

America's Godly Heritage

by John Franklin

America's greatness is due to its founding principles and the blessings of God, which led to the country's prosperity and success.

Duration: 44:30

Scripture: Exodus 20:3, Deuteronomy 32:1-2, Deuteronomy 32:10, Deuteronomy 32:15, Deuteronomy 32:18, Psalm 109:25, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "American Christianity", "Godly Governance"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker recounts the story of the early pilgrims and Puritans who settled in America, seeing themselves as a type of the children of Israel. The sermon references the 32nd chapter of Deuteronomy, where Moses gives final instructions and prophecies to the people. The speaker emphasizes the importance of answering the question of why God has blessed the nation and given them so much. They suggest that one reason is to fund world missions and spread the Gospel. The sermon also mentions a speech by Ben Franklin, where he acknowledges the hand of God in the nation's struggle for independence and questions whether they have forgotten their powerful friend. The speaker concludes by affirming their belief that God governs in the affairs of men.

Transcript

Let's go to the Lord in prayer. Father, it is with an incredibly grateful heart we gather together in your presence on this, the occasion of our country's birthday. And we know the rich heritage that you founded us on and you brought us up in and the traditions of seeking your face.

And so, Lord, we just want to thank you that you have shed your grace on this nation. That, as they said, you founded us in a howling wilderness and blessed us and prospered us and delivered us and caused us to grow and to increase. Until we filled the land and you exalted us and did all of these things so that we could be your servants to do your will in our generations.

And so, Father, we thank you for these things. We thank you for what you've done. May the service today, may the preaching of your word and the remembrance of your hand in this nation be clearly and evidently proclaimed.

And may we all walk away with a greater understanding of you. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Well, today is July the 4th. It is a time to pause and reflect. It's not often that the actual date of our birthday falls on this day.

But it's a time to remember our national heritage and where it is that this nation was founded on what principles. Let me ask you a question. What is it that makes America great? Why does America work the way that it does? Do you know there's never been a nation in history that has advanced in size, wealth, population and power like this country? We own probably half the world's wealth.

We have the exerting influence over all the world. We have been tremendously successful in everything that we've ever done. We never lost a single war until Vietnam, which that wasn't technically a declared war.

But until that time, we had always advanced in every quarter and in every respect. We have had an unusually blessed and stellar history, an unbroken stream of successes and prosperity. Well, I want us to go back and remember this morning the foundations on which made this nation great.

If you have your Bibles, let's go to Deuteronomy 32, the 32nd chapter. And we're going to look at a passage of scripture that the pilgrims referred to and the Puritans, the early people who settled this nation. And this was their view of themselves, particularly in the first few verses.

In the 32nd chapter of Deuteronomy, Moses, he's been the one that has led the children of Israel 40 years in the wilderness. He's about to die and, quote, go the way of all the earth, unquote. And he is going to give some final instructions and admonitions to the people.

And he's really going to write a prophecy for the generations to come. He's actually going to tell what's going to happen in the life of that nation. But these early pilgrims and Puritans, when they came over to America to settle it, they saw themselves exactly as a type of children of Israel.

Just as the children of Israel had gone out to a new land, so they were going out to a new land. And so it says right here in verse 10, Moses is going to describe what the Lord did for Israel. He found him in a desert land and in a wasteland, a howling wilderness.

Now isn't that kind of an incredible description right there? Do you kind of get a howling wilderness? Have you ever been at night where the wind's just blowing and it's got that mournful sound to it somewhere through the trees? They're trying to give you the sense of just the barrenness of the land. And as the pilgrims came over, they were being planted in a howling wilderness. And so it says right here that he, that's God, now watch what God did.

He encircled him. He instructed him. He kept him as the apple of his eye.

As an eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its young, spreading out its wings, taking them up, carrying them on its wings. So the Lord alone led him, and there was no foreign God with him. When it's talking about the picture of an eagle here, I don't know if you know this, but an eagle will almost always build its nest very, very high.

It will build it way up on the side of a rocky cliff or perhaps in a very, very, very tall tree that's a lone tree. And as the eaglets begin to grow, there comes that day in their life, as in all the birds' life, that they're going to have to launch out from the nest and begin the process of learning to fly. And those eagles will take and actually push those young eaglets out of the nest.

