

07-03-2022, COTR Texarkana

Title: America's Christian Heritage, *revision 6*

Purpose: Proclaim the Christian history of America's Founding Fathers, the reasons to protect life in the womb and provoke people to stand for the same principles today.

Text: Psalm 33:12

Topic: America, Founding Fathers, 4th of July, Politics, Christian History

Truth for Today: Our Founding Fathers gave us a nation built on God and the Bible.

America's Christian Heritage

- I. Introduction (Song God Bless America, Irving Berlin, 1918 WW1/ revised 1938 WW2)
 - A. This weekend, we celebrate the birth of our nation. Pic38, On July 4, 1776. The Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence declaring that the 13 American colonies were a new nation, no longer part of the British Empire.⁶ America isn't perfect, but we've been blessed by God because of our Founders commitment to God and the Bible. [Ps. 33:12 (ESV) **Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord..**]
 - B. Title: America's Christian Heritage. This is my 6th year to present the subject. Today I'll tie in the Supreme Court ruling on abortion to the Bible and the Declaration of Independence. It'll be more than a history lesson; it's about our responsibility as citizens of the KOG and American citizens to call America back to God.
 - C. Truth for Today: Our Founding Fathers gave us a nation built on God and the Bible.
 - D. Today we'll talk about (1) Abortion, the Bible and the Declaration of Independence, (2) Our founders view of the Bible and Christianity (3) Early education in America, (4) America's national motto, "In God We Trust" (5) A call to action: America has changed. We need a spiritual awakening. What can we do?
- II. Abortion, the Bible, and the Declaration of Independence
 - A. In light of the recent Supreme Court decision on abortion, When does the Bible say human life begins? I.e., when does a baby in the womb become a person? [Psalm 139:13–16 (NLT) **You (God) made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb...15 You watched me as...I was woven together in the dark of the womb. 16 You saw me before I was born...**] Jeremiah 1:5 (NLT) **"I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb. Before you were born I set you**

apart and appointed you as my prophet to the nations.”] Luke 1:41–44 (NCV) When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, **the unborn baby inside her...44... jumped with joy.**]

1. It’s clear the Bible teaches human life begins in the womb and science confirms it. *American College of Pediatricians*: The predominance of human biological research confirms that human life begins at conception—fertilization.⁴¹ i.e., sex Pic of headline and conception.⁴⁰ Scientists at Northwestern University Just Captured The Flash of Light That Sparks When a Sperm Meets an Egg.

B. Why is abortion Biblically wrong? [Exodus 20:13 (ESV) “**You shall not murder.**”] Def. murder: Intentional, premeditated, and unlawful taking of human life. Murder usurps the authority that belongs to God³⁹ as to who lives and when they die.

1. For me, the starting place for a discussion about abortion is simple: God tells us in His Word that human life begins in the womb, and He forbids the murder of innocent life. If we respect God’s Word, our opinion about abortion will be shaped by the Bible but also our commitment to marriage and our sexual practices that produce babies. There is a lot less need for abortion if we live by God’s standards for sex and marriage. Courts and legislatures may pass laws, but our love and fear of God determine what we believe and do. Dred Scott was wrong about slavery and was overturned, so was Roe v Wade about abortion.

C. The Declaration of Independence agrees. We hold these truths to be self-evident, 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**.--That **to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed**,

1. The Supreme Court recognized that the right to make laws about abortion belongs to the states so “we the People” Pic Constitution⁴² could decide. It’s called Federalism, i.e., divided political power between states and the federal government. Citizens vote for people to represent them. Communism takes away the people’s voice and puts all power in the hands of a centralized government.

2. It was this Biblical principle ‘all men are created equal’ that overturned the evil of slavery. African American, Stanford economist, Thomas Sowell Pic^{43,34} ...within Western civilization (*America*), the principle

impetus for the abolition of slavery came first from very conservative religious activists - people who would today be called 'the religious right.', This story is not 'politically correct' in today's terms. Hence it is ignored, as if it never happened."³²

3. Not only did our Declaration of Independence ultimately do away with slavery, it protects the right for life for all Americans, including those in the womb. The 1st unalienable rights, i.e., a right given by God not government is the right to life.

