

# What Makes A Nation Great? An American Independence Day Message



I copied this article from my friend Jim Gibson's Facebook post. If you are an American, please know our only hope to continue as people free from tyranny and oppression is to keep to the principles the founding fathers of America founded our nation on.

## **What Makes A Nation Great?**

By Jim Gibson <http://www.jimgibson.net/>

On this date (July 4) in 1776, the 13 colonies declared their independence from England. It would not be until 1783 before they actually gained their freedom at the signing of the Treaty of Paris. The document upon which all our laws are based is the Constitution which was signed in 1787. The Founding Fathers wrote the Constitution whose very foundation was established upon what was then known as "Natural Law." One of the most referenced sources cited by the Founding Fathers during the writing and discussion of the Constitution was from Blackstone's Commentaries of English Law. Blackstone maintained that Natural Law was given to mankind by God. These God-given principles were to aid man in their governance. Thus, our Constitution reflects those very statutes which were ordained by God. The apostle Paul alluded to these principles that govern in the hearts of mankind with these words as found in Romans 1:19, 20 and 2:14, 15.

"Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."

"For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves.

Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.”

A person who greatly influenced and inspired the Founding Fathers was John Locke who wrote about that “Natural Law” that formed the very foundation of our nation. Listen to his words: “The State of Nature has a Law of Nature to govern it which obliges everyone...that being all equal and independent no one ought to harm another in his Life, Health, Liberty, or Possessions.” Notice the obvious similarity of wording as that also found in the Declaration of Independence. One historian made the comment that it was the Declaration of Independence which should actually be considered America’s foundation and the Constitution was the house upon which it was built. Anna Beth Rankin wrote that, “The Constitution is the Supreme Law of the United States; however it has its philosophical roots in the Declaration of Independence.” To this agrees the statement made by Abraham Lincoln, “the Declaration of Independence was an ‘apple of gold’ whereas the Constitution was the ‘picture of silver’ framed around it.” The point being stressed here is that the Natural Law, as expressed in the Declaration, was laws and rights given by God, whereas the Constitution was made of laws created by man.

The Framers and early Supreme Court Justices relied heavily on the concepts as found in the Natural Law. Through the years, the Courts have strayed further and further from these original principles of law and justice. In fact, Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas was once castigated by a Harvard Law professor for adhering to these principles of Natural Law. It has been the trend for several decades now to treat the Constitution as a “living document.” As a result, it has been relegated to an obsolete and discarded document in favor of a more fluid social construct which is entirely relative to the whims of a changing society.

In fact, former President Barack Obama made this shocking statement: “We are no longer just a Christian nation.” In his speech, President Obama alluded to the fact that we might have once been a Christian nation, but no longer. What he said is entirely correct. But our magnificent nation was indeed founded upon Christian principles. Two professors, Donald S. Lutz and Charles S. Hyneman made an exhaustive study of our Founders’ most read books, newspaper articles, and monographs with explicit political content. They limited their study to the period from 1760 to 1805. They concluded that the most often cited source was the Bible. This should come as no surprise especially as one reflects upon the words of Benjamin Franklin at the Constitutional Convention. Listen to the wisdom coming from this 81 year-old statesman.

“I have lived, Sir, a long time; and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the sacred writings that ‘except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.’ I firmly believe this; and I also believe that, without his concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel... I therefore beg leave to move that, henceforth, prayers imploring the assistance of heaven and its blessings on our deliberations be held in

this assembly every morning before we proceed to business, and that one or more of the clergy of this city be requested to officiate in that service.”

Just a few years later, our nation’s second President, John Adams, echoed these sentiments when he said, “Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.” It is understandable for those who do not like the “strict constructionist” interpretation of the Constitution when one reflects upon our present societal morality. In this sense, the Constitution is becoming more and more foreign to the thought processes of a liberal and progressive culture.

There was a time in Israel’s history when they were regarded as a great nation, although small in territory and in population. What made them great? To find this answer, we need to go back to their very founding. Listen to the words of Moses as he instructs the children of Israel before they entered the land of Canaan:

“Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me... Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.” (Deut. 4:5, 6)

Just as the nation of Israel began as a great nation because they were founded upon Godly principles and laws, so too was the United States great because they founded our Constitution upon these same fundamental truths. Alexis de Tocqueville has been quoted as saying that, “America is great because America is good. When America ceases to be good, she will cease to be great.” Although this quote has never been verified, its words bear much truth and are truly sublime.

“Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD.”

For almost 200 years, it was an accepted premise that our nation was founded upon Christian principles. In fact, John Adams, the second President of the United States, made this declaration:

*“Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”*

Although many people believe, unwittingly, that the Constitution contains the phrase “separation of Church and State” or “wall of separation”, these phrases are to be found nowhere within the Constitution or the Bill of Rights. We find their origin, however, in a letter written by Thomas Jefferson to the Danbury Baptist Association in 1802. In this letter, Jefferson uses the phrase, “a wall of separation between Church and State.” Contrary to the popular opinion of today, Jefferson’s use of the phrase meant that the Church should be protected from the State or government, and not, that the State must be protected from the Church. It was President Thomas Jefferson, in 1803, that recommended Congress appropriate funds “for civilizing the Indians and promoting Christianity.” Actually, he signed

appropriation bills to Christianize the Indians three different times during his presidency.

For over 100 years, the Bible was used as a textbook in our public schools. Sadly, though, this tradition of a Christian America was dealt a serious blow by the Supreme Court in several consecutive rulings beginning in 1962 and culminating in June, 1963. It was through these rulings that both prayer and Bible reading were removed from the public school system. This Supreme Court decided its decision with a 8 to 1 ruling. The majority, in writing its opinion, stated that their ruling was one of "wholesome neutrality". They further stated that their decision would in no way be deemed as a victory for "secularism". We know now that it did have this "unintended consequence".

As a result of these rulings, our nation began to lose its vision and sight. We no longer can distinguish between good and evil. Just a few years after this Supreme Court ruling, Joseph Fletcher in 1966 wrote a book titled Situation Ethics . In the book, Fletcher argues that there are no moral absolutes, everything is relative. Infidelity, stealing, lying and a myriad of other moral turpitudes might be acceptable depending on the situation. In the Old Testament, during the period of the judges, the Bible records that "every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

Since our nation's founding, the Bible has been used as the rule of law and has acted as the guide for our country's morality. Obviously, our moral conscience as a nation has deteriorated and crumbled. We have forsaken the only moral compass that has ever been given to mankind.

Is there any hope left for America, for the Church? The answer is yes. With regard to the Church, we must individually and corporately confess that we have sinned and failed in our duty and responsibility to God. We must again turn to the Bible and let God's Word lead us and guide us in all aspects of our life. After we have done this, we can then stand on the promise of God as quoted in 2 Chron.7:14.

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