

The Father of Lights Part-3

As we begin the next 250 years of America's history, I want to begin by reflecting a bit on our past 300 years or so in this series, "**The Father of Lights.**" This is **Pt. 3.**" In 1776 John Adams, who became president of the United States of America in 1797, wrote these words to his wife, Abigail, upon the passing of the Declaration of Independence, "I am well aware of the toil and blood & treasure that it will cost us to maintain this Declaration, and support and defend these States. Yet through all the gloom I can see rays of ravishing light and glory. I can see that the end is worth more than all of the means."

From the Introduction to the classic 1977 book, **The Light and the Glory** by Peter Marshall & David Manuel, come these profound words about our nation's founding: "That a drought could be broken, or an Indian attack averted, by corporate repentance is an idea which sounds alien to many Christians today. Yet it was central to the faith which built this country, and is one of the most prominent, recurring themes in the Bible. One of the most familiar examples is, *"If My people who are called by My name humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land"* (2 Chronicles 7:14).

"The key, of course, was that His people – three thousand years ago, three hundred years ago, or today – had to first see that they were sinners. Without accepting that truth, there could be no repentance, for they would not see any need for humbling themselves. This was the linchpin to God's plan for America: that we see ourselves, individually and corporately, in a state of continuing need of God's forgiveness, mercy and support. And this was the secret of the horizontal aspect of the covenant as well: for only at the foot of the Cross can we be truly united in

Christ. Only starting from that position of each of us having to see our own sin, can we be truly one in the Spirit.

“And incidentally, from *this* position, it is impossible to enter into nationalistic pride. Inherent in God’s call upon our forefathers to found a Christian nation was the necessity to live in a state of constant need and dependency upon His grace and forgiveness. Anyone tempted today to take an elitist attitude regarding our nation’s call need only look at how badly we have failed - & continue to fail – to live up to God’s expectations for us.

“Yet in the early days of our history, it is astonishing to see how few people it took to begin a cycle of repentance, followed by the return of God’s grace. And so, this was the final major theme we found: that when a group of people, no matter how small or ordinary, was willing to die out to their selfish desires, ***the life which came out of that death was immeasurable, and continued to affect lives far into the future.*** This was especially true of the leaders God raised up for these early settlers. Men like Bradford, Winthrop, and Washington, instead of aspiring to greatness (which is so often the goal today), truly wanted nothing more than to serve God’s people. And because these servant-leaders were living out the example of Jesus Christ, who said, “*I am among you as One who serves,*” God was able to use them mightily to show the way in the building of His new Promised Land.

“In 1775, as the U.S. Marine Corps was founded, their recruiting slogan stated that they “were looking for a few good men.” That is essentially what God said to Gideon in ancient Israel, when He reduced His army from thirty-two thousand men to three hundred. And it was what He seemed to be saying three and a half centuries ago, as He began to gather those who were willing to give up everything for His sake to dwell in His New Jerusalem. How many of the incredible blessings which have been poured out upon this land – how much of the grace which

continues to cover this country today – were a direct result of their obedience and willingness to die out to self, only God knows for certain.

“That grace seems to be lifting now, but as we look at our nation’s history from His point of view, we begin to have an idea of how much we owe a very few – and of how much is still at stake. For God’s call on this country has never been revoked.

“America, America, God shed His grace on thee....”

I want to reiterate something similar to what I said last week, “God’s love produces Light, and Light produces life, and life produces joy in people of faith.” When you and I live in the manifold grace of God, that Love of God reveals Himself as Light in a darkened world, which may reject or even persecute the Light bearers, for **John 3:19** says, “...*because their deeds were evil.*” However, in **Acts 2:39 TPT** the Apostle Peter delivers to his audience the promise of the Holy Spirit and forgiveness, stating “*For God’s promise of the Holy Spirit is for you and your families, for those yet to be born and for everyone whom the Lord our God calls to Himself.*” It’s spiritual warfare - light vs. darkness, truth vs. lies, self-renunciation vs. self-fulfillment in order to become Christ-like in His spiritual fullness!

