

God in American History

A. Loyd Collins

God in American History

By
A. Loyd Collins

Lecturer, historian, author, Christian educator

Dedication

To

Georgia I. Collins

*In Loving Appreciation of
Companionship and Help which
can Neither be Repaid nor
Measured*

Patriot Bible University

Classroom Edition

2005

All Rights Reserved



CONTENTS

Foreward	5
1. Introduction	6
2. God and Our Colonial Forefathers	10
3. God Helped Us Win Our Independence	24
4. God, Young America, and the Early West	40
5. God and the American Civil War	50
6. God in America Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow	62

Foreword

By Dr. Lonnie Skinner

A study of the history of the United States reveals a nation that has certainly been “showered with a super-abundance of blessings beyond the comprehension or planning of man.”

The greatness of America did not come because our people were better, smarter or wiser than anyone else. The early leaders and citizens of our nation were marked by human flaws like the rest of us. But most of these men and women had one thing in common. They acknowledged, honored, relied and called upon the Almighty God of the Bible. It is the fingerprint of God upon our heritage that shows why we became a great and free nation.

Dr. A. Loyd Collins wrote this little book in the late 1960s, shortly before I met him. He wanted this book to meet a long-felt need of showing the close relationship between God and the founding/development of our country.

Dr. Collins was Executive Vice-President of Baptist Christian College in Shreveport, Louisiana when I was a student there. His writings and lectures on God’s role in American history had a great influence on my life and ministry. He introduced me to historical facts that had been hidden from me when I took history in school.

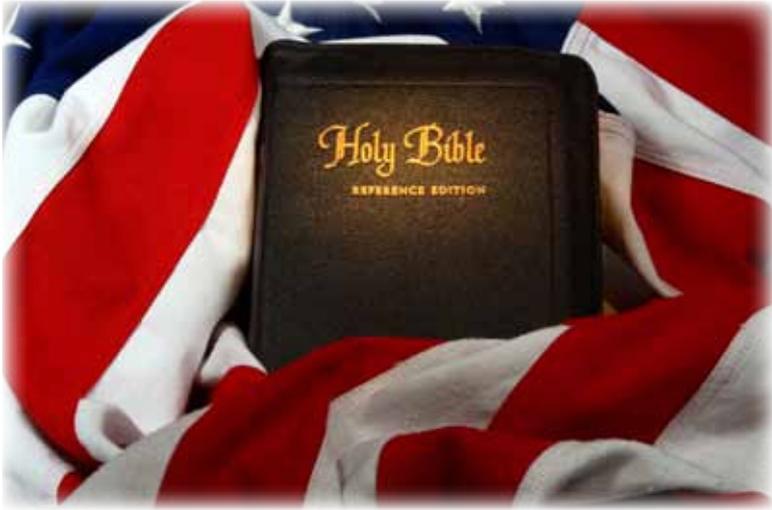
The lessons taught by Dr. Collins stimulated me to begin my quest to better understand why God chose to so richly bless this land. It’s really quite simple: bless God and He will bless you!

My appreciation of America’s godly heritage continued to grow. In 1979, when this institution was founded, I was not surprised when God led us to call it “Patriot”.

The study of history has fallen on hard times. Many schools have dropped it from their curricula. Most U.S. history that is presented today has been revised to ignore the role played by the Bible and prayer, as well as the blessings of God in our heritage. This book will *introduce* you to a few of these historical facts.

The sins and faults of our history are widely advertised and often exaggerated in modern textbooks and in mainstream media, so this book does not focus on our flaws.

It is important for us to realize that God has exalted this nation because there’s been some righteousness in our history.



Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

Very few recent American historians have discussed God's role in American history. Modern textbooks in history in our public schools no longer mention God, or give Him credit for the greatness of our country.

A few early American writers of history, notably William Bradford, John Winthrop, and George Bancroft, made frequent mention of the part God played in making our country a reality.

Bancroft, who is often called "The Father of American History", wrote a ten volume history of the United States. It was our first great national history and is still interesting reading. For a long time, it was considered as the standard work on the subject. Without hesitation or apology, Bancroft credits God with guiding and inspiring our early leaders through the many struggles that made America "the land of the free and the home of the brave."

Francis Parkman, another great historian of note, wrote of the noble work of early missionaries on our continent. The work and influence of these endeavors cannot be discounted in regard to the growth and greatness of the United States.

We need now, as probably never before in our history, to think about God and what He has done to make possible our present position of leadership in the world. The peoples of other lands look to America to show them the way to a better life. Science, as important as it is, must never become a substitute for God and His work.

In a prayer before the United States Senate on April 17, 1948, the great Chaplain Peter Marshall, said:

“O God our Father, history and experience has given us so many evidences of Thy guidance to nations and to individuals that we should not doubt Thy power or Thy willingness to direct us.” (*Congressional Record*).

No intelligent thinking person can fail to give serious consideration to the spiritual influences that have permeated our history. Miracles in our development and struggles for independence have been so frequent and outstanding that they cannot be charged up to chance or coincidence by any possible stretch of a creative imagination.

Our country has been showered with a superabundance of blessings beyond the power of the comprehension of man. Is it not obvious that the Lord has made America great? “A land of honey with sheep upon a thousand hills”; with waving fields of golden grain; with the boundless prairies of the West; the timber giants of the North, and the snow white cotton fields of sunny Dixie; a land of peace and plenty where the people live like kings and queens.

A country like ours did not just happen that way. There must be a secret of our national success and greatness. Is it not to be found in our trust and faith in God? From the days when the bold and courageous Christopher Columbus sailed the unchartered waters of the stormy Atlantic unto the present hour, we have looked Above for the guidance of our life and destiny as a people and as a glorious republic. We have founded our way of life upon the Christian principles of justice, love, and freedom.

We have depended on the Lord and He has helped us as a nation. Our greatest leaders have had faith in and have trusted the Almighty to lead and to guide the Ship of State through the troubled and foaming waters of many storms and much strife. They have looked Above and have sought the hand of the Almighty to steady

the wheel. Millions of our people can testify to that faith, help and trust. They cannot be wrong. Christianity and our churches have grown. The Bible is still the best seller in our country. No other book has so stood the test of time.

God has smiled on America as He has never smiled on any other nation in the history of the world. The matchless story of our country proves that. And if we once again look Above for our guidance, God will surely bless us. He will continue to keep us great and make us a blessing to all mankind. There can be no other source of greatness and leadership such as ours.



America's Christian Heritage

“Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.”

(Proverbs 14:34)



“This is a Christian Nation.” That’s what the Supreme Court of the United States declared in 1892. This is easily confirmed by an honest review of even a few statements made by our founding fathers. For example...

Samuel Chase said: “By our form of government, the Christian religion is the established religion; and all sects and denominations of Christians are placed upon the same equal footing, and are equally entitled to protection in their religious liberty.”

John Quincy Adams stated: “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. From the day of the Declaration...the American people were bound by the laws of God, which they all, and by the laws of The Gospel, which they nearly all, acknowledge as the rules of their conduct.”

Patrick Henry said, “It is when people forget God that tyrants forge their chains.”



Chapter Two

GOD AND OUR COLONIAL FOREFATHERS

America was originally founded on Christian principles and ideals. The great navigator and the first admiral of the world, Christopher Columbus, was a firm believer in God. Columbus trusted in Him on his great voyage across the waters of a great unknown ocean in 1492.

The log or journal kept by Columbus, for Wednesday, October 10, 1492, two days before his historic discovery, indicates that he “was going to continue until” he reached his goal “with God’s help.” When it appeared to the crew that they were near land, because of drift logs and pieces of vegetation in the water, Columbus assembled the crew on the main deck and “reminded them of the unspeakable obligations they were under to Almighty God, who had granted them such favorable weather, and who, notwithstanding their murmurs, had not deserted them.”

And when they saw land the next day, “the admiral lifted up his heart and eyes to heaven, and poured forth ejaculations of thanks and praise to God.” It is said that the crew joined in with him in singing a hymn of praise to the Lord. Several authorities state that the first thing they did when they reached the shores of America

was to fall down on their knees in the sands by the seashore and thank God for His guidance and help.

In his official reports, Columbus expressed interest in mission work among the Indians and in winning them to the Christian faith.

Nearly five centuries before (about 1000), Eric the Red, who is reputed to have visited Greenland (somewhere in the vicinity of New England in North America), was admonished by his king “to proclaim Christianity” in any lands that he might discover and to teach Divine truth to those with whom he came in contact in faraway regions.

The early Spanish explorers, who followed Columbus in various expeditions, brought chaplains with them. These priests were taken along for spiritual advice and to devote attention to the teaching of the “true faith” to those in conquered or occupied countries who did not know about the one and only God.

The French were equally zealous in their missionary efforts during their early explorations. In fact, some of the missionaries were themselves among the most outstanding explorers. For example, Father James Marquette is remembered for his efforts in the discovery of the Mississippi River in 1680. Father Hennepin made explorations in eastern Missouri in 1680.

The French brought missionaries with them to the New World, the Jesuit Fathers, who made heroic efforts to Christianize the Indians in North America. Their sacrifices and work won the admiration of the world. These missionaries often waded through water and through the blinding snows of the north. They lived on pounded corn in order to carry their message to the Indians who did not know about Christ. Some of them were burned at the stake by the unbelieving Indians. But their work continued unabated.

When the great French explorer, LaSalle, arrived at the mouth of the Mississippi River in 1682, he planted a cross on the adjacent land and the party chanted “the hymn of the church.”

When the Spanish explorer, Balboa, in 1513, beheld the majestic waters of the white capped waves of the great Pacific, it is said that he sank to his knees and gave thanks to God.

Another Spanish leader, DeSoto, who first discovered the Mississippi River (1541), was considered by the Indians as a messenger from heaven. It is reported that he told the Indians: “Pray only to God, who is in heaven, for whatever you need.”

The same deep religious spirit permeated the early English settlers of North America. The first charter of Virginia, dated April 10, 1606, indicates that one of the primary purposes of English colonization in the New World was for the propagation “of Christian religion to such People, as yet live in Darkness and miserable Ignorance of the true Knowledge and Worship of God.”

The most imposing edifice on Jamestown Island is the picturesque vine-covered tower of the old church. This church was the center of the religious, social, and civic life of the first permanent English colony in America. Today, a beautiful tablet depicts the spot on the island where the first communion service was held, June 21, 1607. Rev. Robert Hunt was the chaplain of the colony and the first Anglican pastor in America.

Rev. Hunt was not the first of the English clergy to set foot on American soil. A minister was with explorer John Cabot in 1497, two years after the first voyage of Columbus.

Another minister sailed with Sir Francis Drake on his voyages to the New World in 1579. These men were ship chaplains who read daily prayers and celebrated communion both on the ship and when the parties were on land.

A crude church building was erected the first month after the settlers landed at Jamestown. The colony was established by the Virginia Company of London as a business enterprise. In 1609, the company published a little booklet on *The Purpose and Ends of the Plantation Begun in Virginia*. In this pamphlet they stated their first objective as:

“To preach and baptize into the Christian Religion, and by propagation of the Gospel, to recover out of the arms of the Devil, a number of poor and miserable souls, wrapped up unto death, in almost invincible ignorance, and to add to the Treasury of Heaven.”

It has been said that “three-quarters of the signers of the Declaration of Independence and many other leaders of the infant United States were spiritual heirs of the Jamestown Christians.” Prayers were made throughout England for the colony and for the work of the church in Virginia.

The settlers at Jamestown experienced severe hardships which threatened their very existence. One time, when inside the Jamestown church edifice, the author thought how appropriate was the Scripture verse which was marked in the open Bible:

“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8: 18).

In many of the early charters and grants of land in America, a missionary purpose was expressly pointed out that became one of the primary objectives of colonization. All through our colonial times the church was paramount and religious worship was an integral part of the daily life of the people. They clung to their faith, looked Above and courageously forged ahead, undaunted and unafraid.

As soon as homes were erected, Meeting Houses were built as places to worship God. The Holy Bible became a “light unto their path” and the Eternal Guide Book for their lives. The trials and problems were many, but they put their trust in the Lord and He sustained them with His Omnipotent Hand.

The religious efforts of the early colonists at Jamestown did not go without its reward, for it was an Indian who had been converted to the Christian faith that prevented the complete annihilation of the settlement at Jamestown and many of the surrounding communities. In 1622, he warned the settlers at Jamestown of an impending Indian attack. The fearful massacre took many lives and wiped out entire communities. But, if it had been carried out as planned it would have probably resulted in the destruction of the entire Colony of Virginia.

The story of another English colony is even more dramatically known than that of Virginia. This was the colony at Plymouth, Massachusetts, where the Pilgrims landed in 1620. The Pilgrims had a firm belief and faith in God.

To understand the motivating factors which led to the founding of this historic colony let’s review briefly the religious dissensions in England. It was largely the religious persecutions under English Protestantism that led to the founding of New England. The so called Established Church of England was a state religion, which had broken away from the Catholic Church and from the authority of the Pope at Rome, but still retained many the features of Catholic worship. Many people objected to this uniformity of creed and worship.

