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**ISSUE NO. 22** 

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**Bayou's Story Christian Jackson Community Focus** 

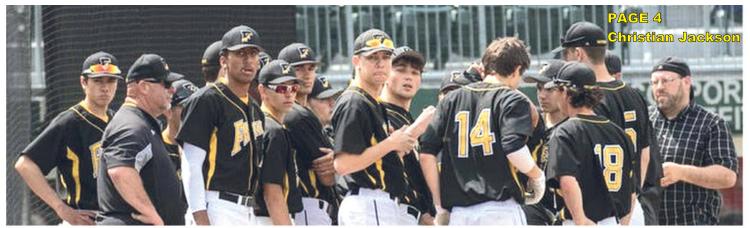
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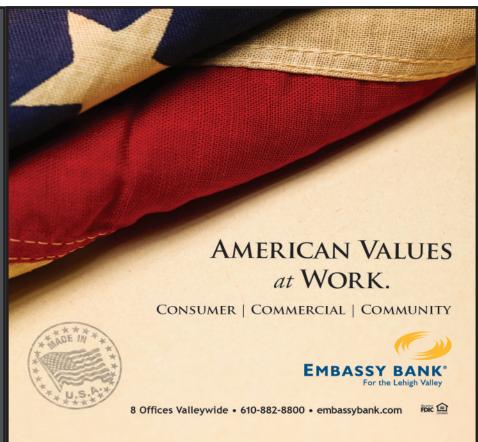
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#### COMMUNITY FOCUS | LOCAL SPORTS

#### PATRIOTS BASEBALL LOOKS TO **CONTINUE RUN OF SUCCESS**



Up to this point, the Freedom Patriots baseball team has had quite a bit of recent success, a trend they would like to continue as they now head into the 2018 season with a good amount of upperclassmen talent taking charge. Last season, the team went 16-6 (playoffs included. 16-4 in the regular season), even starting off with a 7-0 record, but their season came to a halt when they were met with two first round exits in both the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference playoffs and District XI playoffs. In 2016, the Patriots won the EPC championship, but were ousted in their first playoff game in the District XI tournament.

Due to all this recent success, Freedom head coach Nick D'Amico is feeling very confident about his team going into the upcoming season. "I feel we will be able to compete with the rest of the league and will have to do so with great pitching and defense," coach D'Amico said. He emphasized those two points repeatedly (pitching and defense) as keys to being successful this season. The Patriots averaged four runs allowed per game, a total the team is most certainly looking to focus on trimming down in 2018.

D'Amico will look to his group of guys as a whole to step up. Returning to the varsity level, he's looking for Senior OF-P Alec Huertas, Senior 3B-P Tim Healy, Senior 2B Jonah Mateo, Senior 1B-OF-P David Smith, and Senior SS-P Griffin Connelly. New to varsity this spring, Senior Andrew Knerr, Junior Adam Throne, Junior Derek Bast, Senior Echua Caban, Junior JaRay Cotto, Junior Joey Stofanak, Junior Dylann Paar, Junior Sandy Hernandez, Junior Spencer LaRiviere will be looked at as more key contributors he's looking to help guide the team into success.

The team lost five starters from last year in Evan Callahan, Tyler Cooper, Jake Petro, Teddy Liadis, and Tommy Bonilla. As for the offense, once again they are going to be looked upon to make another big splash. When Freedom didn't exactly have great pitching or defense, the offense stepped up in games such as their 14-9 victory over Hazleton, their 10-6 win over Wilson Area High School, and their 17-6 rout over Dieruff. The Patriots shouldn't have any problem with that, averaging nearly seven runs per game last year, a staggering total.

For a team like Freedom, the goals remain the same year in and year out. "We go into the season with the goal of improving upon last year's season and look to compete for league and district championships," D'Amico said. This team is anxious to make some noise in the postseason after last year's late season disappointment. In 2018, it looks as though the Freedom Patriots baseball team is coming into a more complete form and appears poised to make a deep postseason run if they can garner the right amount of drive and leadership to get there, which doesn't look like it should be much of a problem at all. Their season kicks off on March 28 with an away tilt at William Allen.

By Christian Jackson

## SOFTBALL TEAM LOOKS **AHEAD AFTER "REBUILDING"**



Coming off a 7-13 season in which Freedom Girls Softball was dealing with the loss of eight seniors, the team looks toward a new direction in which coach Nora Borger is very optimistic of, calling the team "competitive" overall.

This year, the team only has to deal with the loss of three contributing seniors, catcher Jana Boksan, shortstop Camryn Spina, and right fielder Shalyn Banas. Granted, losses are losses, but it appears with some former underclass players now older and more experienced, coach Borger will look to them to lead the team as the time is now for these young ladies, but she isn't going to get comfortable on just experience alone when being asked who needed to step up for the team.

"Everyone. We need our pitchers to pitch well and our defense to play well. We also need to hit well," Borger said, entering her sixth year coaching the team. "We have a few freshmen who will do well at the varsity level and just need to get some game experience. We have some upperclassmen who have improved and need to bring positive leadership."

Positive leadership will be an important piece to this team, looking to improve off a season in which the team essentially had to start over. With several good teams around the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference, coach Borger is fairly confident, calling her team competitive with that of her competition. The team will need a quick start and win games early in the season to do that, having gone 2-8 in their first ten games of last season.

Overall though, what are the expectations with the Lady Patriots softball team? "We want to qualify for playoffs and see what happens from there," Borger said. All three components of the team, pitching, offense and defense stepping up will be instrumental in doing that.

Regardless of the result, win or lose, coach Borger says her team is "going to have fun playing the game." In the midst of a swift rebuild, the Freedom girls softball team is going to be a very fun and intriguing team to keep track of this upcoming spring sports season when the cold clears and the grass gets greener. For the Freedom softball team, they hope that the grass is indeed greener, and things are looking up for this squad.

