

Guarding the Heritage of Freedom: Why America Needs God

America stands at a crossroads. As citizens of a constitutional republic that has endured for nearly 250 years, we find ourselves asking: What made this nation different? What principles sustained it through wars, divisions, and cultural upheavals? And perhaps most importantly: What will it take to preserve freedom for the generations to come?

The answer, surprisingly to some, lies not primarily in politics or policy—but in something far more foundational.

The Founders' Shared Conviction

When Benjamin Franklin emerged from the Constitutional Convention in 1787, someone asked him what kind of government the founders had created. His response was both hopeful and cautionary: "A republic—if you can keep it."

Those final four words carry enormous weight. Franklin and his fellow founders understood something profound: freedom is neither automatic nor self-sustaining. The constitutional framework they crafted was brilliant, but it was merely words on paper without something more essential—a moral people who acknowledged their dependence on God.

This wasn't the perspective of just one or two religious founders. Despite their theological differences—and they had many—the founding fathers shared a unified conviction: **freedom cannot survive apart from God.**

John Adams, the second president, stated it plainly: "Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

Thomas Jefferson, John Hancock, Noah Webster, and countless others echoed similar sentiments. They disagreed on many things, but they agreed on this: human wisdom alone was insufficient to sustain a free nation. Divine guidance was necessary.

The Declaration of Independence itself appeals to "nature's God," the "Creator," and the "Supreme Judge of the world." These weren't empty phrases—they reflected a genuine belief that nations, like individuals, stand in desperate need of God's grace and guidance.

The Biblical Foundation

The founders frequently referenced Psalm 33:12: "What joy for the nation whose God is the Lord." This wasn't merely ceremonial language. It represented their understanding that moral principles rooted in Scripture should form the basis of civil society.

They recognized that government could restrain evil and laws could punish wrongdoing, but neither could transform the human heart. Only God could do that. And a nation of transformed hearts was the only guarantee of lasting freedom.

Without a moral compass, they warned, the country would collapse. Freedom without God was simply chaos waiting to happen.

Our Responsibility Today

So what does this mean for us today? How do we honor and guard this precious heritage?

Participate Responsibly in the Public Square

As citizens, we have both privileges and responsibilities. Voting, staying informed, praying for leaders, and engaging thoughtfully in public life aren't optional extras—they're part of stewarding the freedom we've been given.

Recent studies reveal a troubling pattern: in multiple states, ballot issues and elections that should matter deeply to people of faith were decided by narrow margins—while hundreds of thousands of Christians simply didn't vote. In one state, over 730,000 evangelicals sat out an election that was decided by just over 10,000 votes.

This isn't about making politics our priority. It's about recognizing that people are our priority, and the policies we vote on directly impact people's lives and the future our children will inherit.

Preserve Foundational Principles

America is one of only two nations in history founded with explicit recognition of biblical perspectives on morality, personal responsibility, virtue, human dignity, and religious freedom. These aren't outdated ideas—they're the very principles that sustain liberty.

Every generation that joins the American story should embrace and contribute to these foundational values. As James Monroe observed, when we view the blessings our country enjoys, we're drawn to the source from which they flow—and that source is God Himself.

We must intentionally pass these principles to future generations, not allowing them to be abandoned or assaulted.

Serve Our Communities

One of the most effective ways to strengthen America is to serve the people who live in it. Jesus didn't come to be served, but to serve—and we guard our heritage by putting the values this country was founded upon into practice.

Whether it's supporting adoption and foster care, partnering with under-resourced schools, providing for working families who struggle to make ends meet, or countless other opportunities, we demonstrate the Christian character that sustains freedom.

Jeremiah 29:7 instructs us: "Work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you. Pray to the Lord for it, for its welfare will determine your welfare."

Prioritize the Power of the Gospel

Here's the most vital point: Gospel work—the proclamation of Jesus' life-saving mission—is something government cannot do and elected leaders aren't chosen to do. This is what Christians and churches must do.

We provide something unique to our communities that other citizens cannot provide: the truth that Jesus saves, that Jesus can change a family, that Jesus can transform a community.

As ambassadors for Christ, we have a message the world desperately needs. Second Corinthians 5:20 says, "We are Christ's ambassadors. Christ is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, come back to God."

The Urgent Call

If we don't speak up for Jesus, if we don't win people to Christ, other voices will capture hearts and minds. This must be a moment, a season, a time when we own and practice the priority of the gospel.

The gospel is God's work of grace for all people. Jesus loves everyone and wants to use us as His ambassadors to plead with people: come back to God.

Perhaps you need to hear that message personally today. Maybe you've known the truth but drifted away. You've been depending on things that can't give you joy or peace. The invitation is simple: Come back to God.

Or perhaps you're a follower of Jesus who's been too complacent. God has placed you where you are on purpose—are you living with purpose? Are you representing Christ well in your family, school, or workplace?

The Choice Before Us

Freedom is fragile. It requires vigilance, character, and above all, dependence on God. The founding fathers understood this. The question is: Do we?

Will we guard the heritage of freedom by participating responsibly, preserving foundational principles, serving our communities, and prioritizing the gospel? Will we be ambassadors for Christ in our generation?

The republic stands—if we can keep it. And we can only keep it with God.

Scripture References from the Sermon

Explicitly Mentioned Scripture References:

1. **Psalm 33:12** - "What joy for the nation whose God is the Lord"
2. **Jeremiah 29:7** - "Work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you. Pray to the Lord for its welfare will determine your welfare"
3. **2 Corinthians 5:20** - "So we are Christ ambassadors. Christ is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, come back to God"
4. **John 17** (general reference) - Jesus' prayer: "I'm not asking you, Father, to take them out of the world. Just as you sent me into the world, I'm sending them into the world"

Alluded to or Thematically Referenced:

5. **1 John 1:9** - Referenced when the pastor said "the Bible says he is faithful to forgive you and cleanse you of all unrighteousness"
6. **Acts 17:26** - Alluded to when discussing "God determines not only our days when we live, but he also determines where we live, the boundaries of our habitation"
7. **Mark 10:45** / **Matthew 20:28** - Referenced when quoting Jesus: "I didn't come to be served, but to serve"

Suggested Relevant Verses for Main Themes:

- **Proverbs 14:34** - "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin condemns any people"
(theme of national morality)
- **Romans 13:1-7** - Regarding civic responsibility and government
- **Matthew 5:13-16** - Christians as salt and light (ambassadors in society)
- **Philippians 2:15** - Living as lights in a crooked generation