY NOT USE A RELIGIOUS SYMBOL INSTEAD OF A NATIONAL SYMBOL?

Most people would not have recognized a statue of David or Moses on the pedestal. Even a statue of Jesus would have been dismissed as simply a symbol for Christians. Besides, we don't know how Jesus looked (Acts 17:29). Although these are famous Biblical characters, they mean nothing to the unsaved and unchurched of the world. However, a statue created in the likeness of the most recognizable iconic symbol of freedom is instantly recognizable by every American, and they must identify with it and consider its message. It is a message to every American, not just Christians, that Jesus Christ is the true source of liberty and that He only is Lord.

THE CROSS IS A SYMBOL OF CHRIST AND CHRISTIANITY. **HOWEVER, NOT EVERY MEMPHIAN IS A CHRISTIAN.** **WOULDN'T OTHER RELIGIONS BE OFFENDED?**

The beauty of Christianity is that God so loved **THE WORLD** that He gave His only begotten Son. Christ is for the world, not just for Christians (Luke 5:32; John 3:16; 1 John 2:2). For all who have not accepted Christ, the Statue's cross says that they can come to Him just as they are, and He will receive them. The cross demonstrates God's love for mankind. This country was birthed out of a desire to worship God. Our job as Christians is to witness to all Memphians that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man can come to the Father except by Him (John 14:6). No other religion or religion's founder makes the claim of defeating death and providing a life after death.

WHAT TYPE OF FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENT HAVE YOU MADE TO PAY FOR THE STATUE? OR WILL THE CHURCH MAKE MONEY FROM THIS EFFORT?

We have paid the cost of the Statue in increments. We will provide souvenirs, artwork, and other materials for sale. Proceeds will help recover costs for the Statue, our church's ministries, and/or provide more funds for outreach.

COULD THE CHURCH HAVE USED THE MONEY ON THE POOR (EXAMPLE: FOOD, CLOTHING, AND HOUSING FOR THE LESS FORTUNATE)?

A) Of course it could have been used for those endeavors. However, we chose to do this. Jesus said to preach the Gospel to the poor. We believe in not only giving to the poor, but also preaching the Gospel to the poor (Luke 4:18). If we preach the Word of God, we will teach people how to fish rather than simply give them a fish. If we can show them how to live, they can live without being dependent on anyone. This is more important than just temporary assistance. This is how we can best help the poor. God's desire is that everyone become self-sufficient (2 Corinthians 9:8).

B) MAN AT THE GATE CALLED BEAUTIFUL

In Acts 3, Peter and John met the poor beggar by the gate called Beautiful. Although he asked for money, they gave him Christ. They did not even attempt to give him money (Acts 3:1-7). They put him in a position where he could take care of himself. It is not money that people need. Instead, people need a relationship with God. From that relationship, all needs in life will be met (Philippians 4:9).

C) THE WOMAN WITH THE ALABASTER BOX

Mark 14:3-10 relates the story of a woman who broke open a precious alabaster box filled with oil in order to anoint Jesus' head. Those around Him were angry and upset because she did not preserve the oil to sell it and give the money to the poor. Jesus told them, "You have the poor with you always to do good to them whenever you want. However, this woman is doing a great work on ME." He said that her actions would be a lasting memorial unto her. This was an instance in which Jesus placed an act of worship unto the Lord above giving to the poor. In essence, eternal purposes supersede temporal and natural ones. Yet, Jesus conveyed that we should give to the poor, which our ministry has done.

D) Our church has given much to support the poor. Yet this is never mentioned.