#### **Bv Christian Jackson**





## COMMUNITY FOCUS | LOCAL SPORTS

# 2018 Spring Sports Schedule

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Boys varsity			Place	Time
Monday	08/26/18	Posponed to 4/28/2018 - Bi pudsburg	Autay	4.00 FM
Wednesday	00/20/10	William Allen	Home	4:00 PM
Thursday	03/29/18	"Wilson Area H3	ferras	4:00 FM
Saturday	03/31/18	Abington Heighte High School	Home	11:00 A
Wednesday	345410	Tast Shoudsburg South	Array	4:30 FM
Friday	04/06/18	*Louis E Dieruff HS	Home	4:00 PM
Salurday	34:07/10	Hazleton Area High School	Armey	12:00 15
Tuesday	04/10/18	'Easton	Homo	4:00 PM
Thursday	04/12/10	"Whitehall	Home	4:00 PW
Tuesday	04/17/18	'Emmaus (Emmaus Community Fark)	fritay	4:00 PM
Thursday	34/19/18	'Bethlehem Catholic High School	Ames	4:00 PM
Friday	04/20/18	'Liberty (Coca Cola Park )	Home	6:45 PW
Monday	04/28/18	William Alien	Autos	4.46 FM
Wednesday	04/25/10	*Pocono Mountain West	Home	4:00 PW
Friday	04/27/18	'Bethlehem Catholie High Behool	Home	4:00 PM
Salurday	3464818	Rescheduled from 2018-03-28 Should-burg	Army	1150 A
Monday	04/30/18	"Nezareth Area High School	ferray	4:00 PM
Wednesday	35/02/18	*Lone E Daruff HS	Army	4:00 FM
Friday	06/04/18	'Pleasant Valley	Home	4:00 PW
Monday	06/07/18	'Easton	Ames	4.00 PM
Wednesday	00/06/10	Liberty (Game is st FBTAA helos)	Acres	7:00 PM

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Saturday	09/24/18	Postponed to 5/1/2018 - Pon Argyl	Place Away	12.00 C0.51
Monday	3099618	Poelponed to 4/20/2018 - Stroudsburg	Amey	4900
Wednesday	08/28/18	'William Allen	Home	4:00 F
Wednesday	3454/18	East Stroutsburg South	Acces	450 F
Friday	04/06/18	'Louis E Dicruff HS	Home	4:00 8
Saturday	04/07/18	Banger Ama	Accept	12.00
Tuesday	0/1/0/18	'Easton	Home	4:00 8
Thursday	04/12/18	Whitehell	Home	4:00 8
Friday	04/13/10	Allentown Central Catholic H S	Home	4:00
Tuesday	04/17/18	'Emmaus (Emmaus Kiwanis Floid)	timay	6:003
Truckelley	04/19/18	"Bethlehem Catholic High School	Anny	4901
Friday	04/20/18	Liberty	Home	4:00 8
Monday	34/23/18	'William Allen	Amey	4.00 8
Wednesday	0.025/10	Pocono Mountain West	Home	4:00 8
Friday	04/27/18	Bethiehem Catholic High School	Home	4:00 F
Saluctey	345/0/18	Rescheduted from 2018-03-28 Strout-burg	Anny	11:00
Monday	04/30/18	"Nazareth Area High School (Tuskes Fields)	Parties.	7.00 8
LIKE HY	05/01/18	Rescheduled from 2018-03-24 Pen Argyl	Accep	4.00 8
Wednesday	06/08/19	"Louis E Dion.If HS	Antay	4:00 P
Friday	05/04/18	*Pleaseant Veiley	Home	4:00 (
Monday	05/07/10	"Eacton	Array	4:00 F
Wednesday	06/08/18	'Libony	Acotte	4,00 8

Boys IV				
Monday	03/29/18	Postponed to 4/25/2015 - Stroudeburg	Place Home	Time 4:00
Wednesday	81/88/60	"Millam Alicn	Away	4.00 PM
Thursday	03/25/18	"Witson Area HS	Home	4:00
Saturday	03/31/18	Abington Heights High School (EAST Hills JV Field)	Home	11:00 A)
Wednesday	854040	*East Stroudsburg South	Home	4:00 PW
Friday	81/30/40	"Louis E Dieruff HS	Away	4:00 PM
Saturday	0407/18	Hazloton Area High School	Away	12.00 PV
Tuesday	01/10/18	Taston	Away	4:00 PM
Thursday	041218	"Whitehall	Away	4.00
Tuesday	04/17/18	Timmaus	Home	4:00
Thursday	01/19/18	'Bethlehem Catholis High School	Home	4:00
Friday	04/20/18	Liberty	Acomy	4.00
Monday	04/23/18	"William Allen	Home	4:00
Wednesday	04/25/18	*Posono Mountain West	ferray	4.00
Friday	04/27/16	*Bethlehem Cetholic High School	Home	4:00 PM
Saturday	04/28/18	Rescheduled from 2018-03-25 Stroudsburg	Home	11:00 At
Monday	04/30/18	"Nezereth Area High School	Home	4:00 PM
Wednesday	05/02/18	*Louis E Dieruff HS	Home	4:00 PM
Friday	05/04/18	"Pleasant Valley	Autoy	4.00
Monday	05/07/16	*Esston	Home	4:00 PM
Wednesday	06/09/18	*Liberty	Home	4:00 PM

Monday	00/26/10	Postponed to 4/25/2018 - Stroudeburn	Phone Home	4:00 PM
Wednesday	08/28/18	'William Alien	Away	4.00 PM
Wednesday	04/04/18	Exel Stroudeburg South	Home	4:00 PF
Friday	04/06/18	"Louis E Dioruff HS	Austr	4:00 PM
Saturday	04/07/18	Bangor Area	Home	12:00 F
Tuesday	04/10/10	*Eaglon	Arragy	4:00 PA
Wednesday	04/11/18	Allemewr Dentral Catholic H S (Pates Park.)	Austr	6.00 PM
Thurseley	34/12/18	Whiterest	Anny	45015
Tuesday	04/17/18	'Emmaus	Home	4:00 Pf
Thursday	04/19/18	*Bethlehem Catholic High School	Home	4:00 Pf
Friday	04/20/10	Liberty	Arragy	4:00 P3
Monday	04/23/18	*William Allen	Home	4:00 PF
Wednesday	3495/18	Popone Mountain West	Away	450019
Friday	04/27/18	Bethlehem Catholic High School	Annay	4:00 P1
Saturday	04/28/16	Rescheduled from 2018-03-26 Stroudsburg	Home	11:00 A
Monday	01/30/18	'Nazareth Area High School	Home	4:00 Pf
Tuesday	05/01/18	Pon Argyl	Home	4:00 Pf
Wednesday	05/02/18	"Louis E Disruff HS	Home	4:00 PF
Friday	02/04/18	'Pleasant Valley	Annay	4:00 PN
Manday	08/07/18	*Easton	Hume	4:00 PF
Wednesday	06/08/18	*Liberty	Home	4:00 PF