The Puritans wanted to purify the church. They were divided into several branches of theological belief. One branch, known as

the Separatists or Independents, wanted to separate from the church, making each congregation autonomous. This particular group went to Holland where they lived in peace for a time. But then they realized they would eventually be absorbed as a part of the Dutch nation and culture through intermarriage with the people of Holland. They would lose their national identity. To avoid this they finally decided to come to America to seek homes.

The London Company gave them a grant of land in Virginia, and the Pilgrims, as they called themselves because of their wanderings, were soon on the famous ship *Mayflower* bound for a strange land on the other side of the great stormy Atlantic.

Before the Pilgrims departed from Leyden, Holland for England enroute to America, they held solemn religious services praising God. The pastor, on his knees and with tears running down his cheeks, commended them to the Lord. They resolved to “seek of God a right way for us, and for our little ones.”

This band of people, known as Pilgrims, left for America from Plymouth, England on September 6, 1620. It was indeed a long and tedious voyage. The sea was at times quite heavy and the ship was leaky. The winds were so fierce, the weather was so bad and the waves so high that for days the ship could not carry sail. They seriously considered turning back. But they asked the Lord for guidance and determined to proceed. It was with joyous hearts, when at the break of day, on November 9th, they finally sighted land.

Before they landed at Plymouth Rock, they met together in the cabin of their historic little ship and drew up one of the greatest documents in all American history, a document known as the “Mayflower Compact.” In this compact they stated that they had undertaken their little settlement on the wild and virgin shores of a strange land “for the glory of God, and the advancement of the Christian faith.”

The Pilgrims were led by able God-fearing men with deep-rooted faith and strong religious convictions. William Bradford served as governor. Captain Miles Standish was their military leader.

Their well known contemporary historian, William Bradford, who wrote the story of the colony in his *History of Plymouth Plantation*, says, describing the landing of the Pilgrims:

“Being thus arrived in a good harbor and brought safe to land, they fell upon their knees and blessed the God of heaven, who had brought them over the vast and furious ocean, and delivered them from all the perils and miseries thereof, again to set their feet on the firm and stable earth...they had now no friends to welcome them, nor inns to entertain or refresh their weather-beaten bodies, no houses or much less towns to repair too, to seek for succor”...

A storehouse had to be erected. And dwellings had to be built. As the winter advanced and the weather became more severe. They were exposed to chilling rains, snow and winds. Hunger, fatigue and cold soon took a heavy toll and by spring half of the brave little band were dead. Almost daily the burial ground was inhabited by a new body.

But they were staunch people. When the *Mayflower* returned to England that Spring not a single Pilgrim went back on it. They had come to America to establish homes where they could be free and where they could worship God as they pleased, and they intended to stay and fight it out and conquer the trials before them.

In the face of countless sore trials and temptations, the Lord was with them. After the harvest in the fall of 1621 there was a time of great thanksgiving to God for His grace mercy, help, and guidance. Bradford, in speaking of their blessing, says: “for which mercy they also set apart a day of thanksgiving.” This was the first Thanksgiving Day celebration in America.

One of the Pilgrims in writing to a friend in England, said, in regard to their hardships (August 17, 1630): “God can do much, and His will be done.”

There is no more hallowed spot in all America, symbolic of religious freedom and faith in God, than Plymouth, Massachusetts. Near the outskirts of the little town stands a statue of the typical Pilgrim. She is pictured as a modest woman, head bowed and holding a copy of the Holy Bible in her hand. These words are found at the base of the monument: “They brought up their families in sturdy virtue and a living faith in God, without which nations perish.” The Pilgrims “gave primacy to God.”

On the gravestone of Governor Bradford there is an inscription which should be a challenge to all liberty living, God-fearing Americans.

It says:

**WHAT OUR FATHERS WITH SO MUCH
DIFFICULTY ATTAINED DO NOT
BASELY RELINQUISH.**

In 1628, eight years after the founding of the settlement at Plymouth, another English colony was planted in the New World, this time in the main Colony of Massachusetts at Salem. It also was founded upon religious principles by Godly men and women known as Puritans.

During the voyage to Salem where they first settled in 1628, the Puritans read the Bible both morning and evening, sang and prayed and their ministers expounded “a chapter in the Bible.” Two years later (1630) a great fleet of eleven ships and nearly a thousand emigrants started for Massachusetts Bay to establish a strong and large colony. The Massachusetts Company had been chartered as a trading enterprise, but its chief purpose was to establish a “religious commonwealth” in America.

Many able leaders were in the group, including John Winthrop, the first governor. He was a lovable, wealthy and cultured gentleman, whose journal is a classic dealing with the early history of New England (1630-1648).

The Puritans had come to the New World to escape religious persecutions and discriminations. They were firm believers in the mercy and guidance of God. But their own government did not always practice those tolerant views which they had advocated and proclaimed in England. They did not permit others to enjoy religious freedom, and their colony was not a refuge for those who believed in freedom of worship.

They were sincere beyond question and probably honestly believed that they were right and all others were wrong in their religious beliefs. To be a freeman and have any voice in the government, you had to belong to and financially support the Puritan Church. In fact, the civil and social life all centered around the church, and the members believed in a strict observance of the Sabbath. They called to stern account those who strayed from the “straight and narrow” way.

The Puritans “believed themselves watched over by an Omnipotent Father.” Winthrop wrote to his wife: “We here enjoy God and Jesus Christ.”

The stability of the Christian home was especially deep-rooted in New England by the Puritans. The foundation of the Puritan conception of both family and state government was found in the Mosaic laws as recorded in the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy in the Holy Bible.

Hard working, virtuous and God-fearing, they laid deep and well the foundations of their society. As a nation we owe much to them for their energy, faith, wisdom, foresight and fortitude.

Throughout the years, Massachusetts remained constant in its belief of "a free state, dependent upon none but God." The colony engaged in missionary efforts.

John Eliot was the great missionary to the Indians of Massachusetts. He lived with the Indians teaching and preaching, and did much to spread the Gospel to the savages of the wilderness. Born in England and educated at Cambridge, Eliot came to Boston in 1631. He became intensely interested in the Indians and their conversion to Christianity, and began his missionary work among them in the fall of 1646. He learned their language, prepared an Indian grammar, and then translated the Bible into the Indian language. Eliot is said to have been the first Protestant minister to have preached to the Indians in their native tongue.

Eliot established an Indian church in 1660 at their town of Natick. He traveled extensively preaching to the Indians and founded numerous churches for them. He helped the sick and distressed and had great influence with the Indians for peace.

Under his ministry, twenty-four Indians became preachers to their people. But the translation of the Scriptures into the Indian language, 1661-1666, is regarded as Eliot's greatest work. His Indian Bible was the first Bible printed in America. He died at Rosbury, Massachusetts on May 20, 1690.

Religious differences in Massachusetts soon led to the founding of another nearby colony, Rhode Island. This state started with the preaching of a minister by the name of Roger Williams.

To those trained in the old school of theology, Williams preached a very dangerous doctrine. In their opinion, it was approaching what was revolutionary and modern for that day and time. He spoke against compulsory church support and attendance. He opposed the union of the church and the state. He contended

that the land which England claimed was the just property of the Indians and that the King had no right to give it away.

He opposed civil oaths. And he preached that it was not lawful for Christians to join in prayer with the unregenerated. In the eyes of the leaders of the time, this was a very dangerous theology.

Because of his views, Williams was ordered banished and expelled from the colony and plans were set afoot to return him to England for reckoning. But he escaped in the dead of winter and stayed with some friendly Indian tribes in the wilderness. He had many devout followers who were quite willing to follow him into exile, if need be. In the spring, 1636, Williams purchased some land from the Indians near the Narragansett Bay and started a settlement of his own which he called Providence, in humble recognition of his deliverance and guidance by God.

He said that he desired that his colony “might be a shelter for persons distressed for conscience.” They had resolved to “strive to excess in grace and in holiness.” Williams said that God did not require “a uniformity of religion,” and held religious liberty “as a natural right.”

His friends and followers soon were with him in this new abode of religious freedom and civil democracy, and thus came into being the Colony of Rhode Island, which was recognized by Parliament in 1643. The sober Massachusetts divines looked with much scorn and contempt upon this group of religious pioneers and called them the Lord’s “debris.”

But Roger Williams had written a new and glorious chapter in the history of religious freedom and civil government. He was also the founder of the first Baptist Church in the United States.

Another English colony, called Connecticut, came into existence in the same year Rhode Island was established. A number of people in Cambridge, Watertown, and Dorchester, Massachusetts, hearing reports of the fertile country nearby, and also being somewhat disgusted with so called Puritan righteousness, sought and were granted permission to establish settlements in the region of the Connecticut River. They soon migrated to this new land over a long wilderness road and were led by their pastor, the Reverend John Hooker. They brought their earthly possessions with them in wagons and drove their stock on foot. Towns soon sprung up. After

the Pequot War of 1637, the colony enjoyed a period of prosperity. Although this settlement was claimed as a child of Massachusetts, the people broke away and formed their own constitution, which is accepted by historians to be the first constitution for a free government in America. Under their system of rule, a man did not have to be a member of the church to vote.

The colony had an annual “thanksgiving to God.” It was described as being both sincere and joyous. This colony, under the guidance of and dedicated to the Lord, enjoyed prosperity.

In 1634, a new English colony sprung up to the south. This colony was called Maryland. Its founder, Lord Baltimore, originally intended the colony to be an asylum of refuge for Roman Catholics who had been persecuted in England. He had been a member of the London Company and was also counselor of the Plymouth Company. So it was not difficult for him to secure a charter for his proposed Maryland.

The district between the Potomac River and Delaware Bay was occupied on the 25th of March, 1634. A Jesuit priest in the group offered mass, after which a large wooden cross was erected, and the party on their knees humbly chanted the litany of the Holy Cross.

St. Mary’s was founded in 1634 at Chesapeake Bay, but the boundaries of the new colony had not been clearly defined. Opposition eventually resulted in bloodshed and bitter feelings between the Catholics and the Protestants. Baltimore, however, although a devout member of the Catholic Church, was tolerant in religious matters. In fact, many of his emigrants were members of the Protestant faith; and none were prohibited in the colony because of religious belief.

Serious religious dissensions continued to arise as Protestants flocked to the colony. They soon outnumbered the Catholics three to one and the Catholics were scornfully looked upon as “polluters” of religion. Things got so bad that in 1649 a Religious Toleration Act was passed, which provided that “no person professing to believe in Jesus Christ shall from henceforth be any wise troubled, molested, or discountenanced for, or in respect of, his or her religion, nor in the free exercise thereof within this province...nor any way compelled to the beliefs or exercise of any other religion against

his or her consent.” After this, following only occasional internal dissensions, Maryland had a prosperous and peaceful development.

The early history of the Carolinas is not very illuminating, for there were many trials and hardships and much inefficient government, discord and turbulence. Pirates and lawless groups roamed the coast creating terror. Hostile Indians were incited by the Spanish in the south to harass and attack the settlements.

North Carolina may be said to have had its real beginning with a settlement on the Chowan River in 1670. South Carolina is said to have begun on the Ashley River at Charleston in 1680. These widely scattered settlements gradually developed into two distinct government units, but they were not officially divided as such until 1729. The population was composed of a very cosmopolitan group of many different creeds, nationalists, and religious beliefs.

In the constitution of South Carolina one of the requirements to be able to vote was: “Acknowledge the being of God, and to believe in a future state of rewards and punishments.”

Some of the other state constitutions established some sort of religious test as a qualification for holding public office. In North Carolina, one had to believe in God, the Protestant religion and the divine authority of the Old and the New Testament.” In Pennsylvania one had to have “a belief in God, the creator and governor of the universe.” In Delaware the requirement was “a profession of faith in God, the Father, Jesus Christ his only son, and the Holy Ghost, one God, blessed for evermore.”

To William Penn, a prominent citizen of England, goes the honor of making a noble experiment in colonial government in America. He left fame and great fortune in England, and chose to become the leader of the Quakers, a religious sect which was facing many hardships, hatreds and persecutions. Young Penn was enrolled in Oxford University, the great English seat of classical learning and higher education, but he espoused the Quaker doctrines so forcibly that he was dismissed along with several others, from the university.

Penn was interested not only in his Quaker friends, but also in colonization. He made a proposition to King Charles II offering in lieu of a great debt due him from the government, to accept a charter

and a grant of land in America where he might establish a colony based upon his beliefs and philosophy of government. The king, who was “short” of funds and glad to discharge his large financial obligations to Penn so easily, readily consented to give him a proprietary charter and a grant of forty thousand square miles in America (1681). He named this land Pennsylvania, in honor of Penn’s father.

Penn laid the foundations for his colony wisely and carefully. His colonial policy proved to be ideal: he provided for a democratic government, cheap land, religious toleration, and for a just and fair treatment of the Indians.

Penn lived far ahead of his time and age. His intelligent political and religious liberalism could well have been inculcated and emulated in the policies and practices of the other colonies. He offered to sell land to the settlers for the ridiculously low price of ten dollars for one hundred acres, and he advertised his colony extensively. Although especially interested in planting a colony for his Quaker friends, he promised religious freedom, and a democratic self-government with laws to originate through a council elected by the people.