And as is often the case, their wings aren't that well developed, and they can't really fly, and they'll begin to plummet. Do you know what those eagles will do, the parents, when that eagle begins to fall? They will come and dive out of the sky and go right under that little eagle and spread their wings and catch that eagle. And here you're seeing the picture of the superintending love of God as he begins to go out and catch this little fledgling group.

You know, as I've been studying and rereading our history again, I just really realized how true that really was. In fact, I began reading about the histories, and we can go back to the pilgrims in 1618. Now, do you know who the pilgrims were? I was really a little bit rusty on this.

The pilgrims were really people who wanted to separate themselves from the Church of England in their day because the Church of England had grown so corrupt. They genuinely wanted to live a holy life that they did nothing but try to please God. Well, they were despised and ridiculed and persecuted.

They were driven from place to place, and finally in 1618 there came the decree that they could no longer stay in the nation of England. And they began to try to secure a means to where to go look, and they finally decided they would leave the English shore and go and settle in a new place. They discussed over where to settle Guyana, which is in South America, was one of the locations.

But after all was said and done, they decided to go to Virginia, to the northern parts of Virginia at that time. And they got on this little boat called the Speedwell and the Mayflower. And the Speedwell had much, much difficulty leaving England.

The guy who was in charge of it misled them in some respects. They kept having to delay their trip or they would get started, and they had to go back. And finally they all got on one ship called the Mayflower.

And they began this three-month voyage in the North Atlantic seas, in whose waters if a man fell into, he could probably live four to six minutes before he would die. For that reason, they had to stay under the main deck, and they had to ride out the terrible storms as they started their journey really too late. They finally started in August.

And they went through all those things and the seasicknesses and all of that, and they finally arrived a hundred miles off course. They decided that they would sail back down and get into the Charter of Virginia. But as they did that, they had trouble going, and then they began to pray, Does God want us to stop and to settle here? And they finally agreed that they would do that.

And there were some murmurings, as you can imagine, going on when plans were changed by the leadership. They drew up something called the Mayflower Compact. And this compact was going to become the idea and the principle by which they were going to govern themselves in this new world.

In fact, one of the deciding factors of why not to go back to the Virginia Territory was this. They would have the opportunity for the first time in history for a group of Christians to establish a colony and be able to govern themselves without any interference from any other existing power, and they could order themselves according to how God wanted them to live. And so they drew this thing called the Mayflower Compact, and I want to read to you its preamble.

In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign Lord King James, by the grace of God of Great Britain, France, Ireland, King, Defender of Faith, etc., having undertaken for the glory of God an advancement of the Christian faith in honor of our King and

Country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia, do by these presents, by these presents, the supporting evidences, solemnly and mutually in the presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic. Do you know why this is so absolutely significant? Because what they decided to do was to mutually agree to hold responsibility for civil government.

Until that time in all the world there had always been a king in all other government telling you what to do, and this became the seminal seeds of democracy that would later take full fruition in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. And they began to do that. They began to search out a place to live.

One of the sailors off the Mayflower decided to guide them to a certain area, and in a dense fog they actually missed it and went further than they intended as they explored the coast, and they found this ground that was slowly rising up, sloping up gently. It was perfect for drainage but not so steep that they couldn't do it. And there they found 20 cleared acres of land.

They didn't know what to make of that, but they decided that's where they would build and settle their new colony. And as they began to do that, they began to experience the ravages of not having adequate fruit. Many succumbed to scurvy and other diseases.

In fact, out of the 102 original pilgrims that went, 47 died the very first winter, reducing their numbers to just 65. At one point there were only four men that were able to be strong enough to carry on certain activities. They would frequently shove themselves on the palisades just because of fear of Indians.

And then as they were surely going to die of starvation, as the Mayflower had wintered its port out there in the harbor but was about to return because of its food supplies, in the middle of March an Indian named Samoset comes walking right down the middle of the village, and his first question was, in perfect English, do you have any beer? Well, they didn't know exactly what to make of that. They fed him, did all kinds of things for him that they could, and then he began to tell his story. He had learned English by trading and doing other things, and they gave him presents, and he left on that Friday and returned the following Thursday with him and a tribal chief named Massasoit and a young Indian named Squanto.

