

# A Christmas Wish



By Paul Engel

December 23, 2023

- As we celebrate Christmas, I wanted to share a few of my Christmas wishes for you, America, and the Constitution Study.
- While most people would probably list peace on earth among their wishes, what about wishing for liberty?
- What do you hope for in our future? What would you like to see in 2024?

Thankfully, I have not seen the level of controversy over name “Christmas” this year that I’ve seen in years past. Whether or not you celebrate the holiday, [5 USC §6103](#) lists December 25th as the holiday “Christmas Day”, which is why government offices are shut down today.

Since I do celebrate the holiday, I decided to take a few minutes and consider some Christmas wishes I have for you, this country, and The Constitution Study.

## **Peace on Earth**

As the Christmas Carol I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day goes, I have the wish “Of peace on earth, good will to men!” Living in a fallen world, I know this is highly unlikely. However, it does not stop me from wishing for it. Since none of us have control over the entire world, how about we start with a little peace in our neighborhood? Again, that may be a pretty tall order and dependent upon your neighbors, but I can still wish that as much as it’s within our power, we live at

peace with our family, friends, and neighbors. Of course, that would require all of us to grant to our neighbors the liberty to live their lives as they see fit, as long as they do not infringe on the rights of others. As Benjamin Franklin, writing under the pseudonym Silence Dogood wrote in 1722:

Without Freedom of Thought, there can be no such Thing as Wisdom; and no such Thing as public Liberty, without Freedom of Speech; which is the Right of every Man, as far as by it, he does not hurt or controul the Right of another: And this is the only Check it ought to suffer, and the only Bounds it ought to know.

[Silence Dogood, No. 8 – Printed in The New-England Courant, July 9, 1722](#)

## **Hope**

I've received several emails and comments to the effect that it's over, it's time to turn out the lights, and to admit that the American experiment has failed. Fair enough; things are pretty ugly right now, and I must admit I don't see things getting that much better in the near future. I generally have two replies to such statements.

First, how do you know it's over? After all, none of us know the future, so how do you know things won't get better? And really, what is the alternative? Simply bending over and shouting, "Thank you sir, may I have another!" while tyrants paddle your behind?

Second, I point out that everyone so far who has made such a statement seems to be focusing on Washington, D.C. Yet we can still have quite an impact within our families, neighbors, towns, and cities. Just because D.C. has become a tyrannical hell-hole, it doesn't mean we have to live in one as well. When you throw some sound knowledge about the Constitution, our rights, and the limited powers of the federal government in the mix, there is more opportunity for hope than there is

for despair.

Therefore, my wish for Christmas is that we do not give up on freedom and that we all stand against the the light of liberty dying.

## **Liberty**

This season I wish that we can all live at liberty.

Freedom from restraint, in a general sense, and applicable to the body, or to the will or mind. The body is at liberty when not confined; the will or mind is at liberty when not checked or controlled. A man enjoys liberty when no physical force operates to restrain his actions or volitions.

### [Liberty – Webster's 1828 Dictionary](#)

The thing about living at liberty is that it's a combination of how we choose to live and how we choose to treat others. As our first Chief Justice of the United States said:

By knowing their rights, they will sooner perceive when they are violated, and be the better prepared to defend and assert them.

### **John Jay, First Chief Justice of the United States**

Living at liberty means not only knowing your rights, but being prepared to defend and assert them. Much of what we do here at the Constitution Study involves helping people do just that. Even if the world around you is living under tyranny, if you are prepared to defend and assert your rights, you are free and at liberty. Yes, they may incarcerate your body, but if you are prepared to defend and assert your rights, they can never incarcerate your mind.

Just as there's a responsibility to defend and assert your rights, you have a duty to allow others to exercise theirs. Just because you disagree with someone does not give you the

right to shut them up. Unless that are interfering with the exercise of a legitimate right, being at liberty means allowing others to be free as well.

## **The Future**

As we celebrate Christmas, followed shortly by New Years, let us consider the present all of us are leaving to future generations. Will our children, and our children's children, live in a country better than the one we live in now? That depends on what we do today, tomorrow, and for the rest of our tomorrows, as we try to secure such a nation for them. It's my wish that we leave them a nation better, freer, and more at liberty than the one we have today. I also wish we leave those generations with a better understanding of the blessings of liberty, how we secure them, and a desire to leave this country to their rising generation in a better condition than they received it. My fervent wish is for the United States to live up to its national anthem, and be the land of the free by being the home of the brave.

## **Conclusion**

I want to conclude with a personal set of wishes. Earlier this year I launched the Constitution Study Patriots Program, designed to help individuals, groups, and organizations better defend and assert their rights. My Christmas wish is that more people will join me, not only by getting the education needed to live as free men and women, but by helping me build more and better tools to help educate others. To that end, I wish for others to help me communicate what's going on to an ever widening group of patriots, I wish for others willing to stand up for their rights, and for the rights of others. Lastly, I also wish for others willing to support the work we're doing, in any way possible.

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