

The background of the entire page is a close-up, slightly blurred image of the American flag, showing the stars and stripes. The stars are white on a blue field, and the stripes are red and white.

Does Christian

LIBERTY

**Look Like 4th of July
Independence?**

By Amy Noel Green

As **June** slips into **July** and your neighbors begin stockpiling firecrackers to shoot off as soon as you've fallen asleep, our minds shift to thoughts of freedom, independence, and liberty.




In anticipation of our country's annual **4th of July** celebration, we tend to focus on the outward expressions of our **liberty**—from the patriotic clothes we wear to the red, white, and blue desserts we bake.



While our outward expressions of freedom create a fun celebration, as Christians, we know that “people look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”
([1 Samuel 16:7](#))



**When you became a
Christian, Jesus set
you free.**

The background of the image is a soft-focus American flag waving in the wind, set against a sky with light, wispy clouds. The flag's stars and stripes are visible, though slightly blurred to create a sense of movement and depth. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white rectangular area in the center of the image.

**But what does that
freedom *really mean*,
and how is it different
from the freedom we
celebrate on
Independence Day?**

Christian Liberty Focuses More on **Interdependence** Than **Independence**

When God created the heavens and the earth, He made a point of declaring all of his creation good. But in [Genesis 2:18](#), God establishes for the first time something that is not good: independence.



God looks at Adam, the pinnacle of His creation up to that point, and says, “It is not good for the man to be alone.”

Man is interdependent by design.
We have been created to depend
on both God and each other.

Independence is a strong American ideal.

We praise each other for independent thinking.



We are often encouraged to act independently without considering the needs of the people around us. It can be challenging to shift our view of independence.

But like much of the truth we discover in the Bible, the wisdom of the Kingdom of God is counterintuitive to the wisdom of our culture. ([Isaiah 55:8-9](#), [1 Corinthians 3:18-20](#))




This call to interdependence is repeated throughout the New Testament in many verses that talk about the followers of Jesus forming a body. (Romans 12:5, 1 Corinthians 12:27, Ephesians 1:23, Ephesians 4:16)



The biblical picture of a healthy community of believers is a single body. Each part of the body is unique and vital, but all parts are completely dependent on each other.

**Loving God well means
accepting our dependence on
Him and His body, the church.**

The background of the image is a close-up, slightly blurred view of the American flag, showing the blue field with white stars and the red and white stripes. The flag is draped and appears to be part of a larger display or ceremony.

You may feel uncomfortable as you begin to think of yourself as **interdependent rather than **independent**. We tend to think of independence as a sign of **strength** and dependence as a sign of **weakness**.**

But as you shift your thinking to embrace the **biblical standard of interdependence, you will grow in love and **compassion**.**

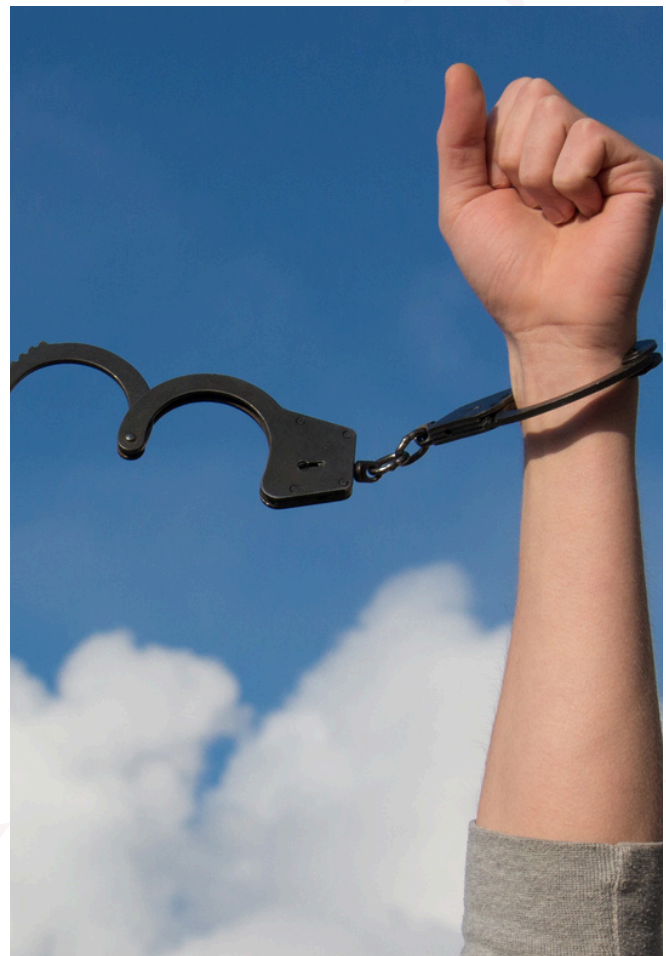
It may help to remember that interdependence doesn't only mean that you resign yourself to your dependence on others, but it also means that you choose to become a person others can depend upon.