- 1) We helped New Orleans evacuees transition to their own homes and provided temporary shelter.
- 2) In December 2005, we gave Shelby County \$25,000 to help pay utility bills. Two years prior, we gave \$12,000.
- 3) We established a ministry called Women's Oasis of Memphis for poor, destitute, and abused women. Today, World Overcomers continues to support this ministry financially.
- 4) We have also given hundreds of thousands of dollars each year to members, non-members, charitable organizations, and other ministries that service the poor and needy.
- 5) Our accredited World Overcomers Christian Academy serves children from grades K-6.
- 6) We provide facilities for basketball leagues to help get kids off the streets in Hickory Hill.
- 7) We provide a youth army boot camp to help teach kids character and discipline.
- 8) We have given to several outreach ministries in Memphis and around the nation, including: drug ministries, homeless shelters, homes for pregnant teen mothers, counseling ministries, ministries for men and women, ministries that feed the hungry, etc.
- 9) We have given free manuals, books, and Bibles to prison ministries.
- 10) We have given vans to ministries for teen mothers.
- 11) We house a Hispanic ministry and have given donations to Hispanic families.
- 12) We have donated to Martin Luther King tournament, MIFA, UNCF, Hispanic ministries, Jewish ministries, and other Christian churches who were about to lose their buildings many more.

Our statue is only a form of our outreach. Yet, our church is actively involved in donating and giving to those who are less fortunate Criticize us only if we have not given to the poor.

E) People buy expensive cars, electronics, appliances, houses, and other unnecessary items for the purpose of having creature comforts. Yet, we are not concerned enough to reserve some of that money for the poor. We erect statues of Elvis Presley, B.B. King, and other great Americans, and nothing is said. We spend millions of dollars on a Vietnam War Memorial in Washington D.C. that could have gone to the veterans for whom the statue honors. Evidently, someone thought it was worth spending that money just for people to remember that war and its veterans. Well, a monument that glorifies and exalts Christ and speaks of eternal value is just as, if not more, important for people to remember.

HOW DO OUR NATION'S FOUNDING FATHERS CONNECT WITH THE STATUE?

In preparation for writing a new book, I have recently done extensive research on our Founding Fathers and on the way our nation was founded upon Judeo-Christian values. These men were like social prophets who predicted America's demise if we departed from the Bible and our righteous foundations. In summary, many of them wrote that if we ever lost religious liberties, then we would ultimately lose our personal liberties. Samuel Adams, the father of the American Revolution and signer of the Declaration of Independence, stated:

“RELIGION and good MORALS are the only solid foundations of public LIBERTY and happiness.¹ [N]either the wisest constitution nor the wisest laws will secure the LIBERTY and happiness of a people whose manners are universally corrupt.² A general dissolution of the principles and manners will more surely overthrow the LIBERTIES of America than the whole force of the common enemy. While the people are virtuous, they cannot be subdued; but when once they lose their virtue, they will be ready to surrender their LIBERTIES to the first external or internal invader.”³

If we overthrow our morals through dissolving our religious convictions, we will **NEVER** be a happy people. No laws that our government establishes will curtail the corruption of a people. We cannot be overthrown by anyone as long as we are a virtuous people. If not, then we will be forced to surrender our liberties. The Statue of Liberation Through Christ says to America: “If you want to keep your liberties, you must never abandon religious liberties.” The Statue connects Christianity with Patriotism, love of God with love of country, church with state, just as God and the Founding Fathers intended (Acts 17:26-27).

BLESSED IS THE NATION WHOSE GOD IS THE LORD.

Psalm 33:12

Historical studies done by university scholars conclude that 94% of the Founding Fathers' writings were based either directly or indirectly on Scripture. They never intended to remove religion (Christianity) from government or its free expression. They only wanted to prevent religion from being controlled or legislated by the government. In fact, the term “separation of church and state” never appears in the Constitution.

WHEN YOU SAY THAT AMERICA IS A CHRISTIAN NATION, DO YOU MEAN THAT EVERY CITIZEN IS TO BE A CHRISTIAN?

Of course not. I respect every person's right to choose who or what they desire to worship. I would not want to live in a country that allowed otherwise. I respect the Muslim, the Buddhist, the Jew, the Hindu, or any other person's religion and their freedom of worship. If we do not, then we as Christians would lose our freedoms.

Being a Christian nation means what the Supreme Court said in the 1892 case of **Church of the Holy Trinity vs. United States**.