Philadelphia, first great city of the colony, was laid out by William Penn. It was the city of “brotherly love.” Within two years Philadelphia boasted a population of two thousand. A total of eight thousand people had come to the colony by 1685, and its population there were, of course, many problems, but the colony prospered.

Penn was a firm believer in the will of God and in Divine Providence. He termed his colony a “holy experiment.” It was decreed that none should be molested who believed in “one Almighty God” as “Creator, Upholder, and Ruler of the World.” But only Christians were to take part in government. No one was permitted to work on Sunday.

Speaking of his new colony, Penn wrote: “God will bless and make it the seed of a nation.”

Georgia was the last of the thirteen original colonies, founded in 1732. James Oglethorpe, a member of Parliament and an officer in the British Army, was disgusted with the horrible conditions in English debtor’s prisons. Mingling humanitarian, political, business, and missionary interests, Oglethorpe conceived the plan to found

a colony in the New World where these unfortunates might have a new start in life. King Charles II granted a charter to Oglethrope and twenty other men to found a southern proprietary colony south of the Savannah River. Oglethrope became governor of this new project.

In 1733, the first settlement in Georgia was made at Savannah with thirty-five families. The next year Augusta was founded, followed by other settlements. Slavery was at first prohibited as was also liquor traffic.

Oglethrope made a good governor, but the colony got a slow start. After two decades it had a population of only five thousand, and went back to the king as a royal province in 1751.

Christianity was the mother of education in colonial America. The famous Massachusetts law of 1647 required public education for religious purposes. The law said children should be taught to read because Satan tried “to keep men from the knowledge of the Scriptures,” and that “learning should not be buried in the grave of our fathers.”

Our first colleges were church-related. The inscription on the west gate at Harvard reads;

After God carried us safe to New England, and we had built our houses, provided necessaries for our livelihood, rear'd convenient places for God's worship, and settled the civil Government: one of the next things we longed for, and looked after was to advance learning and perpetuate it to Posterity; dreading to leave an illiterate Ministry to the churches when our present Ministers shall lie in the Dust.

Early school textbooks had a high moral tone, honoring God and the importance of righteous living. For example, the pioneer McGuffey Readers contained such stories, articles, essays, and poems as: “Respect for the Sabbath Rewarded,” “Work,” “Do Not Meddle,” “What I Live For,” “The Righteous Never Forsaken,” “My Mother's Hands,” “The Goodness of God,” “The Hour of Prayer,” “The Sleep of the Brave,” “Control Your Temper,” “The Heritage,” “Sowing and Reaping,” “The Best Kind of Revenge,” “Religion the Only Basis of Society,” “The Character of a Happy Life,” “The Bible the Best of Classics,” etc.

S. G. Goodrich in his school history of the United States (1851) states: “All of our readers know that the history of mankind begins with Adam and Eve.”

Our early textbooks honored God and His contribution to our history.

We have thrived, progressed, grown, and expanded as a democratic republic under the wing of the Almighty. How else can our matchless development and influence in the world be logically explained? No other country has ever been so founded, protected, or blessed since Bible times.

The Bible does not teach that individuals or nations who follow God will not have severe trials or tribulations. But we do have an assurance that God will never desert us if we look to Him for guidance:

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.

—2 Chronicles 7: 14





Chapter Three

GOD HELPED US WIN OUR INDEPENDENCE

The American Revolution, 1775-1783, provides significant evidences of God's help in our long and hard struggle for independence.

We could not possibly have won this war had God not definitely intervened on our behalf. The British had a powerful navy, and large well-trained and well-equipped armies. We, on the other hand, had only a few ships, no regular navy and a small, ill-equipped, ragged and poorly organized army.

In spite of our inadequate equipment and resources, we had faith in God and in the justice of our cause. Our leaders looked to the Lord. And the people who decided with the colonies were dedicated to the righteousness of our crusade for freedom.

When contemplating upon our struggle with England, there is another remarkable fact to remember. According to some of our best historical authorities, only about one-third of our population were supporters of the war; one-third were loyal to England; and another third were indifferent. Many did not care which side won, and they frequently shifted their allegiance, depending on which side was winning at a particular time.

In no other war in which we have ever engaged has there been more marked evidence of God's help than in the Revolutionary War.

The Christian patriots of the Revolution made themselves subservient to the will of God. One patriot said: "What God in his providence has united" no man can "pull asunder."

Robert L. Livingston said: "The God of heaven, whom we serve, will sanctify all things to those who love him and strive to serve him." One newspaper said: "Liberty is the gift of God, and cannot be annihilated."

In Boston, the ministers agreed on a day "to implore of Almighty God the restoration of lost liberties."

"A freeborn people are not required by the religion of Jesus Christ to submit to tyranny," wrote an official in Massachusetts. "We trust in God" added a man from Lexington.

The ministers of Connecticut wrote to the ministers of Boston that it "is an inexhaustible source of comfort" to know "that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

Benjamin Franklin told the people of Massachusetts: "Your chief dependence must be on your own virtue and unanimity, which, under God, will bring you through all difficulties."

A minister who preached to the New England militia told them; "God himself is with us for our captain."

Around some of the drums of the young volunteers, in letters of gold, was the motto: "God who brought over their fathers will sustain the sons."

It was with such a spirit that we faced the outbreak of the war with England. When troubles with England mounted and were intensified, the colonists in 1774 met for the First Continental Congress in carpenter's Hall in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The chaplain, Dr. Jacob Duche, got down on his knees in the center of that little hall. Members of the congress got down on their knees around him and asked for the help of Almighty God in their undertakings. Dr. Duche prayed the following prayer:

O Lord, our Heavenly Father, high and mighty King of Kings,
Lord of Lords, who dost from Thy throne behold all the dwellers
on the earth, and reignest with power supreme and governments,

look down in mercy, we beseech Thee, upon these American States who have fled to Thee from the rod of the oppressor, and thrown themselves upon Thy gracious protection,, desiring henceforth to be dependent only upon Thee.

To Thee have they appealed for the righteousness of their cause. To Thee do they now look for that countenance and support which Thou alone canst give. Take them, therefore, Heavenly Father, under Thy nurturing care. Give them wisdom in council and valor in the field. Defeat the malicious designs of our cruel adversaries. Convince them of the unrighteousness of their cause, and if they still persist in their sanguinary purpose, O let the voice of Thine unerring justice, sounding in their hearts, constrain them to drop the weapons of war from their unnerved hands in the day of battle.

Be Thou present, O Lord of Wisdom, and direct the council of the honorable assembly. Enable them to settle things upon the best and surest foundation, that the scene of blood may speedily be closed; that order, harmony and peace may effectually be restored, and truth and justice, religion and piety prevail and flourish amongst Thy people.

Preserve the health of our bodies, the vigor of our minds. Shower down upon them, and the millions here they represent, such temporal blessings as Thou seest expedient for them in this world and crown them with everlasting glory in the world to come. All of this we ask in the name and through the merits of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Savior. Amen.

Perhaps our most famous document is the Declaration of Independence. The parchment upon which the first copy was written has yellowed with age. The signatures of its illustrious signers have almost faded away, but its sacred principles live today, as never before in the history of the world. At the conclusion of this great document are these words: “For the support of this declaration” we look “with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence.”

A study of the military history of the Revolution reveals how the Lord helped us in a most striking way in many battles and campaigns of the war.

When the Minute Men assembled on the village green at Lexington, Massachusetts at two a.m. on April 19, 1775, the local minister, the Reverend Jonas Clark, was there along with the others

carrying his old flintlock musket ready to do service for his country by example as well as by word from the pulpit.

After Paul Revere had given the alarm, the minister hurriedly dressed, reached up over the fireplace and got down the old musket and powder horn. Then he called to his wife to bring him the bullet-pouch.

Shortly after the last stars had vanished from night, eight of the Minute Men lay dead and ten wounded. "The grassy field" of the village green was red with human blood. The first sacrifice for freedom had been made.

At Concord, on the same day, the inhabitants responded to the sound of the meeting house bell and gathered at "their town hall." Young and old assembled with their firelocks. Bancroft says that one of the "most alert was William Emerson the minister, with gun in hand, his powder-horn and pouch for balls slung over his shoulder." His prayers and sermons had so aroused "the enthusiasm of his flock, that they held the defense of their liberties a part of their covenant with God."

The first major military engagement of the war came two months later, June 17, 1775, at Bunker Hill. On the evening before the Battle of Bunker Hill the patriots gathered on Cambridge Common before proceeding to fortify the hill. The soldiers paused, took off their hats and bowed their heads for prayer as they leaned on their muskets. Chaplain Langdon, who was president of Harvard College, and a chaplain to the army, led them in prayer to the Throne on High. It was, according to historians, a fervent prayer, asking for guidance, leadership and courage, which could only come to them from Above in their hour of great trial and tribulation.

Those present never forgot that prayer. It gave them strength, hope and courage for the trying tasks which lay before them on the bloody slopes of the hill the following day.

One old venerable gray haired farmer, as he raised his musket to fire, prayed aloud as the British advanced: "I thank thee, O Lord, for sparing me to fight this day for my country. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

The Battle of Long Island was fought on August 27, 1776, when the British were making the drive to capture New York City. Before the battle, Trumbull wrote from Connecticut: "Notwithstanding our

enemies are numerous, yet knowing our cause righteous, and trusting Heaven will support us, I do not greatly dread what they can do against us.”

General William Howe, commander of the British army, employed a strategic flanking movement and the Americans found themselves attacked from both the front and rear. An almost disastrous defeat followed and the slaughter was terrible. Many prisoners were taken, including the American generals Sullivan and Sterling. At least a thousand men were lost, most of whom were made prisoners of war.

Had Howe moved immediately against Brooklyn Heights he could have probably annihilated the entire American army. But for some reason he hesitated, perhaps, remembering his costly experience the previous year at Bunker Hill. The patriots were indeed in a precarious situation, for the English fleet could cut off their retreat and bottle them up on the island. Immediate retreat was the only solution, but Washington’s army was under the very noses of the British and many feared that it could not be done.

The weather made it impossible to transport the army by boats from Long Island. A high northeast wind had been raging for three days. Nevertheless, Washington and his officers resolved to try during the night of August 29. When the main army got ready to start embarking, suddenly, about 11 p.m., the wind died down and the water became very smooth. A gentle breeze sprung up from the south and southwest which aided the boats in crossing the East River to Manhattan. The moonlight was fairly bright and the ships of the enemy were very close by, but, strange as it may seem, the patriot army was not discovered as they made their evacuation. It was a momentous task to get the nine thousand men across the river and it was obvious that the mission could not be completed before daylight came. But daylight approached, a thick sea fog came rolling in and shrouded the British camp. Who would question that the hand of God intervened to save the American cause?

It was a long and hard struggle to win our independence, and at times the light of liberty flickered dimly and feebly, but God did not desert our cause. He heard our prayers and gave us, after many trying sacrifices, eventual victory.

Perhaps, the darkest hour of the American Revolution was before

the Battle of Trenton. As General Washington retreated with his ragged and demoralized Continental army from New York with only about three thousand men, Lord Cornwallis and a large British army was closely on his heels.

On the eighth of December Washington and his forces crossed the Delaware River into Pennsylvania. The retreat through New Jersey was wrought with untold sufferings. The trail of the army's march could be "easily traced by the blood on the snow," and on the frozen ground "from the feet of the men who wore broken shoes." The men were openly exposed to rains, severe cold winds, sleet and snow.

The British thought that it was all over, so did most of the Americans.

Cornwallis put his baggage on ship to return to England. He had stopped at the Delaware waiting for the river to freeze over so he could cross without difficulty and capture what was left of the American army. This would bring the war to a quick and victorious end.

Internal dissensions arose among the colonists. General Charles Lee, the second in command of the American army, refused to obey orders of Washington. Many were deserting from the army. Complete collapse seemed inevitable. But by an almost superhuman effort, Washington by the last of December had reorganized and increased his army to about six thousand men. He again suddenly surprised the enemy and injected new life and hope into the American cause.

Washington decided to take about twenty-four hundred men and cross the Delaware River on Christmas night. Then he planned a surprise attack on Trenton.

At nine o'clock that night, the little ragged army, poorly clad and shivering, stood on the slick banks of the Delaware River. The current was swift and big cakes of ice floated madly in the stream. Clouds hung overhead. It began to snow and then turned bitter cold as sleet descended on the troops.

Report was made to Washington that crossing the river was impossible. But he insisted on crossing. After many, many weary hours of struggling to get the boats across the ice-filled Delaware, the task was finally completed at three o'clock in the morning.

Later, the army formed in lines to march over the cold frozen ground to Trenton.

Thomas Rodney said: “The night was as severe a night as I ever saw. The frost was sharp, the current swift, the ice increasing, the wind high, and at eleven it began to snow. . . violent northeast storm of wind and sleet and hail set in as they began their nine-mile march to Trenton.”

After a sharp contest early that morning, the Hessian garrison was captured. The prize was nearly a thousand men, badly needed supplies, and six valuable brass field pieces.