And Squanto was a member of the Paltuxet tribe. And as they discovered that whole land four years earlier had been inhabited by a very large tribe by that name, and this tribe was always extremely hostile to any whites landing on their shore, and they always killed them. But four years ago, inexplicably, the whole entire tribe was completely wiped out.

Every single man, woman, and child died. As it turned out, Squanto had left in 1605 and had spent until 1614 in England. He came back with Captain John Smith and landed, and then he was here a few months, and when Captain Thomas Hunt tricked him and 20 of his tribe into coming on a boat, they then promptly clasped them in chains and took them off and sold them into slavery in Spain.

The Franciscan monks rescued him out of slavery, and he found an Englishman there that he attached himself to, and he went back to England and was finally able to secure a ride back across the Atlantic in 1619, only to discover his whole tribe had been wiped out, and he was the only living Paltuxet left. Now you think about this. He was deceived into being a slave one year before the whole tribe contracted that disease, and he came back eight months before the Pilgrims landed.

And he took it as his personal project to teach them how to live, because all they had was English wheat and barley. They would have surely perished. And through his blessing and his intervention, the whole colony got founded and saved.

Do you know that early group of Pilgrims began to grow in the grace of the Lord Jesus? There was another group at this time back in England called Puritans, and the Puritans did not want to separate themselves from the Church of England. They wanted to purify it from within. And they would not leave, but finally King James, of which the original English translation is named after from 1611, he died in 1625, and then there came a sovereign in the underling who began to persecute the Puritans, and finally by 1628 it became evident that they would have to leave England as well.

And over they came, and the pictures you see of Pilgrims are actually Puritans. That is a misrepresentation out of history. The Puritans wore the dark clothing.

But they came, and their colony was about to go under when a man named John Winthrop came from England. And he got the vision when he came here that this nation could become a city set on a hill, that they could order and govern themselves according to every way that would please God. And it became this fervent dream.

But it was the Puritans that began to gain the dominant influence. They came over by the thousands, fleeing England, whereas the Pilgrims had been a little small minority of minimal influence. They became in droves, and they began to order and govern themselves according to those means.

Do you know that America is the only nation in the Western Hemisphere and probably the world that has ever been founded by men seeking God more than gold? In fact, Jamestown took 14 years to get established because they came seeking monetary profit. But it was the New Englanders that gained the dominant influence in the early part of our nation's history. Well, God began to prosper and bless this colony, and this is so often the case.

When a man or a woman begins to have a lot of prosperity, they become comfortable, and they begin to forget the God who holds their very life in their hands. And the nation began to turn, and God began to draw them back to themselves. But there were waves of revival.

One was the King's Phillip's War in the 1670s, and it was the costliest war in American history proportional to a population. And finally, they began to repent and ask God to forgive them because they drifted, and then the fortunes began to be reversed, and we won that war, of course. But really, by 1700, the Puritan dream had died of founding a nation, and not much of God's activity happened until the First Great Awakening.

In 1733, a young man named George Whitefield was converted in England. In 1734, Jonathan Edwards, who was a minister in Massachusetts, began preaching. They said he was not very much on a preacher, that he always spoke in a monotone like this, and he would always stare at the back wall, or he would squint down and try to read his manuscript because of his poor eyesight.

And he preached for two hours. Could you imagine? See? You better count your blessings. But he would do that, and he got up and began to preach, and all of a sudden, God poured it out, and there were 300 people converted in his little small town of 1100 in the span of a few short months.

And that was the first tremor of what became known as the First Great Awakening. George Whitefield, about that time, they called him the boy preacher. When he was 22, he came over and he began to preach to crowds, and literally through him and through John Wesley, God turned the English-speaking world upside down, so much so that it was heading toward an internal collapse, and that got reversed.

And the American colonies went from having turned to God just suddenly they were ablaze with a hunger for him. And what God did was he took those people who were converted in that generation and they became the leaders that would lead us in the Revolutionary War and in the writing of our U.S. Constitution. It was out of that revival, based on the earlier foundations, that we began to write our Constitution.