“...This is a CHRISTIAN NATION. Our LAWS and our INSTITUTIONS must necessarily be based upon and embody the teachings of the REDEEMER of mankind...Our civilization and our institutions are emphatically CHRISTIAN.”

When our laws are inconsistent with Christian and biblical precepts and values, or when our institutions become hostile against God’s moral values (such as our schools), we will lose the favor of God, His blessing, and His hand of protection.

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee...seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I WILL ALSO FORGET THY CHILDREN.

Hosea 4:6

IS THE STATUE SOMETHING TO BE WORSHIPPED?

This Statue is never to be worshipped, bowed to, prayed to, or venerated in any way. God’s Word is clear that images or images of other gods are never to be worshipped.

And the residue thereof he MAKETH A GOD, EVEN HIS GRAVEN IMAGE: HE FALLETH DOWN UNTO IT, AND WORSHIPPETH IT, AND PRAYETH UNTO IT, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god. They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand.

Isaiah 44:17-18

DOESN’T THE BIBLE SAY THAT MAKING IMAGES IS WRONG? OR IDOLATRY?

God did oppose images of other gods. In His first laws to mankind, the Ten Commandments, He forbade making images of other gods from anything in heaven, in earth, or in the waters below, to bow down, worship, or serve them. God always had a problem with people making other gods and worshipping them (Exodus 20:3-5). See also Leviticus 26:1; Isaiah 2:8; Jeremiah 25:6; Daniel 3:18; Isaiah 44:17-18; Psalm 97:7.

If images are wrong, then all statues are wrong. Statues of Jesus, His crucifixion, the Virgin Mary, the saints of old, the angels, Old Testament saints, and great leaders would all be wrong. Even the cross is an image, and, in some places it is worshipped as if it is Christ Himself.

In Scripture God permitted images to be made. He told Moses and Solomon to build the tabernacle and the temple with carved images of angels. (Exodus 25:18-22; 1 Kings 6:22-24; 2 Chronicles 3:10-11). Remember, there are people who even worship angels. The point is that God had no problem with angels being carved because they were intended to glorify Him. In the same way, the Statue of Liberation glorifies Christ. How can the statue be called idolatry when she lifts a cross?

The Statue of Liberty in New York does not glorify God. The Statue of Liberation Through Christ exalts Christ, the names of God, and the laws of God. How could it be considered idolatry if she holds a cross in her hand? With the cross, she sends a message proclaiming who the only true and living God really is.

Jesus used parables, or stories with simple objects, to reveal truths to people who could not understand them. The Statue of Liberation is a continual standing parable to the unsaved who will not come to hear a sermon. God often has to step out of the box, or out of people’s normal religious understanding, in order to convey His Word to those who are lost. God’s prophet Samuel had died, but He used a witch to call him up from the dead to send a message to Saul (1 Samuel 28:7-19). Although God said, “Thou shalt not kill,” he told Abraham to kill his own son (Genesis 22:1-2). He used a mule to speak a word to Balaam (Numbers 22:28-30). He used a prostitute to teach His prophet Hosea about His love for Israel (Hosea 1-2). He made a serpent, a symbol of evil, and placed it on a pole to save and heal the children of Israel (Numbers 21:6-9).

And as Moses lifted up the SERPENT in the wilderness, even so must the SON OF MAN BE LIFTED UP: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

John 3:14-15

God can take a carved image of a world-renowned American symbol and use it to speak to today's society.

Lady Liberation's purpose is to exalt the cross of Christ in the midst of our community and city's spiritual wilderness. She is an outward evangelistic tool that says, "If He [Christ] be lifted up, He will draw all men unto Himself." She also urges America to return to God before it is too late.

We do not advocate the worship of any image, especially this one. Instead, we support the honor and worship of the One whom she upholds.

IS THIS BREAKING THE SECOND COMMANDMENT?

Thou shalt not make unto thee ANY GRAVEN IMAGE, or ANY LIKENESS of ANY THING that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

Exodus 20:4

If we isolate Exodus 20:4 alone and make a doctrine out of it, then every graven (carved or sculptured) image is wrong. The scripture here says, "Do not make any images of any likeness of anything from heaven, from earth, or in the water beneath."

