

Christ in Prophecy

Conference 82: Remember America's Christian Heritage with David Barton

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Opening

Tim Moore: Welcome back to Christ in Prophecy! I'm Tim Moore, your host. I'm joined by Nathan Jones, our co-host today. Last week we began sharing excerpts from our 2023 Annual Bible Conference. Our theme was "Let Not Your Heart be Troubled" and our goal was to offer encouragement in midst of so much turmoil in our culture.

Nathan Jones: We developed that theme based on Jesus' promise in John 16:33 that we can take comfort in knowing that He has overcome the world. We can also be assured that He is coming soon!

Now, we've already shared a portion of Pastor Robert Jeffress' powerful sermon. Over the next few weeks we'll bring you a portion of the presentations by David Barton, David Reagan, Tommy Nelson, Erwin Lutzer, and our own Tim Moore. Of course, you can order the complete DVD set with all the presentations in their entirety, along with two different Question and Answer sessions.

Tim Moore: Today, here is David Barton with a motivating message about the faith of our forefathers.

Part 1: David Barton's Presentation

David Barton: It is good to be with you this morning. I want to start with a Bible verse, a very simple Bible verse is Proverbs 10:22, it says, "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it." And what we find in a verse like that is God's blessing is something that enriches our life. And it turns out that some of the greatest blessings we have are things we don't often notice. I learned this from a founding father named Benjamin Rush. Out of the 250 Founding Fathers we have, John Adams said that the top three Founding Fathers were George Washington, Ben Franklin and Benjamin Rush. Now we know a little about him today, unfortunately. Very good guy. He started the Sunday school movement in America, started the first Bible society in America. He started the first abolition movement in America. He's the most famous doctor in American history, he's called the father of American medicine. Started five universities. He's called the father of public schools under the Constitution. And on it goes, and on it goes. He just did a number of amazing things.

We have a collection of about 160,000 items from American history, ranging from Columbus all the way to the Bible that landed on the moon with Apollo 14. And among that, we have thousands, and thousands of documents of what we call our Founding Fathers, including a number of documents of Benjamin Rush. We have his prayer journal. And as he's reading

through the Word, he'll write down things that God shown him out of the Word, speaks to him out of the Word as he goes through. So he has a lot of things to say.

And as I was reading his works, he was trying to be a solid Christian, thanking God, he was being grateful for all the blessings he had. He was listing all these blessings, and he'd go, check, yeah, that's good. That's good. But he got to one where he says, "I thank God for all the times that I have not fallen down the stairs." Run that by me again. And I'll point out I just ran up the stairs and nobody noticed it. Why didn't you notice it? Because I didn't fall. If I had fallen, you would have noticed it. And that would not have been a blessing. A blessing was, it wasn't noticed.

It turns out that some of the greatest blessings we have in life are things we don't notice. As you drive to the store, you come back, you don't have a wreck, you don't think about it. If you had a wreck, you would notice it and that's not a blessing. So having your health, until something happens, or having your family until something happens, or having a job, until something happens. Some of the greatest blessings we have are things we take for granted. And I would say that there is no place on the face of the earth that takes their blessings more for granted than we do as Americans. We're so used to those blessings, we don't even think about them anymore. And there's a lot of ways of pointing that out.

If I take you, for example, to the government we have, now we're one of 193 nations this year at the United Nations, the 193 nations of the world, they all have a government of some type. And governments have been here for a long time, 5,800 years recorded history, thousands of nations, hundreds of constitutions. And the constitution we have how does it rank with the others? Cornell University Law School asked the question, "What's the average length of a constitution in the history of the world? How long does a constitution usually last over those 5,800 years." And the answer they found was 17 years. Going back, researching all those thousands of nations, 17 years, the length the average constitution lasts. Last September the 17th on Constitution Day, we celebrated 235 years under the same document.

Now we set a world's record every year. And most people don't even know when Constitution Day comes and goes because we're so used to being stable, we are so used to all the stuff we have that we don't even think about it. It's just another year, you know, nothing big.

