

Happy Dependence Day

1. God is God or man is god -

We celebrate Independence Day which is a good label for the spirit of America. The problem is that you can only fit so much in a slogan. It speaks of independence from the irresponsible rule of England at that time, but what *underlies* Independence Day is a foundation of *dependence* on God. Very close to Independence Day and the American Revolution there followed another revolution, the French Revolution. Both the American and French Revolutions were reactions against long-standing systems that, over millenia, had concentrated power into the hands of monarchs, aristocrats, or colonial empires. They weren't just about swapping leaders – they were seen as bold resets of the political order, rejecting what many viewed as the inevitable drift toward tyranny in traditional systems. The French were inspired by the American Revolution, but even though the Americans and the French held in common a reaction to a despotic king, each one's motivation was as different as night and day. The American Revolution led to a stable government that was the foundation for the greatness that followed. The French Revolution led to the Reign of Terror that followed. It devolved into authoritarian rule and political volatility as France repeatedly sought to reinvent its government in pursuit of liberty, order, and national identity. They veered toward republics (five of them), sometimes back to emperors (2 empires) or kings (2 of them) in contrast to the United States' stable constitutional path.

What was the difference between the spirit of the founding of the United States and the chaos that followed the French Revolution? It was the difference between the spirit of the Anti-Christ in France and a Godly spirit in America.

In France, faith was replaced with reason as the new guiding principle. Truth was redefined through human reason, not divine revelation. The "Cult

of Reason" was instituted as an alternative to Christianity. Churches were converted into "Temples of Reason." In Notre-Dame Cathedral, a dancer was enthroned as the Goddess of Reason. It was deliberately anti-Christian, mocking traditional beliefs. The Christian Gregorian calendar was abolished. A new Revolutionary Calendar was created. There were no Sundays and no religious holidays. Week days were primarily just called a number with a secondary name like carrot, turkey, or watering can. A 10-day week replaced the 7-day biblical week which was an attempt to erase the Sabbath cycle. The French ignored the corruption of man and elevated man's opinion of himself to a god-like authority. Serving self and the subjective ideals of man characterized the philosophy of the French Revolution.

In America, Godliness and responsibility to God characterized the philosophy of American independence. The American founders recognized the corruption of man and sought to press men to be responsible to God.

Ps 33:12 Blessed *is* the nation whose God *is* the LORD; *and* the people *whom* he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

Ps 144:15 Happy *is that* people, that is in such a case: *yea*, happy *is that* people, whose God *is* the LORD.

Now some might refer to a separation of church and state, but they only have a shallow understanding of what that means. Thomas Jefferson is credited with that separation and made reference to it, but it was only in a private letter that actually only sought to assure the Danbury Baptist Association that the First Amendment could not be used by government *against* the free practice of religion, not the ability to *restrict* the free practice of it. Faith and government were well mixed from the founding of America. Make no mistake about it. The choice is *not* Theism vs. Atheism. The

choice is *not* between having Jehovah God as Lord or not having any god at all. There is not a Theistic/Secular choice. There is *only* a *theistic* choice. The real choice is always between Jehovah as God or Man as god. The French system was not exactly anti-god. They replaced God with man as God. The American system protected Godly people to serve God. They were categorically opposite of each other: realism about God and man vs. idealism about man as god.

2Sam 23:3 The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men *must be* just, ruling in the fear of God.

This was evident in the writing of the Constitution.

We are often given the impression that the founding fathers intended a "strict separation of church and state" with no religious references allowed in the government.

But in reality, on June 28, 1787, during an impasse at the Constitutional Convention, one of the least orthodox of the founding fathers---Dr. Ben Franklin---called on the convention to pray to help break the logjam. This speech turned out to be a positive turning point in a convention that almost seemed doomed to failure.

... Said Dr. Franklin (as recorded by James Madison):

"The small progress we have made after 4 or 5 weeks close attendance...is methinks a melancholy proof of the imperfection of the Human Understanding....

"In this situation of this Assembly, groping as it were in the dark to find political truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, Sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of lights to

illuminate our understanding?
[from James 1:17]

"In the beginning of the Contest with Great Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayer in this room for Divine protection. Our prayers, Sir, were heard, & they were graciously answered. All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a Superintending Providence in our favor.

"To that kind Providence we owe this happy opportunity of consulting in peace on the means of establishing our future national felicity. And have we now forgotten that 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 convincing proofs I see of this truth---that God Governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid?

"We have been assured, Sir, in the Sacred Writings, that 'except the Lord build the House, they labor in vain that build it.' [Psalm 127:1] I firmly believe this; and 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 partial local interests; our projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a reproach and bye word down to future ages....

"I therefore beg leave to move---that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven, and its blessing on our deliberations, be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to business, and that one or more of the clergy of this city be requested to officiate in that service."

Wow! Here was one of the least religious of the founding fathers, a man whose beliefs were not orthodox, asking the delegates to remember God and seek His help.