“Until that hour,” wrote the Pennsylvania German Lutherans, “the life of the United States flickered like a dying flame. ‘But the Lord of hosts heard the cries of the distressed, and sent an angel for their deliverance!’”

Bancroft, in his first edition of *History of the United States* says that Washington, who had been under a terrible strain for seventeen hours, clasped his hands and “raised his eyes, with gleaming thankfulness to heaven,” when he received a report from one of the field officers that the enemy had surrendered. He gave God the credit for the great victory.

Upon learning of the disaster to British arms at Trenton, Cornwallis, the enemy commander, was surprised and alarmed. He quickly moved down with eight thousand men from New York City, and closed in on Washington near Trenton. On the evening of January 1st he encamped for the night and bragged that he would finish Washington” on the morrow.

The air was moist and warm, and the roads very soft with mud. So the baggage and artillery could not be moved around the flank of the enemy, and the roads were impassable even for the troops. Washington found himself in a desperate position because he could not stay where he was and confront the large British army; on the other hand, he could not get away.

But suddenly about midnight, the weather changed miraculously and became very cold, and in a short time the roads froze over hard like a pavement. Keeping his campfires burning brightly to deceive the enemy, the American general slipped by and outflanked Cornwallis; and on the third of January he was at Princeton, New Jersey where he administered another defeat to the British forces stationed there, taking several hundred prisoners.

Thus, with the help of God order was brought out of chaos. And the new year, 1777, opened with new hope! Frederick of Prussia described the Trenton-Princeton action as the most outstanding campaign of the century. When the news reached England Lord Germaine said in the House of Commons that “all our hopes were blasted by that unhappy affair at Trenton.” God came to our cause in the hour of great need.

God kept General George Washington under the protecting shadow of His Wing. During the course of the war, Washington had many narrow escapes from death. He went even beyond the front lines amid a hail of bullets and rallied his soldiers at Princeton. A servant conspired to give him poison in one of his favorite dishes of food, peas; He exposed himself without caution at the siege of Yorktown. He went through the entire long war of eight years without harm or as much as a scratch to his person.

Chaplains

Many faithful chaplains in the Continental army served with distinction during the trying days of the Revolution. They did much to stimulate the morale of the fighting forces by guiding and counseling with the soldiers, both in camp and on the field.

They preached the Gospel, led in prayer, read from the Bible; advised with the men regarding their numerous spiritual and personal problems, administered to the sick in the hospitals, helped to nurse and care for the wounded, and said final services over the dead.

They were an inspiration to many. Old Jacob Trout, for example, preached an eloquent five-minute sermon to the soldiers under Washington’s command before the Battle of Brandywine, September 11, 1777.

The soldiers loved these esteemed men of God, who gave them needed hope and strength in their hours of trial and tribulation. On several occasions ministers were even sent out on special missions of service during the Revolution. For example, the Reverend William Tennent was sent to the South to “stir up” sentiment for the patriot cause, to stamp out Toryism as much as possible, and to organize local militia for the defense of the colonies against the common enemy, England.

The author has reviewed the service records of over 14,000 known officers of the Continental army, from April 1775, to December, 1783. Some very interesting facts were uncovered regarding the religious facilities provided for the troops in the War for Independence. Service records were found for 115 army chaplains who had official officer status and recognition. (There were no doubt many others whose records are not available or have been lost; some volunteered upon a temporary basis and were not mentioned in the records; others served without receiving recognition of chaplain status).

Of the 115 with official service records, Connecticut furnished the largest number, 28. Massachusetts was second with 26.

So these two colonies furnished almost fifty per cent of the army chaplains of the Revolution. The terms of service of the chaplains with the armed forces varied from a few months to eight years.

Many of the chaplains had impressive service records; Moses Allen, chaplain of a Georgia brigade, was taken prisoner January 9, 1779 at Sunbury, and lost his life in escaping.

Charles Thompson, of Rhode Island, brigade chaplain, was taken prisoner of war in June, 1778. John Roseburg, chaplain of the Pennsylvania militia was killed in action in the Trenton-Princeton campaign January 2, 1777.

William Plumb, of Massachusetts, served as chaplain in the Continental army from March, 1776 until his retirement in January, 1781. He lived sixty-two years after his retirement as chaplain, and died June 2, 1843.

One of the most outstanding chaplains of Washington's army in the Revolution was the Reverend John Gano, pastor of the First Baptist Church in New York City. After the war started, he joined the American forces, and it is said that many members of his church volunteered for service when Rev. Gano left for the army.

Gano served with distinction as army chaplain during the greater part of the war. He was described as modest, brave, and kind. He is reported to have been under fire in battle many times. For example was on Chatterton's Hill where the fighting was heaviest.

In this battle four thousand British moved against about 1,400 patriots. The fight was comparatively short but quite sharp, and part of the brigade became panic stricken. Some of the men started to

run, throwing down their arms. Chaplain Gano made his way quickly to the front lines encouraging the men and ministering to the wounded; and an orderly retreat followed.

Gano displayed calm courage when in battle, and it is said that he and General Washington were close personal friends. Some authorities say that it has been documented that Gano baptized the great American general.

When, on April 19, 1783, the peace treaty with England was announced, there was a great celebration and Washington asked Gano to give a prayer of thanksgiving.

After the war, Gano returned (1784) to his pastorate in New York City. He had been gone for eight years and only 37 of the 200 members of the church remained. The building had been made into a stable by the British, and he was faced with many difficult challenges as he carried on his work. Gano, died on August 10, 1804, twenty-one years after the close of the Revolution.

In one of the minor engagements of the Revolution at Springfield, New Jersey, June 23, 1780, when the 3rd New Jersey Regiment ran low on gun wadding for their flintlock muskets in the battle. Rev. James Caldwell, chaplain of the regiment, jumped on his horse and galloped to the nearby Presbyterian Church and returned with armloads of Watt's hymnbooks which he distributed to the soldiers, shouting as he did so, "Tear out the pages and put Watts into them, boys!" They did and the British were halted; thus, even religious song books were used in an effective and practical way in the fight for our freedom.

Rev. Caldwell was a fearless and noble patriot, regardless of the adversity that came his way. His wife had been brutally murdered by the enemy because of his zealous endeavors in the cause of the colonies. Warned of the approach of the British, she ran with her three little ones to the bedroom in her home and closed the door. As the British marched by, one of her little girls looked out of the window, and a soldier saw her. He left the road, according to eye-witness accounts, came to the window, raised his musket and fired. Mrs. Caldwell suddenly fell back and died almost immediately.

One writer says: "Not content with depriving her of her life, the inhuman monsters wreaked their cruelty on her senseless body.

Her clothes were nearly torn off, and her body removed to the roadside, where it was subjected to every indignity, while the torch was applied to the dwelling.” Extreme hatred of Rev. Caldwell for his intense patriotic activities was ascribed as the cause of this outrageous event.

Rev. Caldwell continued to serve in the Continental army and later (Nov. 24, 1781) was shot by a sentinel at Elizabethport, New Jersey. He paid the supreme sacrifice for his beloved country.

Not all of the clergy, however, were for America in the war; some served as chaplains to Loyalist regiments. A number of Tory ministers in the colonies wrote strong articles for the press in support of the king, and much religious dissention resulted in various sections of the country.

The Puritan clergy, however, were nearly all loyal to America and they were pictured by the Tories as deserting their -churches for the “gun and drum”.

In South Carolina, fifteen of the twenty ministers allied with the American cause.

Most Presbyterians, loyal to the colonies, suffered many persecutions and insults at the hands of the British. Their churches were frequently burned or were turned into army stables, or were otherwise desecrated and pillaged.

At Valley Forge

The American army spent the terrible winter of 1777-1778 at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, about twenty miles from Philadelphia.

Valley Forge may be called the Gethsemane of our struggle for independence. The soldiers here endured untold hardships, shivering, freezing and starving while the enemy feasted in Philadelphia. The intense misery of famine and disease spread. There were not enough blankets to keep them warm or clothes to cover their nakedness. The wind howled, whistled and moaned through the New England hills as sleet and snow descended upon the camp and drifted across the fields and around the huts. The lone sentries walking back and forth on their beats in the dim starlit nights would often leave stains of blood where their partly bare feet passed over the snow covered ground.

It seemed that only a miracle could save the army.

In the “Life of Washington” by Rev. M. L. Weems are these words:

In the winter of ’77, Washington camped at Valley Forge with the American army. A certain good old friend, of the respectable family and name of Potts, had occasion to pass through the woods near head quarters. Treading his way along the venerable grove, suddenly he heard the sound of a human voice, which as he advanced, increased in his ear. At length it became like the voice of one speaking much in earnest. As he approached the spot with a cautious step, whom should he behold, in a dark natural bower of ancient oaks, but the commander-in-chief of the American armies on his knees at prayer!

Motionless with surprise, friend Potts continued in the place till the general, having ended his devotions, arose; and, with a countenance of angelic serenity, retired to headquarters.

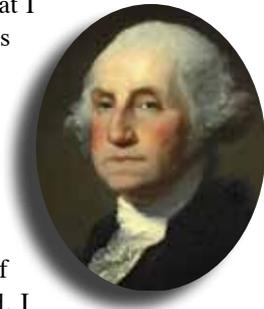
Friend Potts then went home, and on entering his parlor called out to his wife, ‘Sarah! my dear Sarah! All’s well! All’s well! George Washington will yet prevail!’

‘What’s the matter, Isaac? Thee seems moved!’

‘Well, if I seemed moved, ’tis no more than what I really am. I have seen this day what I never expected. Thee knows that I always thought that the sword and the gospel were utterly inconsistent; and that no man could be a soldier and a Christian at the same time. But George Washington has this day convinced me of my mistake.’

He then related what he had seen, and concluded with this prophetic remark: If George Washington be not a man of God, I am greatly deceived—and still more I shall be deceived, if God not, through him, work out a great salvation for America.’

The accuracy of this account has been challenged. Perhaps the details and circumstances are dramatized by Weems. But there is no doubt that Washington was a man of prayer who often prayed for guidance during the war. Therefore, we can be sure he prayed fervently during the great hardships of that terrible winter at Valley Forge.



He Defied God and Was Killed

The picture looked very dark for the American cause when the British were overrunning the South. There were reports of the burning of homes, the hanging of men, and the raping of young girls and women.

Major Patrick Ferguson had been sent into the highlands of the Carolinas to overrun the country and to recruit Tories for the British military service. The hardy backwoodsmen and riflemen of the region were thoroughly alarmed by British threats. They at once sprung to the defense of their country, and marched against their ruthless enemy.

Ferguson learned of their coming and took up a strong position at King's Mountain in South Carolina, where he boasted: "God Almighty Himself could not drive me from this hill."

But he was surrounded and his entire command was either killed, wounded or captured. He tried to escape on horseback through the American lines, but was pierced by rifle bullets from a number of the riflemen and dropped dead from his horse.

The Tories had burned out, pillaged and brutally tortured these Southerners. God did not permit Ferguson to defy Him, and the enemy had to pay heavily for their malicious conduct. The Tory losses, according to reports were about 225 killed, 163 wounded, and 716 captured. The American casualties were only 28 killed and 62 wounded.

It was a brilliant victory, won in the darkest period of the Revolutionary War in the South. Like Bennington in 1777, it bolstered the spirits of the war-weary Americans.

One of the most joyous events during the American Revolution was the news France had decided to come to our aid in the war. News of this momentous event reached Washington at Valley Forge in May, 1777. On the sixth of the month he advised the army of the great news and set aside the following day to be devoted to a grateful acknowledgment of Divine goodness and help. There was a big celebration and parade as Washington reviewed his cheering troops. After that he and Mrs. Washington and the general officers attended the religious services of the New Jersey brigade. There was prayer, thanksgiving and praise to God throughout the entire country.

Even in trial and adversity, the Lord did not forsake America in the Revolution. Benedict Arnold's treason, in 1780, when the treacherous hero of many bloody and hard fought battles planned to sell out his country to the enemy, is no exception. Everything went smoothly until Major Andre's return from his secret visit with Arnold to complete the plans for the conspiracy.

A series of unforeseen events suddenly and unexpectedly transpired upsetting the carefully laid plans for Andre's safe return to British headquarters in New York City. He was carrying in the sock of one of his boots the incriminating papers for the capture of West Point, the American stronghold on the Hudson River. He was captured and the apprehension of the crime of the century was brought to light and foiled.

When Major Andre was hanged as a British spy, no prayer was offered at the execution. But we should remember when the patriot Captain Nathan Hale was hanged, he was even denied a Bible to read prior to his death.

America has never forgotten or forgiven Arnold for what he did. He has become the Judas of American history.

The final major military event of the war was the surrender of Lord Cornwallis and his large army at Yorktown, Virginia in the autumn of 1781. News of this glorious event spread rapidly throughout the country.

When the news reached Philadelphia, the Continental Congress met early in the morning and marched in a solemn procession to the Lutheran Church in the city to render thanks in a special service to Almighty God.

The day following the surrender, Washington specifically ordered that Divine services be held in each regiment in recognition of the "particular interposition of Providence on their behalf."