Now, I've been involved in 13 cases of the U.S. Supreme Court. The Supreme Court is the one who separated religion and morality from public life for over 60 years. I will say the court has changed that. Religious liberty cases, we usually win a religious liberty case once every eight, nine years, something of the sort. In the last four years we've won 11 religious liberty cases. We have more religious liberty.

We literally have more religious liberty now than what we've had in 60 years. Now we have a network of legislator WallBuilders Pro-family Legislative Network, about a thousand legislators in that network. We monitored 157,000 pieces of state legislation last year. The type of stuff going through now, for example, on Monday, I go down to the state legislature in Texas to testify because we're working on a bill that will post the Ten Commandments in every single classroom in the state of Texas.

Now, that's the kind of stuff we can now do as a result of what is as happened in the last few years. Oklahoma's trying to put prayer back in the classrooms, prayer back in schools. All this stuff that's been gone for 60 years is starting to try to come back. But again, going to what Washington said, he said, "You can't call yourself a patriot if you try to secularize the public square." Now, that's what's happened. And it's so secular now that when you look at where we are with Bible reading in America, if you go back to the American Bible Society, now remember religion and morality is what produces political prosperity. So if you want your politics to prosper, you promote religion, morality. And this is where the Bible is so significant, that's the source of religion and morality for us.

And as you look at the Bible, the American Bible Society's the oldest national Bible society in the world. It was started in 1816 by our Founding Fathers, and it was started by signers of the Constitution, it was started by justices on the U.S. Supreme Court. Started by vice presidents, and governors, all these distinguished Founding Fathers started the American Bible Society.

And that's why I was joking with Tim, these are all the atheist, agnostics, and deists the professors tell us we had in the Founding Fathers who started the world's biggest Bible society. Really? See, what happens is people don't know enough of their history to even know they're being lied to. And so we have no clue who the Founding Fathers were, or what they believed.

And what we found in 2021 was that Bible reading in America took a steep nosedive. We lost 25 million Americans who no longer read the Bible at all in one year. So that many Americans stopped reading the Bible. And that's not good for political prosperity, because political prosperity comes from religion and morality. If you're going to stop reading the Bible, you're going to lose religion and morality. And so the report came out just about eight weeks ago for this year, it's the 2023 report and it looks back to 2022. And we found that it turned down again. So we lost another 3 million Americans who no longer read the Bible at all last year. That makes 28 million Americans we've lost in the last two years.

The result of that is we have a high biblical illiteracy now. We do a lot of work with George Barna and others, and we no longer, as Americans know the Bible the way we used to know.

When you look at the source of our ideas, that's why what President Roosevelt said back in World War II, it's easy to prove, this is the book that they used. He continued, he says, "We cannot read the history of our rise and development as a nation without reckoning with the place the Bible's occupied in shaping the advances of the republic." He said, "There is no way you can read American history without seeing what the Bible did." Today there's a whole lot of ways to read American history without having a clue what the Bible did, because again, we have so secularized our own history that we don't even know what the documents are.

But the Plymouth Colony was a little different, their Governor William Bradford, he kept extensive records. William Bradford said that when they got here, the Bible was a new book to them because it had been put up for a thousand years in world history. You're not allowed to read it. The people who tried to get it in the common language like Wycliffe, and Hus and Tyndale, were burned at the stake for trying to get a Bible where people could read it individually. Well, the first English language Bible was printed in 1560, and that's the time that the Pilgrims were having their church and doing their stuff. And so when they come to America

and 1620, the Bible is still pretty new book. It's fairly recent. The Geneva Bible came out in 1560, and that's the Bible they brought to America with them. The King James had just come out and they had that as well. But Bradford says that they would spend 4 to 6 hours a day in the Bible rediscovering the truths of the Bible. And as they did that, and the years they were in Plymouth, they changed a lot of things. And one was their economic system.