Opponents of the thesis that America began as a Christian nation generally ignore this speech. But if they do mention it, they argue that the specific solution Franklin spelled out (that they bring in clergy for daily prayers) was not voted for. Nor was it voted against. Franklin felt his request seemed to fall on deaf ears.

But a variation of his request – that the framers pray together for God's help to finish the task – did happen.

What impact did Dr. Franklin's speech have on the Constitutional Convention? New Jersey delegate Jonathan Dayton tells us what it was like on July 2, when they reconvened for the first time since Franklin's speech: "We assembled again; and...every unfriendly feeling had been expelled, and a spirit of conciliation had been cultivated."

Then on July 4th, the entire Convention attended a special church service, wherein Rev. William Rogers prayed for them: "We fervently recommend to the Fatherly notice . . . our federal convention...Favor them, from day to day, with Thy inspiring presence; be their wisdom and strength; enable them to devise such measures as may prove happy instruments in healing all divisions and prove the good of the great whole;...that the United States of America may form one example of a free and virtuous government...May we...continue, under the influence of republican virtue, to partake of all the blessings of cultivated and Christian society."

But didn't the founding

fathers maintain the view that prayer in the public square was "unconstitutional"? Uh, these were the men who gave us the Constitution.

How low we have sunk in our secularism. We don't need less God today, we need more godly influence, even in our government---as Dr. Franklin well noted.

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townhall.com/columnists/jerrynewcomb/e/2025/06/26/dr-franklin-saves-the-day-n2659454

The point here is that either God is the measure of righteousness or man's self-interest is the measure of righteousness.

2. Happy *Dependence* Day -

Preachers have often made a play on the reference to the Declaration of *Independence* and called for a Declaration of *Dependence*, or dependence on God. Baptists in American history were instrumental in encouraging the freedom of religion and a government with no state church. We are guaranteed the right to the *pursuit* of happiness. In our liberty, each one is responsible for his own stand before God. But, this does not mean that America has not been a Christian nation. If by Christian nation you mean a nation with an official church, then no, we are not a Christian nation. If by a Christian nation you mean a nation that has been formed and is characterized by Christian ideals and virtues, then we are most decidedly a Christian nation. As we are a people whose God is Jehovah, then we will not only pursue happiness but we will find happiness.

We do not just seek to embrace a political philosophy. We need to turn to God in repentance. We must be very careful to notice that whatever ideals we have they must be founded on our relationship with Christ or they are so much smoke. The Creator that was recognized in forming this nation founded on righteous liberty needs to be

embraced.

2Chr 7:14 If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

Abraham Lincoln reflected this when he spoke of that government of the people, by the people, and for the people. These words taken out of context might appear to be promoting a humanistic philosophy founding the authority of government on man. In the context of the Gettysburg address, though, we see that Lincoln related the government of the people to that which had been conceived "four score and seven years" earlier by the Declaration of Independence which recognized the *Creator* who made all men equal. Lincoln did not just suggest a human authority for government. What he said in full was, "that this nation, **under God**, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

"Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious People. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other." - John Adams, Second President of the United States

"God who gave us life gave us liberty. Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed a conviction that these liberties are the gift of God? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that His justice cannot sleep forever." - Thomas Jefferson, Third President of the United States

Prov 23:10-11 Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless:

11For their redeemer *is* mighty;
he shall plead their cause with
thee.

Remove not the ancient landmarks of repentance and faith in God that defined our nation. By teaching our children the true foundation of being one nation *under God*, grateful for the responsibility He has bestowed upon us rather than stewing in how unfair everything is will save us.

Don't try to change the history of your country. Don't try to put this revisionist movement into motion in our schools and lie about what our past is, what our country is. Don't go into the fields of children [specifically in our schools] because the Redeemer is mighty and he will plead their cause against you. I think that this is where we are at as a nation today in America, that we are actually invoking the ire of God Himself....I don't know how that is going to look but I don't want to be standing in the pathway of God when He finally says this is enough of perverting the children of this nation, enough of baptizing them in immorality and a false world view and a false perspective on your own history...You have to help parents get back and involved in what your children are learning in the schools and if they can't take their children out of that environment at least counter the lies that are being propagated to try to form their minds...in a twisted way that they don't really understand. [There was] incredible power and blessing that came on this nation, and God is willing to give us to go into the future if we are willing to reconcile to Him and to one another. In my viewpoint, this is the crux of the whole matter.

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We celebrate the *vision* of America and the vision our founders had of America was good. Our most basic founding document contains what should be one of the most commonly known statements that undergirds all that follows, "We hold these truths to be **self-evident [based on natural law, the law that is evident in our very nature]**, that all men are created equal, that **they are endowed by their Creator** with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." This statement reflects the fact that our whole vision is based on the Creator. When we stand for the flag of the United States of America, we stand to the *ideals* of liberty that are founded *in the righteous character of God*. If you look at the past through the lens of grievance then you will never be satisfied.

Isa 55:2 Wherefore do ye spend money for *that which is* not bread? and your labour for *that which* satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye *that which is* good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

Israel's focus on their dissatisfaction led them to tempt the Lord.

Exod 16:3 And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, *and* when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.