Monday	08/26/18	'Emmaus	Place Away	3.80 Pt
Tuesday	09/27/18	<ol> <li>"Reached ried from 2018-09-20 Nazereth Area Light School</li> </ol>	Amily	3.90 Pt
Wednesday	03/28/18	Pleasant Valley	Home	3:30 PI
Tuesday	04/03/18	"East Stroudsburg South	Away	3.80 Pf
Wednesday	8134640	Stroudsburg	Away	323 P
Thursday	01/05/18	Posono Mountain West	Home	3:30 P
Tuesday	84/10/18	"Afiliam Allen	Home	3:30 P
Thursday	04/12/18	"Rescheduled from 2018-03-22 Whitehall	Home	3:30 P
Monday	81/19/140	*Bethlehem Cetholic High School	Home	3:30 P
Liesday	04/17/18	"Locis E Dienot HS	Away	3.33 P
Friday	04/20/18	Easten	Amay	3:30 P
Tueeday	04/24/18	Liberty	Home	3:30 F

			Place	Time
Monday	03/26/18	'Postponed to WI9/2018 - Allentown Central Catholic H 8	Home	3:30
Thursday	04/03/18	Tri Meet	Home	3:30
Monday	04/09/18	Tri Modi © PM East	Away	3.90
Thursday	64/12/18	Tr. Meet & DiemiT	Amay	330
Tuesday	04/17/18	William Allon	Away	3:30
Thursday	844949	*Reacheduled from 2018-03-28 Allentown Central Catholic H S	Home	3:30
Friday	642048	Alter Invitational	Amay	TBA
Monday	04/23/18	'Dethiehem Catholic High School	Home	3:30
Thursday	04/25/18	'Pleasant Valley	Home	3:30
Monthle	64/30/18	"Libraria	Amory	3.90

roese Boys Varsity				
Tuesday	03/27/18	'Easton	Place Home	Time 7:00 Pi
Thursday	03/20/18	Wallamiter	Awar	4.00 Pt
Tuesday	04/03/18	'Emmaus	Home	4:00 PI
Thursday	04/05/18	*Bedriehem Catholic High School	Home	4:00 PI
Saturday	04/07/18	Wientown Central Catholic III S (% Cader Crest College)	Away	12:00
Monday	04/09/18	Saucon Valley	Home	4:00 P
Tuesday	04/10/18	'Parkland High School (Turl flok)	Away	7.00 PI
Thursday	04/12/18	"Plesesnt Velley	Hame	4:00 P
Saturday	04/14/18	Moravian Academy	Ноте	11:00
Monday	04/18/18	Southern Lahigh	Away	7.00 PI
Tuescay	04/17/18	'Negareth Area High School	Away	7:00 P
Thursday	04/19/18	'Liberty	Home	7:00 P
Saturday	04/21/18	Saucon Valley	Away	10:00
Tuesday	04/24/18	'Northampton	Home	4:00 P
Thursday	04/28/18	Pleased Valley	Away	5:30 P
Friday	04/27/18	Phillipeburg High School	Home	4:00 F
Tuesday	03/01/18	"Bethlehem Catholic High School	Away	4:00 F
Monday	05/07/18	*Liberty	Army	5:30 P

acrosse				
loys JV				
Tuenday	03/27/18	"Earling	Place Home	Title 5:30 PM
Thursday	03/29/16	1\0 фатросо	AWAII	6:30 PM
Tuenday	04/03/18	"Ептинця	Home	5:30 PM
Thursday	04/05/18	*Louis E Dieruff HS	Home	5:30 PM
Saurday	04/07/18	"Allamown Central Catholic H 8 (# Oadar Creat College)	Amily	10.90 Ab
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Tuesday	04/10/18	*Parkland High School (Societ grassifield)	Awas	5:30 PM
Thursday	04/12/18	'Picasam Valley (East Hills BLAX Grass Field)	Home	5:30 PM
Saturday	04/14/18	Moravian Academy	Home	12:30 PM
Monday	04/16/18	Southern Lehigh	Away	5:30 PM
Tuesday	04/17/18	"Nazareth Area High School	Away	6:30 PM
Thursday	87/97/40	*Liberty	Home	5:30 PM
Saturday	04/21/18	Saucon Valley	Away	11:30 AM
Tuesday	04/24/18	'Northampton	Home	5:30 PM
Thursday	04/26/18	1" sessari Valley	Away	7:00 PM
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Monday	05/07/18	Liberty	Away	4:00 PW

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Sitta Varsity				
Saurday	03/34/18	Lake-Lohman Junior-Benior High School	Place Away	Time 11.00 Ab
Tuesday	03/27/18	'Pleasant Valley	Home	4:00 PM
Thursday	03/29/18	'Easten	Away	4.00 PM
Saturday	03/31/18	Northempton	Home	18:00 AN
Thursday	04/03/18	'Nazareth Area High School	Away	6:30 PM
Seturday	04/07/18	*Liberty	Home	12:00 PM
Wonday	01/09/10	Saucen Valley	Away	4:30 PM
Tuesday	81101140	'Northematon	Away	4.00 PM
Saturday	04/14/18	'Allentown Central Catholic H S	Home	2:30 PM
Monday	04/16/18	Southern Lehigh	Home	4:00 PM
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Thursday	04/19/18	Emmaus	Home	4:00 PM
Тинели	эисмия	Allenkeen Central Certrol o H S (# St. Mikers — Field )	Away	450 PM
Thursday	04/28/18	Easton	Home	7:00 PM
Friday	34/27/10	Quakenown Community Senter High School	Amag	3:30 PM
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GMs JV			Flace	Time
Saturday	03/94/18	Lake-Lehman Junice/Senior High School	Away	12:30 PM
Tuesday	03/27/18	"Pleasant Valley (GLAX Grass Field)	Home	6:30 PM
Thursday	87/05/20	*Boston	Away	5.80 PW
Saturday	03/31/18	Northampton	liome	11:30 AM
Thursday	81/60/40	"Nazareth Area High School	Awas	4:00 PW
Saturday	04/07/18	*Liberty	Home	1:30 PM
Monday	04/09/18	Saucen Valley	Away	6:00 PM
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Saturday	04/14/18	"Allentown Central Catholic H S	Home	4:00 PM
Monday	81/31/40	Southern Lehigh	Home	5:30 PM
Tuesday	04/17/18	"Parkland High School (Gress field Clotheid hockey Feld)"	Away	4:15 PM
Thursday	04/19/18	Emmaus (GLAX Grass Field)	Home	5:30 PM
Tuesday	04/24/18	Allentown Central Catholic H S (# St. Mike/s Field )	Away	6:30 PM
Thursday	04/26/18	*Easton	Home	5:30 PM
Friday	04/27/18	Quakertown Community Senior High School	Away	5.00 PM
Monday	04/90/18	Saucon Valley	Home	6:30 PM
Thursday	05/03/18	Liberty	Away	5.50 PW
Setunday	05/12/18	Phillipeburg High School	Home	11:30 AM