It's interesting that Bradford talked about when they changed their economic system. He said, "We used socialism as if we were wiser than God." What does that mean? He said, "When you read the Bible, it's really clear God's not a socialist." Now that's not known today; 71% of millennials today think we should switch from the free market to socialism. 75% of college students think we should go from free market to socialism. So it's not known today that socialism is a really bad idea. We think it's a really good idea. But back then they rejected socialism, adopted what we call the free market system. The free market system based on five Bible verses. Five Bible verses and William Bradford talks about verses like 1 Timothy 5:8, 2 Thessalonians 3:10, Matthew 25, Luke 19, Matthew 20. Those are all the verses that built the free market system, which is the most prosperous economic system in the history of the world. And it came out of the Bible. See that's our civic and our social institutions, not our spiritual life, our civic and our social life, like our economic system.

Another one is our form of government. If you study the Bible, there are seven different forms of government illustrated in the Bible in various places. The Founding Fathers who went through those seven to decide what they wanted to be. They were coming out of a monarchy. Of course, monarchy is one of the big forms in the Bible; you've got King Saul, and King David, and King Solomon, and Rehoboam, and on it goes. But there were other forms of government as well. And of those seven forms of government, the Founding Fathers looked at and they looked at democracy, and they said democracy is worse than a dictatorship. Democracy, there are plenty examples of it throughout the gospels, particularly with the Romans and the Founding Fathers rejected it. They chose what we call a Republican form of government. They cited three Bible verses for that. That was Exodus 18:21, Deuteronomy 1:15 and 16, and Deuteronomy 16:18. So we've adopted a Republican form of government, rejected a Democratic form of government, and yet the president today keeps saying that we need to save the democracy. No, we don't. Really bad idea. As a matter of fact, if anybody read the Constitution today, Article four, Section four of the Constitution explicitly prohibits America from becoming a democracy. Constitutionally, we're not allowed to be a democracy. We are a, quote, Republican form of government. We have to provide that in every state throughout the United States. We even pledge allegiance to the flag, to the Republic of the United States. Today people don't know the difference between a Republic and a Democracy it's all the same. No it's not all the same.

Let me take you to another president. Ulysses S. Grant was president on the 100th anniversary of America. He came out with a card on the hundredth anniversary. You see the card here? Top left, 1776, top right, 1876, that's a centennial 100 years. He's the president. It says centennial, and it says, "Message of President Grant to the children, and students of the United States." It says children and youth. So what is the president going to tell the children and youth? Here's what he said, he says, "Hold fast to the Bible as a sheet anchor of your liberties; write its precepts in your heart, and practice them in your lives." He said, "To the influence of this Book

we are indebted for all the progress made in true civilization, and to this we must look as our guide in the future. 'Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people.'" What do you think happens today if any president does that for the youth of America? But you see back then he said, "Guys, the only way we keep America on track is if you stay in God's Word, because this is where we get all of our civilization. This is where we get all of our institutions." And we've allowed ourselves to be compartmentalized that religion goes in church, it goes in our faith life, but it doesn't go in public life, and it does.

Tim Moore: Listen to what Benjamin Franklin—a supposed Deist—had to say to the Continental Congress in 1787.

David Barton: This is what he told them, he said, "In this situation, this assembly, groping as if it were in the dark for political truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us. How has it happened, sir, that we've not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of light to illuminate our understanding?" He said, "At the beginning of the contest with Great Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayer in this room for divine protection." And that is true, back when Congress started in 1774 and they were meeting in that room, they started the first session of Congress with a two hour prayer meeting. So they started it off with two hours of prayer. They had Bible study. They studied four chapters of the Bible that morning. John Adams wrote to his wife, Abigail, and said what had happened to Congress that morning, they called the nation to a day of prayer and fasting. He said, "Guys, don't you remember what we used to do in this room?" He said, "In the beginning of the contest with the Great Britain," he says, "when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayer in this room for divine protection." He said, "Our prayers, sir, were heard and they were graciously answered. All of us engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a Superintending Providence in our favor."