Prayer and thanksgiving meetings were held everywhere all over our country to thank God for the victory which brought about the end of the war. It is said, when he heard the glorious news, that the doorkeeper of Congress dropped dead with joy.

During the historic siege, it should also be remembered that a storm at sea prevented the escape of Cornwallis at Yorktown. Again the Divine Hand of Providence had come to our aid against our enemies.

An Englishman in London once told the author: “America did not win the war; the English just stopped fighting.”

Woodrow Wilson and other historians agree that England could probably have concluded the war successfully had it been continued, even after the surrender of Cornwallis. General Henry Clinton, British commander in New York, advised his home government that he could quickly bring the colonies to their knees if they would furnish him with 10,000 reinforcements.

But Providence decreed otherwise. Peace was declared and America became a free and independent nation, with God’s help.



“The general principles on which the fathers achieved independence were the general principles of Christianity. I will avow that I then believed, and now believe, that those general principles of Christianity are as eternal and immutable as the existence and attributes of God.”

—John Adams, signer of Declaration of Independence and the second U.S. President



“The Bible is the best of all books, for it is the word of God and teaches us the way to be happy in this world and in the next. Continue therefore to read it and to regulate your life by its precepts.”

—John Jay, first U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice



Chapter Four

GOD, YOUNG AMERICA, AND THE EARLY WEST

The strong religious convictions which permeated the hearts and lives of our colonial fathers continued during the days of the young republic, and on through our movement westward.

George Washington, the illustrious “Father of our Country” was a devout Christian and a regular church attendant. Following the close of the Revolution, he believed the future of the United States would be determined by how close we stayed to the Lord.

After the constitution was adopted, Washington was elected to head our new government. He was inaugurated as the first President of the United States on April 30, 1789. His prayer for that historic occasion was:

Almighty God, we make our earnest prayer that thou wilt keep the United States in thy holy protection; that thou wilt incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government; to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another and for their fellow citizens of the United States at large. And finally that thou wilt most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind which

were the characteristics of the divine Author of our blessed religion, and without a humble imitation of whose example in these things we can never hope to be a happy nation. Grant our supplication, we beseech thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

George Washington

Following his inauguration, Washington spoke to the Congress:

It would be peculiarly improper to omit, in this first official act, my fervent supplication to that Almighty Being who presides in the councils of nations, that his benediction may consecrate to the liberties and happiness of the people of the United States a government instituted by themselves. Every step by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency... Heaven can never smile on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right.

As we began to spread westward as a nation, missionaries and preachers were found in the West at a very early date. In addition to the Catholic missionaries, the various Protestant denominations—especially the Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians—had their early traveling preachers, or “circuit riders.” They held services at the various cabins in the wilderness, and rode countless miles on horseback with their saddle bags filled with their personal belongings and the Bible.

A noted American statesman, Champ Clark, who served as Speaker of the National House of Representatives, described the early Western American pioneers as a “Godfearing people who crossed the Great River (the Mississippi) with a Bible in one hand and a rifle in the other. . .the cream of their age and the history makers of the West.”

John Mason Peck was one of the most noted of our Western missionaries. He traveled far and wide, preached extensively, and was a very prolific writer. He was interested in the founding of churches, the spread of education in the wilderness, and in the training of men for the ministry.

Others could be mentioned who did equally outstanding work in bringing Christianity to the West. These paved the way, with the help of God, for a better world. Their work cannot be measured this side of eternity; they were among God’s great noblemen.

The pioneers were a religious people. After building homes and schools, the settlers usually erected a house of worship. Before church buildings were erected, however, they would often meet at the different homes in the neighborhood and hold services.

The church of the West was generally a log building crudely furnished with split-log benches for seats, and with a crude pulpit at one end of the room for the preacher.

The sermons were usually long and full of the fear and wrath of God. Common subjects for sermons in the early days were: "Sin," "Hell," "Destruction," "Wickedness," "Eternal Punishment," and the like.

Just in front of the pulpit, they had what was known as a "mourner's bench." When people realized the "awfulness" and the burden of their sins, they would come forward and sit on the "mourner's bench." If it was well-filled during a sermon, the sermon was considered effective.

Musical instruments were unknown in the early churches. Someone who could sing would "line off" a song, and the congregation would sing it line by line as it was read off to them.

The women sat on one side of the church building and the men on the other.

"Experience meetings" were frequently held at which time those present would get up and tell what God had done for them and how He had helped them in their many trials and temptations. Sermons were often filled with deathbed stories that would arouse the feelings and the passions of the audience. People frequently became so excited during a service that they would "shout."

The camp meeting was common in the early days of the West, and it was the most important gathering in the pioneer community. It was an outdoor meeting which lasted for a week or more. People would come from afar to attend these meetings. The meetings were usually held in late summer or in early fall. People would come and camp on the grounds until the meeting broke up. Morning, afternoon, and evening services were held. A stand was built five or six feet high, covered with dirt or sand, and a big fire was built on it to provide light at night.

According to Henry Howe, a noted contemporary historian of the early West, the "camp meeting revival" originated in the West.

It was designed for the masses “destitute of the true knowledge of God, and strangers to the religion of Jesus Christ.” Time was spent in preaching, praying and praising God. Church influence and religious revivals tended to tame the Wild West. It was the greatest force for good and law and order.

In order to present a true picture of a pioneer church, typical of the early West, consider the history of Bethel Baptist Church. This church in the wilderness became one of the most noted of its day and time.

Bethel Baptist Church

The first permanent non-Catholic church organized west of the Mississippi River was organized in Cape Girardeau County, about two miles from the present county seat town of Jackson, Missouri on July 19, 1806. The first log church building was erected there in 1812.

Under the leadership of Elder David Green, there were fourteen charter members. The preamble of their church constitution stated:

We the members of the Baptist Church having been a long time destitute of having the privilege of being in any church order, do feel it our duty to embody ourselves together in the fear of God as a church, hoping that God will bless us in so good an undertaking with the teaching of his Holy Spirit and enable us through Grace to live to the declarative glory of Him and the praise of His Gospel.

Church rules were also drawn up. Article eight referred to church attendance:

“Male members missing two meetings shall be cited to give reasons. Females shall attend as often as convenient. When it is believed they have opportunity and will not, they also shall be cited to give their reasons.”

From its very beginning, Bethel Church kept a watchful eye on its entire membership. To belong to that church meant something. Less than a year from the date of its founding, the record book entry for March 7, 1807 says:

“The church met in conference and inquiring into the conduct of Daniel A. Burns, find him ripe for excommunication. Excluded him.”

Thomas Bull was chosen as writing clerk of the congregation (church clerk) and William Matthews a singing clerk (song leader).

Soon, one of the members, a Brother Smith, felt the call to preach. But the church was very cautious, for on September 12, 1807 the record shows:

“Bro. Smith, the church being hopeful that he is called to speak of God in public do give him liberty to exercise either in preaching or exhorting on the bounds of the church, but do not out of the said bounds of the church without a member with him.”

They were taking no chances on him.

It is interesting to note, historically, that the church did not make race discriminations, for on March 12, 1808, the record states:

“Received by experience a Negro woman named Hannah, belonging to Mr. Russell.”

The church building was also used for purposes other than religious worship, for, at one time, it also served as a court house. In April 1814 the minutes read:

“Resolved that no court shall be held in the meeting house and that Brother John be doorkeeper of the church.” But in June it was “Resolved that the meeting house be given up to hold court in until there can be a house on the permanent seat” (County seat). The following December, Brothers McMillian and Bull were instructed to “write to the association to remove the court from the meeting house.”

In 1838, permission was granted to hold school in the church building, stating “teacher and employers being bound for all damages that occur.”

The church membership was composed of whites and blacks, males and females, resident and transit members. A very strict discipline was exercised over the membership. The church ruled that three-fourths of the church should have power to excommunicate (expel) members from the church for improper conduct. Those who refused to vote on either side of a question were required to give their reasons.

During the first three years of its long and unique history, the church had fifteen trials. Thirteen of the accused were found guilty and only two were acquitted of the charges made against them. During this time, fifty-nine people joined the church, including six Negroes. Four who had been excluded were later restored to membership.

A few interesting entries taken from the original church record minute book at random sheds interesting light on the times and conditions west of the Mississippi River:

- 1808 - June 11—The church met in conference and Brother Spears for profane swearing and refusing to hear the church was excommunicated.
- 1810 - April 7—The church met in conference. Mr. Shields excommunicated for...telling untruths.
- 1811 - March 9—The church met in conference. Brothers Matthews and C. Thompson to talk with Sisters McDaniel and Watkins for their neglect of church meetings.
- 1811 - October 12—John Reynolds excluded for joining the Mason Lodge. Also Ann McDaniel for insulting the church and violating the rules.
- 1812 - October 9—Joseph Lockhard excommunicated for unlawful marriage.
- 1812 - December 12—Stephen McKenzie excluded for drunkenness, swearing and offering to fight. John Shields excommunicated for disorder.
- 1815 - December 15—Brethren T. Bull and Issac Sheppard to write to Bro. William Johnson on the arm of Turkey Creek concerning card playing.
- 1816 - July 13—Rebecca Hubble excommunicated for leaving her husband and going off with another man, Jemima Hall excluded for the same crime.
- 1816 - August 8—Green B. League excluded for absenting himself from the country without settling with his creditors.
- 1816 - November 9—Resolved that Sister Hannah Edwards be allowed to wear gold ear rings for the benefit of her eyes. (Note: the church did not believe in elaborate jewelry, but it was believed at the time that gold ear rings helped the eyes—hence, church action upon this matter).
- 1817 - May 12—Anthony Randall excluded for getting drunk, fighting and profane swearing.
- 1819 - April—An accusation laid in against Bro. Richard Willard for having drank to an excess, and for stripping to fight.

- 1819 - May 13—Bro. Ezekiel made acknowledgment for having drunk too much spirits, forgiven.
- 1822 - June 8—Brother Ezekiel Hill laid in a complaint against himself for killing a deer on Sunday; 1 after acknowledgment of his fault, was forgiven.

The chief reasons for expulsion from the Bethel Church were: drinking, swearing, fighting, unlawful marriage, telling lies, failing to pay just debts, and cheating other members in business transactions. Not only did the church help settle disputes between its own members, but was also frequently called upon to adjust difficulties in other neighboring church organizations.

In 1814, it was decided to have a church treasurer to look after the finances, and Brother Isaac Sheppard was selected. A committee was also appointed to “examine traveling ministers of their faith and principles.”

Those feeling the “call” to preach were judged by the church. Some were approved, “examined and solemnly set apart to the great work of the ministry by prayer and the laying on of hands.” Others were denied the privilege; and some were even ordered “to stop preaching.”

The church at one time had a committee of three members to review cases involving indebtedness. If any member was found to be negligent in paying his just debts, he was required to sell his property to satisfy the same, or, if he refused, to face church action.

Brother James P. Edwards was engaged “to fill the meeting house cracks” (between the logs) in 1816, for which he was to receive \$13.00.

Events of common historical interest in the community were recorded in the church book, such as the great earthquake of 1811 at New Madrid, Missouri.

During the early years, the church was a missionary leader that started nine other churches. It also assisted in the organization of scores of other churches and in the spread of the gospel throughout the West, and in many regions in the South and East. For nearly forty years Bethel Church was an important factor in the moral history of civilization west of the Mississippi River. Unfortunately, it later became anti-missionary and declined in its influence.

Bethel Church, like others of its day and time in the West, was actively engaged in an aggressive campaign against evil. It did not compromise with wrong, as it saw it. The church contributed greatly to the moral uplift of the times. Twenty-six preachers were either ordained or licensed in some way by Bethel Church.

The greatest period of prosperity of the church was from 1806 to 1813, during which time 97 members were received by salvation, 62 by letter, and 21 by baptism. This was remarkable, when we consider that the region was sparsely settled at this time.

Bethel Church marked a distinct epoch in western history, when civilization was young and pioneer days were in vogue. The church was in operation for over sixty years, 1806- 1867.

We have always especially turned to the Lord in times of adversity. On June 1, 1812, President James Madison sent his special message to the Congress asking for a declaration of war against England. This officially marked the beginning of the War of 1812. In this forceful message the President stated that he was committing “a just cause into the hands of the Almighty Disposer of events.”

After many defeats we eventually won, with God’s help, the War of 1812.

Benton and Webster

Thomas Hart Benton is regarded as the greatest statesman of the early West. He was a bold aggressive leader who made many enemies in the halls of congress.

For years, Senator Benton and the great statesman and orator, Daniel Webster, of Massachusetts, were not on speaking terms. But on February 28, 1845 something happened to soften the heart of Benton. On that particular day, several senators and other distinguished guests were on the U.S. warship *Princeton* making a cruise down the Potomac River. When the ship neared Mt. Vernon, the home of George Washington the big gun called “Peace Maker” was to fire a salute at Washington’s grave. As the ship slowed for the salute, someone touched Senator Benton on the arm and told him a friend wished to speak with him. Benton walked back to talk with his friend and another person occupied Benton’s place on the boat. The gun was fired. As it did it exploded, killing several people including the man who was standing where Benton had been.