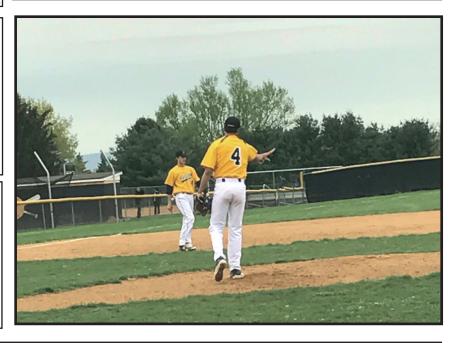
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Tuesday	04/03/18	Southern Lehigh	Home	5:30 PM
Thursday	04/85/16	Cuekerlown Community Serror Figh School	Awas.	7:00 PM
Baturday	04/07/18	Northeastern Benfor High School (Northeastern HB Bobest Tourney)	Away	TB/4
Tuesday	81/01/40	Pocono Nountain West	Home	6:30 PM
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Wordsy	04/19/16	Nazereth Area High School	Away	6:30 PM
Tuesday	04/17/18	Bethlehem Catholic High School	Home	5:30 PM
Trunsday	04/19/18	Name & Dentil HS	Away	5:50 PM
Monday	04/23/18	-Easton	Home	5:30 PM
Wednesday	04/25/18	Whitelett	Amay	7:00 PM
Friday	04/27/18	Posono Mountain East	Home	6:30 PM
Baumlay	042818	Northampton	Away	10.15 AM
Saturday	04/25/18	Wyoming Valley West Senior High School (49 Northampton HS)	Amey	11.00 AM
Wednesday	05/02/15	William Allen	Amey	5:30 PM
Friday	05/04/18	*Emmaus	Home	5:30 PM
Variday	05/07/18	Proprio Mountain Eval.	Amay	5:00 PM
Thursday	05/10/18	*Liberty	Home	6:30 PM

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ys JV Eriday	D3/23/18	Northamoton	Place Home	1:00 Pt
Tuesday	03/27/18	William Allen	Home	4:00 Pf.
	03/25/18			
Thursday		Timmers	Anney	5:00 Pt
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Threaday	0405/18	Quakertown Community Serior High School	Away	avia Pk
Tuesday	04/10/18	'Pocono Mountain West	Home	4:00 Pf
Wodnesday	81/11/40	Tunkhannock High Behool	Home	4:30 Pf
Thursday	04/12/10	Parkland High School (Gemes to held Si Springhouse MS)	Amey	8:50 P
Worlday	04/16/18	Nazareth Area High School	Awey	4:30.19
Tuesday	04/17/18	Bethlehem Catholic High School	Home	4:00 Pt
Thursday	04/19/18	"Louis E Dismil" HB	Amey	4:00 FI
Monday	01/23/18	*Easton	Home	4:00 PI
Wednesday	04/25/18	Whitehall	Accept	5.30 FB
Eriday	04/27/18	"Pocono Mountain Eset	Home	4:00 PI
Saturday	04/28/18	Northampion	Annay	9:00 Al
Security	0425/18	Wyoming Valley West Senior High School	Amer	11.000
Wednesday	05/02/18	William Allen	Array	4:00 FF
Friday	05/04/18	*Emmeus	Home	4:00 Pf
Sarurday	05/85/18	Tunktermock High School (JV Tournament @Tunkhamnock HS)	Away	8100 At
Worlday	05/07/18	Pecano Mountain Fast	Array	4:00 P
Thursday	05/10/18	'Liberty	Home	4:00 Pf





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# COMMUNITY FOCUS

# 'THE BAYOU': SOUTHERN COMFORT IN THE LEHIGH VALLEY



The overall atmosphere of 'The Bayou' is very comforting. The same way a bayou makes home for many different crustaceans in Louisiana and the south, this restaurant is a home for enthusiastic regulars pouring in for 'Happy Hour' Monday-Friday or flocking the outdoor seating as the sun starts to peak it's head back out for the warmer months. With an intelligent, detail-oriented Mo Taylor at the head of the business, this restaurant is a solid establishment in the Valley, representing customer care and an enthusiasm for great food. As successful as the restaurant has become, it was a bit of a risk for Mo and the other members of his team to take, coming from a background of purely 'sports bar' type dining spots.

"The first thing we wanted to do was, kind of, separate ourselves from what we were known for," Mo tells me, as I sit across from him in his friendly, packed upstairs office. "Originally, we were going to do a generic name that couldn't be deemed southern or Italian, or, this or that. [But] we were like 'nope, let's go all the way, let's take the southern thing and run with it."

And, run with it, they have. With another Bayou now open in Easton, it's safe to say the risk was one worth taking. One could come to realize this simply by the flock of individuals that come into the place, but there is more evidence of the feat. Last year, the restaurant was named one of the 'Hot 100 Restaurants in the Country' by OpenTable - a phone application that runs nationwide giving users the ability to book reservations without having to make a phone call. This was something that was accomplished by the combination of great food and an atmosphere open to families and people of all ages and walks of life.

"We really set out to try and make our guests feel at home when they come here. We like to, you know, take the edge off," Mo continues with a genuine tone in his voice. "We serve top quality cocktails and foods- we put a lot of effort into it, but we don't want to do it in a pretentious way. We want people to feel like they can come in and relax in jeans and a t-shirt or a three piece suit. We [really] have a great family atmosphere here."