As authors Marshall & Manuel said almost 50 years ago regarding America, “**much is still at stake.**” For our nation is not simply a conglomeration of wealth, power and natural resources, but it is the people that have come here from all over the world or been born here. So how does this nation, which is so diverse, become united? Again, I repeat what I read, “...*only at the foot of the Cross can we be truly united in Christ.*”

Our nation’s **true** strength, peace and prosperity come from honoring God rather than earthly power or military might. Without the honoring of God, the might & power of man will never be

enough. Israel's defeat at the hands of the vastly outnumbered people of Ai was due to Achan's sin of coveting and hiding the wealth he stole from Jericho, which God reserved for Himself. And it cost 36 men their lives. Let us not covet the wealth or honor of this world above the honor due to the Lord, or else the peace of God will be forfeited for fleeting gain.

Why a Nation is Blessed

Psalm 33:12 NKJV says, "*Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people He has chosen as His own inheritance.*" In **Exodus 19:5 NKJV** what it means for a nation to have God as their Lord, "*Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine.*" **Absolute surrender is required! Holding nothing back from God. He deserves it all.**

This is no time to hide our heads in the sand like ostriches do. While the fires of revival are beginning to burn and college campuses are being awakened to Christ, the enemy of our souls is afoot big-time, subverting by lawlessness the means by which our nation and our freedoms stand.

Understanding the Times

2 Tim. 3:1-5 AMPC says, "*But understand this, that in the last days will come (set in) perilous times of great stress and trouble [hard to deal with and hard to bear]. 2. For people will be lovers of self and [utterly] self-centered, lovers of money and aroused by an inordinate [greedy] desire for wealth, proud and arrogant and contemptuous boasters. They will be abusive (blasphemous, scoffing, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy and profane). 3. [They will be] without natural [human] affection (callous & inhuman), relentless (admitting of no truce or appeasement); [they will be] slanderers (false accusers,*

troublemakers), intemperate and loose in morals and conduct, uncontrolled and fierce, haters of good. 4. [They will be] treacherous [betrayers], rash, [and] inflated with self-conceit. [They will be] lovers of sensual pleasures and vain amusements more than and rather than lovers of God. 5. For [although] they hold a form of piety (true religion), they deny and reject and are strangers to the power of it [their conduct belies the genuineness of their profession]. Avoid [all] such people [turn away from them].”

We need divine wisdom & moral guidance in the political, social and economic climate that our country & world are in. And we need active prayer lives for ourselves, our families & our nation! For there's **a culture war** going on in our nation today, which has been taking place for generations. Light is battling with darkness, and as the famous quote says, “Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their country.” We need to not only evangelize the people, but also disciple them in the truth of God's word and ways.

Materialism isn't satisfying like it used to, and people are turning to lifestyles that are tortured expressions of civilized living, including drugs, sexual perversion & idolatry, as well as Marxist communist socialism & Sharia law. **Peace in Christ alone.**

Thomas Paine (Rights of Man) said, “An army of principles can penetrate where an army of soldiers cannot.” & “The harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph (The American Crisis).”

Let's be a principled spiritual army that advances on its knees! Heart searching is not a bad thing when the conscience is troubled and Holy Spirit is at work to reveal what's hindering our freedoms in Christ. Repentance is not a bad work. Both Jesus and John the Baptist came preaching, “**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!**”

SFLB WW: “**Repent**” Gk. *metanoeo*; from *meta*, “after,” and *noeo*, “to think”. **Repentance** is a decision that results in a change of mind, which in turn leads to a change of purpose and action.”

Has anything that you’ve heard this morning caused you to need to rethink some things and make a decision that leads to a change of mind? Are you then will to change your purpose and action that you’ve been living by? Let the Father of Lights speak to your heart and bring you to conviction that will set you free!