



# Welcome to West Side!

WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

March 6, 2022

## It's a Free Country Article by Tim Tripp

I have heard the phrase many times. It is usually used when someone is being reminded of behavioral norms or expectations placed on them or they are being confronted for behavior deemed unacceptable. The phrase is used in a disrespectful tone. "It's a free country." Basically saying, "I can do what I want. You can't stop me."

I suppose it is true that as long as it is not illegal, we can do what we want. Even when what we do hurts others deeply, it is still a choice we have. We have freedoms in our country that allow us to abandon our children, commit adultery against our spouses, neglect aging parents, and emotionally abuse those around us with no fear of legal reprisal. It's a free country.

We can refuse to share the things we have, manipulate others to our advantage, treat people harshly, and shut out the underprivileged all without fearing legal consequences. It's a free country.

We can curse freely, use racially disparaging language and treat people of different political or religious beliefs with contempt. We can make fun of people who speak different languages or who are of a different race or sexual orientation. It's a free country.

We can get drunk every weekend, watch sports instead of going to church, and party with the worldly. We can buy bass boats and luxury campers but give little to nothing at church. It's a free country.

However, what we cannot do is any one or combination of the things above and claim to follow Jesus. He didn't do those things. Neither would he do those things if he lived now. The permissiveness of culture never defines the limits for the behavior of those who follow Jesus. Jesus does that. He has always called his people to a higher moral and behavioral standard.

In his letter to the Galatians, Paul says, *"May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world."* (6:14). This is just one of several times Paul speaks of being "dead to the world." One cannot be dead to the world but still be a participant in what the world does.

In Colossians, Paul says, *"See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ."* (2:20). The worldly perspective is greatly influenced by the spiritual forces of darkness. They are mutually opposed to the teachings of Jesus and will ultimately draw believers away from the one in whom they claim to believe.

We do indeed live in a free country and are thankful for that opportunity. However, what might be legal in our country does not define what is right by God. Christians, who live in God's kingdom, live by his standards, not the standards of the world. Saying that you follow Jesus and living like the world is not following Jesus; neither is it living in the kingdom.

You are not your own. You were bought with a price. Honor God. Live to please Him. He will show you what it really is to be free.

## ONLINE CONNECT CARD

We would love to connect with you! Please fill out our Online Connect Card at...

[westsidear.org/connect](http://westsidear.org/connect)



### Last Week:

Sunday Class & Conversation (CT Weekend)  
Worship - 102 + others at CHRISTeens Giving - \$6,970  
Wednesday Evening Bible Study - 115

## Prayer Requests

Nadine Jones is currently hospitalized after a fall resulting in injury. Please keep her in your prayers for a full and speedy recovery.

Jonah Vanderheiden recently had sinus surgery. Please continue to keep him in your prayers for overall health improvement.

We extend our sympathy to Virginia Lovejoy and family in the recent passing of her husband Michael. Please keep this family in your prayers for comfort during their time of loss.

Continue to pray for  
Tami Robinson  
Sofia Juarez  
Jesse Boshears

## Spring Quarter Bible classes Begin today!

### Children

- 1 yr. olds - Beth Sorrells - Nursery area
- 2's & 3's - Jamie Bates - Room 16
- Pre-k / Kindergarten - Judy Holman - Room 12
- 1st & 2nd grade - Vickie Betterton - Creator's Canvas Room
- 3rd-5th grade - Jack Reed - Museum Room

### Adults

- Friendship Cafe & Conversational Christianity - In the lobby beginning at 8:45
- 9am Adult class in Room 3 - Life of Joseph
- 9am Parenting Class - KFC Room
- WSYM at 9am in the Cornerstone

## Other News

MNFTM needs Little Debbie's (or any type of snack cakes) for the Monday night meal distribution. Please drop off items in the box provided in the hallway outside of the KFC Room.

## Mark your Calendars!!

### New Song Lunch

We will have a 'New Song Lunch' on Sunday March 13th immediately following morning worship. Bring ( or pick up ) your own lunch and meet in the family center for a time of fellowship centered around singing and learning a couple of new songs for worship.

### Pie Auction Fundraiser

Camp Cudde Pie Auction Fundraiser will take place on March 27th. More details coming soon!

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