Christian Liberty Empowers Us to Be Transformed

It's natural to think of liberty as the freedom to do as we please. However, Christian liberty empowers us to live rightly in our freedom. 2 [Corinthians 3:17](#) famously reminds us that “where the spirit of the Lord is there is freedom,” but as we continue to read, we see that the freedom we have in God's presence isn't the kind of freedom we often idolize: freedom that stays out of our way, not interfering with our desires.

Instead, the freedom we have in Christ has a very specific purpose which is made clear in the next verse, [2 Corinthians 3:18](#), “And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory which comes from the Lord, who is Spirit.”

The freedom we feel in the [presence of God’s Spirit](#) liberates us from sin, selfishness, and any oppression that would interfere with our continued transformation into the image of God.



The liberty God offers is what unveils our faces so that we are able to contemplate the Lord's glory.



Our transformation is impossible without liberty, but it is not a liberty to stay as we are; it is a *liberty to become what we should*. In this way, Christian liberty does not herald our individualism. It is not concerned with offering us the 'freedom to be ourselves.'

Instead, as we focus on the gifts that Christ's death and resurrection have purchased for us. The liberty we have received will gradually make us less ourselves...and more like the God we love and serve.

What Should **Liberty** Look Like?

In our culture, liberty often looks like an insistence on our freedom of speech, protests, acts of defiance, or an assertion that our rights be honored.



In short, our experience of liberty is riddled with our fear that it might be taken from us. However, Christian liberty is so confident in its freedom that it is willing to submit to others.

Galatians 5:13 illustrates this shift from liberty that is self-focused to liberty that reaches outward. It says, “You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.”

We know that Christ’s death and **resurrection** have set us free from the law of sin and death (**Romans 8:1-14**), but we don’t always know how to live well as Christians who don’t have a law or set of rules to follow.

Sometimes, we try to set our own personal rules of good behavior rather than learning what it looks like to live in Christian liberty.

[Galatians 5](#) encourages us to live in the freedom Christ purchased for us and not try to go back to following the law. But if the law doesn't matter anymore, what does?

In [Galatians 5:6](#), we learn that, “the only thing that matters is [faith](#) expressing itself through love.”