In our short time talking together, the chef comes breezing through the upstairs doorway with two bowls of freshly spiced and cooked beef. Everyone in the upstairs office begins sampling the foods and giving their distinct opinions on the flavors, spices and consistencies of the food - truly paying attention to every finite detail. I'm allowed to sample both and think that they are both amazing, but you can tell the professionalism in these food-loving individuals by their decision making process on which meat is truly better. As they come to a general consensus, all I can think of is the fact that I would have been completely satisfied with either choice and smile a bit in admiration of their detail-oriented process. It's something you don't usually see as a regular, dining customer but is, seemingly, what is able to take a restaurant from a regular place to eat to one of the hottest in the country!

With spring and summer (almost) right around the corner, there is an excitement in the air. The outdoor patios are about to open, the summer drinks are about to be crisp and fulfilling to the taste buds and the buzz of weekend escapism underneath the sun and warm stars will be underway.

So, whether you are a regular and love the restaurant or have yet to check it out, be sure to stop on by this upcoming season and find a comforting home in 'The Bayou!'

#### Mo's Picks:

Drink: The Apple Barrel - "It packs a punch but it's great to sip in the warm weather." Dinner: Shrimp & Grits

#### **Customer Top Sellers:**

Fried Chicken Bayou Mac + Cheese

'The Bayou' is open Monday-Sunday 11am-12am. It serves as, not only, a family-oriented restaurant but a fun, lively nightlife location to hit on your weekend endeavors. Located at 702 Hawthorne Rd, Bethlehem, PA 18018 along with a location at 64 Centre Square, Easton, PA 18042. Easton and Bethlehem locations have almost identical menus but provide different atmospheres and vibes.

#### By Shane Cunningham



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# FEATURE ARTICLE

# WHAT A TIME TO BE A SPORTS FAN

Sorry Andy Williams, we all love Christmas, but April is the most wonderful time of the year! What an awesome time to be a sports fan! There's something there for everyone so let's dive in to a flat out incredible and spectacular sports calendar.

Fresh off of the Eagles' first Super Bowl Championship, the positive vibes are still reverberating around the Delaware Valley and throughout the city's now positive and beautiful sports landscape. And while those vibes will carry us through a very long Eagles off season, there will be a litany of great sports right in front of our eyes, waiting for us to enjoy. And for a change, a lot will be going on right here in our own backyard! Seems like old times!

We just witnessed another spectacular NCAA college basketball tournament, which in my opinion, the opening two days of March Madness, are the greatest two days on the entire sports calendar. The tourney itself is just a fantastic fortnight of buzzer beaters, upsets, monster runs and terrific competition. One game left and the nets come down in San Antonio, TX. And true to the old cliché, when one door closes another shall open, and this case, about 7 more. Welcome April. Welcome.

The Phillies, who we discussed last week, are already off and running under new manager Gabe Kapler and will be packing Citizen's Bank Park on opening day in front of a home town sold out crowd. Who doesn't love opening day and the start of baseball season? Settle in and relax, there are only 150+ more games on tap. Let's go Phils! April is one of those rare months where everything is in play, and here in Philadelphia, we finally get back Flyers playoff hockey (we hope) and what do you know; some Sixers basketball too!

The Flyers, who have missed the playoffs in three of their past five seasons, are teetering close to qualifying for this year's run at the cup, but still have some work left to do. The orange and black haven't won a playoff series since 2012 but as usual, this year's field looks wide open and anything can happen in the NHL's postseason. Even if you're not a true fan of the game, nothing beats playoff hockey. The thrill of sudden death overtime, the deciding game

7's, the speed and angst, waiting to see which team blink's first. It's always more fun with a deep run by the home team, but that's up to the Flyers. It's truly a great feeling to attend a playoff hockey game in shorts! Did someone say block party?

Playoff basketball you say? How about Your team, Your town, Your 76ers? Welcome back boys! By mid-month, the team will be participating in their first post season contest since 2012 and you can be sure the Wells Fargo Center will be rocking. The Sixers have a legitimate shot at faring very well in this year's post season, with even some experts predicting an extended presence. It's been a long time since that last playoff series win versus the Bulls in '12, but something tells me this team is about to go on a nice, long string of post season appearances. With the likes of Embiid, Simmons and Saric as a solid foundation, this team will sure be filling many more of our Aprils to come.

Just think, in a couple of weeks, you could be giving the remote control a total workout with the Phils, Flyers and Sixers all on the tube the same night! Get those trigger thumbs and fingers ready. And if college and pro basketball, the beginning of baseball season and the onset of playoff hockey weren't enough to whet your sports appetite, there's still plenty more on the menu. The multibillion dollar behemoth NFL is always in play. One thing that can be said about the NFL, they do an absolute fantastic job of marketing their product all year long. The Eagles, for the first time in the Super Bowl era, will be choosing Mr. Irrelevant (the last player selected in the NFL draft). The NFL has foolishly scheduled this year's draft in Dallas, TX but Jerry Jones and company will be hard pressed to duplicate last year's truly epic party and hosting job by the city of Philadelphia.

Besides discovering who the defending champions will add to their Super Bowl roster this season, we will have all the intrigue of the introduction and announcing of the Birds' first selection, right there in enemy territory. Don't think for a second last year's Drew Pearson's trolling of the Eagles will be forgotten. Can't wait for that one! And finally, for us golf fans,





a tradition unlike any other kicks off the sport's major season on April 5<sup>th</sup>. With the amazing resurgence of Tiger Woods, the ageless Phil Mickelson, and the game's great young talents, this year's Masters promises to be another 4 days of fantastic entertainment. It's April. There may be some showers, there may be some sneezes. But one thing is for sure, there will be plenty of exciting sports to watch and get excited about. Enjoy!

## By Brian Startare @Brianstartare

Brian Startare is a former sports talk host at 94WIP in Philadelphia. The co-author of *This Day in Philadelphia Sports* and is the Public Address Announcer for Saint Joseph's University Men's Basketball team.



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# WHAT HAVE YOU DONE **FOR YOU LATELY?**

are three simple tips to keep you in tremendous form. Take Steps to ACT: We sure can talk a good game but too often when it's time for us to suit up and charge onto the field many of us are sitting on the sidelines with our shoes untied. One of my favorite verses in the Bible is found in James 1:22, "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only."

There's a world of difference between being taught and being caught. During an interview I had this past weekend with Eli Marcus, he asked me a question about people who are avid personal development fans but can't seem to get out of their chairs and actively apply and engage in what they're hearing.

