

Remnant Life Church
July 3, 2022
What Hope for Liberty?
2 Chronicles 7:14

- Tomorrow, we celebrate the 246th anniversary of the birth of our nation
- But the truth is, every 4th of July, we celebrate not only our independence that lead to our becoming a free nation but we also declare our dependence on God
 - Now that second part has been all but eliminated from our thinking today
 - The importance and the necessity of God in our daily lives are no longer accepted in our culture
 - And it is most certainly not being taught to our young people in our schools
 - Instead, we are teaching them that America was a historically horrible nation that, over the past 2 and half centuries, has only oppressed and victimized entire sub-cultures.
 - We are also being told that virtually any group of people, who feel they were treated poorly in the past, can now demand and in fact deserve to be compensated for the wrongs done to their ancestors in a time that no one lived nor had anything to do with on either side
 - Yet Bibles, prayer, and Christian groups are many times banned from taking place on those very same school properties and are being cited as too controlling and manipulative
 - Not only are they banned but people are being punished for desiring to exercise their right to worship God
 - Just this past week it took the SCOTUS to pass a ruling that a football coach in Washington state, who interestingly enough is named Joseph Kennedy, was fired wrongly and had to be reinstated.
 - Why was he fired?
 - Here is a portion of the ruling as written by Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch
 - “Joseph Kennedy lost his job as a high school football coach because he knelt at midfield after games to offer a quiet prayer of thanks. Mr. Kennedy prayed during a period when school employees were free to speak with a friend, call for a reservation at a restaurant, check email, or attend to other personal matters,” the Justice wrote in the opinion. “Both the Free Exercise and Free Speech Clauses of the First Amendment protect expressions like Mr. Kennedy’s. Nor does a proper understanding of the Amendment’s Establishment Clause require the government to single out private religious speech for special disfavor. The Constitution and the best of our traditions counsel mutual respect, not censorship and suppression, for religious and nonreligious views alike.”

- It is the goal of those who oppose all things to do with God to remove all connection between God and this nation
 - We are seeing this more and more with the ongoing attempt to erase or rewrite our history
 - We see it as statues, and historical markers are removed
 - We see it in today's textbooks that are blatantly rewriting our nation's history to sanitize any mention of God
 - But I want you to know this morning that regardless of that agenda and its measure of success God was and is very much at the foundation of this country and its beginning.
 - And it is from that presence of God that we derive our hope

- Our nation's most treasured historical document clearly states where we came from...
 - It opens with these words – *...dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal and endowed by our Creator with certain unalienable rights.*
 - The Declaration of Independence then ends with these *-And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.*
 - Divine Providence is what is given by God
 - Reliance means dependence
 - Our nation's founding document declared independence from Great Britain; but with equal passion, also our dependence upon God.

- Five years ago, I shared with you a sermon titled *Proclaim Liberty Throughout the Land*
 - Those five words have great significance as they are etched on the Liberty Bell
 - Why would such important words be etched on a bell of all things?
 - Well, a little American history...
 - The 2nd Continental Congress, meeting in Philadelphia, approved the declaration on July 2nd
 - The first signatures were affixed on July 4th
 - The first public reading on July 8
 - That reading was celebrated by the assembling and playing of a band and the ringing of the city's bells
 - The very first bell rung, so the story is told, was the one hanging in the belfry of the Pennsylvania State House (later renamed Independence Hall), most likely by Andrew McNair, the doorkeeper or custodian of the sitting congress
 - It was not given the name Liberty Bell until the mid 1830s
 - It was because of the words inscribed - *"Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof!"*
 - But this is not a quote from one of the early founding fathers but from [Lev. 25:10](#)

- A brief history of the bell
 - The first bell was commissioned in 1752 to be made by the London bellfounding firm of Lester and Pack
 - It was delivered to the new land, and at its first ringing, the rim cracked
 - Philadelphians John Pass and John Stow melted it down and recast it
 - It's first ringing, it was later reported, made a sound like "2 coal carts banging together."
 - It was then recast a 3rd time
 - The famous crack, however, did not occur until sometime in the early 1840s
 - It also did not ring on July 4, 1776 but on July 8
- The signing of the declaration on that date also did not end the war nor guarantee freedom
 - In Sept 1777, the British are about to occupy Philadelphia because Washington had lost the Battle of Brandywine near Chadds Ford
 - British believed that to occupy the seat of independence would lead to the winning of the war
 - Metal was scarce and it was thought the British would melt the bells of the city to make cannons
 - The 11 bells of the city, including the one in the state house, were taken down and moved to the village of Northampton Town founded by William Allen, one of the wealthiest men in the colonies 52 miles north of the city (today Allentown)
 - 700 wagons were sent out with the bells and other important artifacts under the guard of 200 cavalymen on Sept 24, 1777
 - Upon their arrival they were hidden under the floorboards of the Zion German Reformed Church until 9 months later, when the British evacuated Philadelphia, the bells were returned and hung again
- The political and cultural climate of our country today denies the importance of God in our nation's early years in spite of the passage we read on the bell
 - A talk show host, noted for his stance against God, was speaking with a call-in listener discussing the early role of Christianity in our nations' founding...
 - The host said, *Why do Christians think they had anything special to do with the founding of this country... Anybody who reads history books knows that Christianity was no more involved in America's founding than any other religion.*
 - If this man had actually read a history book, he would know that his statement was not true...
- And we can go much further back than 1776
 - In 1504 Christopher Columbus wrote in his journal the reason for setting out to discover a new land: "I was led of the Holy Spirit to carry the message of the Gospel to undiscovered lands."

