

This Easter, we celebrated the life of six beautiful puppies. Grace carried eight perfectly formed young. Sadly, two could not survive birth. Both succumbed to lack of timely oxygen. So in the midst of the joy of new life, the shadow of death fell upon us. Still, after eight weeks of non-stop care, we bade our new friends a fond farewell and sent them on to their happy forever homes.

Speaking of life and death, 2020 was a year like no other as we struggled to live with the specter of a “pandemic.” Fear drives people to do strange things. No wonder, with the fear of death hanging over them, people proceeded to strip store shelves of staples and huddle in their homes.

Perhaps that's why so many in power latched onto this latest flu from China to assert authority over those whom they were appointed to serve. They decreed ridiculous and even dangerous mandates. The public dutifully complied to isolation edicts in order to “flatten the curve” and avoid the risk of overwhelming the medical system. Now after nine months, and severe financial hardship for many, skeptics have surfaced. In her webinar entitled “COVID-19 Deaths: A Look at U.S. Data,” Dr. Genevieve Briand, Professor of Economics at Johns Hopkins University, exposed the hypocrisy of this latest flu hysteria by carefully analyzing CDC (comorbidity) data.

Governors and mayors make proclamations and call them laws in clear demonstration of executive overreach and then dutifully apologize when caught hypocritically violating *their own* specious commands. They tout science but ignore genetics. They bemoan death, but foster violence including barbaric butchering of babies in the womb. They even demonize life-giving atmospheric carbon dioxide. What they call *science* is a *political* corruption of true science.

Perhaps this charade has risen beyond the patience of even Almighty God. Perhaps judgment day has arrived for the freest, most powerful nation in history. But perhaps, just perhaps, this is a wake-up call to the righteous remnant. In II Chronicles 7:14 God makes a conditional promise to His people Israel. While not directed to Christians, the verse gives insight into God's character. Our Heavenly Father listens to His own and responds to their humble, sincere cries for His help. God certainly can expose fraud and conquer evil. The fate of our country hangs in the balance.

In 1968, the classic movie *The Planet of the Apes* rocked the big screen. The surprise ending showed the lead astronaut chancing along the shoreline, half-buried in the sand, the Statue of Liberty. He realized he had traveled to a later time and that the Planet of the Apes was his *own earth* (perversely corrupted).

Four hundred years ago, the godly Pilgrims traveled to Plymouth, Massachusetts and there established the foundations of this great nation. Like Moses before them, the Pilgrims fled oppression to freely worship their God. In Philadelphia, hangs the Liberty Bell – a symbol of the freedoms we hold dear. How ironic that a symbol of liberty sits in a city where massive fraud may soon crush the liberty of an entire nation so sacrificially earned and preserved.

As this agonizing scenario plays out, we have to wonder where is the joy and hope we celebrate each year? Thankfully, we're not bound by the evil forces of this world. The Bible says, “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” Jesus Christ, Emmanuel, God with us, came and gave His life that we may conquer death. When He returned to glory, He sent His Holy Spirit. Despite our circumstances, we who know Him will **always be free**. And that's some very good news!

Merry Christmas!