And that's one of the fun studies of the Revolution is seeing the absolute, irrefutable miracles that God did that cannot be explained through any physical means, where God flat changed, we won at least four major battles because God changed the weather in the middle of the battle. And the weather for some reason hit the British, not the Americans in the same battle. How do you do that? See there's records, really clear records of what God did with weather. And we won some major battles because of the weather. And that's what he said, he said, "Guys, we've had so many examples of a Superintending Providence in our favor." He said, "Have we now forgotten this powerful Friend? Or do we imagine that we no longer need His assistance?" He says, "I have lived, sir, a long time." Yes, he had. He says, "And the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth that God governs in the affairs of men." He said, "If a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We've been assured in the sacred writings, that except the Lord build the House, they labor in vain that build it." He said, "I firmly believe this, and I also believe that without His concurring aid, we should succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel, and we should become a reproach and a bye word down to future ages. I therefore beg leave to move that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven, and His blessings on our deliberation be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to business."

Now, that's a slightly religious tone to that speech. And that is indisputably the least religious Founding Father. Franklin, hands down is the least religious, nobody is going to dispute that. If he's the least religious, what does that tell you about the other guys?

So that little speech you just saw of Franklin was 14 sentences long. Here's the question I've got for you: How many Bible verses did you see Franklin quote in those 14 sentences? The answer is 14 Bible verses. These are the Bible verses that Franklin just referenced. Now, notice he did not give a single Bible reference on any one of them, but everybody else in the room knew that those were Bible verses. So how is it that Franklin knew that many Bible verses as the least religious Founding Father? Well, pretty easy, Jesus gives us the answer. How did Franklin know that many Bible verses? How could Franklin speak Bible verses like that out of his heart? Jesus told us in Matthew 12:34, "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks." Franklin could speak those Bible verses because he had memorized those Bible verses. They came flowing out his mouth because he had done a lot of Bible memory work.

Nathan Jones: Consider a letter President George Washington wrote in 1790 to a Jewish Synagogue he planned to visit in Rhode Island.

David Barton: And so Washington writes back kind of a presidential letter, which is, well, that was a really nice letter you sent. Thanks. I look forward to seeing you when I get there.

And here's just two paragraphs out of the letter he wrote back to them. He says, "May the Children of the Stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other Inhabitants; while every one shall sit in safety under his own vine and figtree, and there shall be none to make him afraid. May the father of all mercies scatter light and not darkness in our paths, and make us all in our several vocations useful here, and in his own due time and way everlastingly happy." Now that is two sentences. How many Bible verses did he use in two sentences? Answer is ten. His whole thing was just one Bible phrase after another. And these are the verses that he used in those two sentences. How did these guys do that? Again, they memorized the Bible. They're just speaking what's out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. This is what they had memorized.

So those are God's three institutions. And with God's three institutions, probably one that Christians today know the least about is that of government. Now, that's not a problem in previous generations, because we understood the government was an institution of God. We studied it like we studied the family or the church. Great example is that book I mentioned earlier, John Locke he did the "Two Treatises of Government." This is the book, the third most cited individual, this book in 1690, you can still get it today. That book is less than an inch thick. It's less than 400 pages. John Locke in less than 400 pages showing how civil government is to operate. He references the Bible more than 1500 times on the operation of civil government.

Now, I do a lot of pastor's conferences. We were just this past week in Washington and in Oregon, we'll do two or three pastor's conferences a day across the state. And so I can ask a group of pastors, name all the verses you can think of on civil government. And if I get a dozen verses named it's a big time. 1500 really? See, we don't know what the Bible says about civil government anymore because we tune that out. Christians don't do that, and so we just tune it out and we don't even pay attention to what's in there. And so those three institutions, as a

result, what's happened is Americans have really we've kind of left the government side out of things. That's not part of our focus as Christians. And as a result, we've really become two-thirds Christians. Pretty good on the family, pretty good on church, but we're not good on government. We've got to become three-thirds Christians. We've got to get back involved in that arena.