If we only read verse 4, then all statues are wrong, including statues of Jesus, Mary, the saints of old, presidents, great Americans, angels, animals, etc. Vietnam War Memorial statues, statues of Dr. Martin Luther King, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson, and Franklin Roosevelt would all be wrong. Even the ceramic objects in our homes, which are carved or sculptured, would be wrong.

However, when Exodus 20:4 is placed in its proper context with the scriptures before and after it, God's intent is discovered. "Do not make images of other gods for the purpose of worshipping them."

People have used all kinds of persons, objects, animals, or things for the purpose of worship. If we are never to make statues or images of any kind, then God Himself would be in sin because He would have broken His own commandments. God Himself used images.

A) In 2 Chronicles 3:10, He instructed Solomon to place **images of angels** (heaven) in the temple. See also 1 Kings 6:22-35.

B) In Exodus 37:7-9, God had **images of angels** to be carved on the mercy seat in the tabernacle.

C) In Numbers 21:8-9, God had Moses make an **image of a snake**. He used something evil to demonstrate to Israel a shadow of Christ who was to come. Jesus, like Moses' snake, was made sin (yet He never sinned). He became a sinner for us (2 Corinthians 5:21). God was willing to use an image associated with evil to minister a message. Yet, He changed the snake and put brass on it to let people know that this was a different snake.

Lady Liberation is not the same as Lady Liberty. Lady Liberty does not glorify God. Lady Liberty does not have a crown of glory that honors the names of God. Lady Liberty does not exalt the cross of Christ letting the world know that Jesus is the light of the world. Lady Liberty does not exalt the laws of God (Ten Commandments). Lady Liberation is only a modern-day outward evangelistic tool used to announce to America to repent and return to God.

YOU SAID THERE WOULD BE A PRAYER GARDEN.
ARE YOU PRAYING TO THE STATUE? ISN'T THIS IDOLATRY?

World Overcomers does not advocate the worship of any image or statue. The statue is a message to the world proclaiming Christ as Savior. The prayer garden replica of Christ's tomb is an intimate chapel area for the prayer ministers of our church. Our ministers will alternate shifts to pray unto the Lord (not a statue) for our city, community, and nation.

People who come to tour the site will receive tracts, brochures, and our prayer intercessors will offer ministry to them. While the statue ministers to the world and draws people to tour the site, it also opens up an opportunity for ministry.

The replica of Christ's tomb inside the prayer garden has only one purpose – to remind people of the price Jesus paid for their redemption. People will feel a sense of His love and resurrection power that has been made available to them.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE WITH THIS STATUE?

- A) We wanted an outward witness for Christ. Many people who pass this intersection will never darken a church door. This Statue with an uplifted cross is an evangelistic tool that will preach the Gospel to many who pass by it. We call it a silent sermon.
- B) I pray that many who think about doing wrong will look at that Statue and cross and receive conviction.
- C) Next, we have been concerned about the businesses in the area that have either exited or are preparing to exit. We wanted to make an investment in the surrounding community. It is our prayer that the Statue of Liberation becomes a Christian tourist attraction. If tourists come to this area to view the Statue, they will bring dollars to stimulate and promote business growth. Hopefully, new businesses will desire to locate in the area.
- D) The Statue also provides an opportunity to do outreach ministry for people who come to view the Statue by giving them prayers, tracts, and other ministry handouts.

Hopefully, the Statue will cause people to consider their personal relationships with God and ponder the necessary steps for restoring our nation to its former glory. I pray that it will cause people to talk about America in connection to its relationship with God.

REFERENCES

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2. Williams V. Wells, *The Life and Public Service of Samuel Adams* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1865), Vol. I, p. 22, quoting from a political essay by Samuel Adams published in *The Public Advertiser*, 1748.
3. Samuel Adams, *Writings*, Vol. IV, p. 124, to James Warren on February 12, 1779.

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