

We are on the threshold of celebrating our 70th Independence Day and what a joy it will be when we take pride in all that our nation has achieved as a free country over these last sixty-nine years. We have gained greatly in the area of science and technology with India launching her own satellites and those of other nations from our very own base in Sri Harikota. Many of our software engineers are heading some of the big multi-national companies around the world. Over all the average middle class family is in a financially better position than the last ten years. Metros and bigger airports and low cost flying has also seen movement across cities much more than before. An overall progress seems to have happened.

However, on the other side there are certain things that we need to address in order that we may indeed celebrate our freedom truly. The gap between the rich and the poor seems to be widening steadily and this needs to be narrowed. Corruption is another serious problem that our nation faces. In almost every government deal there seems to be some kickback or the other. Corporations who are to maintain roads take money and choose the tenders of those who can grease the palms and the end result is the roads have huge potholes after the first rain of the season. These are all the harsh realities that we see nowadays. There has also been a polarizing of communities under one pretext or the other particularly with the elections of various states coming up. Dalits have suffered a lot in the recent past particularly and there is regular reporting of atrocities against Dalits in one form or the other daily.

In this kind of context how do we celebrate freedom? Does Scripture have something to tell us? In the OT reading from Deuteronomy we note that the parents of the Israelites were to explain to the next generation about the laws and commands given to them because they were set free from their bondage in Egypt. They were set free in order that they would serve God and their neighbours as they lived in their community. So also in the Epistle to the Galatians Paul tells us that we are to walk by the Spirit and if we do so we will be able to love our neighbours as ourselves. Finally, in the Gospel of Luke we see Jesus telling his disciples that he himself had come to serve. Likewise, we too are challenged to serve one another in love. Serving God would mean walking according to his ways which are the ways of truth revealed to us in Scripture.

So as we look back on the past sixty nine years we are called to give thanks to God for all the blessings that he has showered upon us as a nation. We are to look back and praise God as we count our blessings over the past seven decades. On the other hand, we are not to sit back and be spectators where there is injustice or corruption. Our nation's motto is Satyameva Jayate which is 'Truth alone Triumphs'. We as the followers of Christ are called to stand up for the truth and for justice so that truth will indeed triumph. We will not be able to do this by our own strength and we will need the power of the Holy Spirit who is indeed the Spirit of Truth. The Holy Spirit will empower us to stand up for the truth and bring justice and peace to the people. May we always seek the power of the Holy Spirit and stand up for truth in our own situations wherever God has placed us. If we do then we will indeed make our country a better place to live in. Jai Hind!