Tim Moore: Charles Finney—a leading evangelist in the 1700 and 1800s—had this to say about revival in America.

David Barton: He said, "The church must take right ground in regard to politics. He said politics are part of a religion in such a country as this, and Christians must do their duty to the country as part of their duty to God." Now that's pretty stiff all over. But again, they understood there were three institutions. And what happens is if you have a revival now and it broke out in schools, schools are going to crush that revival. They already do anyway. They tell the kids, you can't express your faith publicly. You can't share your faith with us. We've got a system that if we had a revival break out, it would try to crush that revival. That's why you have to have government on the side, because otherwise it will crush them. And it's doing that now. It's crushing the family, and it's crushing sexuality, and it's crushing gender, crushing all the stuff that doesn't agree with, which is why you have to be involved, that you have to get different policies. And he concludes, he says, "God will bless or curse this nation, according to the course that Christians take in politics."

He said, "The purpose of public education is threefold. He said the number one purpose of public education is to teach students to love and serve God. He said the number two purpose of public education is to teach students to love and serve their country. He said the number three purpose of public education is to teach students to love and serve their family." Notice the order: God, country, family. Nearly every Christian I know today would say, "No, no, no, that's out of order. It should be God, it should be family, and it should be country, because family is so much more important." And Dr. Rush says, "No, you're wrong. It should be God, it should be country, and it should be family." Because as he pointed out, if you ever lose control of your country, it will become the great enemy of your family. And that's exactly what we're seeing now.

I'll close with this challenge which came from Matthias Burnet, he was one of the great preachers back in the American founding. And he summarized what they had been taught back then, and what they were teaching, and was being taught from the pulpit as well. He said, "To God and posterity you're accountable for your rights and your rulers." Now that's interesting that we answer to God for our rights and our rulers. Our rights aren't up to us, that's up to the government. And he said, "No, no, you will answer it." You see, they saw it as a stewardship. John Adams and other Founding Fathers explained it very well. We would stand before God one day and account to God. We all know that Jesus tells us in Matthew 12, "Every idle word we speak we'll give account of." We know from 1 Corinthians 4 that our thoughts, we'll give account of. We know from Hebrews 4 that our actions, we will account to God for that. We'll stand before Him and have to account for it. And He'll say, "I gave you your life. What did you do with your life?" We'll have to account for that. And He'll either say, "Well done, good and faithful servant," or He'll say, "that wicked servant depart from me into eternal fire." And He'll say, "I gave you your family. What did you do with that?" "Well, Lord, they turn out really well.

I raised them and nurtured them in admonition of the Lord. I love my wife. I respected my husband. All the things you said." "Well done good and faithful servant. I gave you your possessions. What did you do with that?" "I was a good steward of it. Not only did I tithe, I gave offerings as well, and I helped the poor, everything you said." "I gave you your country, what did you do it?" "Oh I decided not to get involved in that one." That's not an acceptable answer.

So he closes with this, he said, "Let not your children have reason to curse you for giving up those rights and prostrating those institutions which your father's delivered to you." We have been giving them up just an unbelievably remarkable trust of the Lord. When He comes and we offer it back to Him is it in better shape than it was, or worse shape than it was? How good of stewards have we've been?

Part 2: Question and Answer Segment

Tim Moore: All of our speakers engaged in a dynamic and insightful Question and Answer session during lunch. Nathan Jones and David Bowen were able to join us. One of the submitted questions asked what to do when a church goes woke—or when a person finds themselves unequally yoked in a particular congregation? David Barton offered biblical wisdom.

