



CrossRoads Notes:

Turn your Bibles to Psalm 33:12-22

Title: A Vigilant Nation

Theme: The Foundation of a Nation that Truly Says, "In God We Trust."

Introduction: *Vigilance has never come easy. Throughout the past 200 plus years the United States of America has always had enemies. Many today still remember the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor and everyday in some way we are reminded of 9/11/2001. A day that reminded us that even the powerful U.S.A. is not beyond the violent attack of a hateful enemy.*

Proposition: *I would propose to you that America needs to be vigilant and she must have her full trust in God. There are three Biblical ways for America to protect her national borders.*

Interrogative Sentence: *Just what three things is the Lord calling Christians to do in these last days?*

Read Psalm 33:12-22:

Transitional Sentence: *There are three foundational truths that the Holy Spirit wants to place within our hearts. Our great military strength alone is not enough as we face an enemy that is hard to locate and never knowing when, where, and how he may attack. The first foundational truth found in a vigilant nation is a healthy fear of the Lord. "Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD... the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear Him." (Psalm 33:12,18) Christians who know Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord are a powerful force in a wicked culture that flaunts her disbeliefs. The Lord told Abraham, "For the sake of ten [righteous men], I will not destroy it." A God fearing people can make a powerful difference in God's dealings with a nation. The Bible gives us this powerful truth worth clinging to: (Psalm 147:11; Psalm 34:7)*

The obvious question is "What is fear of the Lord?" The fear of the Lord ranges from terror, which may be evidenced by shaking or trembling (Daniel 5:6), to awe or reverence (Malachi 2:5) which induces love or worship rather than terror. This is the very awe that every God fearing man should have before the Lord if he is going to be among that remnant that is going to be used of the Lord to maintain a lasting foundation for America. (Ecclesiastes 12:13) Fear of the Lord involves receiving instructions from God's Word. In 2 Chronicles 26 we read of King Uzziah accepting instructions from a man of God named Zechariah. Uzziah took instructions from Zechariah on how to live in "fear of the Lord." (2 Chronicles 26:5) The Bible says, "He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord... He sought God... [and] as long as he sought God the Lord, God gave him success." (2 Chronicles 26:4-5)

Uzziah prospered in civilian and battle pursuits. This includes building and farming projects. (2 Chronicles 26:6-9) Uzziah became a great military leader and inventor and God gave him well-trained armies powerful enough to regain land taken over by hostile nations and hold off enemy attacks. (2 Chronicles 26:11-15) Uzziah had fame that was in accordance of God's Word thus bringing honor to God and His people. The Ammonites paid him tribute. Uzziah's reign as king underscored the connection between a king's and nation's success with their obedience to God's Word reflecting true fear of the Lord. (2 Chronicles 26:5; 2 Kings 14:21-22; 15:1-14)

A nation with a firm foundation has Christians who have the heart of the psalmist who wrote, "Teach me your way, O Lord, and I walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name." (Psalm 86:11) The foundation of this country is clearly spelled out in the words of William Bradford who became governor of the Plymouth Colony as he describes the mission of the Pilgrims. Mr. Bradford said, "They cherished a great hope and inward zeal of laying a good foundation... for the advancement of the gospel of Christ in the remote parts of the world..." George Washington said, "It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible." In his farewell speech of 1796 he said, "Of all habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. ...Reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle." George Washington was a man of prayer who could grasp the heart of God in praying, "Direct my thoughts, words and work. Wash away my sins in the immaculate blood of the Lamb, and purge my heart by thy Holy Spirit... Daily frame me more and more into the likeness of Thy Son Jesus Christ." The third president of the United States, Thomas Jefferson said, "God ...gave us liberty. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis... ...I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, and that His justice cannot sleep forever." One of America's Revolutionary leaders, Patrick Henry said, "It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded, not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religions, but on the gospel of Jesus Christ." John Witherspoon, a signer of the Declaration of Independence said, "Cursed be all learning that is contrary to the Cross of Christ." Alexander Hamilton, signer of the Constitution said, "I have a tender reliance on the mercy of the Almighty, through the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am a sinner. I look to Him for mercy." Benjamin Franklin has often and still is accused of being a deist. At the Constitutional Convention of 1787 he clearly said, "I have lived long, Sir, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth – that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it [possible] that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the Sacred Writings, that 'except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.' I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without His concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of [the Tower of] Babel... My

views... are the results of life of inquiry and reflection, and very different from the anti-Christian system imputed to me by those who know nothing of my opinions. To the corruptions of Christianity, I am, in deed opposed; but not to the genuine precepts of Jesus Himself. I am a Christian in the only sense in which He wished anyone to be; sincerely attached to His doctrines in preference to all others."