There was no doubt in Benton's mind that the hand of the Lord had saved him from being killed. His heart was softened. His first move was a visit to Daniel Webster. He told Webster what had happened and ended by saying: "Webster, I want to forgive all and be forgiven and live the rest of my life with no ill-will in my breast. I offer you my hand in friendship." The two men clasped hands and were friends for the remainder of their lives.

Sometime after this, Colonel Wilson, an old man at the time, went to see Mr. Webster and asked him to get someone to help him to get established in California. But Webster had no close friends in California, so he suggested that Wilson get a letter of introduction from Thomas Hart Benton.

"Do you know," replied Wilson with surprise, "that for thirty years Benton and I have been bitter enemies? He hates me and I hate him."

Webster knew this was true, but he also knew that Benton wanted very much to forget these hatreds and that he would be glad to help Wilson. He finally persuaded Wilson to take a note from him to Benton.

With many doubts and misgivings, Colonel Wilson took the note to Senator Benton's home. Benton came to the door himself and greeted Wilson kindly. After reading the note he said: "Wilson, I am glad to see you. Webster has done for me the greatest thing he ever did in his life."

Later, after Senator and Mrs. Benton and their guest, Colonel Wilson, had supper, Benton asked Wilson to forgive him for everything he had said about him. Wilson in turn asked forgiveness from Benton. When they retired for the night they parted good friends. Next morning the senator gave Wilson a nine-page letter of recommendation to take to Benton's son-in-law and friends in California.

When Daniel Webster was Secretary of State in Millard Fillmore's cabinet, he attended a dinner meeting in New York City at the famous Astor House. At this meeting Secretary Webster was asked what was the most important thought that he ever had. His reply was: "The most important thought ever to occupy my mind is that of my individual responsibility to God."

At Sea

It was the custom of Commodore Perry to have a concert of sacred music on his flagship every Sunday afternoon.

In 1853, when his ship moved into a Japanese harbor, the natives expected a bombardment and were filled with fear. But what they heard instead of canon fire was the Marine Band playing, “America,” followed by such songs as “Nearer my God to Thee,” and “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross.”

When the Spanish fleet was destroyed at the Battle of Santiago Bay during the Spanish-American War in 1898, the American commander immediately ordered out the life boats to save the survivors of the sinking Spanish ships. When the thin, hungry, forlorn-looking enemy came on board the American flagship, the sailors asked that the big meal that had been prepared for them be given to the Spanish.

Admiral Cervera, commander of the defeated squadron came on board. When he saw how his sailors were treated the old man embraced the American commander and, with tears running down his cheeks said: “Never before in the history of the world have prisoners of war been so well treated.” The spirit of God in a Christian nation made the difference.





Chapter Five

GOD AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

The Civil War, 1861-1865, was the greatest tragedy in American history. It was a war in which fathers fought against their sons, brother was arrayed against brother, neighbor against neighbor, and friend against friend.

Some have felt that through this war God chastised America because of the sin and evils of human slavery. Slavery is without question contrary to our ideals of democracy and freedom, and is not consistent with the teachings of the Son of God.

It was God's will that the North won, for if it had been otherwise the Stars and Bars of Dixie would today fly as the official flag of the Southern States, and we would have two entirely different nations.

It would require many volumes to record the religious experiences of those on the battlefield and at home during the four long, bloody, and trying years of the conflict, which took so many lives and resulted in so much suffering.

Unlike the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the Confederate States of America (March 11, 1861) made direct mention of God. It said:

We, the people of the Confederate States. . .in order to form a permanent federal government, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity—invoking the favor and guidance of Almighty God—do ordain and establish this constitution for the Confederate States of America.

The great leader of the North during the war was Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States. It is indeed difficult to accurately and fully depict the character of this noble statesman. His love for justice, his devotion to his country, his charitable treatment of everyone, and his humanitarian-mindedness which looked to righteousness but ever tempered “justice with mercy,” made Abraham Lincoln a peer of his age and of his time. No man ever served his country more faithfully, devotedly or unselfishly.

Abraham Lincoln was not officially affiliated with any particular church. (He frequently attended church. Some reports claim he had intentions of uniting with the church the very next Sunday at the time of his untimely death.) There is no doubt that Lincoln was a sincere and devoted Christian. He trusted God for wisdom and guidance for the many decisions which he was called on to make during the terrible struggle.

He is reputed to have said one time: “I do not know where the ship of life will finally take me, but there is one thing that I do know—I know the Pilot of that ship and I have been assured all along the way by the gentle touch of His hand upon mine.”

A visitor once told Mr. Lincoln: “I’m glad, Mr. President, that God is on our side in this war.”

Mr. Lincoln’s quick reply was: “What I’m concerned about is—are we on God’s side?”

In his great inaugural address on March 4, 1861, President Lincoln said:

“Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance upon Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land are still competent to adjust, in the best way, all our present difficulties... We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic cord of memories, stretching from every battlefield

and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.”

Lincoln echoed again this assurance in his great address on the battlefield at Gettysburg: “this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom.”

In his Emancipation Proclamation (1863), he wrote that he invoked the “judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God” upon his action.

Also in 1863, he issued the first Presidential Thanksgiving Day Proclamation. It is a masterpiece on the hand of God in the destiny and leadership of our country, it is still pertinent today:

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the Senate of the United States, devoutly recognizing the supreme authority and just government of Almighty God in all of the affairs of men and of nations, has by a resolution requested the President to designate and set apart a day for national prayer and humiliation:

AND WHEREAS, it is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God; to confess their sins and in humble sorrow, yet with the assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord:

AND IN SO MUCH as we know that by his divine law nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishment and chastisement in this world, may we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolated the land may be put a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people? We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown; but we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and prosperity multiplied and enriched

and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all of these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us:

IT BEHOOVES US, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.

NOW THEREFORE, in compliance with the request, and fully concurring in the views, of the Senate, I do by this proclamation designate and set apart Thursday, the 30th day of April, 1863, as a day of national humiliation, fasting, and prayer. And I do hereby request all the people to abstain on that day from their ordinary secular pursuits, and to unite at their several places of public worship and their respective homes in keeping the day holy to the Lord and devoted to the humble discharge of the religious duties proper to that solemn occasion. All of this being done in sincerity and truth, let us then rest humbly in the hope authorized by the divine teachings, that the united cry of the nation will be heard on high and answered with blessings no less than the pardon of our national sins, and the restoration of our now divided and suffering country to its former condition of unity and peace.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington, this thirteenth day of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the independence of the United States the eighty-seventh.

Abraham Lincoln

Since that time, every President of the United States has issued an annual Thanksgiving Day Proclamation.

In his second historic inaugural address, March 4, 1865, Lincoln eloquently expressed his political philosophy and Christian-like program for the nation in these beautiful words:

With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish

the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

The great leader, hero, soldier and Christian patriot of the South during the war was General Robert Edward Lee. He was the son of the famous General Henry Lee, of Revolutionary War fame. Lee commanded the armies of the Confederacy, proved himself to be one of the greatest military leaders in our history.

General Lee was an humble, devout Christian man, who believed in God and had a firm faith in Divine judgment and guidance. He did more than attend church and pray; he practiced his religion in all of his dealings with his fellow men. Without pretense, show, or sham, he lived before others the Christian faith that he professed. He said, one time: "My chief concern is to try to be a humble, sincere Christian."

In 1864, the Confederate army was making a rapid crossing of the James River to stop Grant at Petersburg, Virginia. General Lee is said to have pulled his horse over to the side of the road, dismounted, and got down on his knees in the dust, alongside a minister, and asked for blessing and guidance from God.

He never cherished bitter feelings toward his enemies, and he said that he had "never seen the day when" he did not pray for the people of the North as well as the people of the South.

In the last years of his life, while serving as college president, Lee said: "If I could only know that all the young men in this college were good Christians, I should have nothing more to desire."

In the farewell address to his army after the surrender, he said: "I earnestly pray that a merciful God will extend to you His blessings and protection."

Another great Southern general, "Stonewall" Jackson, was a devout Christian man. He planned battles with foresight and accuracy, and was bold and aggressive as a field commander. But he was kind and deeply spiritual. It is said the Southern soldiers knew when they were about to engage in battle, because in the dim light of the campfires late at night they could see General "Stonewall" Jackson down upon his knees in prayer.

Jackson's letters and military reports are filled with references concerning the help and blessings of God. In a letter to his wife, Jackson wrote of one of his engagements, "God has been my guide."

When Colonel Imboden reported to Jackson on the field for orders, Jackson told him: "God blessed our army again yesterday," and he expressed the hope that God would continue his protection and blessing "still. . .today."

In writing to Mrs. Jackson in regard to victories on the field of battle, Jackson said: "God has been our shield, and to Him be all the glory."

General Jackson concluded one of his military reports in February, 1863 with these words: "Undying gratitude is due to God for this great victory."

Later, in a letter to Mrs. Jackson, he said that we should "all unite more earnestly in imploring God's aid in fighting our battles."

In one of his reports to General Lee, he said: "Through God's blessing the advance, which commenced this evening has been successful thus far. I look to Him for complete success tomorrow."

In another report dated September 15, 1862, he told General Lee: "Through God's blessing, Harpers Ferry and its garrison are to be surrendered."

Jackson prayed both in private and public for God's help in his campaigns and battles. Just before entering upon an important battle, Jackson said to one of his staff members: "My trust is in God,"

When Lee sent Jackson congratulations on a military success, it is reported that Jackson said: "General Lee is very kind. . .but he should give the praise to God."

General Jackson's last words before his death were; "Let us cross over the river and lie down in the shade of the trees."

General "Jeb" Stuart, Confederate cavalry commander in reporting a military success said that "the hand of God" was dearly manifest, and "I ascribe to Him the praise, the honor, and the glory."

Before Pickett's historic charge at the Battle of Gettysburg, the Confederate chaplains got down on their knees and led in prayer, while the men with bowed heads leaned on their muskets.

A little later, one of the field commanders rode down the lines, and an officer said to him:

“General, this is a desperate charge.”

“True,” said he, “but the issue is with the Almighty and we must leave it in His hands.”

Later, some of the younger men who had not been in battle showed much fright as the shells from the enemy batteries began to fall close to them. A nearby commander quieted them by saying:

“Men, you are not safer in one place than in another. You must depend on the Lord to see you through.”

Many stories are told of the heroism of the Union army chaplains. At Chickamauga, for example, one chaplain took off his coat and carried water all day to the men in the thickest of the fight. He also assisted in caring for the wounded, thus serving as a true minister of mercy.

One chaplain in an Illinois regiment, who was later killed in battle, would go across the field at night with a lighted lantern in his hand as he searched for wounded men among the dead. He would call out: “Any wounded here

Benson John Lossing, the eminent American historian, speaks in glowing terms of the many thousands of Union chaplains who served in the army and navy hospitals, as well as on the fields of battle. Lossing describes them as “faithful servants of the Divine Master, and full of love toward their fellowmen, their country, and their God.” They were the “trusted link between the sick soldier and his home.” They wrote letters home for the soldiers, and tried to comfort the bereaved ones back home when they had to send death messages. They “braved danger and death in every form” to carry on their work.

Historical records show that the Army of Northern Virginia (Confederate) was noted for its various revival meetings. Most of the soldiers carried little Bibles in their packs. It is said that prayer meetings were held in nearly every Confederate regiment. Public worship was engaged in before all important movements.

According to the records, a series of revival meetings started in the Southern army in the autumn of 1862 and continued to the end of the war in 1865. A number of ministers had joined the army near the close of the second year of the war, and they served as chaplains to administer to the spiritual needs of the soldiers.

A revival was held in the camp of Jackson's corps following the bloody Battle of Antietam, and another before the Battle of Fredericksburg and the Battle of Chancellorsville. The commanding generals with their staffs frequently attended these services. It is reported that 500 men in a Mississippi brigade made professions of faith. Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist ministers especially offered their services for these meetings.

Following the great Battle of Gettysburg and Lee's retreat into Virginia, the men met for prayer, Bible reading, and preaching. Often as many as 2,000 men would meet without regular chaplains and hold prayer meetings.

Lee's Second and Third army corps were especially zealous in their religious activities. In four months time, more than 5,000 became Christians.

These converts to the Christian faith did much to sustain the South during the dark and trying days of the Reconstruction period. Many men entered the ministry as a result of these army revivals. The work of the church was thereby accelerated following the close of the war.

Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederate State of America during the Civil War, became a Christian shortly after his inauguration. In 1862 he joined St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Richmond, Virginia; where attended regularly.

In the dark days following the Civil War Jefferson Davis was thrown in prison and put in chains.

While in prison, the Bible and prayer book were said to have been his constant companions. He said:

"An unseen hand has sustained me, and a peace that the world could not give and has not been able to destroy, will, I trust uphold me to meet with resignation whatever may befall me."

Jefferson Davis' last official message to the people of the Confederacy, April 4, 1865, was:

"Let us not...despond, but" rely "on the never-failing mercies and protecting care of our God."

When the Civil War closed the people rejoiced as never before. But along with the wild cheers came the more solemn religious and patriotic tone of the great celebration. Many went to churches and prayed and thanked God.

“Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow” was the song frequently heard. Tens of thousands of people in all sections of the North attended services of thanksgiving.

The historian Motley says that “humble, grateful thanksgiving to God” that the Union had been saved seemed to be the order of the day rather than exultation over the fall of the South.

The bloodiest, most terrible war in the annals of our country had come to an end. The final benediction of the Lord rested with the cause of the North. We were to be united in love and peace once again.



You Never Know!

What begins as just another ordinary day may turn into something that impacts many people for decades, even centuries.

A baby is born in an obscure village to poor parents. No news there; it happens all the time. But two thousand years later we still honor the birth of that baby every Christmas!

He grows up to be a good man. Then one day He is executed between two thieves. A sad day, but historians thought it was insignificant. Yet His death still brings life to everyone with faith in Him.

Fast forward to one July day more than seventeen centuries later. Fifty-six men sign their name to a sheet of paper. That simple act would start a bloody, eight-year struggle that would eventually give birth to the United States of America.

During the next 233 years, the USA would experience many other routine days that produced remarkable results.

At the beginning of most of these days, folks were convinced that—to borrow a phrase from Mr. Lincoln—“the world will little note, nor long remember” anything that happens on this day.

But Proverbs 27:1 reminds us that you do not know what a day may bring forth.

On one day each November, new governmental officials are elected. These leaders often redirect the paths of history.

One December 7th was a day that went down in infamy. Pearl Harbor was attacked, and the USA suspended business as usual for years of sacrifice during World War II.

On January 20th—every four years—a new President takes office. This generates scores of changes—some good, some bad—in millions of lives.

The most significant day on the calendar of USA history just might be September 11.

Troops of emotions blitz my mind as I consider it.

September 11...a day that anybody who loves this nation should never forget.

September 11...a day when courageous heroes did the right thing.

September 11...a reminder of how we must have God's help if we are to be safe and secure.

September 11...Enemies will destroy the USA, if we do not learn from it.

September 11...if we value and use what we can learn from that day we will always have God's blessings.

September 11...if we continue to forget and neglect it, the future of the USA is doomed.

September 11...just an ordinary day. You've probably not read about it in a history book. But the USA might not be here today if it were not for that day.

September 11 ... **1777**.

The stakes were high. The war to complete the birth of the nation was in its second year. If we lost, the USA would only be a great idea that never got off the ground.

Our soldiers were desperate for provisions and weapons. But our leaders decided there was an even higher priority than just meeting physical needs in troubled times.

September 11, 1777. That's the day the leaders of our new government voted to spend \$300,000! (That's like \$300 billion for today's congress). The purpose of this huge expenditure: to place a copy of the Holy Bible in every home in this new country.

An honest investigation of early American history confirms that the USA was founded as an experiment to prove that God honors those who honor Him. God has blessed the United States of America because the USA first blessed Him.

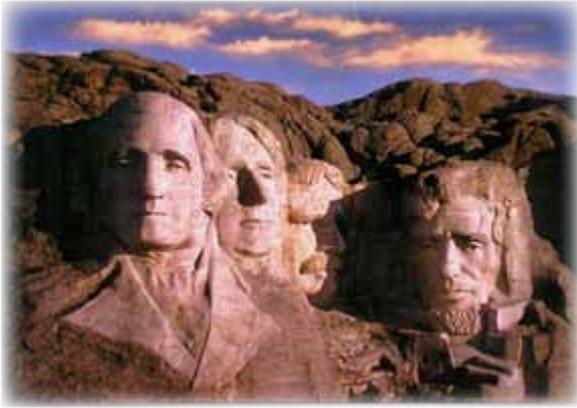
—*Dr. Lonnie Skinner*



“The great, vital, and conservative element in our system is the belief of our people in the pure doctrines and the divine truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

“In this age, there can be no substitute for Christianity... That was the religion of the founders of the republic and they expected it to remain the religion of their descendants.”

United States Congress, 1854



Chapter Six

GOD IN AMERICA YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

Following the Civil War, a great revival spirit swept throughout the entire country, beginning in the 1870's.

To fully understand this revival movement, it is necessary to know something of its historical background. Before the Civil War much of the country was involved in a spirit of social reforms and a higher idealism for human conduct. A movement got under way to curb excessive drinking; and some went so far as to advocate total abstinence. Temperance societies were formed and many churches took up the fight against the use of intoxicating liquors.

One church association (Tebo Baptist Association, in Henry County, Missouri) became so enthusiastic in its crusade on the subject that it adopted in 1856 the following report and recommendation on temperance:

We believe an individual unfit for membership in the church who will stoop to the degrading business of dram shop keeping, and that there is as much sin in buying and drinking as there is in dram selling. And while whiskey may be good for sick horses, and snake bites, it is better to let the horses die and depend on the physician to cure the sick, than to fill the State's prison with convicts and

the poor house with paupers, make so many wives and children paupers, and crowd the infernal regions with so many thousands, for the Scriptures sayeth, 'No drunkard can enter Heaven.'

Later, this particular association also condemned the use of tobacco, calling on members "to discontinue use of the filthy weed."

But the Civil War ended this reform movement. The war produced a period of social unrest, tensions and abnormalities. The usual aftermaths of a war followed in its wake: increase in taxation, the accumulation of huge debts; a wartime prosperity that had developed in the North; corruption, frauds, profiteering, lowering of moral standards, luxurious and extravagant living, and contraband trade. Political graft and corruption continued to abound in the country.

In May, 1864, The Springfield Republican carried a feature story regarding the conditions of the times. This newspaper claimed that members of the Congress and other high officials had their mistresses and prostitutes, to whom they were giving clerkship and secretarial jobs in government offices. It told of corruption in the awarding of war contracts, and outright stealing by those in authority, who were accused of being nothing less than "public robbers." Morals and moral standards were indeed at a low ebb. Immorality was said to have abounded.

"Crooked" and greedy politicians looked on the South, after Lee's surrender, as a "Promised Land" where they could enhance their power and recruit their purses. The sad story of Reconstruction in the South is well known to history.

After the war, a wave of crime broke loose. Bands of outlaws, some claiming to be victims of circumstance—such as the James and Younger boys roamed the country almost at will robbing banks and killing.

All of these factors called for a spiritual awakening. Dwight L. Moody was the "father" of American revivalism of the nineteenth century.

Moody was the sixth child of a family of nine children. Born at Northfield, Massachusetts on February 5, 1837, he grew up under adverse circumstances. When a youth of seventeen, he clerked in his uncle's store in Boston. He attended Mt. Vernon Congregational Church and was a member of the Sunday School class taught by

Edward Kimball. Kimball went to see him one day and, finding him alone in the store, told Moody about the plan of salvation. On his knees in this little shoe store Moody gave his life to Christ.

Two years later Moody moved to Chicago where he was active in Y.M.C.A. work and where he taught in the Sunday School. At the age of twenty-three, in 1860, he devoted his life to full time Christian service, and his fame spread rapidly.

Moody became a great leader of men and was said to have been a tireless worker, abounding in energy. He believed that the hope of the world was to be found in accepting Christ and following in His footsteps. He spoke plainly and simply, using short sentences, often mispronouncing words and making grammatical errors. But his great messages had an astounding appeal to men and women hungry for the Gospel and looking forward to a better way of life.

Great crowds overflowed large city auditoriums where he preached. Many were often turned away because of packed houses. Moody held a revival meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1875. Even the President of the United States, U. S. Grant, and his official cabinet journeyed from the national capitol in Washington, D. C. to be present at one of the meetings.

When Moody held a revival in New York City, over a thousand people were in the great choir and it took 500 ushers to care for the seating of the immense crowds. For a quarter of a century his great revival meetings continued. He was the leading evangelist of the eighties and nineties.

Moody was in a revival campaign in Kansas City, Missouri when he died at the age of sixty-two. His influence on American life in his day and time, and in the generations that followed, cannot be measured this side of eternity.

Dr. Reuben Archer Torrey kept the revival fires burning that were kindled by Moody. Torrey was born in New Jersey, January 28, 1856. Unlike Moody, he received a splendid college education at Yale and abroad. His conversion came about in an unusual way. While a student in college he locked himself in a hotel room intending to commit suicide. But the thought came to him that he should pray first. So he fell down upon his knees by the side of the bed. And that was where he found the Lord.

Dr. Torrey turned to the ministry and served as pastor of churches in both Ohio and Minnesota. He became well acquainted with Moody, who persuaded him to become Dean of the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago and also pastor of the Moody Church there.

The revivalistic efforts of Torrey became worldwide in its scope, as he preached in England, Scotland, Australia, Japan, China and elsewhere.

J. Wilbur Chapman was the third famed evangelist to appear on the stage during this period. He was born in Indiana June 17, 1859.

While he was a student at Lake Forest College, Chapman heard Moody preach in Chicago. It was here in this meeting that Moody lead him to Christ.

Chapman was a speaker who could hold the attention of his audiences. He had a musical, rich, deep, and oratorical style, with a personal appeal.

A conservative, Chapman's message was that man was lost, and that there was no hope outside of God. His meetings were always packed with enthusiastic, interested people. He made a worldwide speaking tour in 1911.

Chapman introduced a new method for evangelistic endeavors. He would divide a city into several districts and assign preachers and singers to each. While he preached in the largest church, the others preached simultaneously in the various districts. This method proved quite successful, and was said to have been his greatest contribution to the revival movement in America.

No evangelist in the history of the United States, perhaps, appealed to the masses as did William A. ("Billy") Sunday. He was born in Story County, Iowa on November 19, 1862. For some time he worked on a farm that belonged to his grandfather. From 1883 to 1891, he was a noted baseball player, setting two records in the major leagues. But he also had a drinking problem.

One night, Sunday attended a religious meeting at Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago. After he accepted Jesus Christ that night he would never be the same. He turned from baseball to become secretary with the Y.M.C.A., and devoted his energy to the work of Christ.

Three years later, J. Wilbur Chapman enlisted Sunday to assist him in his revival campaigns. It was Chapman who started Sunday on his great revival career as an evangelist.

“Billy” Sunday might be called a “showman.” He had a unique style and technique. Always full of action, he preached rapidly and furiously. He often dramatized his sermons, and seemed to possess unlimited physical endurance and energy.

Perhaps his most extensive and successful campaign was during World War I in New York City (1917). This meeting was backed by the millionaire, John D. Rockefeller, and lasted for two and a half months. It was attended by a million and a half people. 150,000 “hit the sawdust trail” (came forward to accept Christ). All proceeds of the meeting, totaling \$ 128,000.00 was sent overseas for work “Over There.”

During the last half of the 20th Century another evangelist, “Billy” Graham, has preached in America and abroad to more people than any other man in history. He preaches a simple Gospel message, based upon the Bible, calling on America and her people to repent of her sins or perish.

The heyday of the small country rural church was from the close of the Civil War well into the twentieth century. No institution has done more for America and the assurance of her future than has the church of Almighty God.

American history reveals that most of our great national leaders have been men with faith and belief in God, who have read the Bible and prayed for guidance.

William Jennings Bryan, three times Democratic candidate for President of the United States, is an illustrious example of our statesmen who have been devout Christians.

In Woodrow Wilson’s first administration, Bryan served for some time as Secretary of State. He was a student and teacher of the Bible for many years. He taught a famous Sunday School Bible Class at Miami, Florida, where great crowds came to hear this famous orator and noted statesman expound from the Word of God.

Bryan believed in the Bible and he believed that there was no real conflict between true science and the Scriptures. He said that parents wanted their children to be well-versed in the sciences, but

that they did not want them to manifest so much interest in the stone age, or the age of rocks that they would lose sight of the “Rock of Ages.”

President William McKinley was a very devout Christian. In his last speech to the American people, September 5, 1901, at Buffalo, New York, McKinley said that:

“...our earnest prayer is that God will graciously vouchsafe prosperity, happiness and peace to all our neighbors, and like blessings to all the people and powers of earth.”

The following day the beloved and popular President of the United States was shot by an assassin. He died about a week later.

Theodore Roosevelt, vice president, who was sworn in as President following McKinley’s death, was a fearless, frank, honest, and straightforward Christian man.

Theodore Roosevelt read the Bible and made it a practical guide in his fearless fight for economic and social justice in America.

Woodrow Wilson, our President immediately before, during, and after the end of the first great World War, was a leader of rare talents. His father was a Presbyterian minister, and Wilson grew up in a home with a distinct Christian environment and atmosphere. To him the Bible, as he later expressed it, was “The Magna Charta of the human soul.”

Wilson believed in example and practice as Divine attributes of faith, for he said one time: “We cannot expect our children to be Christian, if we do not take the time to be Christian ourselves.”

His sermon-like speeches showed a genuine sincerity of purpose motivated by a heart in tune with Christ-like ideals for America and for the world.

In his early career, Wilson often made speeches in churches and before various groups on the Bible and religious themes.

When political intrigue killed the League of Nations, for which he gave his life and in which he believed rested much hope for preventing future wars, he became an old, broken man almost overnight.

But he never retreated from his faith. During his last sickness, someone said to him: “Mr. Wilson, your League is dead.” He arose on his elbow and replied in a loud voice: “You can’t stop Almighty God.”