David Barton: There's 384,000 churches and senior pastors in America. George Barna work in there, calling 500 pastors a day, asking six questions: Did Jesus live a sinless life? Can you earn your way to Heaven? Is there an actual heaven and hell? Six different things. 72% of pastors said they did not agree with that. So you're looking at that point, 72% of pastors don't agree with basic orthodoxy. So there's 107,000 pastors that do, we call them theologically conservative. Within that group there's still a whittling down to only 2.8% are willing to talk about things that are going on in the culture around them. They don't think they should be talking about what's happening around them. So a lot of that, again, polling, 77% of Christians say they self-censor for fear of being attacked if they say something that is true. And in this culture, we don't want to get attacked, so we just keep our mouth shut. And as a result, the other side is gaining. So if I go back to 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12, it says "Because they did not love the truth, God sent them a delusion, they believed a lie and they were damned." So love of the truth is a hard thing to do. Speaking the truth is especially hard for American pastors today because they get their brains beat in by the woke people in the audience. And if they speak the truth, they are liable to have some flack. So the chances are very high right now that you'll have to leave a church, or at least, you know, we're looking at 72% moving in the wrong direction. So that's just where the church is. But we've got to get back to a love of the truth.

Nathan Jones: David Barton also responded to another question about how to handle threats to Christian faith at work?

David Barton: One of the big litigation things happening is whether Christians can say no to that kind of stuff in the workplace. If a private company demands that you use certain pronouns or demands that you affirm gay agendas. Do you have to do that? And at this point, we're winning all the cases against that. But there is a U.S. Supreme Court decision, right now, we think we're going to win. We just don't know about what amount that deals with the rights

of Christian people in the workplace. It happens to be the post office that is the plaintiff or the litigant in this thing, because there's a guy that wants to celebrate the Sabbath, and the post office and the previous standard we've had in 48 years says, well, you really can't practice your faith in the workplace if it's going to make a difficulty for the employer. And that's about to go out the door. So at that point in time, there'll be new legal support for being able to say, No, I'm not going to participate in that.

But I might also throw one other thought in there. In Revelation 21:8 the Scripture goes through who goes into the Lake of Fire and it talks about the whore mongers and the adulterers and the liars, number one on the list, it says the fearful and the cowardly. And so we got to get a backbone, even if it cost us the job. Hopefully the Christians community will all come together. Founding Fathers said, look, we might as well hang together or hang separately, no use hanging separately. We've got to support one another, but we got to get a backbone at some point. And we're about to have the Supreme Court give us a win on this. And when that happens, we need to be aggressive in pushing that. We need to make sure we can turn the culture back. They're aggressive pushing us. We've got to push back.

Closing

Nathan Jones: The 3-DVD set contains the complete presentations by Robert Jeffress, David Barton, David Reagan, Tommy Nelson, Erwin Lutzer, and Tim Moore, as well as both Question and Answer sessions.

For only \$25—and that included domestic shipping—we'll send you the multi-disc DVD album. It also makes a tremendous resource you can share with friends or watch as part of a Sunday School class or Bible Study. Just visit our online store or call the number on the screen.

Tim Moore: David Barton shared how the New Jersey schools used to expect First and Second graders to memorize the entire book of John, along with many other passages from the Bible. Our society is quickly casting itself adrift from its Biblical foundations. But Christians should be so steeped in the Word of God that we cannot be shaken—and our hearts cannot be troubled.

Nathan Jones: We pray that this series will help ground you to the Rock of our Salvation and cause your light to shine even brighter in this darkening world. Until Christ comes, we've got work to do.

Tim Moore: Well said. During the Korean War, Marine Colonel "Chesty" Puller was told he was surrounded by the enemy. Puller's response was, "Good! They can't get away from us now!" We need to have the same sense of purpose and confidence of victory, because we also live in a "target-rich" environment.

Nathan Jones: Let's rise to the challenge David Barton laid down and be stewards of the blessings of freedom handed down to us. Until next week, I'm Nathan Jones for Lamb & Lion Ministries.

Tim Moore: And I'm Tim Moore. Let not your heart be troubled! Godspeed!!

End of Program