In fact, do you know why we have three forms of government? And I've got to look at the watch here, because there's more to tell than I can... I've got to cut out a lot of this history. But do you know why they wrote the Constitution the way that they did? We have three legislative branches because of two reasons. Number one, it says in the Bible that Jesus Christ is our King, our Lawgiver, and our Judge.

They broke our government into three branches, Presidential, Legislative, and Judiciary. The Judge is the Judiciary, the King would have been the President, and the Lawgiver would be Congress. And the reason they created three branches of government was because of their belief that left alone, man will eventually become wicked and do bad things.

And therefore, there had to be a checks and balances and a restraint on that so that nobody could abuse power. Well, all of that came out of the Christianity, and having the experience of democracy and the requirement of personal accountability set the stage for all of this to come into being. Well, we had our Revolutionary War, and there's not enough time for me to tell you.

The miraculous God interventions were time and time again. He did certain things, such as Washington's escape out of New York when the British had him absolutely pinned in, and he was able to do the impossible of ferrying off his army through small boats on a clear, moonless night. But by early morning, he wasn't finished.

A third of his army was still on there, and suddenly this tremendous fog filled the whole harbor, and the British couldn't see, and we escaped. And story after story after story began like that. Finally, we came to the Constitutional Convention.

And by the way, I need to tell you this. Out of the 55 signers of the Declaration of Independence, 52 of them were members of an organized church. When we came to the Constitution, our country began to not be so diligent to follow the Lord.

In fact, in 1800, the average lifespan was 37 years of age. And so if you went 20 years, then you could lose a whole generation. And we began to squabble.

What had to happen was 13 colonies had to give up all of their rights and preferences in order to become one nation. And there was all kind of bickering going on. In fact, by the end of June, it was not going well.

Some of the delegates had already pulled out and returned to New York. And finally, Ben Franklin stood up, and I want to read to you what he said. In the beginning of the contest with Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayers in this room for divine protection.

Our prayers, sir, were heard, and they were graciously answered. All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of superintending providence in our favor. That's the hand of God.

And have we now forgotten this powerful friend, or do we imagine we no longer need his assistance? I have lived, sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convinced I am of this truth, that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground apart from his notice, is it probable that an empire can arise without his aid? We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writings that except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it. I firmly believe this.

I also believe that without his concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel. We shall be divided by our little partial local interests. Our projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a byword down to future ages.

And what is worse, mankind may hereafter, from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing government by human wisdom, and leave it to chance, war, or conquest. I therefore beg leave to move that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of heaven and its blessing on our deliberation be held in this assembly every morning before we proceed to business. And do you know what? That's exactly what they began to do.

In fact, at one point in their government, they canceled all day sessions and got ministers to come and preach the gospel to them so they could get refocused. And it was shortly after that that God began to put together the Bill of Rights in the life of our nation. You can see that the primary founding of this nation is not what we're being told in current politically correct circles.

It really was founded on men and women who really wanted to seek the heart of God, and the blessing of God came on this nation because of that very fact. Well, God began to bless us shortly after that. In fact, when we come to the 1800s, we had become enamored of the French.

The French had had their revolution. Atheism was a part of it. In fact, it became so bad that in Princeton and Harvard, which were originally founded as seminaries, there could only be found five professing Christians in the student body.

About that time, a fellow named James McGrady, a Presbyterian minister, went to preach in Kentucky, and he preached the gospel, and God so blessed it that suddenly the Spirit of God poured down on the frontier of Kentucky, and men and women from all over began to arrive in covered wagons to hear the Word of God preached. In fact, as many as 25,000 were gathered in one location in Bourbon County, Kentucky, to hear the preaching of God. Prior to that moment in Russellville, it had been so bad.

Anybody who committed a crime in the East could cross the Appalachian Mountains and escape justice. There was one place so bad it was called Rogue's Harbor. The vigilantes formed a group to defend themselves against them and lost.

After the revival in two short years, it was not so much able to be heard as a cuss word in that same area that had once been dominated by bandits and lawless men. That revival leapt back over the mountains and went back and went up and down the eastern seaboard, and we turned again toward God. God then began to protect us in our second conflict with Great Britain in 1812.