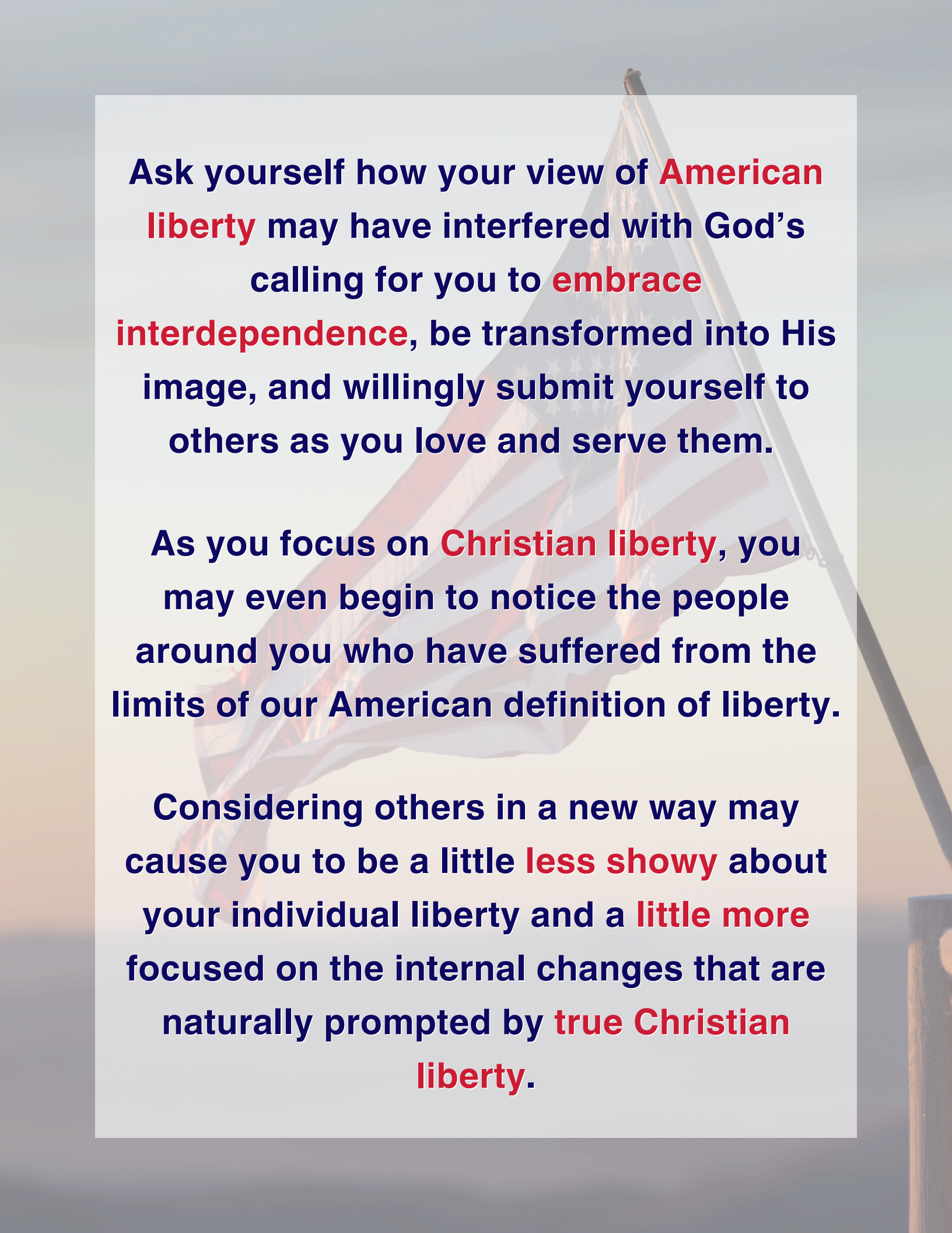


Liberty **Looks Like Faith** Expressing Itself through Love and Service

Rather than trying to prove our righteousness by returning to a law that Christ fulfilled, liberty looks like faith expressing itself through love.



So, this July, enjoy your celebration. Make some noise. Light up the sky. But take some time to reflect on the difference between the nationalist brand of liberty we've grown accustomed to, and the humbling nature of the supernatural liberty we have been offered in Christ.

An American flag is visible in the background, waving and slightly out of focus. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white box.

Ask yourself how your view of **American liberty** may have interfered with God's calling for you to **embrace interdependence**, be transformed into His image, and willingly submit yourself to others as you love and serve them.

As you focus on **Christian liberty**, you may even begin to notice the people around you who have suffered from the limits of our American definition of liberty.

Considering others in a new way may cause you to be a little **less showy** about your individual liberty and a **little more** focused on the internal changes that are naturally prompted by **true Christian liberty**.

Amy Noel Green shares her faith on [TikTok](#), so if you decide to join in, she'd love to be TikTok friends. She is a TED speaker, author, and award-winning video game designer. She received international press attention for her work on the video game [That Dragon, Cancer](#). The video game tells the story of her wrestle with faith as her five-year-old son, Joel, battled with cancer. Amy writes about faith, disappointment, and renewed hope at her [blog](#). You can find Amy's five-minute chapter a day Bible study videos on her [YouTube channel](#). Amy would love to connect with you on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) or [TikTok](#).