It is hard to write a document that articulates a constitution, or what defines the nature of an organization. This is why it is so difficult to write a Statement of Faith for a church. Anything that declares your belief will be subjected to petty criticism. This is why we teach that our

Statement of Faith is helpful but it is not God-breathed. The only thing that we *can* actually declare is absolutely what we believe is found in the Bible itself. With this in mind we can imagine the difficulty that the framers of our Declaration of Independence and the Constitution had.

The founding documents of this country represent the genius of the founders. It is a genius that was born of a centuries long line of philosophical and political debate and examination. But, even the founders knew that they could not have anticipated every possible situation and so wrote into it the ability to amend it, which was also a move of genius. They also knew that amendments should not be made on a whim and so set a high bar to be able to do so; and amend it we have. If there was any clarification to be made, the process of amendment has been available.

3. Fill your mouth with praises to God, not complaints -

There are those who feed the propaganda machine who seek to cast aside the promise of the potential of those ideals. They denigrate the foundry of history that forged the freedom of this country. Their complaint is that the government created by those ideals has not produced a utopia.

They disdain the high ideals of the founding fathers because we've never achieved the goals of those ideals. They want to say that the founding ideas of this country could not have been so great because they were used as tools of oppression. Instead of building on and being vigilant to apply those ideals, they want to cancel them altogether.

The issue, however, is not how successful man is in carrying out those ideals. Such people do not understand the whole nature of a vision. Instead of living up to a vision, they nurture a grudge as they focus on their grievances. Their grievance based movement carries a poison pill in it. Whatever plans men conceive to satisfy their lusts, there will be new groups who will be offended and

want *their* lusts to be taken care of. Some of the latest solutions to social disparities have only produced new grievance groups. The opposite of Theism is not *Atheism*, but modern *Humanism*. Like the French Revolution, the same spirit of *Humanism* exists in communism has dealt with inconvenient classes. Those systems have worked to cancel by death, according to some reports, between 60 and 150 million people. No government can satisfy the lusts of its people.

Instead of focusing on what we don't have, focus on what we *do* have in the Lord!

Ps 71:8 Let my mouth be filled *with* thy praise *and with* thy honour all the day.

Phil 2:13-16 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

America was founded on a Godly vision. The very nature of a vision is something that is impossible to fulfill. Whatever degree of fulfillment you *do* reach cannot sustain itself. It has become quite fashionable that whenever you refer to America, you have to tack on a little disclaimer, "America is not perfect, but it is still good," or, "America's past is filled with sin, but it is still good" We do not need to add a disclaimer. The American ideals are just fine. We just need to apply them by seeking out the Lord.

Deut 4:29-31 But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find *him*, if thou seek him with all thy heart and

with all thy soul.

30 When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, *even* in the latter days, if thou turn to the LORD thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice;

31 (For the LORD thy God *is* a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them.

1Chr 28:9 And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.

Prov 8:17 I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.

As we celebrate the freedoms granted in this great nation, let us not forget that true freedom begins in the heart. We live in a land where you are free to believe—or not to believe. No government can *truly* force you to worship God. That liberty is a gift purchased through sacrifice and built on the recognition that our rights come from our Creator, not the state.

But freedom of religion is not a license for spiritual indifference. It is a sacred opportunity—a space in which you are free to seek the Lord while He may be found. To treat that freedom as an excuse to reject or ignore God is not boldness, it is spiritual immaturity. It is to misuse liberty for rebellion, when it was meant to lead you to truth. If you are lost, do not confuse God's patience with His approval. You may live in a free country, but until you come to Christ, your soul is still bound under sin.

John 8:36 If the Son therefore

shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Jesus Christ died and rose again to offer true liberty – freedom from sin, death, and judgment. He invites you today not into religion, but into relationship. You must be born again. Your soul needs a declaration of dependence – dependence on Jesus alone for forgiveness and life.

Before you can participate in the Christian spirit this country was founded on, you have to be spiritually free yourself. You have to make sure you are free from the judgment of Hell and are free in Christ to live before God. You have to be born again.

And to the saved: have you grown lazy in your liberty? Are you using your freedom to serve yourself, or to serve the Lord? Are you more concerned with your personal comfort than your spiritual calling? The same nation that grants us religious freedom is filled with people who are perishing without the truth we possess. Will you shine as a light in this crooked and perverse nation? Will you hold forth the Word of life?

This is a time to examine our hearts. It is not just Independence Day – it is time for a Dependence Day. Depend on God. Return to Him. Live out your faith courageously. And if you are not saved, call upon Him to save you today. He will forgive you, set you free, and make you whole.

Isa 55:6 Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

1. God is God or man is god - Ps 33:12, 144:15, 2Sam 23:3
2. Happy Dependence Day - 2Chr 7:14, Prov 23:10-11, Isa 55:2, Exod 16:3
3. Fill your mouth with praises to God, not complaints - Ps 71:8, Phil 2:13-16, Deut 4:29-31, 1Chr 28:9, Prov 8:17, John 8:36, Isa 55:6