In the 1820s, once again, God sent waves of revival and the nation turned to God once again. But by the early 1840s, we had begun to turn, and it was so bad that in 1857, a fellow named Jeremiah Lanphier began to be extremely burdened. America itself was riding an economic crest of prosperity.

But suddenly, Wall Street crashed. He had started a little noontime prayer meeting, and it went from 6 to 20 to 40 to meeting every single day, and in a few short weeks, Wall Street crashed, and suddenly all of New York City turned toward God when this happened. And in less than four months' time, there were somewhere as many as 50,000 businessmen praying every single day in New York City.

They would put up signs in their shops that would say, Close for Prayer Meeting, and they would go to seek the face of God. That instantly left out of New York City and went to every single quarter and part of this nation. And the nation, out of a population of 30 million at that time, 1 million were converted in 12 months.

The nation once again turned to God, and God in His mercy was preparing us for the greatest, most dreadful ordeal our nation has ever known, the Civil War. In fact, in the Civil War, we've lost, we had more deaths in the Civil War than every other single war in American history put together. And do you know what God did for us? We had two problems in our nation.

Number one, God wanted to remove the institution of slavery, and number two, we were divided and still factious. States' rights had not yet been ultimately settled, and if God was going to do with us what He wanted to, there had to be the healing of those two things. And God did it through that awful ordeal of the Civil War.

But He did it by sending two incredibly godly leaders for both sides, Abraham Lincoln in the North, who never sought to punish the South or to execute vengeance, and Robert E. Lee, who conducted himself in such a godly manner throughout war that there were no bitter feelings. When he invaded Maryland in the North, in Pennsylvania, he required his soldiers pay for anything that they received. And do you know what God was able to do? I don't know where all this has happened in history.

I know it hasn't happened anywhere today, like in Rwanda or these factions in Africa or other locations, but God took two bitterly opposed factions and put them together so that the loser was more loyal to the new order than the winner. Do you know, I know this about five or ten years ago, but disproportionately, the South had more people in the military than any other part of the country. There is a deep, fervent patriotism among us here for our nation.

And God shed His grace on us, and He began to bless our nation in that century so that we acquired the Louisiana Purchase, all the way from Louisiana way over to Oregon and everything west of the Mississippi for \$15 million. We acquired the rest of the Southwest through a little short war of about 3,000 or 4,000 casualties with Mexico. We bought Alaska for \$7.2 million, and then we acquired what was left from Spain.

And so God increased us until we received the land that we had. We were pretty much left in isolation, and then along came the world wars, which we were able to keep out of in large degree. In fact, in World War I, in which Europe lost over 10 million soldiers, we only had 95,000 killed.

We got a bloody nose by comparison to the horrible ordeal that they endured. But our nation shortly after that experienced a roar in the 20s with its prosperity, and we became careless of the things of God. God sent the Great Depression.

It arrested our nation to turn back to Him in some degree, although not as much as previously. And then came World War II, and I want to tell you what God did. Do you know how many people we had killed in World War II? The estimates will vary, but here's going to be a ballpark figure.

295,000. Let me tell you what other nations lost. In fact, around the world, there were over 61 million deaths, 25,568,000 deaths in Russia.

In communist, godless Russia. And that was after Stalin had probably killed 15 more million. China, 11.3 million.

Germany, 7 million. Poland, 6.8 million. Japan, 1.8 million.

Yugoslavia, 1.7 million. Romania, 985,000. France, 810,000.

Hungary, 750,000. Austria, Greece, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Great Britain, and finally we come down to us. In fact, Finland, which has a population the size of Tennessee, lost 79,000.

Out of that horrible ordeal in which Europe was decimated, out of its ashes came America, and we were catapulted to become the world leader. And here's what we did. Let me read right here what happened next from the scripture.

God blessed us. We turned to God consistently. In fact, in 1900, in the New England Primer, to teach the ABCs, they would give an A and then a Bible verse along with it.

We decided to dig deep roots into the moral foundation and fabric of our children. We had Bible read in classes. We did other things.

It says right here in Deuteronomy 32, So the Lord alone let him, and there was no foreign God with him. Do you know that our nation is always at a tolerance of religion? The very other religions we allow to be practiced, such as Islam and Hinduism and Buddhism and whatever else you want to believe in America, was founded in Christian principles of democracy. They can be here because our Christianity, but if you go to their lands, particularly Islam, they will use it as an occasion to persecute you and not allow that to happen.