D. Our church isn't just against abortion, we're involved in helping moms and kids in a big way. We are under contract to expand 'Grace House' to a 10-bedroom facility. Grace House helps young moms in crisis transition to a life of stability. Started by Karen (a former homeless mom) and Artie Rayfield, Pic. We have a group in the church called, Wellsprings, Pic. They help pregnant moms with practical and spiritual support. We also support both CPC in town and all foster care ministries in the area.

III. Our founders view of the Bible and Jesus Christ

A. Of the 56 signers of the Declaration, all held religious affiliations and the vast majority were Christians: 4 of the signers were preachers.⁷ 29 of the 56 signers of the Declaration held what are today considered seminary or Bible school degrees.⁸

B. No book in the world deserves to be so unceasingly studied and so profoundly meditated upon as the Bible.⁴⁷ John Quincy Adams, 6th President.

C. The Bible is a book worth more than all the other books that were printed. Patrick Henry, Founding Father.⁴⁶

D. The Bible is the Rock on which our Republic rests,⁴⁸ 7th President Andrew Jackson.

E. The Bible is the best of all books, for it is the Word of God and teaches us how to be happy in this world and the next. John Jay, 1st Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.¹⁹

F. 1781, Robert Aitken, asked Congress for permission to print Bibles for schools. They approved and printed in the front a Congressional endorsement, 'The United States in Congress recommend this Bible to the inhabitants of the United States'.²²

G. Oath of office, State Constitution of Delaware 1776."Every person who shall be a chosen member of either House, or appointed to any office or place of trust shall make and subscribe the following declaration, 'I _____

do profess faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ His only Son, and the Holy Ghost, one God- blessed forevermore; and I do acknowledge the Holy Scriptures and the Old and New testament to be given by divine inspiration."²¹

- H. 12-27-1982, Newsweek said, "Historians are discovering that the Bible, perhaps even more than the Constitution, is our founding document."²⁰
- I. I rely on the merits of Jesus Christ for a pardon of all my sins. Samuel Adams, signer of the Declaration. Jesus Christ is the only savior of sinners; if you are not reconciled to God through Jesus Christ, you must forever perish. John Witherspoon, signer of the Declaration.¹⁸
- J. John Jay, 1st Supreme Court Justice appointed by George Washington: Providence has given to our people the choice of rulers, and it is the duty as well as the privilege and interest of our Christian nation, to select and prefer Christians for their rulers.²
- K. According to Supreme Court Justice Brewer, late 1800's, America is "of all the nations of the world most justly called a Christian nation" because Christianity "has so largely shaped and molded it."²⁴

IV. Christianity and early education in America

- A. Picture²⁹ New England Primer taught children of the Colonies how to read and pray. They learned to pray: Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray thee, Lord, my soul to keep; If I should die before I wake, I pray thee, Lord, my soul to take.⁹ It taught the ABC's from stories in the Bible. A: "In Adams fall, we sinned all." B: "Heaven to find, the Bible mind." C: "Christ crucify'd." By the time children learned their A, B, Cs they were also well acquainted with the Bible stories and concepts of right and wrong. Literacy rates were high and grew in early America. By the mid 20th century, schools switched to readers like Picture "Dick and Jane"³¹ which no longer taught the Bible stories. Later books like, Picture 'Heather Has 2 Mommies"³⁰ were added to the curriculum. At the same time test scores began to drop, along with a moral decline of our youth and a rising crime rate. CNS news today, 65% of Public-School 8th Graders Not Proficient in Reading; 67% Not Proficient in Math. Only 5 percent of Detroit public-school eighth graders were proficient, in math. 7 percent in reading.⁴⁴
- B. Colleges: 106 of the first 108 in America were built upon Christian principles, Harvard: 2nd Rules and Precepts of Harvard: (2) Let every student be plainly instructed, the main end of his life and studies is, to

know God and Jesus Christ which is eternal life, the only foundation of all sound knowledge and learning,⁴⁹ 11 May, 2016 the Washington Times reports A Harvard law professor, Mark Tushnet, has called for liberals to begin treating like Nazis those who subscribe to Christian or conservative beliefs.¹²