Absorbing is the first step. Next, you have to adapt and metabolize what you've listened to and then you can aspire to the next level. You must implement a system that enables you to take you

We need you to be at the top of your game. Here where you want to go and devise a viable flight plan to get you there.

> move you forward? Get Counsel and ASK: Those after I've discovered I've made a poor decision, someone will say to me they knew it was a wrong By Tracey C. Jones

When I wonder why they didn't tell me, I realized that I had never actually asked them for their input before I made the decision. There's a fine line between speaking truth in love and allowing someone the latitude to make their own mistakes. Many of us will not share any truth in love unless specifically asked. So, make sure you routinely and repeatedly ask for specific feedback from your mentors before you make any change, and not after.

What one person are you going to call and ask advice from on an issue you've been dealing with? Read Books to ADD: To get something you've never had, you'll need to do something you've never done. That's why viewing life as one long learning experience is imperative. You'll never know when life will present an opportunity that entails executing a skill set that you've never done before. It's important to be ready for when these situations present themselves. You are going to have to expand your mind, shift your paradigms, and alter your current schedule.

You're going to have to push something off your plate that is no longer value added so that you can make room for a heaping helping of something more nourishing and useful. As my father used to say, "Everything that touches your life makes you a more deeply motivated person." The same holds true for becoming a more deeply unmotivated person. If something or someone is not adding to your life, it needs to be subtracted for good. What one book What one step are you going to take today that will are you going to read today that can give you a new thought or idea?

of you who have heard me speak recently know that Charlie "Tremendous" Jones was a world-renowned motivator. But even he realized that truth in grace is my mantra for life. We need to ask true motivation is an inside job. Check out his life changing classic, The Mystery of people whom we respect for their input. Many times Self-Motivation and learn how you can stay in tremendous form today and every day.



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## **HOW TO MAKE PEOPLE LIKE YOU**

I was speaking at a community wide conference in Illinois. I was scheduled to speak for three days and had already completed the first two when something happened. I received a message that I needed to urgently process a document for my local bank. I decided to go to a bank at my speaking location and ask if they would help me. I arrived at the bank at lunch time. There was a long line of people waiting to talk with one woman. I noticed that everyone in the line was tense and nervous.

As we moved closer to the woman the man in front of me turned and said that he would rather do anything else than speak with the bank officer. I asked why, and he replied that the officer was an obnoxious and difficult person who always made conversations negative and rarely helped with whatever the customer wanted. He said he dreaded any contact with her. A few other people in line overheard his comments, looked at me and nodded in agreement. It looked like we all were in for a rough experience. I watched as each person spoke to the woman. She insulted and dismissed each one. All this time I was getting closer. It was almost my turn.

I thought and prayed about what to do. Then I had an idea. I decided to launch a positive "attack." I observed the woman as she offended everyone in front of me, looking for anything I could use to establish a friendly connection. When I reached her station, I smiled and introduced myself. She glared at me and said nothing. I then asked her about an unusual broach she was wearing on her sweater. I asked her if the pin was an antique and commented on the beauty and craftsmanship of the piece. I told her that she must be very proud to own such attractive jewelry. She paused a moment and said that the broach had belonged to her grandmother who had died a few years before. I then told her how much I loved both my grandmothers and asked her to tell me about her relative.

She opened her heart and relayed how much her grandmother had meant to her and that she still missed her. I told her that her grandmother would be pleased and proud that her

granddaughter loved her enough to continue to wear her jewelry to honor her memory. With her eyes moist with tears, she thanked me for reminding her of the grandmother she loved. Then, with a look of surprise, she asked me if I had any business with the bank. I explained my situation and she cheerfully handled my transaction. When we finished she asked me if I needed any money. She said she would transfer any funds I required and give me cash. She said she did not need to see my identification because we were now friends.

As I exited the bank the line of people still waiting looked at me in amazement and wonder. They could not understand why the bank clerk was smiling and waving at me as I left. There is ONE simple secret to making people like you. This secret can work for you today. The secret is: Always focus on the other person and what matters to them. I don't know why the woman at the bank was so difficult. I have no knowledge of her life struggles and what molded her personality. But I decided to ignore her bad attitude and focus on her. I used the pin on her sweater as an entry point into her heart and it worked.

Ask God to make you sensitive to other people, Put them ahead of you, Concentrate on what they consider special, Compliment them and honor them, and Focus more on their needs than

The Bible says in Philippians 2:3-4, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit; but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."

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#### By Ron Ball

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## **p** Health | Wellness

#### **March is Brain Injury Awareness Month**

# **OVERCOMING A BRAIN INJURY**

People often tell me how strong I am, how courageous I am. I think to myself that I'm really not. Years ago I wanted to stop fighting; I wanted to give up; I wanted to kill myself. I didn't because I had a family that loved me; they were the strong ones. In January of 2005, my life was amazing. I was a junior in high school coming right off of a state medal in track and field and I was halfway into my basketball season for Tamaqua High. One hit to my head changed my life forever. Everything was ripped right out of my hands. The ability to go back to school and the opportunity to win a D1 scholarship for track was now gone. I spent years with disabling migraines and I needed help walking from point A to point B.

I went from being this all-star athlete to the girl that people made fun of because I had a brain injury. I no longer understood life. Why did this happen to me? I was in excruciating pain day in and day out. I became a guinea pig to doctors. They didn't know how to treat me or what was even wrong with me other than "post concussive syndrome". They prescribed me pills, lots and lots of pills.

Some medications made me stutter and slur my words while others made me a complete zombie. I had lost all faith in doctors. I had one doctor tell me, "You're going to have migraines for the rest of your life, we'll just teach you how to deal with it". I wanted to give up. The pain was so bad that I wanted to fall asleep and never wake up. I often thought about how I could kill myself. Fast forward to 12 years later, I'm 29 and I'm a full-time student at Temple University majoring in journalism with a sports broadcast focus.

I graduate this December and I couldn't feel more blessed. Isn't that amazing!? But how did I get here? I started fighting back. I persevered. My depression and anxiety were so bad, that I grew tired of it. I started researching holistic approaches for treatments and I leaned on my family. My brain injury gave me a voice, and I slowly started to find my purpose in life. I shared my story online, at conferences, at clinics, and even for the government. I wanted to protect youth athletes. I find happiness when people from all over the world reach out to me and ask for help.