Wilson's last message to the American people was in a magazine article written shortly before his death and printed in *The Atlantic Monthly*. He called it "*The Road Away From Revolution*." In this final benediction to our people he pointed out that our only hope for the future was Spiritual redemption; that we could not survive materially unless we were "permeated" with the teachings and spirit of Christ.

General John J. Pershing was the commander of the American Expeditionary Forces in France during World War I. He believed that the Christian idealism of the American soldier would do much to win the war. His character is shown by his own words which were inscribed under his picture in Y.M.C.A. huts in France:

Hardships will be your lot, but trust and God will give you comfort. Temptations will befall you, but the teachings of our Savior will give you strength. Let your valor as a soldier and your conduct as a man be an inspiration to your comrades and an honor to your country.

What a "day of rejoicing" there was when the war came to an end on November 11, 1918. People went wild with joy and happiness. There was shouting, singing, dancing, laughing, crying, and praying. People were waving flags and blowing whistles. Sirens sounded. Church bells rang. Factory whistles blew. Some people got drunk; others went to church and thanked God. One country newspaper said: "Never since the creation has joy been so nearly universal among mankind, and never has there been greater occasion for universal gladness."

But, unfortunately, the same old pattern soon followed the close of the war. High prices, a crime wave, lowering of our moral standards, reckless living, forgetting God and what He had done for us. Then came general social and political instability.

Women's dresses became unusually short, and carefree, thoughtless people danced to wild "jazz" music and drank "bootleg booze." Divorces, broken homes, juvenile delinquency, robberies and kidnappings increased. Women began to smoke and drink liquor as never before in history. And even trail marriages were suggested. Religious and race prejudice also increased.

From the pulpit came “thunders” against the sins of the age. But the masses paid no attention to the warnings. People lived high and recklessly. And in the “mad rush” to “get rich quick” they began to trade carelessly on the stock markets.

Then, came the great depression. Many people asked: “Is it unreasonable to believe that the forgetting of God and the sins of the times were not important factors in bringing about the depression?”

We paid dearly for the temporary and false prosperity after the war. The trying days of the depression would not soon be forgotten. Everything was uncertain. Markets were gone. Prices of farm products were on the rocks. Banks were closing everywhere. The people were almost panic stricken. Homes and farms were selling “under the hammer” at court house doors. Savings of a lifetime were swept away overnight. We were bankrupt materially and spiritually. Trade and credit were gone. It was impossible to borrow money. Factories and mills closed. The unemployed walked the streets or rode freight cars not knowing from where the next meal was to come. There were the days of long bread and soup lines. Countless suicides, despondency, despair and discouragement. Hunger and want prevailed. Times seemed to go from bad to worse as the days passed.

The story of our recovery was slow, long and hard. Then came the most terrible war in all human history — World War II, a war which threatened the destruction of democracy and freedom throughout the world.

As usual, in times of adversity, we turned to God for help. Church attendance increased and the Bible was read as it had not been read for years. But, as one minister asked: “Why do we always have to wait until the ship is sinking or the house is on fire to call upon the Lord?”

On the front page of the New Testament and other Scripture books given to our soldiers in World War II was an impressive message from our commander-in-chief, the President of the United States. It said:

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

To the Members of the Army:

March 6, 1941

As Commander-in-Chief I take pleasure in commending the reading of the Bible to all who serve in the armed forces of the United States. Throughout the centuries men of many faiths and diverse origins have found in the Sacred Book words of wisdom, counsel, and inspiration. It is a fountain of strength and now, as always, an aid, in attaining the highest aspirations of the human soul.

Very sincerely yours,
Franklin D. Roosevelt

In his brief message to the Congress on December 8, 1941 asking for a declaration of war against Japan, President Roosevelt assured the nation—“we will gain the inevitable triumph, so help us God.”

We triumphed, but only after nearly four years of hard, bitter fighting that cost the blood and lives of tens of thousands.

The war picture of 1941-1945 followed a familiar pattern: boys registering for service in the armed forces and leaving for training camps. Worried families were full of heartaches and sorrows while loved ones were away. Tensions and fears mounted as battle reports came in bringing news of boys who had been captured, missing, wounded or killed in action.

People spent long hours at work. Transportation facilities were crowded and limited. Food and clothing were rationed. High prices and “black markets” also helped make it a time that “tried men’s souls.”

Women worked in the factories while men were away, many of them on night shifts seven days a week. Children had to be cared for by “baby sitters,” or were left to shift for themselves. The lack of parental care frequently caused children to drift into delinquency or crime. We lived and struggled for nearly four years through these trying times.

We were sobered by the tragedy at Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941. Eighteen of our ships were either damaged, sunk, or put out of action. It was a stunning blow that took us completely by surprise. Grave days were ahead and a long, hard war with a very uncertain outcome was predicted.

Many islands in the Pacific were overrun and taken. After a heroic stand we finally had to surrender at Corregidor to a ruthless enemy who heaped insults and inflicted inhumane treatment, persecutions and torture upon American troops as they began the “Death March to Bataan” to prison camps.

Not since the dark days when Washington prayed in the snow at Valley Forge, had the picture been so black.

The Japanese flag waved over Wake, Guam, Midway and the Philippine Islands. Our Pacific fleet was crippled. We were fighting a war on two fronts in Europe against Germany and her allies, and in the Orient against Japan.

Many stories of great faith came out of the war. None was more inspiring than that of “Eddie” Rickenbacker. He was sent on a special mission for the government and was lost at sea, November, 1942. He and his men were adrift in the Pacific Ocean and were not rescued until they had spent three trying weeks on a raft. He made numerous testimonies of the miraculous experiences and reliance upon God in this adventure.

We had to make extensive preparations for “an all out war.” It was a slow process, but, with the help of God, we gradually gained ground, both in Europe and in the Pacific. On June 6, 1944 came the long awaited invasion of Europe. I wrote in my diary on June 7, 1944:

Yesterday, we witnessed the greatest military invasion and operation in all history. It was a day of glorious war news. We made the great landings in Normandy as the allies invaded Northern France. Our losses in every branch were said to be far less than had been anticipated. So far the invasion is a great success. Last night at nine President Roosevelt led our nation in what was probably the greatest mass prayer in all history—heard by an estimated 100,000,000 people.

We had undertaken the greatest crusade in history, and such slogans as “Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition;” “trust in God and keep your powder dry;” “coming in on a wing and a prayer,” became realistic as we faced the foe in a death struggle. These were trying times, but our faith was in God.

I will always remember a statement I read from a letter a boy wrote to his mother back home. It said: “Mother, don’t merely pray that I will come back. I want you to especially pray that I will always have the courage to do my duty whatever may come.”

I also recall seeing these words on the fly leaf of a faded little New Testament given to a boy before he left for the service:

Dear Son: We love you and will be praying for you. Read this and follow your Christ in all that you do. Nothing will be a better guide for you—or a surer one.

*Lots of Love,
Mom and Dad*

“If you don’t have God, you don’t have anything to cling to over here,” one soldier wrote back home.

In the darkest hours of the conflict, General MacArthur and others in reporting military successes said: “By the help of God,” we have been able to do thus and so.

When the tide had turned, and in the midst of glowing victorious war news came the flash that shocked the entire world — news of the death of our great leader, President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Upon the death of President Roosevelt, the Vice President, Harry S. Truman, was sworn in as the Chief Executive of the United States in a simple ceremony at the White House. The people of the United States were naturally apprehensive for he was little known to the country as a whole, and they wondered what kind of a President he would be.

Truman was a Christian, God-fearing and a member of the Baptist church. His mother had always admonished him to trust in the Lord. She told him that God would see him through all of his trials and problems of life. He did not forget that when he became President of the United States. He read his Bible regularly and sought God’s help and leadership in connection with our national problems.

He kept a Bible on his desk in the White House. He read from it daily and each morning and evening prayed for Divine guidance in his many decisions as President.

When he became President, Truman said to those around him: “Boys, I want you to pray for me.” He once told me: “I never make an important decision until I first talk it over with the Lord.” And he also wrote me after he took the oath of office: “I’m glad that you are going to pray for me.”

President Truman made a good start; he was willing to take advice and to consult others. His humble simplicity, friendly personality and businesslike efficiency appealed to the people. And during the first few months that he was in office he became one of our most popular Presidents. In his first message to Congress, he said:

“I ask only to be a good and faithful servant of my Lord and my people.”

When the war with Germany came to an end in May, we were still sobered by the thought that for us the war was but half over. President Truman in an address to the people said:

This is a solemn but a glorious hour. . . Our rejoicing is sobered and subdued by a supreme consciousness of the terrible price we have paid to rid the world of Hitler and his evil band. . . We can repay the debt which we owe to our God, to our dead and to our children only by work . . . We must work to finish the war. Our victory is but half won. The West is free, but the East is still in bondage to the treacherous tyranny of the Japanese. When the last Japanese division has surrendered unconditionally then only will our fighting job be done.

The war finally came to a glorious end on Tuesday morning, August 14, 1945. The President proclaimed total victory and V-J Day (Victory over Japan) was celebrated the following two days. Rejoicing was great and universal. People prayed, cried, and shouted, giving vent to their jubilant feeling. Many thronged into the churches over the land and offered thanks to God for victory.

I was in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania when the war ended. I bought a copy of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* for Wednesday morning, August 15, 1945. The headline was one huge word across the

top of the front page of the paper. It read: “P E A C E.”

But what I remember most is the little column in the left hand corner of the paper above the headline. It read:

LET US THANK GOD

TO ALMIGHTY GOD, for this blessed peace restored to a war-torn world, a grateful people offer devout thanksgiving.

Thank God, we say, the war is over at last. The guns are stilled. The bombs plunge no longer on their business of death. Mothers and wives and sweethearts can breathe with unfettered hearts. Our loved ones will be coming home. An evil enemy has been crushed.

But there are many who are not here to rejoice with us this great day—because they gave their lives so that we could have this day. Give them our prayers, our undying gratitude, our promise to cherish forever the ideals they freely died for. And for peace with victory, let us thank the All-Merciful God.

There can be no doubt that God helped us in our many struggles. President Dwight D. Eisenhower recognized our dependence upon the Lord when he was inaugurated as President in January, 1953. He dedicated himself to God and made an earnest plea for Divine guidance as he took over the great trust reposed in him by the American people.

Prayer and the Bible and the dedication of Christian lives to unselfish service has made possible America’s advance to greatness. The religion of our fathers played a major role in American history.

Such a faith is our stronghold today and the only hope for the future. It has given us an anchor of security godless people do not have. As long as we stay close to God and his teachings, our nation will live and prosper. Our history has proved that “Righteousness exalteth a nation.”

Afterword

The scope of this book concerns only the period of history in founding and development of this nation through World War II. Of course much has happened since then. Technological advances and material blessings have been astronomical.

However, despite optimistic campaigns from many quarters to return to our roots, much of our national leadership has turned away from God and the Bible. And too many of our citizens have become complacent, giving evil a free hand in this land.

The Bible and prayer have been removed from our schools and many public places. *Roe vs. Wade* has resulted in the legalized murder of innocent unborn babies by the tens of millions. Sex merchants, along with homosexual activists, have joined other allies to bring sin and indecency before the eyes of children in public places. Character, integrity, purity and righteousness are not only unpopular, a new generation has not been taught to even recognize these traits when they do make a rare appearance.

Yes, the Bible teaches us that righteousness exalts a nation, but that same verse goes on to warn us that sin is a reproach to *any* people. America will not be excused. May God help us to get back to God, back to the Bible, back to the basics, back to our heritage!

Doesn't the Lord give us the same offer today that He gave to ancient Israel in 2 Chronicles 7:14 so long ago? That verse also contains the formula for recovery.



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.

—2 Chronicles 7:14

We hope you enjoyed the eBook.

If you'd like to study more—maybe even complete a Bible course of the same title we have a special offer for you.

We have a companion workbook (in print or PDF) with additional studies and reading. Complete the workbook and turn it in for grading. You can receive either a completion certificate from Patriot School of the Bible or upon enrollment in Patriot Bible University you can earn 2 credit hours towards a Bible degree. [*Click the buttons below and use the coupon code*]

Bible Course -

Enroll for \$99 (includes first two courses) and...we'll give you the rest of this course for **FREE**.

Coupon Code - GAMH



Completion Certificate

- Course \$29. (includes the rest of this course & shipping)

Coupon Code - GAMH

Correspondence
Bible Courses

Start Anytime,
Study Anywhere

[Learn More](#)



Patriot Bible University
1135 French St. Del Norte, CO 81132
888.578.9332

www.patriotuniversity.com



What made America a Great Nation?

The greatness of America did not come because our people were better, smarter or wiser than anyone else. The early leaders and citizens of our nation were marked by human flaws like the rest of us. But most of these men and women had one thing in common. They acknowledged, honored, relied and called upon the Almighty God of the Bible. It is the fingerprint of God upon our heritage that shows why we became a great and free nation.

Dr. A. Loyd Collins wrote this little book in the late 1960s. Twenty-first century Americans will find this edited version as important as ever to help us see the close relationship between God and the heritage of our country.

If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?

Psalm 11:3