They have no knowledge of that. It was God that led this nation. Here's what it says right here.

He made him ride the heights of the earth that he might eat the produce of the fields. He made him draw honey from the rock and oil from the flinty rock, curds from the cattle and milk of the flock, with fat of lambs and rams of the breed of Bashan and goats with the choicest wheat and he drank wine, the blood of grapes. But, Jeshua, and that's another word for Israel, grew fat and kicked.

You grew fat. You grew thick. You are obese.

Then he forsook God who made him and scornfully esteemed the rock of his salvation. They provoked him to jealousy with foreign gods, with abominations they provoked him to anger. They sacrificed the demons not to God, to gods they did not know, to new gods, new arrivals that your fathers did not fear.

Of the rock who begot you, you are unmindful and have forgotten the God who fathered you. In eighteen short years after exalting us to prominence on the world stage, the way this nation turned around and repaid God was they told him that prayer was no longer to be allowed in schools nor the Bible was to be

allowed in the character formation of the children of this nation. We were not mindful of God.

We began to have the sixties and in fact when JFK was shot it was almost the end of innocence for this nation and simultaneously a floodgate of rebellion was opened in this nation through rock music and drugs and the sexual immorality and revolution of this country instead of us being struck and to realize that the greatest judgment of God in all of scripture is the removal of wisdom because when you no longer know how to do things that have right relationships then always that people will internally implode. And then we told God that a woman had the right to decide over life and we began to take the freedoms that God had given us freedom that is only found when we're submitted to him and we used it as an excuse to tell him to get out of our face that he no longer had any right here. And we have proactively aggressively pursued that course and we in fact there is a politically correct agenda that is trying to expunge every single bit of history that talks about the influence of Christianity in our nation.

It talks about separation of church and state when no way did the Constitution ever say that. That came from a letter written by Thomas Jefferson to Baptists who feared that if a church was installed as the official church of the nation it would persecute the other churches. And so the separation of church and state was not to protect the state from the influences of religion it was to protect religion from the influences of the state.

And suddenly we have come to the place where there is an intelligentsia in our country that says religion is a bad thing that people are trying to cram their views down each other's throats. Folks, you can go read the Founding Fathers, George Washington on his farewell address and pour this country to turn to God. Abigail Adams said, to be a patriot requires you to have a religion and if you don't that's an inconsistent paradox as an honest man without the fear of God.

They wrote this in all of our history. You can see what they did. Every single president prayed to God.

Do you know when Thanksgiving became a part of our national life? It was in 1863 in the middle of the Civil War when Abraham Lincoln called America to repent because we had been sinning against God through our pride and our arrogance and our self-sufficiency. That's what he did as a president and every single president after that has done that. And suddenly we have come to where the foundations of our nations are tottering because we are forgetting God on that.

Now, no nation that forgets God can stand. I was looking up something from my father last night and it absolutely scared me to death. It says in Psalms 109, I think it's verse 25, but it says, "...the wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations that forget God." Folks, it is impossible for us to say we are free to do whatever we want to in disregard to God who has blessed us.

That absolutely cannot happen. Well, what do we do right here? Well, number one, let me give you an application. Let me tell you something they did.

The way that separation of church and state is being taught is absolutely wrong. If you believe that as a Christian, you've been sold a lie. I don't know how to say that any more undiplomatically than I can and I'm trying to be undiplomatic.

Folks, I believe we really are. It is like this thing is at the throat of the life of our very existence. They did not practice or do that kind of stuff.

They tried to influence things. You need to know what groups are out there that are deliberately trying to turn this nation from God. They are currently succeeding.

And if they succeed, then we will cease to exist as a nation. It will come a point, and I haven't talked with you much about this, but I am convinced unless we have a national revival that God comes down and this nation once again turns to Him, Cecil and I and other ministers are going to have to start preaching different sermons. We're going to have to start talking about how do you undergo the judgment of God and what happens when you become persecuted.

If the homosexual agenda succeeds, and it is succeeding, it will happen to us what is already happening in Canada where it is now legally permissible to fine and punish anybody who speaks of homosexuality as a sin, even if you preach it as a sermon based on biblical text. The freedom that we have, we will undergo persecution. And there's going to be a whole different series of dynamics.