C. Dr. Benjamin Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, the founder of public schools, wrote [T]he Bible, should be read in our schools in preference to all other books because it contains the greatest portion of knowledge which is calculated to produce private and public happiness.¹³ The great enemy of the salvation of man never invented a more effective means of eliminating Christianity from the world than by persuading mankind that it was improper to read the Bible at schools.⁸

D. Dr. Lawrence A. Cremin, Ph.D. from Columbia University, said that during the colonial period the Bible was "the single most important cultural influence in the lives of Anglo-Americans."³ Thus, the cornerstone of early American education was the belief that "children are an heritage from the Lord, Ps. 127:3"⁴

V. America's national motto, "In God We Trust" (Picture of money²⁵

A. Our national motto, "In God We Trust", comes from our National Anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner", written by Francis Scott Key, in 1814 after witnessing the bombardment of Fort McHenry by British ships in the War of 1812. Key was inspired by the large American flag, the Star-Spangled Banner, flying triumphantly above the fort during the American victory. Verse 4 declares, Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation!...Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just, And this be our motto: 'In God is our trust'.⁵⁰

B. "In God We Trust" first appeared on U.S. coins in 1864 and has appeared on paper currency since 1957. It's our National Motto, adopted in 1956 by Congress to differentiate the United States of America from the atheistic communism. Two years earlier Congress had added the words "under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance.

VI. America has changed. We need a spiritual awakening. What can we do?

A. Barna: In 1991, 86% of U.S. adults held a biblical view of God, now 46%. Belief in the Bible as "the accurate Word of God": 70% in 1991 now 41%. Americans who believe they'll go to heaven because they accept Jesus as their personal Savior 36% in 1991, 30% now. The Don'ts, i.e., they don't

believe or know if God exists, 12% in 2011 to 34% in 2021. 43% of Millennials are Don'ts.⁴⁵

- B. Be like Paul; stand up for your rights and religious freedom as an American citizen. Paul used his Roman citizenship to avoid persecution. [Acts 22:25 (ESV) when they had stretched him out for the whips, Paul said, "Is it lawful for you to flog a man who is a **Roman citizen and uncondemned?**] Bill of Rights: (1) Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. This guarantees our freedom to live out our faith. Sometimes we must fight for it. Supreme Court say a coach could pray on the football field after a game.
- C. Be like Daniel; do what God says is right even if it's unpopular. [Daniel 6:7-10 (NLT) the king should make a law...any person who prays to anyone, except to you, Your Majesty-will be thrown into the den of lions, 10 But when Daniel, went home, **He prayed three times a day, just as he had always done,**
- D. Be like Jonah; speak the truth in love in hopes of a spiritual awakening. [Jonah 3:2-5 (NIV) "Go to, Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you.", 4, "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown." 5 **The Ninevites believed God,**

VII. Conclusion: America's Christian heritage is undeniable, but our future depends on us.

- A. In 1931, the Supreme Court said, "We are a Christian people, according to one another the equal right of religious freedom and acknowledging with reverence the duty of obedience to the will of God."²³
- B. This was our past. The only hope for our future is a spiritual awakening. Let us: (1) Be like Paul and stand up for our rights and religious freedom as American citizens. (2) Be like Daniel and do what God says is right even if it's unpopular. (3) Be like Jonah and speak the truth in love in hopes of a spiritual awakening.

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IX. Supplemental material: God and the American Revolution, the War for American Independence

- A. The Christian emphasis during the Revolution caused one British governor to write to Great Britain complaining that: "If you ask an American who is his master, he'll tell you he has none. And he has no governor but Jesus Christ."⁴
- B. A motto of the American Revolution directed against King George III confronted the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings (i.e. when the king spoke, it was the voice of God to the people) was simple and direct: "No King but King Jesus!"⁴
- C. John Quincy Adams, 6th President, "The highest glory of the American Revolution was this: it connected, in one indissoluble bond, the principles of civil government with the principles of Christianity."⁵ The 1st right in the Bill of Rights was the freedom to practice religion as one chooses.
- D. Picture²⁷ Ben Franklin's motion at the Constitutional Convention Sept. 1787: „groping as it were in the dark to find political truth, how has it happened, Sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of lights to illuminate our understandings? In the beginning of the Contest with G. Britain, we had daily prayer, for the divine protection." Our prayers, were graciously answered.³