- In 1620 the Pilgrims drafted the Mayflower Compact. “In the name of God, amen. Having undertaken for the glory of God and for the advancement of the Christian faith, do solemnly and mutually in the presence of God, covenant and combine ourselves together.”
- In 1643, 23 years later, the Puritans formed a group and wrote The New England Confederation
 - This draft was the first written document of the new world and a forerunner for those men to utilize in 1776.
 - The New England Confederation Constitution begins with these words, *Whereas we all came into these parts with one and the same end and aim, namely to advance the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ and to enjoy the liberties of the gospel in purity and peace.*
- One of the driving forces to seek a new land was for the freedom of worship
 - The Church of England began in 1534 by Henry VIII because Pope Clement VII would not grant him an annulment from his wife Catherine of Aragon so that he could marry Anne Boleyn
 - The Puritans, knowing the corrupt state of the Church of England, left for the new land America to show how a nation could prosper if its citizens lived under the laws of God and not the state or a king.
- What about the colonies themselves?
 - The Delaware Charter, the first state to ratify the constitution, defines the purpose of their Colony, *To further propagate the Holy Gospel.*
 - The Virginia Charter assures the right for people to live in *Christian peace*” and *instructs the people to: “Propagate the Christian religion to such people who yet live in ignorance of the true knowledge and worship of God.*
 - The Rhode Island Compact: *We submit our persons, lives, and estates unto our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.*
- George Washington, in his personal prayer book wrote: *Oh, eternal and everlasting God, direct my thoughts, words and work. Wash away my sins in the immaculate blood of the lamb and purge my heart by the Holy Spirit. Daily, frame me more and more in the likeness of thy son, Jesus Christ, that living in thy fear, and dying in thy favor, I may in thy appointed time obtain the resurrection of the justified unto eternal life. Bless, O Lord, the whole race of mankind and let the world be filled with the knowledge of thy son, Jesus Christ.*
 - Does that sound to you like Christianity was no more involved in America’s founding than any other religion?
- John Quincy Adams (6th President)
 - The DOI was cowritten by his father John Adams along with Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Robert Livingston and Roger Sherman
 - JQA, in 1821 wrote about the document those 5 men wrote, *From the time of the Declaration of Independence, the American people were bound by the laws of God and the laws of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which they all acknowledge as the root of their conduct. We all came together to obey the word of God.*

- Patrick Henry the first Gov or VA: *It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded not but religionists but by Christians, not on religion but on the gospel of Jesus Christ.*
- Benjamin Franklin: after a rather long debate on the writing of the DOI *Gentlemen, if it is true that not one single petal from any flower falls to the ground without escaping God's attention, will the distress of this nation go unheeded? Let us therefore determine to seek His face.*
 - They stopped debating and began to pray and seek the wisdom of God.
- In 1782, the United States Congress voted this resolution: *The Congress of the United States recommends and approves the Holy Bible for use in all schools.*
- It is also very telling when you consider the question, what is the genesis of the three branches of our government?
 - Executive, Legislative, and Judicial
 - **Isaiah 33:22** - *"For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; it is he who will save us."*
 - For the Lord is our Judge [judicial]
 - ...our Lawgiver [legislative]
 - ...our King [that's executive]
 - The founding fathers turned to the Scripture for not only guidance but for the very structural foundation of our nation
- And what about the role of the church and its pastors in America's early days.
 - It was a preacher named Frances Bellemey who helped to write the words of the "Pledge of Allegiance."
 - Another preacher, Samuel Smith who wrote the Hymn "My Country 'Tis of Thee."
- Pastor John Leland wrote the introduction of the First Amendment to the Constitution.
- Prior to the Civil War (this weekend is the 159th anniversary), 90% of all of America's College Presidents were preachers of the Gospel.
- John Harvard was a Pastor in Charlestown, Massachusetts and the man for whom Harvard University is named stated that the purpose of the University was, *That every student be plainly instructed and earnestly pressed to consider well the main ends of his life and studies: to know God and Jesus Christ...*
 - As a matter of fact, if you can locate Harvard's original seal, the motto states, "Truth for Christ and the Church."
 - Today it has been changed to the Latin *Veritas* which simply means "Truth"
- Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Brown, Dartmouth, William and Mary and Columbia, today the very seat of hyper liberalism and godless education, were all founded by pastors and church affiliations with the expressed intent to educate young men for Christ and the preaching of God's Word.

What is America's hope?