We all must understand that back in the time of laying a foundation for this nation there were men who claimed to be God fearing and were not, just like it was in the time God was building and establishing the nation Israel. However, there was that remnant who truly feared the Lord. The Holy Spirit dwelt with this through the Apostle Paul in Romans 9:6, "...For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel." God does not look upon a man's outward relation and position, but upon the character and heart. Calling oneself an Israelite does not make a person right with the Lord and neither does calling oneself an American citizen while quoting "In God we Trust." The Apostle Paul gives this truth in Romans 2:28-29, "A man is not a Jew [or Christian] if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a man is a Jew [or Christian] if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the [Holy] Spirit..." There has always been a remnant and Jesus taught only a few will enter the narrow gate and walk the narrow road that leads to eternal life. (Matthew 7:13)

I do not know how many Christians were involved in the founding of this nation, one thing is for sure, there were men who had a fear of the Lord and God used them to lay a firm foundation for this country. It will only take a remnant to grasp the heart of God and live in the fear of the Lord to assure God's hand upon our country, petitioning Him to do what is best for the souls of mankind to come to Christ.

Transitional Sentence: *One Nation Under God also has her foundation under-girded in Prayer.* 1Timothy 2:1-2 says, "I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone -- for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. The Apostle Paul used the word "urge" (parakaleo) meaning to exhort with urgency. He wrote "first of all" meaning that prayer for those in leadership is of primary importance in the church, a very essential part of public worship. Christians are to pray in accordance with Exodus 18:21-22. "Judges" (*sapat*) here means to govern. This Hebrew word is much more inclusive than the modern day concept of judging and encompasses all the facets and function of government; executive, legislative and judicial. Judges are to be men who have a fear of the Lord and they have a serious charge.

A vigilant nation will have men like George Washington who prayed, "Bless O Lord the whole race of mankind, and let the world be filled with the knowledge of Thee and Thy Son, Jesus Christ." Men like Abraham Lincoln who served our nation in its bloodiest war who said, "I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go to and my own wisdom... seemed insufficient for the day." (Taken from a sermon preached

by Pastor Gerald Flurry) President Lincoln words reflect the heart of a man who knew that a vigilant nation must have God's aid and that the Lord works through positions of great authority as well as through humble servants fulfilling their call in praying for those who are in governmental authority.

Transitional Sentence: *Vigilant nations have leaders who know their need of Divine intervention and have faithful servants who obey God's Word to be in prayer for their leaders. Such nations also have men and women of God beseeching the Lord for a true spiritual awakening. (Joel 2:12-13)*

The expression "the Lord your God" was well known to Israel and testified to the covenantal relationship between God and the nation. For the people of a nation to "rend" their hearts is to have it circumcised by the Holy Spirit and produce the fruit of repentance by the way they live before God.

Vigilant nations have spiritual leaders who know the need of being a nation that calls out to God for a true spiritual awakening. Abraham Lincoln wrote an address to the nation during the Civil War, by which he designated Thursday, April 30, 1863 as a day of humiliation, fasting and prayer. He wrote, "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 transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with 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."

The awful calamity of the Civil War which now desolates the land may be but a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to bring us to a needful national reformation as a whole people. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity to pray and 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 pray for clemency and forgiveness."

In Closing: A vigilant nation expresses true "In God we Trust" by living in fear of the Lord by being vigilant in prayer by her leaders and through Christians praying for their leaders and by beseeching God for a spiritual awakening. She must have a remnant in her that is living the Christian life before God. (The truths found in the message come from long prayerful study of the NIV Bible, The Complete Word study of the New and Old Testament; The Expositors Bible Commentary; Harper's Bible Dictionary; Easton's Bible Dictionary; The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia: Pentecostal Evangel; Barnes Notes; Thru the Bible; Commentary on the Old Testament; A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory; Daily Study Bible Series; Matthew Henry Commentary; Willmington Bible Hand Book; The Bible Reader's Bible Commentary: The Bible Knowledge Commentary; The New American Commentary: Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains; Encyclopedia of 7,700 Illustrations,)