They're searching for hope, and I can give them that. I never gave up. I thought I was weak, and technically, I wanted to give up many times...but I didn't. I started finding the positives in my life instead of focusing on the negatives. I had an amazing family and a bright future that I wanted to start writing. The last piece of my crazy puzzle was solved when I found my miracle doctor in Rhode Island, Dr. Pedro. He diagnosed me properly, and treated me properly, and in less than two months, he cured me. Now, I really had no excuses.

I was normal again! I made up excuses to not go back to school like, I'm 25 and I can't afford it. After I realized those were just excuses, I applied for FAFSA and the rest is history. I still struggle in school to this day. I get easily overwhelmed and I still have some breakdowns, but every time I do, I realize how far I've come. I am strong! I can do this! I am healthy and happy and that is what life truly is about. So when you're struggling, keep fighting and never give up. If you wrestle with suicidal thoughts, don't do it, because there is someone in this world that cares about you, including strangers like me. Find a purpose in life and a reason to keep fighting. NEVER GIVE UP, because I didn't and trust me when I say, life will get easier.

By Tracy Yatsko PBS 39 TV Host - Reporter



#### WHY I KNOW THE BIBLE IS TRUE!

Many in our society falsely assume that the Bible is a religious book filled with superstitious stories about God working in people's lives. For decades scholars made the front page of newspapers and magazines with their accusations of "errors" all the while the archaeologist continued to uncover thousands of items confirming the accuracy of the Bible. A simple google search of the key words "Biblical Archaeology" or "Biblical Artifacts" will confirm this premise.

As a Christian I BELIEVE the Bible is true, but as a serious student of Bible prophecy, history, and archaeology I KNOW the Bible is true. Fulfilled Bible Prophecy is God's proof to a skeptical world. In the Bible God calls us to believe by faith, but He does not call us to believe in a "blind faith."

"Fulfilled Bible Prophecy – God's Proof to a Skeptical World"

Hundreds of books have been written to document the fulfillment of ancient prophecies regarding people, places, events, and nations (Search "reasons.org/Bible Prophecy"). It is a faith building experience to read about Daniel's prophecies of nations, Daniel 9:24-27; David's prophecy of crucifixion before it was invented, Psalm 22:16, and the prophecy of a king named Josiah who would dig up and burn the bones of false prophets on the altar of king Jeroboam, I Kings 13:2, 2 Kings 23:15-18, and over 300 prophecies fulfilled by Christ (Search "Godandscience.org/Prophecies of Jesus").

As amazing as it is to look back in history and see the accuracy of the Bible, it is even more astounding to look at events in our lifetime that confirm the Bible is true. When talking to a skeptic – family, friend, or co-worker – what do you say to them? Ask them to consider the single greatest proof that the Bible is true - the greatest fulfillment of prophecy in our lifetime is the rebirth of the nation of Israel. Jesus predicted the destruction of Jerusalem which was fulfilled in 70 AD and documented in the Arch of Titus just a few blocks from the Roman Colosseum. The Bible predicted that the Jewish people be scattered around the world, Deuteronomy 28:64, "And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from one end of the earth even unto the other." But it also predicts that Israel will be Re-gathered and the Jews will return to their homeland, Israel. Ezekiel 38:8, "After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people...."

"The Greatest Fulfillment of Prophecy in our Lifetime - Israel!"

There are over 1,500 prophecies about the second coming of Jesus in the Bible. But one thing is clear – the Jewish people MUST return to the land before the coming of Christ.

Old Testament prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel both predicted the return of the Jewish people to their land after being scattered around the world – Ezekiel 36:24, 37:12, 14, Jeremiah 30:11; 31:10.

In one generation the Jewish people went from having no homeland to being a recognized nation. In 1948, when Israel took its place among the nations of the world again for the first time in nearly 2000 years, students of prophecy recognized the fulfillment of the primary sign that the end of the age was upon us. Many Bible scholars view the rebirth of Israel as the budding of the fig tree, Matthew 24:32-33. Others see the retaking of Jerusalem in 1967 as the fulfillment of this event. Learn more by searching TheCaringChurch.com/Sunday-Evening (see "Be Prepared" Series).

Most musical lovers are familiar with the "old spiritual" called Dry Bones. This song sets to music the prediction from Ezekiel 37 picturing the rebirth of the nation of Israel as a valley of dry bones that becomes a mighty army. The fulfillment of this prediction is found in the Jewish people returning to their land in our lifetime.

We live in exciting days! We are witnesses to the fulfillment of prophecies made more than 2,000 years ago. We can understand that the current crisis in the Middle East absolutely fits a biblical scenario of the last days. A leader will rise out of the European Union to broker a peace treaty between the Jews and the Arabs "in the last days" (Daniel 9:27). This "world peace" does not last very long. Jesus predicted a 3 ½ year period of "great tribulation" on the earth, (Matthew 24:21) before His return to the earth to set up His one thousand year reign upon the earth, Revelation 20:4,

Yes, I know the Bible is true. The proof is found in history, prophecy, archaeology, and even in science. But the most important truth found in the Bible is the subject of your eternal destiny. Everyone has a living soul that will live *somewhere forever*! God gave us an accurate record of His dealings with people for one major purpose – to love us to Himself.

If you have never made a personal commitment to become a true and genuine follower of Jesus Christ, consider His offer of love and forgiveness today. Please take five minutes and watch "The Truth about Eternity" (TheCaringChurch.com/the-truth/).

Pastor Scott Wendal Valley Forge Baptist

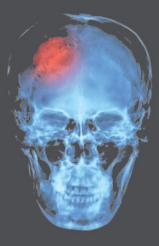
# CONCUSSION

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# ONE SUCCESS SECRET YOU REALLY NEED

I made a big mistake when I was a young pastor. Amy and I were speaking at a church near St. Louis. The services were unusually blessed by God and the people were happily responsive. Every night the church was full, and we were continually adding seats.

I was presenting a series on how to have a growing relationship with Jesus Christ. People of all ages were represented, and I was especially excited about the large number of teenagers and young adults who attended. Midway through the week I was stopped by an older woman. She asked if I had audio recordings of my seminars and I said no. She then asked if she could order a set.

I had never sold audios at an event and her question led me to a decision. I spoke with her the next night and told her that I would be happy to take an order and send her the audios when they were completed. She was very appreciative and said she would tell her friends at the church to order as well.