2 Chronicles 7:14

- *If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.*

4 Conditions followed by 3 Blessings

The Conditions:

1. Humble ourselves

- To be humbled or humiliation is something that everyone works very hard to avoid
- But God's humbling is different than man's
 - Man's is done to tear down another person in order to build yourself up
 - God's is done to restore and build up in perfect love
- God WILL bring humility into our lives
 - Prov 3:34** - *He mocks proud mockers but shows favor to the humble and oppressed.*
 - Js 4:6** - *God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.*
 - This nation is rife and riddled with pride
 - We see that evidenced by the way we shake our fists in the face of God by blatantly defying His Word and embracing all the things that God says are wicked

2. Pray

- Not merely an activity but a condition of the heart
- And true prayer is empowered when preceded by humility

3. Seek His face

- To seek God's face means to desire His will over my own
- What God wants is infinitely more important than what I want
- Seeking His will for my life demonstrates my humility
- Psalm 24:5-6** - *They will receive blessing from the LORD and vindication from God their Savior. Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek your face, God of Jacob.*

4. Turn from our wicked ways

- There must be action attached to our intent
- Merely speaking words will never create a lasting change
- The men of the 2nd Continental Congress had to act on their resolution of independence
- So today we, the church, must also set a precedent and example for the change needed in our society, not just with our words but with our actions

The four conditions: humble ourselves, pray, seek His face, turn from our wicked ways

The Blessings:

1. God will hear us

- a. There is no greater despair than being alone and overwhelmed by loneliness
- b. That despair goes to the very depths of our souls when we cut ourselves off from God
 - i. His love is eternal and ever-present
 - ii. But our pride can and will separate us by our own choosing
 - iii. Daniel was a man of humility who God greatly blessed
 - iv. **Dan 9:17** - *Now, our God, hear the prayers and petitions of your servant. For your sake, Lord, look with favor on your desolate sanctuary.*

2. He will forgive our sins

- a. Only God's forgiveness spares us from eternal separation from God (**Rom. 6:23**)
- b. Death then is not only physical but spiritual and forever
- c. His forgiveness is also what gives every Christian hope to survive and even prosper even when surrounded by spiritual darkness

3. Heal our land

- a. Our land is this nation, our homes, our churches, our families, and our hearts
 - b. Make no mistake – God is the only hope for this nation
 - c. More money, more programs, more governmental intervention – NONE of those things are going to heal this land
- The blessings, including our healing, can only come when we meet the conditions
 - Humble ourselves, pray, seek His face, and turn from our wickedness

This nation was founded on principles that actually got stronger in the first 150 years of our nation but then the erosion began

- Erosion of our morals
- Erosion of our faith
- Erosion of our dependence on and fear of God

It is not too late, but the time is growing short

September 11 is an important date in our history.

On September 11, a foreign enemy attacked America. There was smoke and fire that obscured the horrible loss of life from the explosions. But I'm not talking about September 11, 2001, this was September 11, 1814.

The British sea forces started bombarding Ft. McHenry in Baltimore, America's largest seaport at the time. It is the War of 1812, and most Americans don't realize how close we came to surrendering our new-found independence that had been won only thirty years earlier.

Three weeks prior, British General Robert Ross had made a tactical error. Instead of attacking Baltimore immediately, he first attacked Washington D.C. which had at the time only 8,000 residents. There was little resistance, and the British captured Washington easily. President James Madison had fled earlier in the day, but Dolly Madison, his wife, had remained at the

White House setting her huge table with forty places for what she had hoped would be a victory banquet. When she saw the British soldiers approaching the White House grounds she quickly took a painting of George Washington down from the wall, cutting it from its frame, and an original copy of the Declaration of Independence.

The enemy soldiers entered the White House and found the table set for a banquet with food in the kitchen. General Ross and his officers sat down and enjoyed a sumptuous meal, courtesy of the First Lady. Then, they set fire to the White House and the surrounding public buildings. Dolly Madison watched from a nearby hillside as our nation's capital, and her home burned.

The very next day, an unusual weather phenomenon occurred. Although violent storms seldom make landfall around Washington, a violent hurricane roared ashore and two hours of torrential rain and winds extinguished the fires, meaning the White House wasn't completely destroyed. Tornadoes spawned by the hurricane killed more British soldiers than the battle of Washington itself! The weather was so bad that General Ross decided to leave Washington rather than occupy it.

As he was leaving, he asked an American lady along the way: "Great God, Madam! Is this the kind of storm to which you are accustomed in this infernal country?" The lady answered, "No, Sir, this is a special interposition of Almighty God to drive our enemies from our city." You won't read this in the history books, but that storm proved to be as important an event as any battle and turned the tide making the difference between defeat and victory in the War of 1812.

- The Liberty bell could not remain hidden under floorboards; it needed to be brought back and hung in a place where it could be heard
- Just as it is engraved on the side of the bell, we too are called to *Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof!*
- Jesus said in his first sermon following his temptation in the wilderness: *The Spirit of the Lord is on Me, because He has anointed Me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.* [Luke 4: 18-19](#)
- That is why I encourage every one of you to continue to pray for our nation, not give up hope, and stand for what is right – you just might help to start a spiritual revolution that will ultimately save our land