Now, let me tell you, a lot of people say, well, I think that would be good. We've gotten so fat and lazy, and that's true. We have.

That it might do us some good. Well, it might. And I want to tell you what, folks.

It would be better to repent than to have to go that direction. Persecution is a nice, ideal sounding thing, but in reality it requires blood, sweat, the loss of our financial independence, the quality of life, all that awaits us. But now let me tell you what here.

I think there's some causes for encouragement in our day. I believe right now that God is extending us this invitation. We are still right here enough where half the nation still has the moral values, even if they all aren't Christian, that they know the right way.

It's not okay for the homosexual agenda to succeed. Marriage is not between two men or two women. It is only between a man and a woman.

There are some people who still know that. And so, we still have this window of opportunity. If we will confess our sins, that we've lived our lives independently of God, we've not thought about Him, we've not been concerned about Him, or if we have, we've done it kind of in a cursory manner.

We've spent more time watching the TV than we've spent in prayer seeking God. We've been more concerned about our financial prosperity than we have over becoming a blessing to others and giving our stuff away. We have thought more that we are free to do whatever we want to than to serve our Lord and our King who died for us as He did.

If we do that, then as Kathy sings, we are going to see that nation. Now, I do not think the answer lies in politics. Let me encourage you, if you are a Christian, to vote your convictions.

In fact, do you know separation of church and state? If the people advocating really believed it, America wouldn't be here. Do you know where they preached the whole American Revolution? It was in the churches. That's where it came from.

Do you know where the civil rights movements came out of? It came out of the black churches. It always comes out of churches because God is not uninvolved in the affairs of the day. But let me tell you something they all did.

Every single one of them who lived in that generation who were godly had the ability not just to talk about you need to be saved and you need to be a Christian. They had the ability to know in their day what was going on and what the questions were. And their day in the revolution, it was when is it right to not submit to the king and rebel against him? When has he violated and gone too far? And all the churches answered that question and it won the hearts over in five short years before the Lexington Concord 1775 incident.

When you go and you look at other times and eras they always got the question in their day and in our day there is a question we've got to answer. And if we just keep saying oh you need to be saved folks we're never going to get there. We have got to answer the question in this our day why has God blessed this nation as he has and given us all that he's given and we've come to this point.

Folks I think I know part of the answer. One of the things he wants us to do is to fund world missions. We could see the whole world hear the gospel of Christ in our lifetime if we all released our pocketbooks.

Why has he made us so influential? He's opened the door to Americans to go almost anywhere now with the exception of a few of these Islamic countries and preach the gospel. We could do different things. And the second question is in our day what have we got to do as Christians to turn around and defend our freedoms before it's too late.

We've got to go vote our convictions on what that requires. But I want to read you this quote right here from Dwight Eisenhower. Here's what he says.

This was written in 1977 and the guy in 1977 was quoting from Eisenhower. Many hope that electing a Christian president would do the job of turning America back. He could already see the decline.

But as Dwight Eisenhower once said never let yourself be persuaded that any one great man any one leader is necessary to the salvation of America. When America consists of one leader and 158 million followers this would have been the 50s or 1960 it will no longer be America. It is the most dangerous kind of corporate self-delusion to think that a president regardless of how much he heeds God can reverse the bend of the national wheel once it is set in a certain direction.

And when it becomes apparent that he cannot he and the Christianity he professes will become the next scapegoat. Folks, is that not prophecy? If you are a Christian today are you not the scapegoat? Are you not labeled as the problem in America? What an incredible travesty when everything this nation was built on came out of that. The only salvation I'm looking for is that God himself would come down and arrest our wickedness and turn us back to himself.

And if the whole nation gets that hard then we'll go the way of God and this nation will once again return to its former happiness and prosperity. God will heal our land. Our land is so sick.

Not economically. We might be that too. Who knows? But that's irrelevant.

We are so sick relationally with one another. We need that healing. Those early Puritans had a vision of a city set on a hill.

What if in our day we answered the question and had a vision that this nation would return to God and we would begin to pour out our very lives and beings and give God no rest until it happened.

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