There was so much interest in the audios that we had to set up a table in the hallway to receive all the orders. People were happy and excited and eagerly paid me for the future recordings and even added postage. Amy and I collected the orders, finished the meeting and left for our next engagement. That was in March. We had a packed schedule and I went from conference to conference for several months. While I was traveling and speaking I forgot about the orders I had taken.

Finally, in August we were taking a quick summer break at the home of Amy's parents on the Jersey Shore. The beach was beautiful, the weather was spectacular, and the Italian food was amazing. We had one week to relax before we went to our next meeting. One morning I received a message to return a call. I did not recognize the number and called, not knowing the identity of the caller. The other person was the sweet, elderly woman who had first asked for audio recordings of my talks at her church in March.

When I realized who she was I remembered my promise to send the audios six months earlier. I apologized and told her that I would send her the audios as soon as I could have them recorded. She was very quiet then said that she no longer had a need for them. She explained that she had ordered them in March, believing that they would spiritually comfort her son who was in the last stages of cancer. She said she had told him about my messages and then waited to give them to him, but he died less than two months after my meeting in her church.

She had been deeply hurt by my failure to fulfill my commitment. After I apologized again and asked her forgiveness, I disconnected. I went into our bedroom and asked for God's forgiveness as well. What caused my failure? I was unorganized and busy. I knew I had promised the audios to those people (who had paid me) but continually procrastinated. Whenever I remembered the orders I would tell myself that I was too busy, or too tired, and that I still had ample time to finish the project, but I never did.

I refunded all the money. I went home, recorded the audios and sent them as well. And I have never forgotten the lesson of that failure. When you make a commitment you keep it, I have only missed two speaking engagements for the past 30 years. Twice I was stranded by different ice storms and could not travel to my locations. I have driven all night, bought airline tickets with my own money, changed clothes in hotel restrooms, sometimes arrived at an event exhausted (I once fell asleep on the stage while I was being introduced to speak,) but I have fulfilled every commitment (except for the two ice storms.)

When my daughter Allison was in Law School she was elected to the student Bar Association. She was responsible for scheduling social events for students and their families. To plan the events, she needed reservations. She said she was always astonished by how many law students would make reservations and not come. Many would personally promise to attend and not show up.

If you are a man or woman who fulfills your promises and keeps your commitments, you will stand out in your generation. Do you want to know one simple secret of success in life that always works? Keep your word, Keep your commitments, To your wife or husband, To your children, To your co-workers,

To your friends and neighbors, To God, and Keep your word.

The Bible says in Deuteronomy 23: 21, "If you make a vow to the Lord, do not be slow to pay it..."

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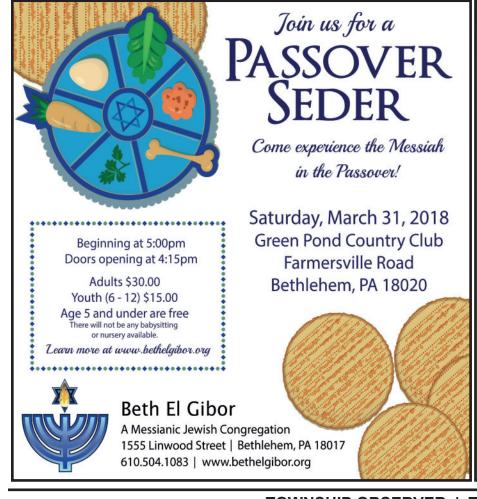


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## FEATURED EASTER MESSAGE

# **Easter and the Story of the Birds**

I am glad to say that I was greatly influenced by radio legend Paul Harvey for more than 20 years of my life. Paul Harvey was the greatest radio newscaster and commentator of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His daily broadcasts were the top three broadcasts for many years. He received numerous awards in his life including the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Everyone knew that Paul Harvey was a patriot who loved America and most knew that he was a Bible believing Christian as was evidenced by his holiday broadcasts. Though silenced by the grave in 2009, many of us can still hear his voice as we read his favorite Easter story once again.

A Boston preacher Dr. S.D. Gordon, placed a beat up, bent, rusted old bird cage beside his pulpit when he told this story.... An unkempt, unwashed, little lad about 10 years old was coming up the alley swinging this old caved in bird cage with several tiny birds shivering on the floor of it. The compassionate Dr. Gordon asked the boy where he got the birds. He said he trapped them. Dr. Gordon asked what he was going to do with them. The boy said he was going to play with them and have fun with them.

The preacher said, "Sooner or later you'll get tired of them. Then what are you going to do with them?" The lad said, "I have some cats at home. They like birds. I'll feed them to my cats." Dr. Gordon said, "Son, how much do you want for the birds?" The boy, surprised, hesitated and said, "Mister, you don't want these birds. They're just plain old field birds. They can't even sing. They're ugly." The preacher said, "Just tell me. How much do you want?" The grubby little lad thought about it.

He squinted up one eye. He calculated and hesitated and said, "Two dollars?" To his surprise Dr. Gordon reached into his pocket and handed the boy two, one dollar bills. The preacher took the cage. The boy, in a wink, hurried up the alley. In a sheltered crevice between buildings, Dr. Gordon opened the door of the cage and tapping on the rusty exterior he encouraged the little birds, one at a time, to find their way out through the narrow door and fly away.



Thus having accounted for the empty cage beside his pulpit, the preacher went on to tell what seemed, at first, like a separate story. Once upon a time, Jesus and the Devil had engaged in a negotiation. Satan had boasted how he'd baited a trap in Eden's garden and caught himself a world full of people. "What are you going to do with all those people in your cage" Jesus wanted to know. The Devil said, "I'm going to play with em', tease em'. Make them marry and divorce and fight and kill one another. I'm going to teach them to throw bombs on one another.

I'm going to have fun with them!" Jesus said, "You can't have fun with them forever. When you get tired of playing, what are you going to do with them?" Satan said, "Damn them! They're no good anyway! Damn them! Kill them!" Jesus said, "How much do you want for them?" Satan said, "You can't be serious! If I sell them to you, they'll just spit on you. They'll hate you. They'll hit you and beat you. They'll hammer nails into you! They're no good." Jesus said, "How much?" Satan said, "All of your tears and all of your blood. That's the price." Jesus took the cage, and paid the price, and opened the door.

Yes, who truly believe on Jesus Christ for our salvation are truly free. Jesus said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" John 8:32.

## By Pastor Scott Wendal Valley Forge Baptist





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