



**Title: A Vigilant Nation**

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

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people He chose for His inheritance. From heaven the LORD looks down and sees all mankind; from His dwelling place He watches all who live on earth-- He who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do. No king is saved by the size of his army; no warrior escapes by his great strength. A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength it cannot save. But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear Him, on those whose hope is in His unfailing love, to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine. We wait in hope for the LORD; He is our help and our shield. In Him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in His holy name. May your unfailing love rest upon us, O LORD, even as we put our hope in you." (Psalm 33:12-22)

**United States of America has always had enemies**

*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.*

*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. Our war on terrorism has upped the ante and the Lord is calling the church to the lay a foundation that points those who have ears to hear to once again set their hearts on truly saying, "In God we trust!"*

*Just what three things is the Lord calling Christians to do in these last days? Our keys text lays the foundation for the United States as she endeavors to avoid the dangers that are coming at her through acts of terrorism.*

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people He chose for His inheritance. From heaven the LORD looks down and sees all mankind; from His dwelling place He watches all who live on earth-- He who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do. No king is saved by the size of his army; no warrior escapes by his great strength. A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength it cannot save. But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear Him, on those whose hope is in His unfailing love, to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine. We wait in hope for the LORD; He is our help and our shield. In Him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in His holy name. May your unfailing love rest upon us, O LORD, even as we put our hope in you." (Psalm 33:12-22)

## Healthy fear of the Lord

*There are three foundational truths that the Holy Spirit wants to place within our hearts this Independence Day Weekend.* 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)

Contemporary America has a long list of transgressions against the Lord. Some of those transgressions are the embracing of the homosexual agenda, abortion, abandoning Christ by bowing to the pressures of the ACLU and other worldly organizations. However the remnant, Christians who know Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord are a powerful force in a wicked culture that flaunts her disbeliefs. There is a powerful hope in the words that the Lord spoke to Abraham in his plea for Sodom and Gomorrah. 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, “the LORD delights in those who fear Him, who put their hope in His unfailing love. (Psalm 147:11) Psalm 34:7 says, “The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear [God] and He delivers them.”

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.

In the close of the Book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon writes a truth that must be grasped by all Christians and especially for those who may be involved in the governmental affairs of this country. He writes, “...Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the duty of man.” (Ecclesiastes 12:13) In the Old Testament fear of the Lord is used as designation of true religion. (Proverbs 1:7) This fear conjoined with love and hope in Christ is the heartbeat of true reverence thus becoming the preventive tool against backsliding and is the incentive to living a life of true repentance before God. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

True Christianity produces a fear that induces a love for keeping God's commands and laws. In Deuteronomy 5:29 we read about what is on the heart of God for those who are called by His name, "Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear Me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children." In Deuteronomy 31:12 we read of Moses telling the priest to "Assemble the people – men, women, and children, and the aliens living in the towns, so they can listen and learn to fear the Lord..."

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) God is very pleased and will look out for a nation that has people who serve Jesus, cleave to Him, live under the authority of Christ and keep His words. Obedient Christians who fear the Lord see all acts of obedience to the Lord as a delight, not a burden. Psalm 112:1 says, "Praise the LORD. Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who finds great delight in His commands.

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..."

It is very evident that the men who God used to lay the foundation of this nation were men who had a fear of the Lord. Listen to these quotations from our founding fathers and other national leaders. Men like George Washington who 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." Thomas Jefferson knew the need of a nation to walk in reverence before God and to live with a Biblical understanding of what it means to live in the fear of the Lord.

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."

We know this to be true because of the heart that was reflected in men who signed the Declaration of Independence and our Constitution. 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."

There have always been attacks on the faith of the men God had used to lay the foundation for this nation and even on Christians the Lord is using now to govern this nation. One such man was Benjamin Franklin who 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.

### ***Under-girded in prayer***

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.

We are to pray for those in leadership positions, Republicans praying for Democrats and Democrats praying for Republicans. The heart of God is not first for Republicans to be praying for more Republicans and Democrats praying for more Democrats. “Many years ago a famous chaplain was asked, ‘Do you pray for the Senators?’ he replied with, ‘No, I look at the Senators, and then pray for our county!’”

This was really a very good answer for Proverbs 21:1 says, “The King’s heart is in the hand of the Lord; He directs it like a watercourse wherever He pleases.” God’s Word affirms that the decisions of the king are under the Lord’s control. And God moves the king to do as he pleases. As the farmer channels the water where he wants and regulates its flow, so does the Lord with the king. No human ruler then, is supreme. God determines the results of his reign and how long he reigns as the king or in America’s case, governs as president.

Christians are to pray in accordance with Exodus 18:21-22, “But select capable men from all the people--men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain--and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Have them serve as judges for the people at all times...”

“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

This is why 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)

When this nation has been attacked, in great danger or in times of making key choices about the direction of her future, the Lord has raised up men of faith in Christ and men of prayer. He also raises up Christians who feel a great burden to be in humble prayer for their leaders.

The Pentecostal Evangel ran the true story of Eliza Gurney who the Holy Spirit gave special sympathy for President Lincoln, a president who has been driven to his knees many times. She had prayed for a spiritual visit with the president and in October of 1862 the Lord brought that visit about.

She was accompanied by three friends, John Whitall, Hannah Mott and James Carey. Not one of them sought anything for themselves and none came to criticize or offer unasked advice. They came only to give spiritual support. They were therefore greeted with unusual warmth from Mr. Lincoln and he spent much time with them.

In the private apartment of President Lincoln there was an awful silence and the President had a look of anxiety on his face brought by the national crises the United States was in. Tears ran down his face and when a prayer was offered President Lincoln bowed his head in reference. After the prayer Mrs. Gurney gave in essence a short Biblical message, which was later written down in Lincoln Papers. After the message she knelt down and prayed a prayer asking that light and wisdom would be shed down from on high, to guide our president.

After further silence Lincoln spoke, “We are indeed going through a great trial – a fiery trial. In every responsible position in which I happen to be placed, being a humble instrument in the hands of our Heavenly Father, as I am, and as we all are, to work out His great purposes. I have desired that all my works and acts may be according to His will, and that it might be so, I have sought His aid...” 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.

### **Beseeking the Lord for a true spiritual awakening**

*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 says, “Even now, declares the Lord, ‘return to Me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning. Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love.’”

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. This only comes as God has revealed to a nation’s people in a nation of her sins and He is the only one who can do a supernatural work in the hearts and lives of people.

When people are truly broken by their sins, and yearn to return back to living for the Lord, then a change of life will follow. A form of godliness that denies the power of God breaks the heart of God. True repentance leads to a nation and people enjoying the graciousness and compassion of the Lord and enables a vigilant nation to rest in the abounding love of 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."

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.

Let us pray!

(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; Wilmington 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)